

Elbow Reef Classic : Tournament Rules

May 29 – June 1, 2023

The Captain's Meeting: Wednesday, May 29, 2024. Teams fish (Capt. Choice) two out of three days.

Where: Hope Town, Elbow Cay, Bahamas (Hope Town Inn & Marina)

*A team representative must be in attendance, as rules are subject to change and will be announced at the Capt. Meeting.

*All boats must declare where they are docking and which island they will be departing/ fishing from at the Capt. Meeting. *Any fish that is harvested, must be brought in with the team/angler which the fish was caught.

1. PERMITS & LICENSES

All teams must possess a Bahamas Fishing Permit.- [Click Here](#)

2. All teams and anglers must comply with all Bahamian rules and regulations [CLICK HERE TO READ.](#)

3. FISHING DAYS / HOURS

The Tournament fishing days are Thursday (June 22th), Friday (June 23rd) or Saturday (June 24h) Captains choice 2 of 3 days. Mandatory 2 fishing days to qualify. "Lines in" 8:00am / "Lines out" 4:00pm each day.

- All boats must be inside the marina before 6pm each evening. The Committee must have your catch affidavits and videos by close of the weigh station each day.
- An angler may fight a fish until it is lost, released or boated. ONLY if it was hooked and reported to the Committee prior to lines out of the water.
- If you are hooked up 15 minutes or after the close of each fishing day, you may continue fighting the fish until you catch or lose the fish. Teams must call in "hook ups" to the committee boat prior to "lines out" to qualify.
- Any meatfish requiring a weigh-in must be at the scales prior to closing at 6pm.

4. Each team must take one lay day (*Capt. choice). Teams may practice fish on the lay day if desired or participate in the on island activities (not mandatory). All teams fish at your own risk. *subject to change due to weather

5. BOUNDARIES

There are NO boundaries set. Please note weigh station/ scale times as there will be no exceptions. Zero.

6. Teams are welcome to fish other tournaments hosted on neighboring islands that fall on the same fishing days as long as these (ERC) rules are upheld by the team and all validation requirements are met.

7. ANGLING & EQUIPMENT

- International Billfish Tournament rules apply.
- Six anglers per team per day are permitted, with no restrictions. Teams are permitted to hook and hand, but only once, upon the hookup as soon as possible.
- To be eligible to compete as a Junior Angler, the angler must be 16 years old or under at the start of the tournament registration.
 - A maximum of six lines (with hooks) are permitted at any one time.

8. TOURNAMENT SPECIES

Blue Marlin, White Marlin, Sailfish and Spearfish are eligible for catch and release ONLY.

Tuna (Yellowfin, Blackfin, and Big Eye only), Wahoo, and Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi), Barracuda are eligible for weigh-in, with a 15 lb. minimum weight requirement, and are categorized as "gamefish/meatfish" in this tournament.

9. REPORTING OF BILLFISH

A billfish hook-up must be called in to the "Committee Boat" as soon as possible on the VHF channel or text | Whats App to cell number **(Courtney · 561-909-7868)**. The "Committee Boat" will validate your hook-up by announcement on VHF and reply with an official release time and fish number. A billfish release (only) must be called in to the "Committee Boat" with the following information: species released, boat name, angler name. The "Committee Boat" will then verify your information by announcement and give you a release time, which must be recorded on your daily catch affidavit and turned in at the end of

the fishing day, with your video evidence. It is unnecessary to call in any other species besides billfish. If you lose your fish prior to release (i.e. jump off, pulled hook, etc.) please inform the "Committee Boat" as soon as possible. If you call in a release, then it will be recorded as a release. Any unidentified billfish will be awarded 100 points per release.

All Billfish are release ONLY, No Kill.

10. GAMEFISH/ MEATFISH DIVISION WEIGH-IN

Teams may weigh-in only two of each species per day. Scale hours are *4:00pm-6:00pm each fishing day. The minimum weight of each species is 15 pounds. Any fish eligible for weigh-in must be brought to the scales by a team member and the angler. In the event of a tie, it will be broken by weigh station time. Please record the time the fish was caught in the case of a tie. Each fish must be brought to the dock by the team/ angler who caught the fish! For teams at Boat Harbor, or neighboring marinas/ docks you may bring your fish by tender or on another boat as long as the angler is with the fish being weighed at all times. You may then "walk or roll" the fish to the weigh station as needed. (*times subject to change but will be announced prior to fishing days).

