

Hatteras Village Offshore Open - 2024 RULES

ENTRY FEES:

Level I:	\$700	Mandatory Billfish
Level II:	\$800	Additional Billfish
Level III:	\$500	Game Fish
Level IV:	\$1,000	Biggest Blue Marlin
Level V:	\$500	Daily Game Fish
Level VI:	\$1,000	Daily Billfish Release Points
Level VII:	\$3,000	Additional Biggest Blue Marlin (60%/40%)

1. **REGISTRATION** - All boats must be registered with the Tournament committee and entry fee paid prior to 8:00 PM on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 to qualify for prizes. Any boat may be withdrawn or substituted prior to 6:00 PM on the Tuesday before the first fishing day. A full refund will be given to boats withdrawn prior to that time. Any substitute boat must be registered with the Tournament committee and entry fee paid.
2. **FISHING TIMES AND LAYDAYS** – No lines or teasers in the water nor can sonar be turned on before official fishing hours each day. Available fishing days and hours: May 15, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, May 16, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, May 17, 8:00 AM – 3:00 PM, May 18, 8:00 AM - 3:00 PM. Fishing days for all eligible boats shall be any three out of the available four days, captain’s choice. Non-fishing days must be reported on the official lay day form prior to 8:00 AM of the day declared as a non-fishing day. A member of the fishing team or boat’s crew must sign the form or file electronically via the website (www.hvoo.org). If a boat does not declare a day as non-fishing, the Tournament Committee will automatically count the day to be a fishing day for that boat.
3. **BOUNDARIES** – All boats fishing in the Hatteras Village Offshore Open must fish between LORAN coordinates East 26750, North 40500, and South 39800.
4. **FEDERAL AND STATE REGULATIONS** – All boats entered must have proper Federal and State permits to participate. No Blue Marlin will be weighed until a current HMS permit is produced for that boat. All crew, anglers, and any other individual participating in fishing shall have a valid NC Coastal Recreational Fishing License (CRFL) or be covered under a valid For Hire CRFL blanket license. All boats must also conform to state and federal regulations with regards to bait, tackle, size limits & possession limits. J-hooks may be used with artificial lures only.
5. **REPORTING** – All billfish (blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, and spearfish) must be reported to the committee boat when hooked, lost, boated or released. A billfish is considered a release when the mate touches the leader or the leader touches the rod tip. The crew cannot have attempted to boat or gaff the

fish. Once the gaff breaks the plane of the boat, the billfish cannot be considered a release. Any member of the crew may set the hook and the rod may be passed no more than twice to the angler. Radio frequency shall be VHF channel 74. No hookup reporting is required for game fish.

