

## 28<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL TUNA-MENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

### NEW – 2 Divisions based on boat size – 31 feet and under OR Over 31 feet - Manufacturer Specifications

**ENTRY FEE:** \$275.00 (Non-members add \$25) - Applications paid with a dishonored check or credit card shall automatically void the registration.

**CAPTAINS and MEMBERSHIP:** Captains and crew do not have to be members of the MSSA to fish this tournament.

**TOURNAMENT DATES:** June 16-18, 2017

**WEIGH-STATIONS:** Atlantic Tackle - Ocean City, MD; Chincoteague, VA – Curtis-Merritt Harbor; Hook'em & Cook'em - Indian River Inlet, DE

**FISHING LOCATIONS:** Waters of the Atlantic Ocean

**ELIGIBLE FISH SPECIES:** All tunas except false albacore will be allowed in main tournament. Dolphin will be allowed in the special category. **ALL BOATS COMPETING IN THE TOURNAMENT WILL FOLLOW THE ANGLING POSSESSION LIMITS DETERMINED BY NMFS AND APPLICABLE STATE LAWS.**

**WEATHER AND RISK OF LOSS:** There is no Weather Committee. Captains and crews enter and participate in this tournament at their own risk. Captains and their crews 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.

**REFUNDS:** Only one (1) day of fishing by one boat is necessary to make the tournament official. In the event that there are no available days for fishing the tournament due to an Act of God or natural disaster, 50% of all entry fees and TWT fees will be refunded. In the event that you are unable to participate, a written request stating the reasons therefore for a tournament refund must be received at MSSA's main office no later than 5:00 P.M. on June 13, 2016. All requests must be in writing and may be delivered via mail, hand, email or facsimile transmission to the Tournament Committee for its consideration

**WEIGH-IN:** **FISH MUST BE BROUGHT TO OFFICIAL WEIGH-IN STATION BY BOAT DIRECTLY FROM FISHING BY WATER.**

Fish must be brought to an official Weigh-Station by water in the same boat that they were landed (unless authorized by MSSA Weigh-Master under Disabled Vessel Rule). Captain may weigh-in any tournament fish species during tournament Weigh-Station hours. Captain or their designee must be present and have captain number in hand before Weigh-Master will weigh and enter their catch. Weigh-Master has the right to request identification of Captain. Refusal will result in disqualification of fish or disqualification of team from tournament. All fish weighed in will be issued an official weigh-in receipt. Captains must object to the catch weight before the weigh-in receipt is issued. Upon issuance of the weigh-in receipt, the catch weight shall be deemed accurate, final and agreed upon by the Captain. All fish are subject to examination, internally and externally, as the Weigh-Master deems necessary. All fish weighed in will be prominently marked by the Weigh-Master. Weigh-Masters may confiscate or report suspect fish to the Tournament Committee without protest. Only three (3) fish of each tournament species can be weighed in per captain, per fishing day. (Bluefin, refer to NMFS regulation)

**WEIGH-STATION HOURS:** will open at: 4:30 PM on Friday, Saturday and Sunday and will close at 8:00 P.M. on each day of the tournament. No fish will be weighed in after 8:00 P.M. unless the Captain, Alternate Captain, and/or crew is in line and/or have been recognized by the Weigh-Master at time of closing.

**PROTEST:** Protests are strongly encouraged to be placed immediately upon knowledge of a Rules infraction. Initial Protests may be made verbally to any MSSA Weigh-Master. Verbal protests must be followed up in writing on an official MSSA Protest Form. Protests Forms must be received within two (2) days from the close of a tournament with the \$500.00 protest fee to be eligible for consideration by the Tournament Committee. Protest fees will be refunded in the event a protest is upheld. MSSA reserves the right to withhold payment of tournament prizes until protest is resolved. Disqualifications are not dependent upon valid protest process.

**FISHING HOURS:** Lines in the water 7:00 AM to 3:30 PM, unless fish on. Reminder, you must get back to the Weigh-Station, in line with fish in hand or recognized by the weigh master before 8:00 PM. NO EXCEPTIONS (Even if you had a fish on after 3:30PM).

**FISHING DAYS:** You may only fish two (2) of three (3) days. You MUST declare your 'Lay-Day' by 7:00 AM on each day. Any day not specifically declared a lay day will count as a fishing day whether your boat leaves port or not. If an entrant doesn't make any declarations then the first two days will be their fishing days. **Call 443-613-5109 & Leave message (Name, Capt. Number, and Lay Day)**

**MEASURE:** The Minimum length for weighing in any Tuna or tournament species will be the current regulations established by NMFS (curved fork length) or other government agency.

