

Spring Point Drive, South Portland, Maine July 29 - August 4, 2023

Registration

Registration for returning vessels from the previous year will begin at 12:01 a.m. on January 1, 2023 and close January 14 at 11:59 p.m. Open registration will begin January 16 at 6:00 a.m. and continue until all available (80) slots have been filled. **No registration will be deemed complete until it has been paid in full.**

All participating captains vessels must be registered and paid in full to the Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza Tournament and have signed a Waiver of Damages by 7:00 pm on the evening of the Tournament. A representative (captain or crew member) from each registered vessel must be present and signed in prior to the Captain's Meeting held on Saturday, July 29. The vessel representative must be at least 18 years old.

Any vessel that is not registered and has not completed a Waiver of Damages prior to 7:00 p.m. at the Tournament Tent on that date will not be eligible to fish for the tournament year.

General Compliance

Tournament participants are responsible for obtaining and becoming familiar with tournament rules and all applicable State and Federal laws, rules and regulations. Tournament rules can be found on the tournament website at www.bluefinbonanza.org

All Tournament participants must be in full legal compliance with Maine Department of Marine Resources and NOAA/ National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regulations and must possess any and all state and federal licenses and permits required by these agencies.

All entrants must be properly licensed to fish in the Atlantic Tunas General Category or HMS Charter/Headboat Category with commercial endorsement under NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) regulations and must meet all U.S. Coast Guard requirements.

All vessels must also possess a Maine Landing Permit. Non Residents may purchase a Non-Resident Commercial Fishing Special Tuna Permit (Tournaments Only).
<https://www.maine.gov/dmr/commercial-fishing/index.html>

The Board of Directors of the Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza reserves the right to remove or disqualify any person from the tournament or tournament facilities with no monetary return for behavior or actions considered inappropriate, reckless, dangerous or a threat to public safety.

Location

There are no limitations on fishing area, except that tournament participants must fish in a location that allows fish to be landed at Spring Point Marina.

Weather

There is no weather committee. The decision to fish is that of the captains and participants, and is strictly at their own risk. Upon signing the Waiver of Damages, the Casco Bay Bluefin Bonanza Tournament cannot be held liable.

Fishing

Fishing may commence (lines in) Sunday, July 30 at 12:01 a.m. and will be suspended Monday, July 31 at 10:00 p.m. Fishing resumes on Wednesday, August 2 at 12:01 a.m. and will conclude (lines out) Thursday, August 3 at 10:00 p.m. (see note below).

All hookups should be reported or relayed to the Tournament Weighmaster Shawn Tibbetts (207) 502-0368, or other boats in the area as soon as possible when the fish is hooked. Tournament channel - 8.

Once fish is landed (subdued, tail-roped and is hanging from or lying on the deck), vessels MUST relay notification by radio or phone to the Tournament Weighmaster, or other boats in the area that the fish is in contention. Tournament channel - 8 - Shawn Tibbetts (207) 502-0368. Participants are also encouraged to take a digital photo of the fish with date and time stamp.

All participants are expected to operate in the spirit of cooperation and fair play. At the request of a boat fighting a fish, all others must stay clear.

General Category Rules apply with the following exceptions: a) no electric harpoons, b) no aerial reconnaissance allowed and c) all tuna are to be hooked, fought and brought to boat side only by manually operated rod and reel (hand line or conventional harpoon prohibited except cockpit harpoon may be used to land fish). Power driven reels or devices of any kind are prohibited, except when used as kite rods or as required by disabled anglers, with prior approval from the Tournament rules committee. This includes, but is not limited to motor, hydraulic or electrically driven devices. Fish may be fought from the rod holder or freestanding. Fish may be fought by multiple anglers.

All tuna must measure 73 inches curved fork length (CFL) or greater to be eligible for entry in this category. Please check updated regulations on the NMFS website:
<https://hmspermits.noaa.gov>

Regardless of the duration of a fishing trip (e.g., whether a vessel takes a two-day trip or makes two trips in one day), no more than a single day's daily retention limit may be possessed, retained or landed.

Note: During tournament week (July 29 - August 5) no vessel registered for and participating in the tournament may have tuna lines in the water outside of designated fishing hours. This includes vessels with a Charter/Headboat permit with commercial endorsement.

Weigh-in

Tournament Weighmasters are available only during open scale hours. Weighmasters will NOT be available outside of these hours.

Tournament scales will be open from 8:00 a.m. - 10:00 p.m. on each fishing day. close. All vessels with fish to be weighed should be tied to the scales dock, but must be inside the NO WAKE buoy at Spring Point Marina (rafting is acceptable) by 10 p.m.

