

## 2023 XXXX NT Billfish Classic Rules

### Tournament sanctioning requirements

All competitors must be a **current** member of the Darwin Game Fishing Club, as well as an affiliate member with the NTGFA or GFAA.

The tournament is based on GFAA rules and the decisions of the Darwin Game Fishing Club committee in relation to the tournament rules and/or disputes arising during the tournament.

### Categories

The tournament will include separate Billfish and Pelagics categories. Points awarded in the Pelagic category do not qualify for points towards the Billfish category. Likewise, points awarded in the Billfish category do not qualify for points towards the Pelagics category.

### Briefing/Calcutta night Monday 6 November 2023

Briefing commences 6.00 pm. Venue: Darwin Trailer Boat Club

The briefing is compulsory for at least one member from each team to attend.

Teams are required to provide satellite phone numbers to the tournament coordinators no later than the Briefing night. A photo of each competing boat is to be supplied to the DGFC by the briefing night.

### Competition fishing dates and times

#### Thursday 9 - Saturday 11 November 2023

Teams must contact Billfish base station by 9.00am **every day** by satellite phone and provide the following information:

- (a) Boat number
- (b) Number of persons on boat
- (c) Amount of fuel on board
- (d) Which area on the map you intend fishing
- (e) Intention of returning to Darwin each night and/or remaining at remote anchorage and intended general location of remote anchorage eg Cape Fourcroy, etc.

<b>Monday 6 November</b>	<b>Briefing</b>	<b>6.00pm</b>	<b>Darwin Trailer Boat Club</b>	
<b>Thursday 9 November</b>	<b>Lines in</b>	<b>7.00 am</b>	<b>Lines out</b>	<b>5.00 pm</b>
<b>Friday 10 November</b>	<b>Lines in</b>	<b>7.00 am</b>	<b>Lines out</b>	<b>5.00 pm</b>
<b>Saturday 11 November</b>	<b>Lines in</b>	<b>7.00 am</b>	<b>Lines out</b>	<b>5.00 pm</b>
<b>Saturday 18 November</b>	<b>Presentation night at Silks</b>			

Updated 20/9/23

### Team requirements

All teams require a minimum of two anglers and a maximum of four anglers. Any other persons aboard the vessel are only permitted to assist with driving the vessel, setting up of fishing equipment entering the water, retrieval of fishing gear or equipment from the water and rigging baits and rigging tackle. They are not permitted to be involved in the capture or tagging of a fish. Crew changes must be notified to Billfish base at the start of each day.

### Tackle, equipment & rules

Line is limited to IGFA rated monofilament either as a full spool or a top shot only.

The top shot must be a minimum of 5m directly preceding the double, leader & hook. This section must be comprised of a single homogenous piece of line.

Line class 10 kg minimum

Line class 60 kg maximum

Multifilament style lines (Dacron or Braided style lines) must have a monofilament top shot rigged. Direct connection to a leader by multifilament line will see the catch disqualified.

### Point scoring for Billfish

Point scoring will be as follows:

	10kg line	15kg line	24 kg+ line
All Sailfish and Marlin <1200mm LJFL	750 points	725 points	700 points
Marlin 1200mm and over LJFL	1500 points	1450 points	1400 points
Marlin 2000mm and over	2000 points	1750 points	1600 points

**All Sailfish and Marlin must be tagged and photographed to qualify for points.**

*\*Note - NSW Billfish tags to be used*

Record details of billfish species, time and date on score sheets provided.

No billfish will be weighed at the gantry, any fish returned to be weighed at the gantry will not be eligible for any points and/or any prize categories.

Any billfish not tagged and/or not released, will be ineligible for tag points or prize categories.

Tagged billfish are not required to equal line class.

All tackle and equipment must conform to the GFAA rules, the Committee reserve the right to inspect and adjudicate on any tackle or equipment used to capture fish during the tournament.

Updated 20/9/23

**Due to the Lack of Radio Coverage, Radio schedules will not take place, but boats are encouraged to maintain radio coverage with each other.**

When a billfish is tagged, the tag time is to be recorded and radioed in as soon as possible to Billfish base at mobile number **0402 301533**.

Relaying of information to another competition vessel is acceptable under the condition that the relay vessel forwards the information to Billfish base via satellite phone. **\*\*Note-The onus is on the vessel that hooks and tags a Billfish to ensure their information is received by Billfish base each day.**

#### **Tie-breaker rules**

In the unlikely event that there is a tie, then the team first to record their total number of points will be declared the winner.

All billfish tagged and submitted for points **must** be accompanied by a photograph/video of the fish, preferably once the tag is inserted in the billfish. The photo/video may be used by the Committee to verify the estimated weight of the billfish tagged if required.

**It is strongly recommended that fish are not removed from the water, due to the potential for injury to anglers. The tape provided in your kit box must be fastened on your tag pole and must be visible in all photos/videos taken of your billfish.**

#### **Tag submission requirements**

Teams must return Billfish tag cards and photos to the Darwin Trailer Boat Club between 5.00pm – 7.00pm on Monday 13 November 2023.

Failure to do so will result in the submissions being disqualified.

- a) All fish tags or score sheets submitted for points or prize categories must be completed in full and in a legible manner.
- b) Any late submissions will be disqualified unless there is a valid reason which Darwin Game Fishing Club reserve the right to accept or reject, no further discussion will be entered into.

#### **Billfish tags**

Marlin and Sailfish will be tagged with the NSW Bill fish tags.

