

FISHING TOURNAMENT**OFFICIAL RULES**

Alcoholic Beverages: Captains and anglers participating in The Hogan Law Firm Charity Fishing Tournament (“Tournament”) are responsible for complying with Hernando County, State of Florida and United States laws and regulations concerning the concurrent operation of watercraft and the consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages. Captains and anglers are individually responsible for familiarizing themselves with all applicable alcoholic beverage laws prior to the tournament and complying accordingly.

Amendments: The statement and rules contained herein may be modified or amended by additional verbal instruction and/or printed matter distributed by the Tournament Committee before the official start time.

Awards: Unofficial awards will be announced at the dinner following the Tournament. Official awards will be made after the end of the Protest Period. Cash and merchandise will be awarded to category winners. All winners must be present at the awards presentation to receive their awards. Exceptions due to hardship will be made at the sole and absolute discretion of the Tournament Committee. If an exception is granted, it will be the sole responsibility of the winner to arrange for pickup of all merchandise and/or awards at their own expense within 30 days after the awards presentation. Awards are based on 40 anglers (subject to change if less than 40 anglers). Awards will not increase if there are more than 75 anglers. Winners may be subject to on-site polygraph examination.

Coast Guard Compliance: All entrants are responsible for maintaining their boats in a manner consistent with all U.S. Coast Guard and Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission regulations, as well as any other local, state or federal regulations that may apply.

Check-in and Check-out: Check-in and Check-out are mandatory for all captains and anglers. Anyone late to check-out will be disqualified from the tournament, and will not be eligible for any Tournament awards.

Disqualification: If any boats come together or if anything is passed between boats, or between a boat and any dock(s), for any reason after the official start of the day’s fishing and before each boat has measured-in, then such boats shall be disqualified. However, as safety is a primary concern to the operation of the Tournament, exceptions to this rule may be granted by the Tournament Committee in the event of an emergency. Any angler found to be in violation of any tournament rules and regulations may be subject to disqualification from the tournament. Any decision to disqualify any Tournament participant(s) shall be made at the sole and absolute discretion of the Tournament Committee. All decisions of the Tournament Committee shall be considered final.

Entrants: The Tournament Committee has the right to refuse any entry. Each person must be a paid entrant of the official Tournament and abide by all Tournament rules and regulations.

Fish: As of the date of the Captain’s Dinner preceding the Tournament, eligible fish will include, if in season, and of sufficient legal size: grouper (red or gag), mangrove snapper, red snapper, black drum, black sea bass, pompano, spotted seatrout, tripletail, cobia, mackerel, kingfish, redfish, snook, and sheepshead. Prior to the Tournament, captains and anglers are individually responsible for reviewing state and federal guidelines concerning which species are in season and what size and number of fish of a given species may be legally retained, as the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission routinely changes applicable regulations.

Fishing Rules: The Tournament will be fished in accordance with the Department of Natural Resources rules for size and catch limits for the State of Florida. All fish must be caught and measured-in on the date of and during the official times listed for the Tournament. All tournament fish must be caught on rod and reel. No hand lines or electric reels may be used. Any state law or United States federal law that conflicts with these rules shall override these rules, and all anglers are responsible for knowing and abiding by state laws and United States federal laws governing fishing in this tournament. Any illegal fish brought to the Measure-in Station will disqualify the boat and all of its anglers from the Tournament. Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) Officers may be present on the water and at the measure-in for the Tournament. In addition to disqualification, an illegal fish may result in a citation being issued to an entrant by FWC.

Licenses: All Anglers must possess a valid Florida Salt Water Fishing License.

Prizes: Cash prizes will be awarded as follows: Fifty-percent (50%) of net angler registration fees will be awarded as prizes to the winning teams (Award Proceeds). First place team receives 60% of Award Proceeds and a plaque, second place team receives 30% of Award Proceeds and a plaque, and the third place team receives 10% of Award Proceeds and a plaque.