6. **WEIGH-IN** – All billfish eligible for prizes must be off-loaded and weighed at the official tournament weigh station at Hatteras Harbor Marina from the boat landing the fish. The tournament weigh master must enter the fish on the official entry form. Game fish (Yellowfin tuna, dolphin, wahoo) must be brought to the official tournament weigh station to be eligible for prizes. The tournament weigh master will record the species, boat name, angler's name and official weight and measurements. Tournament weigh station will be closed at 7:00 PM unless notified of incoming blue marlin. All yellowfin tuna brought to the scales must be a minimum of 27" curved fork length. Only one fish per species per day per boat will be weighed at the scales.
7. **POINTS** – Winners of Level I and Level II will be determined by points. In the event of a Level I and/or Level II tie, winner will be determined by the first boat to reach the most points. Release Points are awarded as follows: 125 points will be awarded for all Billfish releases. 400 points will be awarded for a Blue Marlin release with a photo identification. 125 points will be awarded for a released White Marlin, Sailfish or Spearfish.
8. **QUALIFYING BLUE MARLIN** – In the largest Blue Marlin categories, Level IV and Level VII, the winning Blue Marlin(s) will be determined by weight. Any blue marlin that is boated must be weighed in at the official weigh station. In the event of a tie, the largest total measurement of girth plus length will be determined the winner. Length will be measured from the V-notch in the tail to the tip of the lower jaw. Any Blue Marlin weighing 400 pounds or more or measuring 110 inches or more will be eligible for prize money. In the event a blue marlin does not meet either of these qualifications, the fish will be disqualified and the boat will be penalized 200 points. A Blue Marlin less than 99 inches will be automatically disqualified. Any Blue Marlin that makes minimum of 110 inches or 400 pounds will be awarded 400 points. These 400 points count ONLY in Level I and II but NOT Level VI. No official weigh slip will be given for any disqualified fish. In the event no qualifying blue marlin are weighed in Level IV and Level VII, prize money will be retained and added to the following year's purse for each of those Levels. If only one blue marlin is weighed in for Level VII, it will receive 100% of prize money in that Level.
9. **GAME FISH** – Winning game fish will be determined by weight in pounds and ounces. In case of a Level III or Level V tie, the winner will be determined by the largest total sum of length and girth as measured by the official weighmaster. Fish must be in fresh edible condition; fit for human consumption and weighed in the day they are caught.
10. **RELEASE DOCUMENTATION** – Released fish must be attested to by signature of the angler, boat captain and mate on board the boat at the time of the release on the Official Release Form provided by the NC Billfish Series. This form shall be turned into the official Weighmaster in Hatteras by 7:00 PM. Release forms must be turned in the day the fish is released to qualify. To be considered a release, the mate must touch the leader or the leader touch the rod tip before the fish is released. All leaders must not exceed 30 feet. In the event of a tie, the first boat to achieve the winning total shall be declared the winner. Polygraph tests will be administered to the top money winners and others as necessary - captain and mate only. **Qualifying crew must be available for polygraph at the discretion of the Tournament Committee either Friday or Saturday of the Tournament in Hatteras Village.**

11. **WEIGH-IN PRIORITY** – Blue marlins take priority over game fish at the scales. The same scales and weigh station will be used for all fish including those entered in the NC Billfish Series. Any Billfish or game fish being weighed in at the scales are property of tournament boat and must be disposed of properly.
12. **RULES MEETING** – At least one person from each boat should be represented and is responsible for knowing the rules, including any changes that may take place at the Captains Meeting on Tuesday, May 14, 2024 at 7:00 pm at the Hatteras Village Civic Center.
13. **PRIZE MONEY** – Prize money checks will be made payable to the person or entity indicated on the registration form of the winning boat. Social security number or Taxpayer ID of the prize recipient must be provided at the time of prize distribution. You must be entered in a level to receive prize money from that level.
14. **PROTESTS** – Any dispute must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Rules Committee within one hour of weighing the last fish for that day.
15. **WEIGHT ALTERATION** – The Rules Committee reserves the right to cut open the fish for inspection of any suspected weight altering efforts such as inserted weights, ice, water, etc. Attempted weight alteration of any blue marlin or game fish will automatically disqualify the boat from the tournament. IGFA rules apply regarding mutilated fish.
16. **REFUNDS** – In the event that no qualifying blue marlin are weighed in Levels IV and/or VII, all prize money will be retained and added to the following year's purse to the established prize schedule. No refunds will be made. If not all places are won in Levels III & V, all prize money will be paid proportionately among the other winners in each of those Levels.
17. **MANDATORY ENTRY** – You must enter Level I before you can enter any other level.
18. **DISQUALIFICATION** – Any boat breaching any of the above Tournament Rules will be disqualified, except as previously stated. Decisions of the Rules committee and Board of Directors are final. Any captain or mate that refuses to be polygraphed will be disqualified.
19. **FORUM SELECTION/INDEMNIFICATION** – All participants, owners of vessels or pro hoc owners of vessels, consent and agree that the federal and state courts for Dare County, North Carolina, shall serve as the sole venue for all litigation and disputes arising out of a person or vessel's participation in the tournament. If a participant does not secure the signature of the vessel's owner and/or pro hoc owner for this agreement, the participant(s) agrees to indemnify the tournament against all claims brought by the owner and or pro hoc owners of the vessel(s).