#### **Tagging**

Anglers will tag all billfish in a manner that minimises damage to the fish being tagged, the recommended area to tag fish is in the shoulder area just below the dorsal fin.

## Point scoring for Pelagics

Point scoring will be as follows:

	Up to 1 metre	Over 1 metre
Mackeral	100 points	150 points
Tuna/Trevally/Queenfish	50 pints	100 points

**All Pelagic fish must be photographed/videoed with the leader and fish visible to qualify for points.**

**Pelagic fish will be classed as caught once the leader is touched.** This method allows for easy release of the fish by cutting the leader as close to the fish as possible. Fish may also be kept by the team, abiding by NT bag limits.

**Whilst there is no maximum number of fish that can be caught and be eligible for point, all teams must abide by the General Possession Limits listed below:**

Spanish Mackeral per person - limit of 2  
Queensfish per person - limit of 5  
Tuna per person - limit of 5

Teams can continue to amass points for captures once the limit for a particular species is reached, however any fish above the limit for the specified species must be removed from the vessel to ensure that compliance with the NT General Possession Limits is maintained.

### **Boating and safety requirements**

All boats must be in a seaworthy condition and must be compliant with Northern Territory Maritime Act requirements for the areas the boat is located. All competition boats must have a working VHF radio.

**Please note that all teams must have a satellite phone on board.**

All Skippers are expected to assess prevailing weather conditions to ensure they do not expose their team or vessel to any foreseen safety concerns. Should a Strong Wind Warning (25 knots) be declared, teams must cease fishing until further advised.

All Skippers are expected to maintain a safe distance from other boats who are hooked up to a Billfish during the tournament to avoid any accidental cut offs of hooked Billfish.

### **Pre lines in**

Lines in is not permitted until 0700 hours on each day. Teasers, bait jigs are permitted to be in the water prior to lines in each competition day.

No fishing equipment intended to be used to capture Billfish can enter the water before lines in at 0700 hours each day.

Updated 20/9/23

## **Reef Fish Protection Areas**

A network of temporary reef fish protection areas was implemented in 2015, and there is no recreational fishing of any form permitted within these areas. A fact sheet with the coordinates of these protected areas will be provided in your kits and teams must abide by the restrictions.

## **Score board updates & weather updates**

Billfish base will update the scoreboard on a daily basis and will be posted to the Darwin Game Fishing Club Facebook page. Results will be made known to teams when they call in each morning.

Billfish base will provide a general weather prediction for Darwin waters each morning, however the onus is on the Skipper of each team to assess the prevailing weather conditions or other circumstances in relation to the safety of their crew and vessel.

All scoreboard information will be subject to change until such time the tags are issued to Billfish base and the photographic evidence issued by competition teams is verified by Billfish base as correct in relation to tagged Billfish during the tournament.

The Darwin Game Fishing Club reserves the right to cancel a competition day or days at any time, if, in their opinion, the prevailing weather conditions or other circumstances make boating unsafe.

## **Failure to Adhere to Competition Rules**

The Darwin Game Fishing Club aims to run its competitions to the highest standards. The rules listed in this document are to be followed by all teams/competitors. If teams have failed to follow the listed rules after signing the registration form accepting these rules the team and/or angler will be subject to penalties.

The following actions will see teams disqualified from the competition:

- Failure to attend the briefing night/sign the registration form
- Intentionally cheating from the team to secure a result to their benefit
- Bringing the club into disrepute during the competition window
- Any actions of the team that result in prosecution by NT Police or Government authorities

The following actions will see the points scored for the day disqualified:

- Fishing prior to lines in or lines out with the intention to catch Billfish/Pelagics
- Failing to fish within the ethics of game fishing (see GFAA Angling Rules)
- Passing of tackle from one angler to another during a fight of a fish
- Failure to log on in the morning and log off in the evening with Billfish Base
- Fishing within areas deemed out of bounds (Native Title, Reef Fish Protection etc.)

Updated 20/9/23

The following actions will see the points scored for the individual fish disqualified:

- Failure to complete the tag card correctly
- Failure to provide suitable video/photo evidence of fish being tagged
- Failure to provide any tackle associated with the capture if asked to present by DGFC committee/weighmaster

Teams will have a right of reply to sanctions, evidence by the way of video or photo will need to be provided to prove allegations and here say will not be used as evidence in the event a breach of rules is presented to the committee.

### **Right of Protest**

The committee of the Billfish Classic and DGFC will accept protest submissions from teams during and after the competition. Teams will need to lodge the protest verbally at first to Billfish Base if during the competition and then formally via written submission with accompanying evidence as soon as possible to allow the committee time to consider the protest, seek a response from the affected angler or team, decide and amend any results if needed.

Protesting teams will need to lodge a \$200 protest fee with the committee. If the protest is upheld the team will get its fee returned to them. Details of the protesting team will not be divulged to the team in question. Teams under protest do have a right of reply and further evidence will need to be presented as counter evidence where possible.

The decision of the committee once the protest is heard and the right of reply to the team in question has been heard will be final and no further investigation or action will be entered into once this decision is handed down.

### **Prizes Awarded:**

- Champion Billfish team
- 2<sup>nd</sup> Place Billfish team
- 3<sup>rd</sup> Place Billfish team
- 4<sup>th</sup> Place Billfish team
- Champion Pelagic team
- Champion Billfish angler
- Champion Junior Billfish angler (juniors are defined as under 16 as at 11 November 2023)
- Most Meritorious Capture
- First Billfish tagged on each day

Updated 20/9/23

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