

Rules & Regulations

I. GENERAL TOURNAMENT RULES

A. Boat Entry Guidelines

1. The Basic Entry Fee is \$1050 per boat on or before June 1st and \$1400 after June 1st.
2. There is no minimum or maximum boat size.
 - a. Only boats under 40' LOA are eligible to enter and receive awards in the Small Boat added entry levels. Length Over All (LOA) is the horizontal distance between the outboard side of the foremost part (bow) of the hull and the outboard side of the aftermost part (stern) of the hull. It does not include bowsprits, rudders, outboard motor brackets, swim platforms that do not contain buoyant volume, and other similar fittings and attachments that are not part of the buoyant hull envelope.
3. An unlimited number of anglers are allowed per boat.
4. Any person listed on the Official White Marlin Open entry form will be considered an angler (i.e. Captain, Mate, Boat Owner). Anglers may also be registered by calling 410-520-2065 or emailing anglers@whitemarlinopen.com. All anglers must be registered prior to fishing.
5. In the event of a boat disability, contestants may transfer to a second boat and assume the original boat's number without paying an additional entry fee.
6. Only 1 day needs to be fished by at least 1 boat to make the tournament official and for prizes to be awarded.
7. The White Marlin Open reserves the right to cancel the tournament at any time.
8. It is expressly understood that all registered anglers and their companions, crew members and observers (the "Participants") participate in the White Marlin Open (the "Tournament") at their own risk. The Participants hereby indemnify and agree to save harmless the Tournament, White Marlin Open, and its respective officers, directors, employees, volunteers, agents, partners, members, and/or attorneys (collectively the "Tournament Indemnified Parties") from and against any and all claims that arise from or in connection with any negligent act or omission of the Tournament Indemnified Parties. All persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of the White Marlin Open whether an individual, a corporation or other type of entity, shall have no liability whatsoever for any special, incidental, consequential, punitive, exemplary and/or any other damage including, without limitation, any damages arising from libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury or death. The Tournament Directors reserve the right to refuse entry to any boat, team or person. Participants specifically agree and consent to the use of any photograph or video in which they appear, and/or audio recordings of such participants, by the Tournament for any purpose whatsoever including, but not limited to, resale, advertising and promotional material without compensation or restriction of any kind. This liability Release shall be binding upon the Participants and their respective heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns.
9. By registering in the White Marlin Open and paying the entry fee, Participants acknowledge that they have read these Rules and the Liability Release. As a condition for the entry into the White Marlin Open, all Participants hereby agree to be bound by all the Rules, and by the Liability Release.

B. Federal Legislation and IGFA Rules Apply

1. All-tackle I.G.F.A. rules apply unless otherwise noted. In the event of any conflict between the White Marlin Open Rules and the I.G.F.A. Rules, the White Marlin Open Rules apply.
2. All Anglers are required to follow Federal law relating to fishing.
3. Federal law mandates that all anglers participating in a tournament which bestows points, prizes, or awards for Atlantic billfish (blue & white marlin, sailfish, spearfish, or swordfish) must deploy only non-offset circle hooks when using natural bait and/or natural/artificial lure

combinations. Anglers in these tournaments may use J-hooks only in artificial lures.

4. Participants are assumed to have all necessary permits, licenses and/or registrations required by law. **However, it is not the responsibility of the tournament officials or directors to verify that all required permits, licenses and/or registrations are acquired by anglers participating in the tournament. Failure of a winning angler to have obtained any or all required permits, licenses and or registrations shall not be the basis for a protest to be filed under the General Tournament Rules, or for a fish to be disqualified.**

5. In the event that the National Marine Fisheries Service increases the minimum length for landing white and/or blue marlin over and above the current White Marlin Open minimums, then the new NMFS minimum length shall become the new White Marlin Open minimum length.

6. With the intention of preserving sportsmanship, rewarding angling skills and billfish conservation, the intentional use of live bait and/or live bait teasers in the attempt to catch billfish is not allowed.

7. The use of Green Sticks is not permitted.

8. The use of drones in any capacity is not permitted.

9. Line class shall be limited to the manufacturer's stated rating of no greater than 130 lbs. The use of Tournament Grade Line is not required. The use of any pound test backing is permitted.

