

TROPICAL ANGLERS CLUB

FISHING RULES

I. APPLICATION: These rules shall apply to the members of Tropical Anglers Club, and shall additionally apply to all guests and prospective club members while participating in any club outing or fishing activity.

II. BOUNDARIES: The waters in and surrounding the State of Florida and the Bahamas.

III. GOALS: Tropical Anglers Club exists to promote sportsmanship, fellowship, and conservation. Consistent with these goals is the expectation that members will not convert their catch for financial gain. Accordingly, no fish that has been sold, bartered, or otherwise converted to remuneration of the angler will be eligible for entry for species, or for any tournament sponsored by Tropical Anglers Club.

IV. ENTRY REQUIREMENTS:

1. All catches must be made with rod and reel.
2. No entries will be accepted for fish having been caught while the paid services of a guide, charter boat captain, etc., have been engaged, with the exception of party or "head" boats.
3. A rod broken as a result of hooking, fighting or landing a fish shall disqualify the catch for entry.
4. A catch can be entered only if the angler making entry was holding the rod when the fish was hooked; or was the first person to pick up the rod after the fish struck. No other person may touch the rod, reel or line for any purpose from the moment of strike to the time the fish is brought to gaff.
5. If a fish, between being hooked and brought to gaff, is injured in any manner, it shall be considered a mutilated fish and ineligible for entry.
6. Shooting, harpooning, lancing, hand lining, or free gaffing a fish shall disqualify it for entry.
Exception: To avoid injury to the angler after the leader has been touched, a "bang stick" may be used on shark only.
7. Standard gaffs must have the hook permanently and immovably affixed to the staff with the overall length not to exceed (8) eight feet. The limitation of gaff length shall not apply while fishing from a party or "head" boat. Bridge gaffs may be utilized only when fishing from bridge or pier.
8. Entries will be accepted when such fish is weighed on any government, Met, or IGFA certified scale, or individual Tropical Anglers Club certified scale which has been certified for that six-month tournament period prior to acceptance of entry.
9. All entries to obtain credit for records, fish of the month and outing prizes must be weighed on shore. Eligible entries, which are of such size as to merit a Club record may be required to be accompanied by a formal affidavit when not witnessed by a member, and must be approved by the Fishing Committee.
10. It shall be the responsibility of the angler to see that a copy of his entry blank is turned in for posting within ten (10) days of the catch.
11. Any questionable entry must be approved by the Fishing Committee whose decision approving or disapproving same shall be final and binding on all participants.
12. Any protest against an entry must be filed, in writing with the Fishing Committee of the alleged violation of any rule. The decision of the Fishing Committee thereon shall be final. Such protest must be submitted within ten (10) days of discovery of the alleged rule violation.

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13. A potential club member may enter fish caught after his application for membership has been approved by the Board of Governors. His entries shall not be eligible for trophies or prizes, however, his entries will count toward achievement badges and angler achievements plaque.

V. TACKLE SPECIFICATIONS:

1. To be eligible for entry, tackle must meet the specification for the tackle class with which the fish was caught.
2. Tackle divisions and specifications are as follows:

A. FLY CASTING DIVISION:

- a. Rod, reel, line and leader must be of the standard conventional types, specifically designed for fly casting and must be capable of repeated false casting in accord with the criterion without undue strain on tackle or angler.
- b. Criterion: That the line carry the lure through the cast rather than the lure carry the line.
- c. Rods: Fly rods with a minimum length of seven (7) feet may be fitted with an extension butt which shall not extend more than two (2) inches below the reel seat.
- d. Line: Fly lines, whether floating or sinking types must be of non-metallic material.
- e. Leader: Non-metallic leaders whether level or tapered must have a tippet or lure end of at least (15) fifteen inches of no more than (15) fifteen pound test. An additional "shock" tippet connected to the fly and of any material may be used but must not exceed (12) twelve inches in length including all knots.
- f. Lure: Gang hooks and tandem hooks and hooks exceeding (3) three inches in length on any fly or lure are prohibited. The fly or lure must be cast into the water and retrieved in an orthodox manner, and no fly, lure or leader shall be so weighted as to substantially interfere or prevent casting in an orthodox manner.
- g. Any catch made with a trolled lure, or stationary lure given action by the current shall not be eligible.
- h. Lure must be artificial without the addition of any natural substance or odor, except pork rind.
- i. Fish caught with fly tackle may be entered only in that division.
- j. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.

Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark.

B. LIGHT SPIN DIVISION:

- a. All spinning rods and open faced reels designed specifically for casting artificial lures shall be eligible.
- b. Rods: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet.
- c. Line: Non-metallic material shall not exceed four (4) pound test.
- d. Leader: Double line and leader, including eighteen (18) inches of the tippet end which may be of any material, shall not exceed the length of the rod.
- e. Lure: Must be artificial without the addition of any natural substance or odor, except pork rind.
- f. Lure must be cast into the water and retrieved in an orthodox manner.