**CAPTAIN NUMBER:** Each Captain MUST have in their possession the captain number issued by the MSSA. This captain number should be included in your Captain's Package and must be presented to the Weigh-Master before weighing fish.

**FISHING PORTS:** You may fish from any port, but you must weigh-in at official weigh stations. Atlantic Tackle - Ocean City, MD; Curtis-Merritt Marina- Chincoteague, VA; Indian River Int, DE

**FORMAT:** Captains may weigh in 3 tuna and 3 dolphin per day. Largest Tuna is determined by weight only. Captain must choose their fish to be weighed in before weighing. Captain may NOT use official scale to help decide. You may only win one prize per captain in the main tournament, excluding TWT's and special categories. This is an "Open" tournament, everyone is eligible to fish. Amateurs, professional captains, charter boat captains, mates of charter boats, or any holder of a commercial fin-fishing license are eligible to participate.

**FISHING AND FISHING METHODS:** All fish must be caught on hook and line. Chumming, Chunking, and jigging will not be permitted during the tournament by any participant. **THIS IS A TROLLING TOURNAMENT ONLY.** In the event of an emergency regulation change all participants are responsible for abiding by all NMFS regulations regardless of MSSA tournament rules. NO "GREEN-STICKING" ALLOWED

**TOURNAMENT COMMUNICATION:** Text alerts will be sent after weigh stations are closed to inform Captains of preliminary standings. If you would like to receive tournament updates via text please give your cell number on application. MSSA will also post preliminary standings and results on www.mssa.net and MSSA facebook page.

**DISQUALIFICATION:** The Tournament Committee reserves the sole and absolute discretion to disqualify any angler, crew, captain, registrant or vessel at any time. Persons may be disqualified from the tournament because of a rule violation, regardless of the severity of the violation. All participants agree to abide by tournament rules and decisions of the Tournament Committee. Decisions as to the disqualification or eligibility of any vessel, crew, or fish weighed in shall be made solely by the Tournament Committee and its decisions shall be final and incontestable. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to disqualify any boat at any time for misrepresentation made on any application or registration form by any member of the boat, any suspicious activity or unsportsmanlike conduct. Any boat disqualified shall be for the entire tournament, and shall result in the forfeiture of all tournament fees and prize money even if the disqualification was made after the prize money was awarded.

**POLYGRAPH:** In consideration for the MSSA's acceptance of an entry form for a Tournament, each registered Captain and angler specifically agrees and consents to voluntarily submit to a polygraph examination or examinations. The MSSA reserves the right to polygraph tournament winners as well as random tournament participants in any tournament. Each registered Captain or angler agrees to

obtain the agreement and consent of each and every occupant of the boat from which he or she fishes during the tournament (including but not limited to the captain and crew) to submit to a polygraph examination or examinations as described above. The method and conduct of all polygraph examinations, and the interpretation of the results thereof, shall be in the sole judgment of the polygraph examiner appointed by the MSSA, whose opinion shall be final. If any registered captain, angler or occupant of a vessel refuses to submit to a polygraph examination, or if any registered Captain, occupant, or angler gives a response which, in the sole opinion of the polygraph examiner, is untruthful, then all registered persons on the boat shall be immediately disqualified without further notice from the MSSA. Any registered Vessel, Captain or angler so disqualified shall not be entitled to any prize, award, or entry fee refund.

**FISH ONBOARD:** No uncleaned tournament fish can be on the boat before the start of the day, unless marked by Weigh-Master. Transient boats must keep with them at all times, captain number, marina receipt, and any other documentation explaining their situation to avoid law enforcement violations. The MSSA shall not be responsible for any citations or other law enforcement violations during tournament hours.

**RULES and RULE CHANGES:** Tournament rule changes may be made by the Tournament Committee at any time up to the first Captain's Meeting. It is the responsibility of all participants to familiarize themselves with all the rules and regulations of this Tournament and to abide by these rules and regulations.

**SEPARATION OF VESSELS:** At no time during tournament fishing hours is a vessel permitted to approach another boat or structure unless authorized by an MSSA Weigh-Master or in emergency situations. Participants may not return with fish for weigh-in after landing or leaving their vessels without Weigh Master approval. Refusal or error may result in disqualification.

