

# Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament

## 2009 Tournament Format and Rules

revised February 23, 2009

**TOURNAMENT ENTRY** Tournament Dates: Wednesday, August 19 – Saturday, August 22, 2009

**Tournament Contact**

Paula Owen: 757.652.8409, paula@VB BT.com

**Important Dates and Times to Remember**

August 3: Last day to enter without paying an additional \$150.  
 August 19: Tournament entry ends at 10:00pm.

**Entry Application**

Teams wishing to enter the VB BT must complete a 2009 Entry Application. Entry forms can be found on the [www.VB BT.com](http://www.VB BT.com) website, and may also be requested by calling 757.652.8409 or e-mailing [paula@VB BT.com](mailto:paula@VB BT.com). Entry fees may be paid by either cash or check. Make checks payable to the "Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament". Mail entry forms and payment to:

Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament  
 Post Office Box 568  
 Virginia Beach, VA 23451

**After August 10 we recommend that you enter in person instead of mailing your entry** to make sure your entry is received. You can enter at Fisherman's Wharf Marina through 5:00pm on Tuesday, August 18 or during Registration on August 19.

**Registration**

Registration takes place on Wednesday, August 19 between 4:00pm and 10:00pm. Teams must check in during Registration to verify information and pick up team bags. Teams may enter optional entry levels throughout Registration.

Teams may pre-register at Fisherman's Wharf Marina through 5:00pm on Tuesday, August 18 but must check in during Registration on the 19th to verify information, add anglers, pick up team bags and attend the Captain's Meeting.

Teams running late due to weather or mechanical problems may register up to 8:30am on Thursday, August 20, but must make arrangements with the tournament director beforehand. Teams registering late are still expected to abide by any rules changes that may be announced at the Captain's Meeting.

**Late Entry**

Teams registering after **August 3** are charged an additional \$150.

**Team Contact**

The person designated on the Entry Application as the Team Contact is the official contact/team leader for the team. Contact information for this person must be complete.

**Anglers**

There is no limit to the number of anglers per team, but all anglers must be registered during Registration on August 19. It does not matter which day the angler is fishing. Captains and mates may also be anglers, but must be registered as such.

**Team Bags**

Each team receives a team bucket with sponsor give-aways, six tournament t-shirts and six event tickets. Merchandise and event tickets for additional team members may be purchased at the event.

**Prize Money**

Cash awards are paid by check and mailed within two weeks following the event. If you won a cash award you must fill out a Disbursement Form with payee name, address and SSN/EIN before a check can be disbursed. You may have more than one payee. Disbursement Forms with the award amount will be available at the Awards Celebration. A 1099-MISC is issued for all prize money to the person or company to whom the check is made payable.

**Refunds**

Any refunds due are mailed to the Team Contact within 30 days after the tournament.

**Withdrawal from the Tournament**

If a team chooses to withdraw from the tournament, they may do so in writing up to 9:00pm on August 18 for a full refund. After August 18 there are no refunds. If a team cannot attend due to what VB BT Officials deem an emergency, they may choose to roll their full entry to the 2010 Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS			
<u>Wednesday, August 19</u>	<u>Thursday, August 20</u>	<u>Friday, August 21</u>	<u>Saturday, August 22</u>
Registration..... 4:00–10:00pm	Fishing Day 1..... 8:30am–3:00pm	Fishing Day 2..... 8:30am–3:00pm	Fishing Day 3..... 8:30am–3:00pm
Kick-Off Party..... 6:00–10:00pm	Scales Open ..... 12:00–8:00pm	Scales Open..... 12:00–8:00pm	Scales Open..... 12:00–7:00pm
Captain's Meeting..... 6:30pm	Evening Dock Party	Evening Dock Party	Awards Presentation

**ENTRY LEVELS AND CASH AWARD DISTRIBUTION**

There are six levels of entry: One mandatory tournament entry (Level 1) and five optional entries. If there are no winners in any particular level the entry fees for that level are refunded

**LEVEL 1 Top Boats (mandatory) ..... \$1,500**

Awarded to the five teams accumulating the most overall billfish points—first through third place receive cash awards, fourth and fifth place are awarded trophies. The amount allocated to cash awards is split 50%/30%/20% between the top three teams. If only two teams qualify, the split is 60%/40% and if only one team qualifies, the winner takes all.

**LEVEL 2 Billfish Jackpot (optional) ..... \$1,000**

Awarded to the three teams accumulating the most overall billfish points and also entered in this level. Cash allocation between the winners is the same as Level 1.

**LEVEL 3 High Rollers Jackpot (optional) ..... \$1,500**

*Must be entered in Level 1 and Level 2 to enter Level 3.* Awarded to the three teams accumulating the most overall billfish points and also entered in this level. Cash allocation between the winners is the same as Level 1.

