

# Exmouth Game Fishing Club

## Tournament Rules and Regulations

### Betta Billfish Bonanza 2022

**1. Regulations:** This tournament will be fished within current Game Fishing Association of Australia, WA Department of Transport and WA Department of Fisheries rules and regulations.

**2. Participation & Registration:** Only registered anglers may fight a fish during the tournament. Anglers will fish only from the boat on which they registered. Registered/anglers may participate in any act which directly contributes to the tag and release/free release of a fish during the tournament. They are, driving the boat, tagging fish, running out lines, retrieving lines, clearing teasers or taking the leader. These participants must be registered on the entry form.

At least one member of each registered team must attend the Tournament Briefing which will begin at 6:30pm, Thursday October 27th.

**3. Fishing Area:** All Tournament competitors must fish within 60 nautical miles of the EGFC Clubhouse, with a minimum of two anglers on board.

**4. Fishing Times:** Lines in is 8am on all days. Lines out will be 5pm on Friday and Saturday and 3pm on Sunday. No line is to be in the water 15 mins prior to lines in, including bait jigs and teasers. A radio call will be made at 15 minutes prior to lines out. At this time any vessel that is hooked up, or hooks up before lines out, must notify Radio Base and be acknowledged. A boat may continue to fight a fish after lines out if they have notified Radio Base.

All other boats are to observe radio silence during the last 15 minutes of lines in.

Fully completed tag or free release cards must be presented to the tournament Weigh Master during weigh-in times of 6pm-8pm on Friday and Saturday, and 5pm-7pm on Sunday.

**5. Lines:** All fish must be claimed on the line class on which they were captured. Backing can be used of an undetermined breaking strain in braid, dacron or monofilament, however, a MINIMUM TOPSHOT OF 16 METRES OF IGFA RATED LINE MUST BE USED (for record claim purposes, 16m continuous, single line is required).

Random gear checks will be conducted throughout the tournament.

**6. Junior/Small Fry Anglers:** A Junior/Small Fry Angler is a person who has not attained the age of 16 years prior to the conclusion of the tournament.

**7. Special Release Conditions:** All billfish caught during the 2022 Billfish Bonanza shall be 'free released' without the need to place a tag (see Free Release, section 8).

These special release conditions stand for the Billfish Bonanza tournament only.

**8. Free Release:** Any billfish hooked during the 2022 Billfish Bonanza will be deemed caught and eligible for tournament points when the leader is touched by any registered member of the crew. Following the release, the team must complete a Measure & Release Card (as issued by the EGFC Weigh Master) to record full details of the catch and release, and register the catch with tournament Radio Base as soon as possible after release.

Fully completed Measure & Release Cards must be lodged with the Weigh Master on the day of capture during the official weigh-in times unless otherwise arranged with the Weigh Master under extraordinary circumstances only. The angler and a witness to the tagging must sign the capture receipt at the recorders station.

If teams fail to return fully completed Measure & Release Cards for any catches by the end of official weigh in-times on the last day of the tournament, those catches will automatically be disqualified.

**9. Exmouth Gulf Line Class Limits:** Billfish can only be tagged on 1kg to 10kg inclusive line classes to accrue points if caught inside Exmouth Gulf.

**10. Exmouth Gulf Waters:** Exmouth Gulf is defined as all waters south and east of a line drawn from North West Cape to the south west tip of South Muiron Island to the north west tip of South Muiron Island to the south west tip of North Muiron Island to the north west tip of North Muiron Island to Peak Island to Observation Island to Tubridgi Point.

**11. Hooks for Natural Baits:** When fishing natural baits (either dead or live), anglers cannot use J hooks or offset circle hooks. In-line circle hooks only are to be used. J hooks are still permitted when fishing lures.

**12. Radio Base:** All boats must be fitted with an operational VHF radio system and are required to log on and off with Betta Base each day of the tournament. Tournament radio coverage will be exclusively VHF, channel 21. A non-functional radio must be repaired before the affected vessel goes to sea the following day. Vessels failing to comply will be disqualified for that day. Each boat will be asked to give a daily sked at time of log off each day, consisting of sailfish, blue marlin, black marlin and striped marlin raised, hooked and tagged. Skeds do not constitute catch reporting for tournament purposes. All fully completed tag/free release cards must be lodged with the Weigh Master on the day of capture for points to apply.

**13. Point Scoring:** This is a catch & release event for sailfish and marlin species only. Points will be allocated as follows:

Species	Point Score
Marlin (all species)	500 Points
Sailfish	400 Points

Section winners will be decided by:

- a) Team with the highest total of catch and release points;
- b) In the event of a tie on points, the team achieving the points first according to the time the release is logged with Radio Base.
- c) If still tied, the team with the lowest average line class.

**14. Protests:** A verbal intention to protest must be made to the Weigh Master as soon as possible by the protestor. This is to enable the Weigh Master to preserve any evidence that may be needed by the Committee if the tag/release card is presented before the protestor can attend the Weigh Station. All protests must be lodged with the Weigh Master in writing with a \$100 deposit which will be refunded if the protest is upheld. Protests must be lodged before the close of Weigh Station. No further protests will be accepted after completion of the weigh-in times on the final day. The Committee will consider all protests as soon as possible after receipt. The Committee's decision is final and the affected parties will be notified ASAP.

**15. Sanctuary Zones & Exclusion Zones:** If a competitor is charged by Fisheries WA or the Department of Biodiversity, Attractions and Conservation Parks & Wildlife with fishing in a sanctuary zone and/or sighted by a fellow competitor, tournament official or EGFC member fishing in a sanctuary zone, they will be disqualified from the competition for that day. If a competitor is sighted fishing within an oil & gas exclusion zone (500m radius of any offshore oil & gas structure), they will be disqualified from the competition for that day. No other protests relating to sanctuary zones and exclusion zones will be heard.

**16. Conduct:** All competitors will participate in a sporting manner and embrace the ethics of game fishing. All fish offal must be returned to the ocean.

The Committee reserves the right to penalise any team or angler by deduction of points or disqualification for part of, or the whole, tournament for conduct they consider detrimental to the competition or the EGFC.

**17. Weather:** Please refer to the EGFC weather policy for clarification on cancellation due to weather. This can be found on our website [www.egfc.com.au](http://www.egfc.com.au). Communication will be essential for this event and anglers will be notified by text message daily.

**18. Disclaimer:** The EGFC committee reserves the right to change any rule, regulation or section which it believes will enhance the Tournament. The EGFC takes no responsibility for loss or damage to competitor's person, personal effects or vessel and competitors fish the tournament at their own risk.