



2nd Annual Ocracoke Red Drum Shootout Tournament Rules and Regulations

September 19-20, 2025

**edited 8/5/25*

Early registration and entry fee of \$150, must be received no later than August 30th. After this date, entry fee will be \$200 per boat. On-Site registration opens Friday, September 19th at 5:00 pm- 8:00 pm Saturday, September 20th at 9:00 am and closes at 11:30 am.

Fishing Hours are from 3:30 pm to 7:30 pm, September 20th. Level 1 is the only required level. All registration and entry fees are non-refundable.

1. **HAVE FUN-** The primary intent of this tournament is for family and friends, both new and old, to come together for fishing fun, as we work to raise money for our local community. The Ocracoke Red Drum Shootout (ORDS) is a nonprofit group, operating under the umbrella of the Ocracoke Heritage Initiative, a 501c3 Non-Profit (application pending). All 2025 revenues will benefit the Ocracoke Working Watermen's Association (OWWA) and potential other heritage and cultural needs in the Ocracoke community. Please be responsible, safe, and have a good time!
2. **REGISTRATION** - All boats must be registered with the ORDS Tournament and all entry fees paid in order to qualify for prizes. An alternate boat may be substituted for pre-registered entrants who suffer a break-down. Substituted vessels must be updated and approved by the ORDS Tournament prior to lines in. Registration is available through a link on our website (www.ocracokereddrum.com) and again in person the weekend of the event at the registration desk located within the Berkley Barn. The tournament reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to deny entry to anyone for any reason.
3. **RULES MEETING** – The Captains' meeting will be held on Saturday September 20th at 12:30 pm in front of the main stage, located in the Berkley Barn. At **least** one person from each vessel is **required** to attend the Captains' Meeting for the Ocracoke Red Drum Shootout Tournament. The ORDS 2nd Annual Token, required to be displayed in all photographs to qualify for prizes, and the official 2025 ORDS ruler, one each per boat, will be given out at the Captain's Meeting. All participants in the tournament are responsible for knowing all tournament rules, including any changes to the rules that may take place at the Captains' Meeting.
4. **ROD & REEL RULES** - This is a rod and reel, hook and line tournament. For fish to qualify, it must be landed through the use of a rod and reel from an ORDS Tournament registered boat. The following practices are illegal in the ORDS: a) use of handline or rope attached to the line or leader; b) shooting, harpooning, lancing, or gaffing; c) the transfer of any fish from one boat to another, or from one angler to another. If the fish is



being submitted for Youth or Lady Angler categories, this angler must fight the fish to the boat. Assistance bringing fish into the boat for measurement and documentation is permissible.

5. **BOUNDARIES** – All boats fishing in the ORDS Tournament may fish wherever they please, but we encourage you to remain within the general vicinity of Ocracoke Island and surrounding North Carolina waters. All fish must be caught in North Carolina waters.
6. **FISHING TIME – Lines in from 3:30 pm until 7:30 pm!** No lines or chum are permitted in the water before lines in. The official start of the tournament will begin at 3:30 pm and will be announced over VHF Channel 71. Official times will be determined by cell phone clock and the REEL TIME app. Lines out at 7:30 pm unless you are hooked up with a fish. **You must radio or call the tournament BY 7:30 pm to inform us you have a fish on. You then have until 8:00 pm SHARP to land AND submit your fish. Fish submitted after 8:00 pm will not be eligible.**
7. **REPORTING** – All qualifying Red Drum releases submitted for potential prizes must be reported to the ORDS Tournament app (Fish On app), or if unable to do so, submitted via cell phone (sent by text message) showing when the fish is landed and proper documentation. Please follow all directions for photographing your catch. The VHF Radio frequency shall be CHANNEL 71. Red Drum hooked prior to or after fishing hours are not eligible for prizes.
8. **DISQUALIFICATION** - Any boat will be disqualified from the tournament if the boat, captain, and/or crew violates any rules of the tournament unless otherwise specified in these rules, or if utilizing a single Red Drum in an attempt to falsify multiple releases, or transferring a fish to youth and or lady categories, or transferring a fish or its angler to another boat for any reason.
9. **Tournament Levels:**
 - a. **Level 1 – General - \$150** This level is required for general entry into the ORDS Tournament and will be your registration fee. After August 30th, 2025, the Level 1 Entry Fee is \$200. Red Drum must be legally boated without harming the fish, measured with the provided 2025 ORDS Ruler, photographed with the 2025 ORDS Token visible, and subsequently released. Winners will be determined by reviewing qualifying photos of the longest red drum measured from tip of nose to *fork* (see rule #11 for definition) of the tail. Please see the “Measurement Guide” provided at the Registration Desk and reviewed during Captains’ Meeting to ensure you properly measure your catch per the rules contained herein. Improperly measured fish, or photographs that do not follow the guidelines, will not be eligible for the leaderboard and / or any associated prizes. ORDS Tournament will keep 100% of Level 1 entry fees. No prize money shall be paid out for this level. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place teams.