**LEVEL 4 Billfish Daily Jackpot (optional) ..... \$500**

The cash in this level is split evenly between each day of competition and is awarded to the team that accumulates the most overall billfish points for the day and is also entered in this level. At least 10% of the fleet must fish in order for the Daily to be paid. See Rule #7.

**LEVEL 5 Gamefish Division (optional)..... \$500**

The cash in this level is split evenly between the three eligible gamefish species (dolphin, tuna, wahoo) and awarded to the teams weighing the single heaviest fish in each species category and also entered in this level. If there are no winners in an entire species category, the cash award for that species rolls evenly into the remaining species categories.

**LEVEL 6 Blue Marlin Jackpot (optional) ..... \$1,000**

Awarded to the team weighing the single heaviest blue marlin and also entered in this level. If no qualifying fish are weighed, the award goes to the team that accumulates the most billfish release points and is also entered in this level.

Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$1,500	\$60,000
<b>LEVEL 1</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF WINNERS</b>				
<b>TOP BOAT DIVISION</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
1st Place	50% \$30,000	60% \$36,000	100% \$60,000	
2nd Place	30% \$18,000	40% \$24,000		
3rd Place	20% \$12,000			
Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$1,000	\$40,000
<b>LEVEL 2</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF WINNERS</b>				
<b>BILLFISH JACKPOT</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
1st Place	50% \$20,000	60% \$24,000	100% \$40,000	
2nd Place	30% \$12,000	40% \$16,000		
3rd Place	20% \$8,000			
Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$1,500	\$60,000
<b>LEVEL 3</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF WINNERS</b>				
<b>HIGH ROLLERS JACKPOT</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	
1st Place	50% \$30,000	60% \$36,000	100% \$60,000	
2nd Place	30% \$18,000	40% \$24,000		
3rd Place	20% \$12,000			
Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$500	\$20,000
<b>LEVEL 4</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF WINNERS</b>				
<b>BILLFISH DAILY AWARD</b>	<b>Day 1</b>	<b>Day 2</b>	<b>Day 3</b>	
Daily Winner	33% \$6,660	33% \$6,660	33% \$6,660	
Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$500	\$20,000
<b>LEVEL 5</b>				
<b>NUMBER OF WINNERS (PER SPECIES)</b>				
<b>GAMEFISH DIVISION</b>	<b>Dolphin</b>	<b>Tuna</b>	<b>Wahoo</b>	
1st Place	100% \$6,667	100% \$6,667	100% \$6,667	
Basis of Cash Distribution (Teams*Fee)		40	\$1,000	\$40,000
<b>LEVEL 6</b>				
<b>BLUE MARLIN JACKPOT</b>	<b>1 WINNER</b>	<b>WINNER TAKE ALL</b>		
1st Place	100% \$40,000			
<b>Total Cash Awards:</b>				<b>\$250,000</b>

**OTHER AWARDS**

- Top Overall Angler**—Awarded to the angler who accumulates the most total billfish points.
- Top Release Angler**—Awarded to the angler who accumulates the most billfish release points.
- Top Lady Angler**—Awarded to the lady angler who accumulates the most total billfish points.
- Top Crew**—Awarded to the captain and crew who accumulate the most total billfish points.

- Top Junior Billfish Angler**—Awarded to the junior angler (15 years or younger) who accumulates the most total billfish points.
- Top Junior Gamefish Angler**—Awarded to the junior angler (15 years or younger) who catches the largest single gamefish (dolphin, tuna, wahoo).
- Top Circle Hook Team**—Awarded to the team releasing the most billfish using circle hooks.

**TOURNAMENT RULES**

Rules are subject to change. Final instructions are given at the Captain’s Meeting Wednesday, August 19.

**1. Rules Acceptance**

It is the responsibility of the captain, crew and anglers to understand and abide by the Tournament’s rules, including any special instructions or changes that may be announced during the Captain’s Meeting. The Captain’s Meeting takes place Wednesday, August 19 at 6:30pm. At least one representative from each team must be present.

**2. Permits & Licenses**

Registered boats and anglers must comply with all Federal and State laws regarding fishing licenses, size limits, bag limits and any other regulations that may apply. For information regarding Federal HMS Permits refer to [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com) or call 888.872.8862. For information regarding Virginia state saltwater fishing licenses refer to [www.mrc.state.va.us/mrc-permits.shtm](http://www.mrc.state.va.us/mrc-permits.shtm) or call 800.986.2628.

*If you wish to be eligible for a Virginia Citation, you must have a Virginia Saltwater Fishing License. For information regarding the Virginia Citation program call 757.491.5160 or visit [www.mrc.state.va.us](http://www.mrc.state.va.us).*

**3. Fishing Dates and Times**

Tournament fishing days are Thursday, Friday and Saturday August 20–22. Fishing hours are 8:30am to 3:00pm all three days. No lines or teasers may be in the water before the official start or after the official end of tournament fishing. Billfish hooked and reported to the Committee Boat prior to lines out may be fought until caught or released, except for the final day when any team wishing to weigh a fish must be within Rudee Inlet by 6:45pm.