NOTE: The weigh station will check for HIGH TIDE for larger vessels to enter Pelican Harbor at Elbow Cay. (For any concern on tide/entry to the harbor please call /WhatsApp to discuss with Robert Williams, Dockmaster @ Hope Town Marina · [1-876-518-7600](tel:1-876-518-7600) WhatsApp / [242-577-8067](tel:242-577-8067)

***Weigh Station will be at Hope Town Inn & Marina: VHF channel TBD**

11. CATCH & RELEASE RULES

All billfish must be released to qualify. A billfish is considered released when: a) the swivel between the mainline or double line and leader hits the rod tip b) the mate grabs the leader or c) the wind-on leader comes through the rod tip. *Please release the fish in good condition by either removing the hook-set or cutting the leader as close to the hook-set as possible. "Popping" the leader is not a good method of healthy release, and we ask that you refrain from doing so.*

12. No mutilated fish will be weighed. No exceptions.

13. CATCH & RELEASE POINTS :

Blue Marlin: 500pt
White Marlin: 200pt
Sailfish, Unidentified Billfish: 100pt
(A "Hatchet Marlin" and "Round Scaled Spearfish" will be considered White Marlin in this tournament and therefore categorized as such.)

14. CATCH & RELEASE VERIFICATION

Identification Markers - each team will be required to validate their videos and catches/ releases/ kills with a “marker” of the committee choosing to be announced at the Captains Meeting.

Billfish Release Affidavit - each billfish release is required to be noted on the day's release card and submitted with your video to the Committee each fishing day. Failure to turn in your card will disqualify that day's catch(es). Release/ catch cards are supplied with your registration package. If you do not have one for each day, please see the Committee for a replacement.

Submission of Video - Verification recordings must be submitted to the Committee between 4:30pm-6:30pm each day of fishing. All recordings, images, sounds etc. may become property of the Tournament and may be used at any time. Recordings and/or images will be downloaded from the team's device(s), if needed. Teams may use cell phone video if necessary. The Tournament will provide a way for teams fishing from Boat Harbor to drop their video cards to the Committee without entering Pelican Harbor, Elbow Cay.

Disputes or Protests – Protests must be filed with the Tournament Director prior to the close of scale each fishing day. Protests must be in writing accompanied with a non-refundable \$500 fee. All disputes will be settled by the Committee. All decisions are final. If found true, the protest fee will be returned to the boat who filed.

15. PAYMENT OF CASH AWARDS

Participation in optional Calcutta is not required to compete.
90% of all optional Calcutta fees are distributed in the form of check/awards with proper tax information as requested.

Calcutta fees, may be paid by U.S. currency, check (payable to Elbow Reef Foundation), wire transfer, cash or check.

Awards for all divisions are determined by points as stated in the above rules. Gamefish/meatfish: If no gamefish are caught in any division then that category will be shared/split into the other divisions. If no gamefish are caught, then all money will be refunded at 100%.

Weather

Tournament officials may cancel the tournament day if in their best judgment unsafe conditions exist at sea for the average boat entered. No refunds of any sort will be made for any cause in the event of such cancellation. If the day (or any portion thereof) is “weathered out”, the tournament results will be final based on the results of the official fishing time that can be completed. Notice of cancellation and/or resumption of fishing will be provided via Committee Phone. A determination permitting fishing by tournament officials should not be interpreted to mean that the tournament ensures the safety of any registered angler or occupant of any boat. Anglers must make their own judgments whether to fish under the prevailing weather conditions based on the size and seaworthiness of their boat, their seamanship skills, and any other relevant factors.

Hold Harmless - All registered anglers and non-registered occupants of their boats enter and participate in this tournament voluntarily at their own risk. In consideration for the tournament’s acceptance of his or her entry, each angler, for his or her heirs, executors, and administrators, agrees to release, hold harmless and indemnify the Tournament (Elbow Reef Foundation), its officers, managers, directors, agents, sponsors, donors, the city, county or country where the event is held, and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of the tournament (including, Tournament Director, Courtney Bowden – Contact Courtney Consulting, LLC), from and against any and all liabilities, claims, actions, damages, costs, fees or expenses which he or she may have against any above-described party, or which his or her captains, crew members, family members, companions or nonregistered occupants of their boat may have, arising out of or in any way connected with his or her participation in this tournament, including any injury or death suffered by any registered angler, boat captains, crew members, family members, companions or other occupants of any boat, and including any damage to vessels and equipment, which occurs during or in conjunction with the event. Each Angler

understands and agrees that this release specifically includes and waives any claims based on libel, slander, negligence, action or inaction of any above-named party.

Signing of the Entry Sheet - By registering a team and signing the entry form, the Boat Owner/Team Representative agrees to follow the above tournament rules, including all regulations set by the Bahamian Government. All Boat Owners/Team Representatives are required to sign the entry form as certification that they have read and agreed to abide by all guidelines and the above liability release.

***as of January 25, 2024– Rules, prices, schedule subject to change by committee as needed prior to the Capt. Meeting, May 29, 2024. All changes will be announced and published with appropriate timing.**