- i. **Lady Angler-** Included with General Entry Fee- Only 1 prize for longest fish will be awarded in this sub category
 - ii. **Youth 12 and Under-** Included with General Entry Fee- Only 1 prize for longest fish will be awarded in this sub category
 - iii. **Note-** An angler may win both a General overall 1st, 2nd, or 3rd place prize and the sub category of Lady or Youth Angler, if the documented fish and angler meets all requirements.
 - b. **Level 2 – Most Releases Calcutta - \$100** Entry into this level requires that you must first enter Level 1. All Red Drum releases must be boated and measured with the provided 2025 ORDS Ruler and 2025 ORDS Token visible in photos to qualify for prizes. Each fish in this category must be a minimum of 27” (with fish shown measured in photos with the official ruler) and all fish should be released without harm. Level 2 pays 1st (50%), 2nd (25%), and 3rd (15%) places. Tournament will keep 15% of Level 2 entry fees.
 - c. **Level 3 – Longest Drum Calcutta - \$200** Entry into this level requires that you must first enter Levels 1 and 2. The qualifying photo of the longest Red Drum being properly measured (see rule #11) with the 2025 ORDS Official Ruler and Token visible wins. Second and Third Place in this level is for the second and third longest Red Drum released with the same qualifying evidence provided. Level 3 pays 1st (50%), 2nd (25%) and 3rd (15%) place. Tournament will keep 15% of Level 3 entry fees.
 - d. **Level 4 – First Fifty Two! – \$300** Entry into this level requires that you must first enter all other levels, including: Level 1, 2, and 3. The first qualifying photo of a Red Drum release, properly measured that is 52” or longer with the Official 2025 ORDS Token in photo and using the official 2025 ORDS Ruler wins. If no fish over 52” caught, all eligible prize money for this level rolls over to the next year’s event, increasing potential payout! Level 4 is winner take all. Tournament will keep 15% of Level 4 entry fees this year. If Level 4 prize is not awarded, the prize money will be rolled over into the next tournament for this category.
10. **Qualifying Photographs** – Each Red Drum photo submitted for tournament prizes must be measured with the official 2025 Tournament Ruler (60” Ruler provided to you during the Captain’s Meeting) and the 2025 ORDS Token (given out during the Captains’ meeting at 12:30 pm on September 20th). All submitted photographs, regardless of Level entered, must be submitted during tournament fishing hours on September 20th. The photo submission must include the 2025 ORDS Token with the fish number clearly marked. Clear, discernable photos must be submitted; refer to “Measurement Guide” for additional clarification. All qualifying Red Drum photos are to be submitted no later than 7:30 pm to the phone number(s) provided during the Captain’s Meeting, or through the REEL TIME app (Fish On mobile app), or in person at the tournament judging desk no later than 7:30 pm on September 20th. Special exception will be made if a boat radios in



prior to 7:30 pm that a fish is on the line, or that a boat has already caught and photographed a fish but was without cell service. In this exception, the VHF radio transmission must be received BEFORE 7:30 pm, and the photographic evidence in this case must be received by 8:00 pm, without exception. When submitting a fish photo for the longest Red Drum prizes, please make sure the entire fish is visible, nose held firmly to the head plate of 2025 ORDS Tournament Ruler and lying with the Ruler beneath the fish in accordance with Rule #11. You may hold the fish down with one, or two hands, so long as the nose, tail, spot, ruler, and token are all visible. Do not submit more than two photos of any single fish.

11. **Qualifying Measurements** – Red Drum are to be placed on top of the 2025 ORDS Official Tournament Ruler with the nose firmly touching the head plate and lying flat. Red Drum lengths will be recorded from tip of the nose to fork of the tail (defined and determined as: line where lateral line meets the tail). All submitted photographs must include the 2025 ORDS Token and utilize the 2025 ORDS Ruler for documenting length, to be eligible for prize money. Please reference the ORDS “Measurement Guide” for instructions and images of proper measurement. All photo submissions must be on the Official 2025 ORDS Ruler, include the Official 2025 ORDS Token, and include the entire fish. TIE-BREAKER - In the event of a tie, the winner will be determined by the first submission.
12. **FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS** - All vessels and participants shall comply with North Carolina and Federal Fisheries laws and regulations regarding fishing licenses, vessel permits, fishing gear, season size limits, and bag limits. Participants shall also adhere to all Ocracoke Red Drum Shootout Rules as contained herein.
13. **PRIZE PAYOUT SCHEDULE** - Prize money checks will be made payable to the person or entity as indicated on the registration form of the winning boat. All prize money is subject to change based on the total number of vessels participating. Prize money will be paid 48 hours after the conclusion of the tournament, and expiration of the dispute resolution period, to allow for any disputes. All prize winners must complete a W-9 form for payment.
14. **DECISION** – This is a “Judges Tournament.” All decisions made by the 2025 ORDS Judges are FINAL. Participants are expected to act with honesty and to respect their fellow anglers and captains both on the water, and on shore, at all times.
15. **DISPUTE RESOLUTION** – Any protest by one participant against the catch of another must be submitted in writing to the ORDS Tournament Director, Ray Murray, no later than 6:00 pm on the day following the event along with \$400 cash or check payable to the Ocracoke Heritage Initiative. All other disputes, controversies, or claims of any kind arising out of, or relating to the Tournament (hereinafter, “dispute” or “disputes”), including, but not limited to, all disputes concerning decisions must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director no later than 6:00 p.m. on the day following the