Exception: Deep Jigging

- g. Any catch made with a trolled lure or stationary lure given action by the current shall not be eligible, but may be classified as general tackle.
- h. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.
Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark
- i. Fish caught with tackle meeting the light spin casting division cannot be entered into the general tackle divisions; but may be entered in the spin casting division.

C. SPIN CASTING DIVISION:

- a. All spinning rods and open faced reels designed specifically for casting artificial lures shall be eligible.
- b. Rods: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet.
- c. Line: Non-metallic material shall not exceed ten (10) pound test.
- d. Leader: Double line and leader, including eighteen (18) inches of the tippet end which may be of any material, shall not exceed the length of the rod.
- e. Lure: Must be artificial without the addition of any natural substance or odor, except pork rind.
- f. Lure must be cast into the water and retrieved in an orthodox manner.
Exception: Deep Jigging
- g. Any catch made with a trolled lure or stationary lure given action by the current shall not be eligible, but may be classified as general tackle.
- h. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.
Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark
- i. Fish caught with tackle meeting the spin casting division cannot be entered into the general tackle divisions.

D. PLUG CASTING DIVISION:

- a. Rod: Must be of the conventional plug casting type and when fully assembled must have a minimum length of five (5) feet overall. The butt, whether straight or offset shall not exceed twelve (12) inches in length including reel seat and rear grip (foregrip not included).
- b. Reel: Must be of conventional plug casting type with operating level wind and line capacity shall not exceed three (300) hundred yards. Crank nut may be replaced while fighting fish, if needed, but without help. Anti-reverse mechanisms and adjustable drags shall be allowed. Any reel over three hundred yards capacity will go to light general division.
- c. Line: Non-metallic material shall not exceed fifteen (15) pound test.
- d. Leader: Double line and leader, including eighteen (18) inches of the tippet end which may be of any material, shall not exceed the length of the rod.
- e. Lure: Must be artificial without the addition of any natural substance or odor, except pork rind.
- f. Lure must be cast into the water and retrieved in an orthodox manner.
Exception: Deep Jigging
- g. Any catch made with a trolled lure or stationary lure given action by the current shall not be eligible, but may be classified as general tackle.
- h. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.
Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark
- i. Fish caught with tackle meeting the plug casting division cannot be entered into the general tackle divisions.

E. SIX POUND GENERAL DIVISION:

- a. Rod: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet when fully assembled.
- b. Reel: No restrictions except that electric reels shall not be permitted.
- c. Line: Non-Metallic material shall not exceed six (6) pound test.
- d. Leader: double line and leader shall not exceed a total length of twenty (20) feet.
- e. Fly tackle not acceptable.
- f. Tackle which meets spin and plug casting specifications is not eligible for general divisions. It must be the intention of the angler to fish the general tackle divisions before the lure enters the water. Any adjustment to the tackle to make it general must be made prior to the lure entering the water.
- g. Six pound general tackle also qualifies for all other general divisions.
- h. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.

Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark

F. TWELVE POUND GENERAL DIVISION:

- a. Rod: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet when fully assembled.
- b. Reel: No restrictions except that electric reels shall not be permitted.
- c. Line: Non-Metallic material shall not exceed twelve (12) pound test.
- d. Leader: double line and leader shall not exceed a total length of twenty (20) feet.
- e. Fly tackle not acceptable.
- f. Tackle which meets spin and plug casting specifications is not eligible for general divisions. It must be the intention of the angler to fish the general tackle divisions before the lure enters the water. Any adjustment to the tackle to make it general must be made prior to the lure entering the water.
- g. Twelve pound general tackle also qualifies for Twenty pound general and general divisions.
- h. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall not be eligible.

Exception: Marlin, Swordfish and Shark

G. TWENTY POUND GENERAL DIVISION:

- a. Rod: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet when fully assembled.
- b. Reel: No restrictions except that electric reels shall not be permitted.
- c. Line: Non-Metallic material shall not exceed twenty (20) pound test.
- d. Leader: double line and leader shall not exceed a total length of twenty (20) feet.
- e. Fly tackle not acceptable.
- f. Tackle which meets spin and plug casting specifications is not eligible for general divisions. It must be the intention of the angler to fish the general tackle divisions before the lure enters the water. Any adjustment to the tackle to make it general must be made prior to the lure entering the water.
- g. Twenty pound general tackle also qualifies for general division.
- h. Flying gaffs with the overall length of the hook and staff not to exceed eight (8) feet when assembled. May be fitted with not more than thirty (30) feet of line. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall be eligible for entry only with tackle meeting the general divisions requirements.