Protests: All protests concerning any alleged rule violations must be filed in writing with the Tournament Committee on the day of the Tournament, not later than sixty (60) minutes after the winner is announced. A \$200 cash deposit, refundable only if the protest is upheld, must accompany the written protest. In reviewing a protest, the Tournament Committee will consider all factors, including, but not limited to the nature of the infraction, as well as whether the infraction gave an unfair advantage to any team or angler. Decisions on protests will be made at the sole and absolute discretion of the Tournament Committee, whose decision shall be considered final. If the protest is not upheld, then any protest deposit shall be forfeited by the protestor(s) to the Tournament.

Refunds: No refunds will be given or substitutions allowed.

Release of Liability: It is expressly understood that all participants in the Hogan Law Firm Charity Fishing Tournament have entered this event at their own discretion and solely at their own risk. The Hogan Law Firm, Tournament Officials, committee members, sponsors, donors and all persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of the Tournament shall be exempt from any liability for libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury or death suffered to any participant, vessel-owner, captain, entrant, sports-fisherman, their companions, boat captains, crew members, vessels and equipment which may occur during this Tournament. All anglers, participants and captains will fish and/or operate their vessels solely at their own risk.

Safety: All boats must be equipped with some type of emergency ignition cut-off device (kill switch) on any remote steered outboard while main engine is in use. Ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must be attached to boat operator at all times while main engine is in use. Kill switch must operate properly. When the kill switch is activated, the outboard main engine must stop running immediately. However, kill switches are not required on boats with hand operated engines unless equipped with one when manufactured or on airboats. Boat captain/operator must show proof of registration upon request. US Coast Guard approved life jackets are required for each person in boat. Life jackets must be worn and fastened in accordance with US Coast Guard regulations. No boat shall have a motor of higher horsepower than the maximum horsepower approved by the US Coast Guard. Any captain/operator found to be in violation of any US Coast Guard tournament rules and regulations may subject the boat and all of its anglers to disqualification from the tournament. Any decision to disqualify any boat or Tournament participant(s) shall be made at the sole and absolute discretion of the Tournament Committee. All decisions of the Tournament Committee shall be considered final.

Scoring: Only fish measured-in and presented by the Angler or a representative of the team that caught the fish will be officially entered in the tournament. Scores are tallied for each boat; not individual anglers. A boat's score is calculated by adding the total inches (in length) of legal fish caught and dividing that sum by the number of anglers in the boat. Tournament prizes will be awarded by highest average inches. All entries must be "measured-in" at the designated measure-in location. A boat captained by a "guide" (an individual who routinely charges individuals for fishing trips, with or without a captain's license) shall be handicapped in that the "guide" will not be permitted to fish, and will be counted as an angler when computing the final score. For example: if you have two (2) anglers and a "guide" with a total of 30 inches, the same will be divided by three (3) which would result in a score of 10 inches. Use of a guide shall not increase any bag limits of any legal fish.

Sportsmanship: All anglers will exercise good and courteous sportsmanship and conservation whether at the dock, underway or fishing. Anglers shall be attentive to litter and should make every effort to maintain their trash in their boat and dispose of it properly. Violators will be subject to disqualification at the sole discretion of the Tournament Committee without refund.

Tackle and Equipment: All fish must be caught by casting and anglers may use artificial or live bait. Each angler may use only one rod at any one time. Other rods may be in the boat for substitute purposes. Bank fishing is not permissible. No electronic tracking devices (implanted microchips) may be used to locate fish for tournament purposes. Depth finders and graph charts are the only exception.

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Ties: All boats will be assigned a tournament number. This number will be recorded on the measure-in slip. In the event of a tie, the boat with the largest legal fish of any species shall be declared the winner. The loser shall assume the next lower position in the category.

Tournament Schedule: This year's Tournament will take place on Saturday, May 06, 2017 from 8:00 a.m. ("Cast-Off") to 3:00 p.m. ("Measure-In")

Weather Conditions: The Tournament Committee reserves the right to terminate the Tournament due to inclement weather or unsafe conditions at sea. If the Tournament is cancelled due to inclement weather or sea conditions, the event will not be rescheduled or postponed to a future date. Angler entry fees are not refundable. Regardless of the Tournament Committee's decision, it is the individual Captain's responsibility to determine the suitability of his/her craft for the conditions.