**DISABLED VESSEL:** At no time during Tournament Fishing Hours is a vessel permitted to approach another boat or structure unless permitted by MSSA Weigh Master or in emergency situations. In the event a vessel becomes disabled during the Tournament, the Captain must notify a Tournament Weigh-Master as soon as possible that their vessel is disabled. Boats being towed into port must notify a MSSA Tournament Director (443-613-5109) that their vessel is under tow to remain registered. Only registered tournament participants may be on board a disabled vessel under tow. Upon returning to port, the Captain must first check-in with the Weigh-Master to affirm to the Weigh-Master that their vessel was towed to port and that no one boarded their vessel during the tow. Captain must notify the MSSA Tournament Director prior to transferring to another vessel

**RISKS and WAIVERS:** Tournament participants accept the risks and dangers involved in such activity, and they acknowledge that unanticipated or unexpected dangers may occur. Participants agree to indemnify and hold harmless: the MSSA, its officers, directors, members, committee members, its assigns, sponsors, lessees, agents, and employees from any and all liability for any: claim, loss, injury, damage, demands, actions, choses in action, costs, accidents, libel, slander, negligence and/or death suffered by any member, family, crew boat and/or other persons which may occur during their term of membership or participation in a Tournament or MSSA Sponsored activity. The member further releases the MSSA, its officers, directors, committee members and sponsors from any liability for libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, injury and / or death suffered by any member, family, crew, boat and/or other person which may occur during any term of membership.

**FUTURE PROMOTION:** MSSA members consent to the MSSA's use without payment or restrictions of any photographs taken during an MSSA event, the angler's name, boat name, crews names, or vessel for any purpose whatsoever. All photographs submitted to the MSSA shall be the sole property of the MSSA after submission and maybe used without compensation

**SPORTSMANSHIP:** The MSSA may disqualify any Vessel, Captain, crew, participant, angler or member who is involved in unsportsmanlike conduct; a knowing violation of the Rules, or for any reason that the MSSA believes the acts warrant disqualification. Members are also subject to termination of their membership for similar violations. At no time shall any boat captain or crew make verbal or written contracts that in anyway involve the splitting of prize money with another vessel. Any team caught culling or discarding fish immediately following weigh-in will be automatically disqualified.

**MONIES WILL BE SEPARATED BY DIVISION – DIVISIONS WILL USE THE SAME FORMAT LISTED BELOW**

**MAIN TOURNAMENT PRIZE MONEY: (single heaviest tuna – Captains may weigh 3 tuna/day)**

1st Place.....60%  
2nd Place.....30%  
3<sup>rd</sup> Place.....10%

**Tournaments Within Tournament (TWT) RULES - (tuna only):**

1. This is an optional portion of the Tuna-ment
2. Main tournament rules apply.
3. Each Captain must enter into the Tuna-ment before he is eligible to enter any TWT.
4. Captain must be entered in each TWT before the start of the tournament to be eligible for TWT prizes.
5. You are allowed to weigh up to fish (3) tuna per captain, per fishing day. The \$100 TWT will be determined by the total weight of up to two (2) heaviest tuna checked-in during the tournament. \$200 TWT will be determined by the total weight of up to three (3) heaviest tuna weighed-in. The \$300 TWT will be determined by the heaviest yellow fin weighed-in. \$500 Skill Level is determined by single heaviest tuna weighed-in

**TWT PRIZE MONEY:**

\$100.00 TWT (2 fish stringer).....70% - 30%  
\$200.00 TWT (3 fish stringer).....70% - 30%  
\$300.00 TWT (single heaviest yellow fin).....70% - 30%  
\$500.00 TWT (single heaviest tuna) – One Winner

**SPECIAL CATEGORY RULES – (dolphin only):**

1. This is an optional portion of the Tuna-ment
2. Main tournament rules apply
3. Captain must enter into the Tuna-ment before he is eligible to enter any Special Category
4. Captain must be entered in the special category before the start of the tournament to be eligible for special category prizes
5. Only three (3) dolphin fish may be weighed in per captain, per fishing day. Captain must decide which fish to weigh for entry before weighing. Captain may not use official scale.

**Special Category (dolphin) PRIZE MONEY:**

\$75.00 (single heaviest dolphin).....70% - 30%  
\$100.00 TWT (3 fish stringer).....70% - 30%