H. GENERAL DIVISION:

- a. Rod: Must be a minimum of five (5) feet when fully assembled.
- b. Reel: No restrictions except that electric reels shall not be permitted.
- c. Line: Non-Metallic material, 130 pound maximum strength.
- d. Leader: double line and leader shall not exceed a total length of forty (40) feet.
- e. Fly tackle not acceptable.
- f. Tackle which meets spin and plug casting specifications is not eligible for general divisions. It must be the intention of the angler to fish the general tackle divisions before the lure enters the water. Any adjustment to the tackle to make it general must be made prior to the lure entering the water.
- g. Flying gaffs with the overall length of the hook and staff not to exceed eight (8) feet when assembled. May be fitted with not more than thirty (30) feet of line. Fish taken with the aid of a flying gaff shall be eligible for entry only with tackle meeting the general divisions requirements.

VI. POINT SYSTEM:

1. Points shall be credited in accordance with the scoring table below.
2. Points shall be scored only for the heaviest of each species in each tackle division.
3. No entry shall be credited with more than two (200) hundred points.
4. The minimum entry weight shall be no less than 25% of the 200 point requirement, 50 points.
5. Points for fish weighing between the minimum requirement (25%) and the 200 point requirement (100%) will be credited proportionally.
6. No more than 200 points shall be credited to any single species in each tackle classification.
7. Bonefish, jewfish, marlin, sailfish, shark, swordfish and tarpon released alive shall be 200 points. Any fish that the Federal or State governments close the season on, shall be considered a release fish while the closed season is in effect.

VII. CLUB RECORDS:

1. For entries to be eligible for club records, the angler must submit four (4) sections of line 30" long, with 4" to 6" loop within fourteen (14) days with the entry card to the Fishing Committee for line test.

Exceptions:

- A. In the Fly Casting Division, the tippet plus 12 inches of the leader leading to the tippet (including steel) must be submitted for line test. This entire line should be intact.
 - B. General Division (over 20#) - test not required.
 - C. If line is submitted to the Metropolitan Fishing Tournament, or other contest, or for a World Record and found to test, it shall be accepted in the TAC as a record. If line does not test, the entry will not be accepted in the TAC.
2. If fly tippet fails to test, it may not be entered in any other tackle.
 3. If light spin casting (4#) division line fails to test, it may be entered into the spin casting (10#) division and tested for that record.
 4. If an six pound general (6#) division line fails to test, it may be entered into the twelve pound general (12#), twenty pound general (20#), or general (over 20#) division and tested for that record.

5. If an twelve pound general (12#) division line fails to test, it may be entered into the twenty pound general (20#), or general (over 20#) division and tested for that record.
6. If an twenty pound general (20#) division line fails to test, it may be entered into general (over 20#) division for that record.
7. Line shall be tested by the Fishing Committee in the following manner:
 - A. Line shall be tested in the condition (wet or dry) which it is presented to the Fishing Committee for test.
 - B. The average of the first three (3) tests shall not exceed one hundred and ten percent (110%).
 - C. Should the anglers line fail the one hundred ten percent (110%) test, the fish will not be accepted as a record for that division. If the line tests between one hundred ten percent (110%) and one hundred twenty (120%) percent, the fish can be accepted as an entry only in that division. Over one hundred twenty (120%) test and the entry must go to the next division.

VIII. ANGLER BADGES:

1. Badges of the following colors will be issued to anglers when they have qualified:

GREEN: Novice Angler - awarded to each new member.

BLACK: 3rd Class Angler - ten (10) species.

RED: 2nd Class Angler - eighteen (18) species and ten (10) 200 point fish.

BLUE: 1st Class Angler - twenty-two (22) species and twelve (12) 200 point fish, including bonefish, tarpon and sailfish releases.

GOLD: Master Angler - twenty-six (26) species and fourteen (14) 200 point fish, including bonefish, tarpon and sailfish releases. He must win in competition, overall and three of the four following categories:

1. Fly
2. Light spin or spin
3. Plug
4. Any general division.

He must also qualify for the remaining category.

GOLD WITH STAR: Senior Master Angler - twenty-six (26) species and fourteen (14) 200 point fish, including bonefish, tarpon and sailfish releases. He must win in competition, overall and all of the following categories:

1. Fly
2. Light spin or spin
3. Plug
4. Any general division.

IX. SEMI ANNUAL ANGLING CONTESTS:

1. **Tournament dates:** November 1st to April 30th and May 1st to October 31st.

2. **Eligibility:**

- A. Only members of the Tropical Anglers Club shall be eligible.
- B. Anglers must qualify to win.

3. Overall Angling Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points, by all recognized club methods, shall be adjudged the overall angling club champion and be awarded a suitable trophy from the club.

B. Winner of the championship must have entered; during the current semi-annual tournament, at least three different species of fish in fly, light spin, spin, plug, six pound general, twelve pound general, twenty pound general and general. Three fish in each of eight divisions.