10. The use of dart gaffs, harpoons, and /or lance gaffs is prohibited.

11. Any last minute changes will be announced at the Captain's meeting on Sunday, August 5th at 7:00 p.m.

C. Fishing Days, Fishing Times, and Distance Parameters

1. Each boat and/or angler is allowed to fish a maximum of 3 days.

a. Fun fishing on lay days is permitted.

b. Participants can not be registered as a Captain, mate or angler on more than one boat.

2. Boats must declare their non-fishing day before 8:30 a.m. each day the boat is not fishing, except for Friday. No non-fishing day reporting is required on Friday.

3. To report a non-fishing day, a representative from the boat must notify the White Marlin Open by calling 410-520-2065 before 8:30 a.m.

4. Those boats not reporting by 8:30 a.m. will be declared "fishing" that day.

5. In the event that a boat does not notify the White Marlin Open by 8:30 a.m. on the non-fishing day, Tournament Directors reserve the right to declare that boat not-fishing.

6. Fishing hours are 8:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. each day. No boat may place lines or teasers in the water prior to 8:30 a.m. All lines and teasers must be removed from the water at 3:30 p.m. Fun fishing before or after tournament hours is prohibited.

7. Any fish hooked prior to 3:30 p.m. may be played until boated or released, but it must be made available for weigh-ins by 9:15 p.m. that day (see exception under rule C8).

8. Any boat still fighting a blue marlin after the 3:30 p.m. deadline:

8a. will be permitted to fight that fish until boated, released or lost – except that in order to be eligible for prize money, the blue marlin must be made available for weighing no later than 12:15 a.m. on Saturday, August 11th, regardless of which fishing day the hookup occurred.

8b. If that boat has any other fish on board intended for weighing, it must report to another registered tournament boat, Tournament Directors or another boat that can be verified by 3:30 p.m. the species of boated fish, the exact length and girth, estimated weight and when the fish was boated. Only fish that match the reported length and girth will be weighed.

8c. If that boat does not return inside the sea buoy by 4:00 a.m. on the day after the hookup, that boat cannot return outside the sea buoy and fish that day.

9. Boats may leave from any inlet between Barnegat Inlet in New Jersey and Rudee Inlet in Virginia.

10. No boat may pass the sea buoy of any Inlet prior to 4:00 a.m. on any fishing day.

11. There is a fishing distance limit of 100 nautical miles from the Ocean City inlet sea buoy. Boats must fish within this limit regardless

of the Inlet of departure. Boats are not permitted to cross the 100 mile boundary line at any time for any reason.

D. Reporting and Weigh-In Procedures

1. All fish must be made available for weighing between the hours of 4:00 p.m. and 9:15 p.m. on the day the boat left the inlet to go fishing. Any fish not available for weighing by 9:15 p.m. for any reason other than a drawbridge malfunction or line at the scale of fish to be weighed, will not be counted (see exception under General Rule C8).
2. All fish to be eligible for prizes must be weighed in on the official scale at Harbour Island Marina.
3. In the event of a malfunction in the primary weighing system, the Tournament shall switch to a calibrated backup system.
4. All weights registered on either system will be considered official.
5. All fish must be accompanied by a signed catch report. Signed catch and release reports must be turned in to the scorer's table or a designated drop off area by 9:15 p.m. that day to receive full point value. **BOATS FISHING FROM AN INLET OTHER THAN OCEAN CITY, MD MAY FAX OR EMAIL CATCH REPORTS TO 410-289-4490 or contact@whitemarlinopen.com.** If emailing a catch report, a picture of the completed and signed official catch report must be included. Any catch report received after the 9:15 p.m. deadline will lose 1/2 of its total value.
6. If any boat still fighting a blue marlin after the 3:30 p.m. deadline has any other fish on board intended for weighing, it must report to another registered tournament boat, Tournament Directors or another boat that can be verified by 3:30 p.m. the species of boated fish, the exact length and girth, estimated weight and when the fish was boated. Only fish that match the reported length and girth will be weighed. (see General Rule C8)
7. Once a fish is caught, an angler may use any means to make his fish available for weighing. This includes but is not limited to switching his fish to another boat to get it to the scales, being towed by another boat, or trucking the fish to the scale.
8. In order to ensure that the tournament rules are preserved, Tournament Directors reserve the right to not weigh any fish that will clearly not place first, second, or third based on the following formula:
$$\text{Length(in.)} \times \text{Girth}^2(\text{in.}) / 800$$
9. The Tournament Directors reserve the right, in their sole and absolute discretion, to reject any fish that does not meet the requirements of the Tournament. Any decision of the Tournament Directors to reject a fish is final.