Tournament along with \$400 payable cash or check to the Ocracoke Heritage Initiative. Failure to submit any such disputes in writing by these dates and times shall constitute a waiver and release of any and all such disputes. If necessary, in the event of any dispute arising out of, or relating to the Tournament in any way, the interested parties shall use their best efforts to settle such dispute by mutual agreement. To this effect, responsible, authorized representatives of the interested parties shall meet, consult, and negotiate with each other in good faith (with or without a third-party mediator, as they may choose) and attempt to reach a mutually satisfactory solution. In the event they do not reach such a solution within a period of five (5) days after the first written notice by any party to any other of the existence of the dispute, then without waiving any other provisions in these Rules concerning the absolute discretion and finality of decisions made by the Tournament Officials, Boards, or Committees, the sole and exclusive means for resolution of any dispute shall be the procedures set forth below: a) The dispute shall be submitted to arbitration under the North Carolina Revised Uniform Arbitration Act, Chapter 1, Article 45C of the North Carolina General Statutes. b) All negotiations, mediations, and arbitration hearings shall take place in Morehead City, North Carolina, or such other places the interested parties may agree upon in writing. c) The arbitration shall be conducted by a single arbitrator who is a retired North Carolina state or federal judge or an attorney whose practice experience includes commercial litigation. The arbitrator must be a resident of the State of North Carolina. In the event the interested parties cannot agree upon an arbitrator, the decision shall be made by a Resident Superior Court Judge of Hyde County, North Carolina. d) Prior to any arbitration hearing, limited discovery shall be permitted for the purpose of obtaining production of documents and taking depositions. All discovery shall be governed by the North Carolina Rules of Civil Procedure. All issues regarding discovery requests shall be decided by the arbitrator. All discovery shall be completed within 90 days after the selection of the arbitrator; provided, however, that the arbitrator shall have the authority to extend or reduce the time for discovery in a manner consistent with a general desire for expedited resolution of the dispute. e) All fees and expenses for the arbitration shall be borne by the parties equally. However, each party shall bear the expense of said party's own counsel, experts, witnesses, and preparation and presentation of proofs. Only in the case of extreme abuse of the procedure may the arbitrator reallocate such costs and expenses among the parties. f) Any arbitral award may be enforced by an action in the Superior Court of Hyde County. The terms and conditions of this Agreement shall be construed, interpreted, and enforced under the laws and judicial decisions of the State of North Carolina, notwithstanding any principle of conflicts of law. In the event any part of this Agreement shall be declared illegal, invalid, or void, such declaration shall not affect the validity of any of the other terms or provisions of this document.

16. **LENGTH ALTERATION** - Attempted length alteration to either a Red Drum or the official 2025 ORDS Tournament Ruler will be subject to disqualification and will disqualify the boat owner, captain, and possibly crew from the tournament permanently.



17. **POLYGRAPH** – If deemed necessary for any reason by the ORDS Tournament Committee, ORDS reserves the right to polygraph test, at its discretion, any participant as deemed necessary by ORDS Tournament Officials. Participants must make themselves available for polygraph testing in Hyde County following notice from ORDS Tournament Officials. Individuals that are required to take the polygraph test must not consume alcohol or any controlled substance within eight hours prior to the test. A participant's refusal to take a polygraph test or failure to answer test questions in a manner satisfactory to ORDS Tournament Officials, in their sole discretion, may result in disqualification. By entering the ORDS Tournament, participants consent to the admissibility of polygraph results in any dispute or proceeding arising out of the ORDS Tournament.
18. **WITHDRAWAL** – In the event of a withdrawal for any reason from the Tournament, NO REFUNDS will be given despite notice or reason. Tournament entry and sponsor donations are non-refundable.
19. **VIOLATION OF RULES** - Any boat violating any of these ORDS Tournament Rules, or any boat containing a participant violating any of these ORDS Tournament Rules is subject to disqualification from the ORDS Tournament (unless another sanction for a particular violation is expressly set forth herein). By participating in the ORDS Tournament, all participants acknowledge that all ORDS Tournament Rules are material and that disqualification is a permitted and appropriate sanction for any violation of any ORDS Tournament Rules. Decisions regarding the interpretation of Rules, violation of Rules, penalties, and the suspension of any Rules or penalties will be made by the ORDS Board of Directors in their sole and absolute discretion. All decisions by the ORDS Judges or ORDS Board of Directors are final and are not subject to further challenge by participants.