**4. Lay Day**

Teams may fish any two of the three available fishing days (Captain’s choice). Lay Day forms must be signed by a registered member of the team and turned in at Fisherman’s Wharf Marina by 8:30am of the day being declared as a lay day, otherwise the boat is recorded as fishing that day.

**5. Tournament Communications**

Tournament Officials and Committee Boats monitor VHF Channel 74 and SSB Channel 452 (4149.0).

**6. Official Clock**

Official tournament time is continuous GPS time and starts at 8:30am August 20. Times are recorded to the full minute.

**7. Weather and Cancellation Policy**

Weather related decisions are at the sole discretion of each Captain. The Tournament Committee does not declare a “weather” day in the event of severe weather conditions. If any of the boats registered in the tournament decide to fish on a particular day (based on lay day forms), that day is declared an official fishing day and all eligible fish are scored according to tournament rules. However, at least 10% of the fleet must fish in order for a Daily Award to be paid.

**8. Boundaries**

Boundaries are 100 nautical miles from the Rudee Inlet Sea Buoy. Fish must be hooked within these boundaries, but may be fought outside of the boundaries once hooked.

**9. Equipment and Angling Rules**

IGFA Saltwater Equipment and Angling rules apply with the exception of any special instructions given in these rules, and any instructions or changes that may be given during the Captain’s Meeting. Copies of IGFA rules are available during Registration.

The VBBT is a Boat tournament—any member of the crew may set the hook, but a registered angler must then fight the fish unassisted. Unconventional non-trolling techniques are strictly prohibited. No backing into schools, casting, use of casting tackle, use of live bait or live bait teasers.

**10. Mechanical Failures**

Fish must be brought to the scales on the boat on which they were caught. Should a situation arise where a boat cannot make it back by the deadline, the fish and angler with scorecards may be transferred to another tournament boat, after consulting with VBBT Officials.

If a boat becomes completely disabled, another boat may be substituted. Substitute boats must be registered with the Tournament Director prior to fishing.

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ELIGIBLE SPECIES				
SPECIES	MINIMUMS	POINTS per POUND	RELEASE PTS	LIMITS
Blue Marlin	115” (LJFL) or 500 lbs.	up to 599.9 lbs.: 0.5 600.0 lbs. and up: 1.0	70	1 / angler / day
The capture of a blue marlin under 115-inches and 500-pounds results in the forfeiture of all accumulated points and disqualification of the team from further competition.				
Sailfish	n/a	release only	70	n/a
Spearfish	n/a	release only	70	n/a
White Marlin	n/a	release only	70	n/a
Dolphin	n/a	1.0	n/a	10 / angler / day
Albacore	n/a	1.0	n/a	n/a
Bigeye Tuna	27” CFL	1.0	n/a	n/a
Bluefin Tuna	27” CFL	1.0	n/a	<b>TBA</b>
Yellowfin Tuna	27” CFL	1.0	n/a	3 / angler / day
Wahoo	n/a	1.0	n/a	10 / angler / day

**BLUE MARLIN LOWER JAW FORK LENGTH (LJFL)**



**TUNA CURVED FORK LENGTH (CFL)**



(Continued from page 3)

### 11. Reporting Billfish and Billfish Catch Affirmations

The Billfish Catch Affirmation (BCA) form is the Team's record of billfish hooked and subsequently released, tagged, lost or boated. Affirmations are compared to the Committee Boat radio logs for verification. Billfish should be recorded as caught to ensure accuracy. If you caught a billfish, you must turn in a BCA. Billfish Catch Affirmation forms are distributed during Registration.

As soon as you **release** or **boat** a billfish, call a Committee Boat and report Boat Name, Species, and Status (Released or Boated). In addition, **billfish hooked within the last hour of fishing on any day, and billfish still being fought at lines out must be reported to a Committee Boat.** If a Committee Boat cannot be raised, a verifiable report must be given to another tournament boat and the boat name noted on the BCA. Committee Boats are announced during the Captain's Meeting.

*Lost billfish should not be reported to a Committee Boat but should be recorded on the BCA for statistical purposes. The same applies to recording the time the billfish was hooked and whether it was tagged.*

Before turning in your BCA be sure it's filled in completely including a suffix if necessary for the angler (i.e. Jr., Sr., III). If the angler was a Lady check off under the **L** column. If the angler was a Junior write in the junior's age under the **JR** column. If you used a Circle Hook place a checkmark under the **CH** column.

