



# RULES 2025

## 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Signature Open - Rules

While all efforts are made to keep this information current, all published rules shall be considered unofficial. Official rules will be distributed and announced at the registration check-in and captains meeting. All participants agree to the terms of these rules by participating in the tournament.

### Sonar Definition

Any vessel with a sonar system that requires a transducer mounted to a shaft or “staff” that extends from or through the hull/keel of the vessel like a periscope and with the capability to rotate will be deemed as a sonar-equipped vessel. These vessels are not eligible to fish in the “non-sonar” division. A good example of this type of Sonar would be any system that works like the Furuno Omni Sonar.

Any vessel with a traditional fish finder with a “fixed” transducer and with no extending shaft and no ability to rotate the transducer will be deemed as a non-sonar vessel and are eligible to fish the “non-sonar” division.

The decision of the Tournament Committee concerning a review of the sonar vs. non-sonar distinction with respect to a particular boat or crew or fish will be binding and final.

### Prize Disbursement

Each registered team representative is in control of any prize winnings and must sign a prize disbursement form specifying how the funds are to be distributed. If the funds are intended to be disbursed to multiple parties, each party must fill out a form signing off on their portion of the winnings and specifying how the funds are to be distributed (check, ACH or wire), in addition to providing a signed form W-9, if applicable. Funds will be disbursed 30 days from receipt of all necessary documents once all tournament entry fees have cleared the bank. All funds will be paid from a US bank account in US dollars.

### Schedule

Thursday December 4, 2025 – Team Final Registration check-in, Captains Meeting, and kickoff party at Marina Pez Vela 4:00 pm – 8:30 pm.

Final Registration and Check-in from 4:00 – 6:30 pm.

Mandatory Captains meeting 7:00 pm.

### Fishing Days

Friday December 5, 2025 - Boats are permitted to leave the marina at 6:00am. Fishing will begin with a lines-in the water tournament radio call at 7:30am, and end with a lines-out of the water tournament radio call at 3:30pm. Release Video check-in and weigh-in 4:00pm – 6:30pm

Saturday December 6, 2025 - Boats are permitted to leave the marina at 6:00am. Fishing will begin with a lines-in the water tournament radio call at 7:30am, and end with a lines-out of the water tournament radio call at 3:30pm. Release Video check-in and weigh-in 4:00pm – 6:30pm.

**No lines are allowed in the water before 7:30am which includes teasers, dredges, fishing line, bait ... nothing in the water prior to lines in.**

### Awards Ceremony

Saturday December 6, 2025, 7:30pm – 9:00pm

## Permit & Licenses

All participants must abide by Costa Rican Fishing Regulations and must have a valid Costa Rican recreational fishing license from Incopesca. The angler, crew and boat must have valid Costa Rican Fishing Licenses **(Please contact Marina Pez Vela for more information)**.

All participants must sign an indemnity waiver.

## Weigh-In

Teams will be allowed to weigh two dorado (dolphin fish) and two tuna, yellowfin, or big eye each day, **minimum weight 20 pounds**. Any game fish to be weighed must arrive at the Marina Pez Vela scales by 6:30 p.m. Fish arriving at the scales within 15 minutes of the deadline must receive verbal confirmation from tournament officials. Scales will close at 6:30 p.m. If a boat receives verbal confirmation from tournament officials of a visual before 6:30 p.m., scales will remain open until that boat's fish are weighed.

## Gamefish Minimum Weights:

Gamefish must meet or exceed the minimum weight limit of 20 pounds in the following categories: dorado(dolphinfish), tuna (yellowfin or bigeye). Gamefish will be weighed to the tenth of a pound up to 200-pounds and to the pound for fish over 200-pounds. In the event of an exact tie by weight in the daily gamefish category, the winning teams will split the prize. If there is a tie by weight for first in the Overall category the teams will split the first and second place prize. If there is a tie for second place by weight in the Overall category the teams will split the second and third place prize. If there is a tie for third place by weight in the Overall category the teams will split the prize. No mutilated fish will be weighed.

