2023 CFOA 37th Annual Offshore Fishing Tournament Rules 3/23/2023

1. **Tournament:** This is a one-day tournament to be held on Saturday May 20, 2023. In case of unfishable weather as determined by the Tournament Director, the tournament make up day will be Sunday May 21, 2023 or, on a later date to be determined by the Tournament Director.

2. **Fishing Regulations: All fish must be caught on hook and line and in accordance with applicable Florida and Federal recreational rules and regulations.** From the time that a fish strikes or takes a bait or lure, the angler must hook, fight, and bring the fish to the boat without the aid of any other person. A foul hooked fish may not be weighed in the tournament. Electric or power driven reels are not permitted. (Power downriggers are permitted). Stinger rigs are allowed. All gaffs must be equipped with a single hook and be no longer than 8 feet. Flying gaffs or detachable head gaffs are not allowed. Harpoon or lance attachments are prohibited.

3. **Entry Fee: Entry fee is $175, and to be eligible the signed and completed entry form and entry fee must be received at the captain's party or from the online system.**

4. **Captains meeting:** Attendance at the Captains meeting is optional for Boats that were registered and paid online. All boats must always display their assigned Boat Number (registration ID card) during the tournament. Captains meeting is highly recommended to review critical issues and any last minute changes.

5. **Time:** The tournament shall commence at 6 a.m. on the tournament day and no lines (including sabiki) shall be in the water prior to that time. **All boats weighing fish must check in via radio (Channel 71) and be in visual site of the Portside Marine tournament boat or dock-master by 5 p.m. on the day of the tournament**. **No Exceptions! Tournament Boat will be anchored near the east side entrance of Port Canaveral.**

6. **Tournament limits:** Boats may leave from Port Canaveral, Ponce Inlet or Sebastian Inlet but must return to Port Canaveral by water on the day of the tournament and **must fish west of longitude 79 45' West, south of Ponce Inlet and north of Sebastian Inlet**.

7. **Weigh in:** Weigh in will commence at 3 p.m. **All eligible fish must be brought by water to the Academy Sports+Outdoors weigh in station at the Bluepoints Marina dock in the boat upon which it was caught**. A boat may only receive one prize in each of the categories. **A fish may be weighed in only 1 division and the angler must declare which division (Species, Ladies, Juniors or CFOA) at the time the fish is offloaded from the boat (prior to weighing) and may not be changed thereafter.** All fish weighed must be legally caught under tournament, state and /or federal rules. All fish must be weighed by the CFOA Tournament Weighmaster and all decisions by the Tournament Weighmaster are final. In the event of fish being weighed of equal weight, the tie shall be broken by the first weighed fish. In the event of a scale failure, the backup scale will become the official scale for the remainder of the Tournament. All weights shall be considered official once recorded regardless of scale used. ALL HOOKS and TACKLE MUST BE REMOVED PRIOR TO WEIGH IN. FISH WITH VISABLE FISH HOOKS or TACKLE WILL NOT BE WEIGHED UNTIL HOOKS or TACKLE ARE REMOVED!

8. **Eligible Species:** Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper **(Only Red, Gray/Gag, or Black),** Cobia, Kingfish. (Fish may be substituted if changes in Federal or State laws make a species not eligible.)

9. **Largest Fish Prize:** There shall be a prize awarded for the largest Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Kingfish or Cobia species weighed of $2,500.00. The winning fish must comply with all other tournament rules and the winning fish will not also be eligible for a Species, Ladies or junior prize.

10. **Species Division:** The prizes are 1st place $1,000.00; 2nd place $500.00; 3rd place $250.00 in each of the Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Cobia, and Kingfish species.

11. **Ladies Division:** The female angler (17 or older as of May 20th, 2023) that catches the largest eligible Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Cobia, and Kingfish by weight shall be awarded a prize of $500 for first and $250 for 2nd.

12. **Juniors Division:** The anglers who are 16 years old or less on May 20th, 2023 that catches the largest eligible Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Cobia, and Kingfish by weight shall be awarded a prize of $500 for first and $250 for 2nd.

13. **General Calcutta:** A Calcutta is available for an additional $100.00 registration fee for the heaviest Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Cobia, and Kingfish weighed in the tournament. 90% of the money taken in shall be awarded to the boat weighing the heaviest fish in the tournament. 10% of the money shall be kept as a donation to the CFOA.

14. **Donkey Tail Awards**: A prize award for the largest Amberjack by weight shall be awarded a prize of $500.

15. **CFOA Member Award**: The CFOA member as of May 10th, 2023 that catches the largest eligible Dolphin, Wahoo, Grouper, Cobia, or Kingfish by weight shall be awarded an additional prize of $500 for 1st and $250 for 2nd.

16. **Testing:** The tournament reserves the right to test any fish for freshness by any and all appropriate means and to administer a polygraph test to any angler and/or boat captain. **All boats shall maintain continuous track logs on their GPS throughout the tournament and until after all protests have been settled and must allow inspection upon request by the tournament committee. Anyone refusing such tests shall be disqualified. An operational GPS with track log capabilities is required equipment to be eligible in the CFOA 2023 Tournament.**

17. **Protests:** All protests must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director with a $500 cash deposit prior to 5:30 p.m. on the date of the tournament. If the protest is not upheld, the cash deposit will be forfeited to CFOA. All decisions of the Tournament Director are final.

18. **Awards Ceremony:** Shall commence after the weigh in has concluded and all eligible fish have been weighed. All prizes will be awarded at the awards ceremony. In order to receive the prize the angler and Captain should be present to accept the award. By accepting the award, the angler and captain agree to allow CFOA to use of their names and images.

19. **Safety:** All boat captains and anglers are responsible for their own safety and it is the responsibility of the boat captain and crew to ensure the boat is properly equipped and that it is operated within the limits of the boat and the skill and seamanship of its captain and crew. Each boat is responsible for making the determination as to whether the boat and crew can safely operate on the day of the tournament and in the sea conditions of the tournament. **All boats must monitor channels 16 & 71 throughout the tournament.** In the event of an emergency, the assisting boat may contact the Tournament and receive a waiver PRIOR to rendering assistance.

20.. **Release: The owner, captain and/or crew of each boat understands and agrees that CFOA,** CFOA Marine Foundation, **Bluepoints Marina, Fish Lips and any of their volunteers or employees shall not be held liable or responsible in any way for any injury, death or other damages to the crew, equipment or the boat that may occur because of participation in this tournament.** This shall include any damage or injury which is the result of the negligence of any person(s) affiliated with CFOA, CFOA Marine Foundation, Bluepoints Marina or Fish Lips. The owner, captain and/or crew intend to fully exempt, release and hold harmless CFOA, CFOA Marine Foundation, Bluepoints Marina, Fish Lips and all of their volunteers and employees from any and all liability or responsibility for any injury and/or damage. All boat captains by signing the registration form acknowledges that he or she understands and agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the CFOA, CFOA Marine Foundation, Fish Lips and/or Bluepoints Marina, staff and/or volunteers from any and all damage or claims brought regarding the tournament. The tournament shall include the captains' party and tournament.

21. **General:** The Tournament Committee reserves the right to amend the rules at any time as it deems necessary. We reserve the right to deny entry to any team or participant, regardless of acceptance of entry form or payment, refund of fee will be made. All participants agree that all decisions of the Tournament Director are final and hereby agree to waive all rights to any further interpretation and/or litigation. Venue for all claims and disputes shall be solely in Orange County, Florida.