The boat captain, observer (if assigned) and all anglers who caught billfish must print their name and sign the BCA indicating they affirm the information as recorded.

Turn in all copies of the BCA to the Scoring Table by the designated deadline (see Rule #14). If you did not catch a billfish you do not need to turn in a BCA.

### 12. Official Billfish Release

A billfish is considered officially released when the leader connection is wound to the tip of the rod, or the mate or other crew member touches the leader. Tagging is not required for tournament points, but is encouraged if the billfish is under control and the tag can be placed without injury to the fish. If a gaff breaks the plane of the cockpit covering boards, the team has committed to a capture and the billfish will not count as a release whether or not it is subsequently captured.

### 13. Weighing Fish

All fish must be weighed at the official Weigh Station. The scales open daily at 12:00 noon. On Thursday, August 20 and Friday, August 21 the scales close at 8:00pm. On Saturday, August 22, the final day of fishing, the scales close at 7:00pm. On the final day of fishing, any boat wishing to weigh a fish must be inside Rudee Inlet by 6:45pm. Additional rules:

- › Boats are lined up to weigh in the order in which they arrive.
- › The weighing of blue marlin takes precedence over gamefish.
- › Fish must arrive at the dock in edible condition.
- › Mutilated fish are not weighed. In this case, "mutilation" is defined as any damage that would impair the fighting ability of the fish.

- › All fish are weighed to the tenth of a pound.
- › If anyone wishes to have a fish re-weighed, it must be done while the fish is still hanging.
- › The angler must remain with the fish throughout the weigh-in process, and before leaving the scales must sign the Weigh-In form.

The Weighmaster and VBBT Officials reserve the right to refuse to weigh any fish that does not meet tournament requirements.

### 14. Scoring

Scoring closes Thursday and Friday at 8:00pm and at 7:00pm on Saturday. Forms are accepted after 8:00pm on the first two days of fishing only if the team is fighting a fish or their boat becomes disabled, however, the Tournament Director must be made aware of the situation delaying the team. **On the final day of fishing, forms must be turned in by 7:00pm.** Billfish Catch Affirmations must be filled in completely and signed by the boat captain, all anglers who caught billfish and the observer if one was assigned. Weigh-In forms must be signed by both the Weighmaster and a member of the team. The location of the Scoring Table is announced at the Captain's Meeting.

### 15. Breaking Ties

Ties between the weight of two or more fish are broken by the time the fish was weighed. Ties between Release Points are broken by the time of release. The date of Release is based on the boat's fishing day (day 1 or 2) as opposed to the tournament fishing day (day 1-2-3). The Rules Committee may consult Committee Boat Logs to reach decisions on release time or sequence of releases.

### 16. Observers

The Tournament, at their sole discretion, may assign an observer to any boat on any fishing day. If an observer is assigned, the boat is responsible for the observer's comfort and safety, including providing lunch and non-alcoholic beverages.

### 17. Polygraph Examination

Registered Participants agree to submit to a polygraph examination if requested to do so by VBBT Officials. Failure to comply will result in disqualification of the Participant and, at the discretion of VBBT Officials, the Participant's entire team. Disqualified Participants/Teams or Participants/Teams that fail a polygraph examination forfeit any and all entry money, prizes or prize money, and are refused entry to future VBBT tournaments. The decision of the Rules Committee is final.

### 18. Protests

Registered participants may submit a protest against any fish entered. Protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director by 9:00am on the day following the catch of the disputed fish or by 8:00pm on Saturday, August 22. The Rules Committee at their discretion may use a polygraph examination to reach a decision. All participants agree to the final decision of the Rules Committee.

## LIABILITY RELEASE

It is expressly understood that all registered participants and their companions, crew members and observers (the "Participants") participate in the Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament (the "Tournament") at their own risk.

The Participants hereby indemnify and agree to save harmless the Tournament, Tournament Sponsors, Tournament Control, Inc. and their respective officers, directors, employees, volunteers, agents, partners, members and/or attorneys (collectively the "Tournament Indemnified Parties"), from and against any and all claims that arise from or in connection with any negligent act or omission of the Tournament Indemnified Parties.

All persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of the Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament, whether individual or corporation, shall have no liability whatsoever for any special, incidental, conse-

quential, punitive, exemplary and/or any other damage including without limitation, any damages arising from libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury or death. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to refuse entry to any boat, team or person.

Participants specifically consent to the use of any photograph or video in which they appear or audio recording without compensation or restriction of any kind by the Tournament for any purpose whatsoever including, but not limited to, resale, advertising and promotional material.

This Liability Release shall be binding upon the Participants and their respective heirs, personal representatives, successors and assigns. By entering the Virginia Beach Billfish Tournament and paying the entry fee, Participants acknowledge that they have read the Rules and the Liability Release and are bound by same.