## Eligible Species

Blue marlin, black marlin, striped marlin, sailfish and spearfish are eligible for catch and release only. Dorado (Dolphinfish), yellowfin tuna and bigeye tuna are eligible for weight categories.

## Departure & Boundaries

Fish must be hooked within a 50 nautical mile radius from the entrance of marina pez vela.

Should a hooked fish cross the boundary line, the fish can be played outside of the boundary until caught or released. Fish that are hooked outside of the tournament boundaries will not be eligible for the tournament.

All boats participating must leave directly from Marina Pez Vela.

## Tournament Radio Communications

All billfish releases are to be reported to tournament control along with the assigned boat name, angler name and fish species. If a tournament boat is out of range, the catch must be relayed via radio or cell phone as soon as possible. Tournament control's time will act as the official time for the start, catch, and end of fishing each day without exception. The official VHF tournament channel is 21 with the backup channel of 24. A Costa Rica cell-phone number and US cell phone number through which teams can also communicate will be given at the captains and anglers meetings. **All hookups must be reported during the last 15 minutes of fishing.**

## Reporting of billfish

All billfish releases must be called into the tournament control on VHF Channel 21 with the following information:

- Boat name
- Angler Name
- Species Released

The tournament control will then verify your information and give you a release time, which must be

recorded on your daily catch report and turned in at the end of the fishing day.

## Video Release Verification Rules

All teams must provide their own video equipment and know how to operate it to verify releases. To score an official release, the video footage must include sufficient footage to (1) clearly identify the species of the fish while hooked up; (2) clearly identify the angler of the fish while hooked up; (3) clearly show the leader is wound inside the rod tip or the swivel touching the rod tip while the fish is still hooked OR a team member, angler or crew touching the leader while the fish is still hooked; (4) identify the release card provided, the release cards will be designated for each fishing day the night before, (5) identify the time and date of the catch; (6) show the fish has been fully released. The video must identify all these elements. Do not delete any video taken during fishing hours, even if it does not include the above elements and will not be used to prove a catch.

## Catch Affidavits

After the release video is taken, the official time, boat, species, and angler name must be written on the catch-report affidavit. Each registered angler and boat captain must then sign the catch-report affidavit. At the end of the day's fishing, the video camera, camera connections used to plug into a computer, catch-report affidavit and all video footage taken must be brought to the video verification station. Catch reports should be turned in by 6:30 p.m. unless a team is fighting a fish after lines out at 3:30 p.m. Failure to turn in a catch report will result in disqualification of that day's releases. Any team falsifying information on the affidavit will be disqualified from the tournament with no refund of entry or optional jackpot fees. All recordings, images, sounds, etc. become property of 135th Anniversary Signature Open and may be used at any time. Recordings and/or images may be downloaded from the team's device(s). Any release images posted on the tournament website or social channels or included in the tournament videos are for entertainment and marketing purposes only.

## Billfish Release Points

Any blue marlin, black marlin, striped marlin, sailfish, or spearfish released in accordance with the tournament rules shall be awarded the following points: Blue and black marlin will receive 300 points; striped marlin will receive 200 points; sailfish or spearfish will receive 100 points. If the fish is only identifiable as a billfish and not clear as to the species it will be awarded 100 points. If there is a tie in billfish release points by multiple teams in the tournament, rankings will be determined by the first team to reach their aggregate point total by time of catch.

## CatchStat

The 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Fishing Tournament uses CatchStat for team management. CatchStat provides live scoring updates. **All content on CatchStat is for entertainment purposes only.** Content does not replace and may not reflect official tournament standings or payout amounts.

## Tournament Committee

The Tournament Committee has the right to investigate and act upon any incident occurring during the tournament. It shall have the right to disqualify any capture following examination. Refusal to allow the committee to examine any tackle, line and/or leaders will result in immediate disqualification from the event without a refund of any registration fees. The tournament committee reserves the privilege of changing the rules, starting and finishing times for any reason it deems necessary. All decisions of the Tournament Committee are final and non-appealable.