E. Fishing Guidelines

1. For the purpose of identification and prize money eligibility during the White Marlin Open, a hatchet marlin/round scale spearfish will be considered a white marlin.
2. **In the event of a tie in the weight of a white marlin, the fish that is not gaffed will be considered the winner of the two.**
3. A fish may be hooked by anyone other than the angler (Captain, mate or other registered angler) however the fishing rod must be transferred immediately to the angler after hookup. **The angler, from that time on, shall fight the fish alone until boated or released.**
 - a. Once the fishing rod has been transferred to the angler, the act of a person other than the angler touching the rod, reel, or line either bodily or with a device is prohibited. Holding or touching an angler in a manner that assists them in fighting the fish or takes pressure off the angler is prohibited. Touching or briefly holding the angler to prevent them from falling is permitted.
4. No help, in either manpower or equipment, can be given by another boat nor can anglers from another boat help in any aspect of fighting, boating or releasing the fish.
5. In the event of a boat disability while fighting a fish, the angler may not switch to another boat nor can anglers from another boat help with either manpower or equipment in any aspect of fighting, boating, or releasing the fish.
6. The following minimum weights/lengths must be met for a fish to qualify for prize money and/or billfish points:
White Marlin 70 lb and 67"

Blue Marlin 114" – no minimum weight. To be eligible for weighing, a blue marlin must meet the minimum length of 114". The winner will be determined by weight.

Tuna 50 lb

Dolphin 20 lb

Wahoo 40 lb

Shark 100 lb

F. Protest

1. A protest may only be filed by a registered angler, registered crew member, or Tournament Director.
2. The White Marlin Open must be notified immediately (by calling 410-289-9229 or speaking directly with a Tournament Director) that a protest is being filed.
3. All protests must be put in writing and include the registered angler(s) names(s), a local contact phone number and \$750 in cash or check made payable to the White Marlin Open. It must contain a detailed description of the protested matter and include any supporting evidence available. It must be signed by the protesting angler(s) or crew member(s) and be delivered to the Tournament Directors as soon as possible from the time the protested action occurs. If no Tournament official is available at Harbour Island, turn in the written report to the guardhouse at the 14th Street entrance to Harbour Island and call 410-289-9229 to report the written protest has been delivered there.
4. All protests in compliance with these procedures will be given to the judges. **That decision is final.** If the judges rule in favor of the person(s) that filed a protest, the \$750 protest fee will be refunded.
5. No protest will be accepted after 3:15 a.m. Saturday August 11th.
6. Protests should be carefully considered by contestants as they delay or interfere with the awarding of prizes to the tournament winners. Unjustified protests in recent tournaments have caused expense, turmoil, and unfavorable and unacceptable conditions with respect to the bona fide winners of prizes receiving their awards. Any person filing an unsuccessful protest will reimburse the White Marlin Open for all costs and fees incurred by the White Marlin Open, including reasonable attorneys' fees, relating to the protest and/or any litigation involving the same subject matter as the protest. In the event of a successful protest, the person who was the subject of the protest shall pay the White Marlin Open \$750 and reimburse the White Marlin Open for all costs and fees incurred by the White Marlin Open, including reasonable attorneys' fees, relating to the protest and/or any litigation involving the same subject matter as the protest. Reasonable attorney's fees include, but are not limited to, providing legal advice, and investigation of legal matters in conjunction with any protest as well as legal fees for any litigation which results. In no event shall White Marlin Open be liable to any person for any attorneys' fees or costs.