C. All entries must total a minimum of 7500 points, and 15 species to qualify.

4. Fly Casting Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by fly casting shall be adjudged the fly casting champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of six different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 1000 points to qualify.

5. Light Spin Casting Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by light spin shall be adjudged the light spin casting champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of eight different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 1600 points to qualify.

6. Spin Casting Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by spin shall be adjudged the spin casting champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

7. Plug Casting Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by plug casting shall be adjudged the plug casting champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

8. Six pound General Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by six pound general fishing shall be adjudged the six pound general champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

9. Twelve Pound General Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by twelve pound general fishing shall be adjudged the twelve pound general champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

10. Twenty Pound General Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by twenty pound general fishing shall be adjudged the twenty pound general champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

11. General Championship:

A. At the end of each semi-annual fishing tournament, the member who has accumulated the most points by general fishing shall be adjudged the general champion, and shall be awarded a suitable trophy by the club.

B. A minimum of ten different species must have been entered, during the current semi-annual tournament, to entitle a member to win this championship.

C. All entries must total 2000 points to qualify.

12. Exceptions:

A. No member may win more than one of the angling championship divisions for any one tournament.

B. If a member has the highest points total in two or more championship divisions he will be declared the champion in that division in which he has the largest ratio of earned points to qualifying points. If any two or more largest ratios are equal, he will be declared the champion in that largest ratio division in which he has the most overall points.

C. In the event of a Championship Division tie, after the above determination, the member with largest quantity of "overall" points shall be adjudged that Division Champion.

13. Achievement Awards:

A. The Fishing Committee shall present awards at the end of each semi annual angling contest.

B. An award shall be presented to the winner of each Tackle Division and the Overall Angling Champion. Such award shall be a Citation and either a plaque or one of the tournament prizes.

C. A prize shall be presented to the top five (5) anglers.

D. The member who has won overall shall have first choice with each subsequent choice taken by the member who has qualified his division by the largest percentage. In the event of a tie, preference order shall be the member with largest quantity of divisions led, then largest quantity of divisions qualified, and then largest quantity of points.

E. The Fishing Committee will be responsible for obtaining and displaying prizes representing approximately \$500.00 - at the beginning of the semi annual angling contest.

F. The Fishing Committee is responsible for ascertaining the qualifiers.

G. Un-awarded prizes will carry-over to the next semi annual angling contest. Only the value of the awarded prizes will be replaced for the next semi annual angling contest.

X. OUTSTANDING CATCH TROPHY:

1. Tournament dates November 1st through October 31st.
2. This trophy is awarded by the club for the outstanding fish caught during the annual tournament.

XI. FISH OF THE MONTH:

1. The Fishing Committee will set forward a tentative "Fish of the Month" specie(s) for each twelve months. Species may be changed by the club at the regular meeting that must proceed that month.
2. Each month the Fishing Committee will award a prize to the member who enters the highest point "Fish of the Month" specie which qualifies for the month.
3. In case of a tie, the earliest entry will be declared the winner.

XII. CLUB OUTINGS:

1. Participants in outings shall be limited to members of T.A.C. and their guests.
2. The Fishing Committee will set forward a tentative schedule for each twelve months; location may be changed by the club at the regular meeting that must precede each outing.
3. Outing Manager - to be appointed for each outing. He will be in charge of the outing. It will be his duty to call and notify each member of changes, weather and other things related to the outing. Money once pledged for calcutta, etc.; cannot be withdrawn by a member unless he calls the outing manager before official starting time of the outing.
4. Any outing attended by one (1) member will be considered an official outing; if he is the only participant, he will be eligible to win all monies and prizes designated for such outing.
5. There will be an official uniform to be worn at all outings; jackets, shirts, T-shirts or caps with club insignia on it.
6. Unless otherwise prearranged, no two hundred (200) point release fish will be eligible for outing prize and calcutta.
7. Only fish caught between time putting boat in water and taking out are eligible.
8. All entries must be weighed on shore with official scales to be eligible for calcutta and outing prize. A card must be turned in at the time of entry. *Exception: Guest*
9. The Fishing Committee shall award an outing prize for the highest point fish, caught by a member. Tarpon, Shark and Jewfish are species ineligible for winning an outing prize
10. Guest, if accompanied by a member will be eligible to participate in calcutta, but not to win club sponsored prize.

XIII. ADDITIONAL RULES AND AWARDS:

1. Further rules and awards will be at the discretion of the Fishing Committee. On any matters to which these Rules are silent, the rules of the International Game Fish Association (IGFA), including future amendments thereto, shall apply. Any questions, ambiguity or dispute regarding the application, meaning and interpretation of these Tropical Anglers Club fishing rules shall be determined and resolved by the Fishing Committee, whose decision shall be final.