## Weather

There is no weather committee. The tournament is conducted on a "fish at your own risk" basis. If any portion of the tournament is fished and a team or teams land or release fish that match the tournament's eligible species and minimum weight limits, then prizes will be awarded.

## Protests

Participants may lodge protests against any catch which they believe was not made in accordance with these rules. All protests must be stated in writing and accompanied by \$1,000. All protests will be settled on the day of the incident unless the tournament committee feels more time is necessary. All protests on December 5, and December 6 must be in the hands of the tournament's designated rules officials by 6:30 p.m. on the day of the alleged incident. Official tournament release video footage may only be viewed by the tournament committee and the team who submitted it. Decisions of the tournament committee regarding protests are final, non-appealable, and nonjusticiable.

## Sportsmanlike Conduct

All participants are expected to always maintain a reasonable and sportsmanlike demeanor throughout the tournament. Unsportsmanlike or threatening conduct towards the tournament committee or other participants, or any other behavior which the tournament committee deems inappropriate, in their sole discretion, will result in immediate disqualification of the entire team with no refund of entry fees.

## Angling and Tackle Rules

All teams must follow I.G.F.A. saltwater angling and tackle rules unless otherwise stated for the 135<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Signature Open. For a complete listing of the I.G.F.A. saltwater equipment and angling rules, please go to:

<http://www.igfa.org/Fish/INTERNATIONAL-ANGLING-RULES.aspx>

The exception to this is that a captain, mate or angler may set the hook and pass the rod to a registered angler. This may occur only once during the fight. It is the responsibility of each team and crew member to know, understand and abide by I.G.F.A. and tournament rules during this competition. Any angler who intentionally breaks these rules is subject to expulsion and disqualification, upon a determination by the tournament committee, from this and future tournaments without a refund of any registration fees.

**Bait and Lures:** Dead bait, live bait, lures and any combination thereof are permitted in this tournament.

**Hooks:** Natural dead and live bait must be rigged with non-offset circle hooks only. Artificial lures without natural bait may be rigged with conventional J-hooks.

**Line:** 130-pound-test is the maximum; tournament or non-tournament lines are eligible. If the stated line test is 130-pound or less on the label, it is allowed in the tournament. Wire lines are prohibited.

**Prospecting:** Teams are not allowed to hire or use other boats, planes, helicopters or drones to find fish or assist them in any way in catching or releasing fish.

## APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION AND FULL RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ASSUMPTION OF RISK: READ CAREFULLY

This Release affects your legal rights and its completion is a prerequisite for your enrollment and participation in the 135th Anniversary Signature Open (the "Tournament"). Your entry indicates your FULL acceptance of these terms. By entering the 135th Anniversary Signature Open and paying the entry fees, I AGREE AS FOLLOWS: I am applying to participate in the Tournament; acceptance of my application is at the sole discretion of the Tournament organizers. In consideration of being permitted to apply for, enroll or participate in the Tournament and such activities as may be arranged for me in connection with such application, enrollment and participation (collectively, the "Tournament Activities"), individually for myself and on behalf of my personal representatives, heirs, assigns, executors, administrators, and next of kin, and as the vessel's master (if I am the vessel's master):

1. I hereby acknowledge that the Tournament Activities are dangerous and hazardous, and may entail the risk of serious injury, death, and property or economic damage. I understand that the risks include, but are not limited to, dangers posed by inclement weather and the inherent risks posed by game fishing. I hereby



fully assume all noneconomic and economic risks posed to me by my enrollment and participation in the Tournament Activities, whether those risks are known or not and whether those risks are foreseen or not. I hereby release and discharge the Tournament, its sponsors and organizers; each of their respective parent companies, subsidiaries, and affiliated companies; the officers, employees, associates, agents, and contractors of all of the foregoing; all other Tournament participants; and all location owners and operators (collectively, the "Releasees") of and from any and all claims, suits, causes of action, obligations, liabilities, debts, costs, damages, or demands of every kind and nature which I now have or which may arise from or in connection with my enrollment and participation in the Tournament Activities, whether or not caused or contributed to by the negligence of the Releasees or the manner in which the Tournament is conducted by the Releasees. ALL TOURNAMENT PARTICIPANTS ARE ADVISED TO OBTAIN THEIR OWN INSURANCE COVERAGE.