G. Prize Money Payout Procedures

1. If no second or third place fish is weighed, that guaranteed prize money will be divided equally among all winners in that specific category.
2. If a category is not won at all, the guaranteed prize money for that category will be equally divided among the other winning categories.
3. Prize money will be awarded to the registered angler catching the winning fish unless a different disbursement is requested in writing (on the Prize Money Distribution Form) by the winning angler.
4. Each winning angler (or boat in Level R and Daily Points) must complete a Prize Money Distribution Form before any award checks will be issued. Prize money checks will be mailed within 7 business days of the awards ceremony.
5. All anglers winning \$50,000 or more and any anglers winning any amount in Level R may be required, at the discretion of the Tournament Directors, to take a polygraph examination prior to the distribution of any awards.

5a. The Tournament Directors may, at their discretion, also request that a polygraph examination be taken by any other angler or crew member registered to that boat. The Tournament Directors may, at their discretion, also request that any angler or crew member take additional polygraph examinations. All anglers and crew members requested to take polygraph examinations are encouraged to provide the polygraph examiner(s) and/or the Tournament Directors with any information the

angler and/or crew member may consider relevant to the issues that are the subject of the polygraph examination(s).

5b. If a polygraph examination is required, the angler, Captain or other crew member will be notified by a Tournament Director after the scale closes at 9:15 p.m. on Friday August 10th with the time and location of the examination. Unless otherwise specified by the Tournament Directors, Polygraph examinations will take place on Saturday August 11th.

5c. In the event that an examination cannot be taken at a scheduled time, the Tournament Directors reserve the right to reschedule the examination within 30 days of the date on which the fish was caught. The rescheduled examination must be administered by a White Marlin Open approved examiner who is a member in good standing of the American Polygraph Association, and the examination will be at the angler's expense.

5d. If an angler (or crew member on an angler's boat) fails to take any polygraph at the time requested by the Tournament Directors, that angler will be disqualified unless the Tournament Directors agree to reschedule the examination as provided above. If an angler (or crew member on an angler's boat) is, in the opinion of the polygraph examiner, not in a condition suitable to take the polygraph at the time requested by White Marlin Open, that angler may be disqualified, at the discretion of the Tournament Directors.

5e. If an angler wishes to dispute an unfavorable polygraph result, the angler may have a second polygraph conducted within 10 days by a qualified polygraph examiner at the angler's expense. This polygraph must be administered by an examiner who is a member in good standing of the American Polygraph Association.

5f. The Tournament Directors will decide, based on the polygraph examination(s), whether the angler is eligible for the prize money. The decision of the Tournament Directors is final.

6. In the event of any dispute concerning prize money, White Marlin Open reserves the right to file an interpleader and/or declaratory judgment action in court, seeking the court's determination of the dispute.

7. In the event of any litigation regarding prize money, whether filed by White Marlin Open or by a Participant, White Marlin Open shall be entitled to its reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, to be paid out of the prize money in dispute. If the prize money in dispute is insufficient to pay White Marlin Open's reasonable attorneys' fees and costs, each Participant in the litigation shall be jointly and severally liable to pay White Marlin Open's reasonable attorneys' fees and cost. In no event shall White Marlin Open be liable to any person for any attorneys' fees or costs. In any litigation, the Court may order that any White Marlin Open attorneys' fees or costs paid out of the prize money be reimbursed by any Participant who has taken a position in litigation that is contrary to a final decision made by the Tournament Directors.

8. 90% of added entry fees are paid out unless otherwise noted.

H. Tournament Directors' Decisions Are Final.

1. Any Participant in violation of any Tournament Rule may be disqualified. By participating in the Tournament, all Participants acknowledge that all Tournament Rules are material and that disqualification is permitted and appropriate sanction for any violation of any Tournament Rule(s).

2. The White Marlin Open Rules have been established for the best interest of all concerned. In the event of necessity or extraordinary circumstances, any rule may be altered at the discretion of the Tournament Directors.

3. Decisions regarding the interpretation of Rules, violation of Rules, penalties, the suspension of any Rules or penalties, the alteration of any Rules, and the calculation of prize money will be made by the Tournament Directors in their sole and absolute discretion. All decisions by the Tournament Directors are final.