Any vessel with a fish to be weighed that is not inside the NO WAKE buoy at Spring Point Marina or tied or rafted to the scales dock by 10:00 p.m. will not be accepted (Committee discretion).

All eligible fish must be weighed at Spring Point Marina and must be delivered on the tournament registered vessel upon which it was boated; they may not be landed and delivered by vehicle. Per NOAA/NMFS regulations, transfer of fish between vessels is prohibited.

In order to be eligible, heads and tails must be left on prior to weighing.

Fish will be weighed by the tail using a tail rope provided by the Tournament. Participants are advised to bring innards and gill plates. They will be weighed separately and included in the final weight, if detached.

Please cooperate with the Weighmaster in filling out and returning your weigh-in slips. Please do not leave the weigh stand until your slip is filled in and signed.

By signing the weight slip, you acknowledge that you have accepted the weight of your fish as final and correct. In the event of a tie in weight, any prize due will be awarded to the first fish weighed by the official Tournament scales.

All tuna are subject to examination by the Tournament Rules Committee.

Any fish found to have bullet wounds or any unnatural damage will be disqualified (This does not include gaff and/or harpoon marks).

Disposal of fish and/or fish parts is the sole responsibility of the angler after the Weighmaster releases the fish. DO NOT dump fish entrails and/or heads at the marina. In most cases innards and head will be retained by weighmaster and given to researchers for research purposes and then become their responsibility for disposal.

Once released by the weighmaster, participants are solely responsible for the disposition of their fish. They may sell their catch dockside to the local buyer of their choice, if present.

Vessels participating in the tournament that elect to land their fish at another location are still required to report their landing to the tournament weighmaster, per NOAA Fisheries regulations.

Note: When traveling in Portland Harbor, the Tournament committee requests that all vessels observe State of Maine rules and regulations. Please obey 'No Wake Zones' and be mindful of lobster traps when traveling the inner and outer harbor waters. All vessels are required to contact the weighmasters via phone or radio prior to entering scales.

Issues/Conflicts

All fish weighed in for prize eligibility must be caught from a boat registered in this tournament by 7:00 p.m. on the eve of the tournament. In the event of mechanical failure, PRIOR to that time and date, Captain and Crew may request that they fish an alternative boat. Any such changes MUST be approved by the Tournament Rules Committee.

A person or vessel is ineligible to obtain or possess any type of award or certification associated with this tournament unless the fish submitted for consideration is caught legally and under compliance of tournament rules and State and Federal laws.

In the event that one or more rule provisions appear to be in conflict, the most restrictive rule applies and is to be determined by the Tournament Rules Committee.

All landed fish are subject to examination by the Tournament Rules Committee and/or Weighmaster.

The Tournament Rules Committee has final and sole authority to resolve questions and/or issues that arise. All committee decisions are final. Protests must be in writing and submitted by the close of scales on Thursday, August 3, 2023.

Withdrawals

If a registered vessel/captain wishes to withdraw from the tournament they may do so up to 7 days before the Captain's Meeting. They will have the option of forwarding their registration fee for one year or requesting a partial refund. Any withdrawals after that date will sacrifice their registration fee.

Closure

If, at any time during the Tournament, NOAA/NMFS declares that the quota is filled and fishing must cease, or applies additional restricted fishing days, the tournament will be concluded and awards presented. In the event of an early conclusion, please direct all questions/concerns to the Rules Committee.

In the event that market conditions discourage dealers from purchasing fish but the fishery remains open, the tournament will continue and participants may fish at their discretion.

Protests/Grievances - Protests shall be called to the attention of the Rules Committee via radio, by contacting the telephone numbers provided, or in person upon arrival at the dock. Protests must be written in detail and turned into the Rules Committee by 8:30 p.m. the day of the incident . All decisions made by the Rules Committee are final.

Awards

Prize distribution will be awarded for tournament year 2023 as follows: 1st Place: \$25,000 plus trophy for (1) year; 2nd Place: \$12,500; 3rd Place: \$6,000; 4th Place: \$3,000; 5th Place: \$1,500; Highest Cumulative Weight: \$1,000. Largest Fish Landed Each Day: \$1,000. In the event that all 80 entry slots are not filled, prize money will be reduced proportionately. In the event of NO FISH, all prize money will be added to the 2024 Tournament. If only one (1) fish is landed, \$25,000 and trophy for (1) year will be awarded. If less than five (5) fish are caught, all prize winnings will be awarded proportionately.