2. To the fullest extent permitted by law, I hereby agree to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Releasees, their heirs, executors, administrators, legal representatives, successors, assigns, and parent organizations from any damages, costs, expenses, or liabilities, including but not limited to reasonable attorney fees or other professional fees, resulting from or in any way connected with the risk posed by the Tournament or Tournament Activities, and regardless of whether those risks were caused in full or in part by a party indemnified hereunder.

3. I agree that this Release supersedes any other agreements, written or oral, between the parties and is governed by the laws of Costa Rica. I intend this release to be interpreted as broadly as possible, and if any portion of this Release is held invalid, I intend the remainder to continue in full legal force and effect.

4. I acknowledge receipt of the rules of the Tournament and I agree to fully abide thereby. I further agree that: (i) I will abide by and accept all decisions made by the Tournament organizers or any representative of the Tournament organizers in connection with my application, enrollment, or participation in the Tournament; (ii) all such decisions will be final, non-appealable, and in the sole discretion of the Tournament organizers or their representatives; and (iii) any economic or non-economic consequences to me as a result of such decisions are within the scope of the foregoing release. I HAVE READ THIS RELEASE AND FULLY UNDERSTAND ITS TERMS. I UNDERSTAND THAT I HAVE GIVEN UP SUBSTANTIAL LEGAL RIGHTS BY SIGNING IT. MY ACCEPTANCE AND TOURNAMENT ENTRY IS GIVEN VOLUNTARILY, WITHOUT ANY INDUCEMENT OR ASSURANCE BEING MADE TO ME, AND I INTEND MY ENTRY TO BE A COMPLETE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF ALL LIABILITY TO THE GREATEST EXTENT ALLOWED BY LAW. Participants in Tournaments are advised to obtain their own insurance covering them and their vessel's participation. By entering the tournament, I hereby affirm receipt of the rules of the Tournament. I also affirm that I will abide by and accept all decisions made by Tournament management.

**PUBLICITY RELEASE** In consideration for being permitted to enroll and participate in the 135th Anniversary Signature Open (the "Tournament"), I hereby agree to the following terms: 1. I grant the Tournament, its organizers, and their respective licensees, affiliates, successors and assigns (collectively, the "Licensed Parties") the unrestricted, irrevocable, and perpetual worldwide right to record, copy, reproduce, publish, exhibit, perform and otherwise exploit (collectively, "use"), and license others to use in any and all media now existing and hereinafter developed, without payment of additional compensation, my appearance, name, likeness, voice, and statements that I make in interviews connected with the Tournament, and any photographic, video or audio materials that I create during my participation in the Tournament (collectively, the "Property"), for any purpose, including but not limited to advertising and promotion. I hereby waive any right to inspect or approve any use of the Property or any materials including the Property. 2. The Licensed Parties shall have no liability to me relating to the use or publication, as set forth herein, of the Property for any reason. For myself and on behalf of my personal representatives, heirs, assigns, executors, administrators, and next of kin, I hereby irrevocably release and exempt the Licensed Parties from and against all actions, claims and demands that I now have or may have in the future arising from or relating to any such use or publication of the Property. 3. Nothing herein obligates the Licensed Parties to make any use of any of the rights set forth herein. The rights granted shall not revert to me by reason of the Licensed Parties' lack of use, and are irrevocable. 4. By registering as a participant, you are consenting to our privacy policy and agreeing to grant the 135th Anniversary Signature Open and its organizers use of your personal information to send you newsletters, surveys, offers, and other emails that may be of interest on behalf of the 135th Anniversary Signature Open and our trusted partners. You can opt out or amend your email preferences at any time.