4. Any litigation relating to the tournament shall be filed and resolved (1) in the Circuit Court for Worcester County, Maryland, or (2) in the United States District Court for Maryland (if that court has jurisdiction). All disputes involving the tournament shall be governed by the laws of the State of Maryland, without regard to choice of law rules.

II. BILLFISH POINTS

Non cash prizes will be awarded to the top 5 anglers and top 5 boats for accumulation of billfish points during the tournament.

A. Points will be awarded for catches and releases for billfish as follows:

1. White Marlin

Release = 70 points

Boated = 1 point per pound (must meet 70 lb. and 67" minimum)

2. Blue Marlin

Release = 175 points

Boated = 1/3 point per pound (must meet 114" length minimum - no minimum weight. In order to be eligible for weighing, a blue marlin must meet the minimum length of 114". The winner will be determined by weight.)

3. Sailfish

Release = 70 points

Boated = 2 points per pound (must meet 30 lb. and 63" minimum)

4. Swordfish

Release = 70 points

Boated = 1 point per pound (must meet 80 lb. and 47" minimum)

5. Spearfish

Release = 70 points

Short Bill, Long Bill and Mediterranean Spearfish are not allowed to be boated. However, for the purpose of identification and prize money eligibility during the White Marlin Open, a hatchet marlin/round scale spearfish will be considered a white marlin, and are allowed to be boated.

B. A billfish will be considered released when the swivel touches the rod tip, when the mate grabs the leader material, or when the leader goes through the rod tip.

C. In case of a tie (i.e., 2 anglers with 2 white marlin released, each have 140 points) the anglers scoring the tying points earliest in the respective 1st, 2nd, or 3rd day of fishing is the winner, regardless of what day in the week the points were scored.

D. All fish must be accompanied by a signed catch report. Signed catch and release reports must be turned in to the scorer's table or a designated drop off area by 9:15 p.m. that day to be counted. **BOATS FISHING FROM AN INLET OTHER THAN OCEAN CITY, MD MAY FAX OR EMAIL CATCH REPORTS TO 410-289-4490 or contact@whitemarlinopen.com.** If emailing a catch report, a picture of the completed and signed official catch report must be included. Any catch report received after the 9:15 p.m. deadline will lose 1/2 of its total value.

E. All general tournament rules apply.

III. ADDED ENTRY LEVELS

Registration for the added entry levels will be held Saturday, August 4th and Sunday, August 5th from 12-5 p.m. at Harbour Island Marina. Each boat may be entered into as many skill levels as the anglers feel their capabilities allow.

Each skill level will be independent from the others.

Levels A, B, C & D:

30% Heaviest White Marlin	30% Heaviest Blue Marlin
12% 2 nd White Marlin	12% 2 nd Blue Marlin
8% 3 rd White Marlin	8% 3 rd Blue Marlin

Level E: Heaviest White Marlin Winner Take All

Level WM: Heaviest White Marlin Winner Take All

Level F: Heaviest Blue Marlin Winner Take All

Levels T1 & T2: Tuna

65% Heaviest Tuna
25% 2 nd Tuna
10% 3 rd Tuna

Level T3: & T4 Heaviest Tuna Winner Take All

Level R: Most Release Points by a Boat awarded as follows (no observer required):

55% First Place
30% Second Place
15% Third Place

Level M: Daily Meat Fish:

50% Heaviest Dolphin Daily
50% Heaviest Wahoo Daily

Level DT: Daily Tuna Heaviest Tuna Daily Winner Take All

Level SBW: Small Boat Heaviest White Marlin Winner Take All
Boats under 40' LOA (see rule A2a)

Level SBT: Small Boat Heaviest Tuna Winner Take All
Boats under 40' LOA (see rule A2a)

Level SBBF: Small Boat Big Fish – The heaviest qualifying white marlin, blue marlin, tuna, dolphin, wahoo OR shark winner take all
Boats under 40' LOA (see rule A2a)

Captain: Captain of boat that catches heaviest white marlin – winner take all

Mate: Mate of boat that catches heaviest white marlin – winner take all

Non-Billfish Doubler: The tournament will double the listed guaranteed prize money for all non-billfish categories. For example, the angler landing the 1st place Tuna would receive \$2000 for the guaranteed prize money plus a \$2000 bonus. Each winning fish will count for only one doubling bonus. If an angler lands the 1st and 2nd place Tuna and there is no 3rd place qualifying Tuna, that angler would receive \$2000, \$1500, and \$1000 from the guaranteed prize money plus a \$2000 and \$1500 bonus. There is no limit to the number of bonus categories an angler may win.

Tuna Bonus: \$10,000 bonus to the heaviest tuna entered in the Tuna Bonus.

Daily Billfish Points: There will be a daily cash award for the most billfish points accumulated by a boat each day. In the event that there is no daily billfish points winner on a given day, that day's prize money will be divided equally among the other daily winners.

To be eligible for prize money all fish must meet the minimum weights set by the tournament.

A, B, C, D Levels – If no third place qualifying white marlin is caught, that money will be split equally between the first and second place white marlin. If no second place qualifying white marlin is caught, that money will go to the first place white marlin. If no third place qualifying blue marlin is caught, that money will be split equally between the first and second place blue marlin. If no second place qualifying blue marlin is caught, that money will go to the first place blue marlin. If no minimum weight white marlin is caught, that money will go to the blue marlin winners. If no minimum weight blue marlin is caught, that money will go to the white marlin winners. In the event that there is no qualifying white or blue marlin caught, the prize money would go to the top three tuna at 50%, 30%, 20%.

E, WM, SBW Levels – If no minimum weight white marlin is caught, the prize money will go to the heaviest qualifying blue marlin. In the event that a qualifying white or blue marlin is not caught, the prize money will go to the first place qualifying fish in the following order: tuna, wahoo, dolphin, shark.

WM Level - In the event that no qualifying white marlin, blue marlin, tuna, dolphin, wahoo or shark is weighed in Level WM, 90% of the added entry fee for Level WM will be refunded to the boats that are entered in that level.

F Level - If no minimum weight blue marlin is caught, the prize money will go to the heaviest qualifying tuna. In the event that a qualifying tuna is not caught, the prize money will go to the first place qualifying fish in the following order: wahoo, dolphin, shark.

T1 & T2 Levels - If no minimum weight tuna is caught, the prize money will go to the heaviest qualifying fish in the following order: wahoo, dolphin, shark.

T3, T4 & SBT Levels – In the event that a qualifying Tuna is not caught, the prize money will go to the first place qualifying fish in the following order: wahoo, dolphin, shark.

M Level – In the event that there is no daily Meat Fish winner on a given day, that day's prize will be divided equally among the other daily winners for that particular species.

DT Level - In the event that there is no daily Tuna winner on a given day, that day's prize will be divided equally among the other daily winners.

*90% of all added entry level entry fees are paid out unless otherwise specified.

No added entry level fees will be accepted after August 5, 2018.

IV. GUARANTEED CASH PRIZES

The White Marlin Open furnishes \$50,000 in guaranteed prize money. Actual cash prizes are determined by guaranteed prize money amounts and added entry prize money amounts for the specific added entry levels in which a boat is entered. Minimum lengths and/or weights must be met for all species in order to be eligible for prize money. Guaranteed cash prizes are listed below.

Heaviest White Marlin	\$15,000
Captain's Award (Heaviest White Marlin)	\$1,500
Mate's Award (Heaviest White Marlin)	\$1,500
2nd Heaviest White Marlin	\$5,000
3rd Heaviest White Marlin	\$2,500
Heaviest Blue Marlin	\$3,000
2nd Heaviest Blue Marlin	\$2,000
3rd Heaviest Blue Marlin	\$1,500
Heaviest Tuna	\$2,000
2nd Heaviest Tuna	\$1,500
3rd Heaviest Tuna	\$1,000
Heaviest Wahoo	\$2,000
2nd Heaviest Wahoo	\$1,500
3rd Heaviest Wahoo	\$1,000
Heaviest Dolphin	\$2,000
2nd Heaviest Dolphin	\$1,500
3rd Heaviest Dolphin	\$1,000
Heaviest Shark	\$2,000
2nd Heaviest Shark	\$1,500
3rd Heaviest Shark	\$1,000