



SECTION I

Sport Fishing Championship | SFC Billfish Championship Rules

1. Composition of Team.

- (a) A “Team” is defined as at least three teammates (“Teammates”), comprised of any combination of Captain, Mates, and Anglers, and includes all anglers on a boat. Each boat is limited to a single Team in each SFC Qualifying Event regardless of the number of persons on the boat. Teams may be comprised of male and female representatives (Sport Fishing Championship (“SFC”) does not have gender-specific competitions).
- (b) All Teammates must be on the boat at all times during an SFC Qualifying Event in order to for the Team to remain eligible to earn points in that SFC Qualifying Event.
- (c) Once a person declares themselves a Teammate of a Team, that person may not compete for any other Team in the same SFC Season.
- (d) SFC acknowledges that there are special circumstances where a Teammate may become injured, ill, or other special circumstances (such as bereavement) arise (“Special Circumstances”). In the event that a Team cannot meet the three Teammate qualification minimum for a SFC Qualifying Event due to Special Circumstances, the Team must submit a Tournament Qualification Special Request Waiver to the SFC Competition Chairperson for review, and in that Special Request Waiver identify a Teammate who has previously appeared on the Team’s SFC Roster Card during the current SFC Regular Season who may be permitted to compete as a Teammate in that SFC Qualifying Event under the sole discretion of the Sport Fishing Championship’s Competition Chairperson.

2. Registering a Team, Roster, and Boat.

- (a) All competitors above the age of 18 years old will be required to register and create a Competitor Profile at **SportFishingChampionship.com/registration** and provide the minimum information requirements for registration in the Sport Fishing Championship. Minors (younger than 18 years of age prior to the first date of fishing for an SFC Qualifying Event) must have a parent or guardian complete a SFC Minor Competition Waiver prior to competing. Registration for a Qualifying Event will be available until 11:59pm local time on the day prior to the start of the tournament.
 - i. Registration for a Team to participate in the 2024 SFC Billfish Championship Season is included in the total registration cost for the Qualifying Event. A secondary registration for the Team is not required.
- (b) The three Teammates of each Team must check in with the SFC’s team registration table, typically located at the same registration location at each of the SFC Qualifying Events. All Teammates must check-in with the SFC representative and provide a government-issued ID. The Team will then fill out a SFC Team, Roster, and Boat registration card, either physically or digitally, where the SFC will collect the first names, last names, boat name (if applicable) and boat HIN.
- (c) Example of SFC Fishing Team, Roster, and Boat Registration Card:

2024 Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open SFC Roster Card

Team Name (Optional)	Team Super Charged
Boat Name	Lucky Number 7
Boat HIN	ABC12345D404
SFC Fishing Teammate #1	Johnathon Doe
SFC Fishing Teammate #2	Jane Smith
SFC Fishing Teammate #3	Walter Angler
Team Member #4	First Last 1
Team Member #5	First Last 2
Team Member #6	First Last 3
Team Member #7	First Last 4
Team Member #8	First Last 5
Team Member #9	First Last 6
Team Member #10	First Last 7



- i. In the example above, Johnathon Doe, Jane Smith, and Walter Angler have declared that they are competing for the “Team Super Charged” team in the SFC Regular Season.
 - ii. The three Teammates will be required to compete on the “Lucky Number 7” boat with HIN last four D404 at the 2024 Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open.
 - iii. The three Teammates that comprise the Team Super Charged (Doe, Smith, Angler) are permitted to compete as a Team on a different boat at future SFC Qualifying Events.
 - (d)** It is the responsibility of the Team to complete registration for a Qualifying Event prior to the start of the event. After registration for a Qualifying Event is closed - typically between 5-9pm in person at the Qualifying Event registration area, and 11:59pm local time online at sportfishingchampionship.com - Teams will not be permitted to register for the Event once registration has concluded. For teams experiencing technical difficulties registering online, please email contact@sportfishingchampionship.com prior to the start of the Qualifying Event competition and SFC Officials will work diligently to manually register participants, however, manual registrations through SFC staff are not guaranteed without taking the steps listed above.
 - (e)** Teams are permitted to change boats during any SFC Qualifying Event **only** if the vessel experiences a new mechanical issue to the motor, cabin, or hull that creates life safety issues to the Team and all other people on board and is subject to the Qualifying Event's official tournament rules and/ or Tournament Director approval. If a Team needs to change boats due to life safety issues, a Boat Change Request Form must be immediately submitted to the SFC Competition Chairperson before the new boat is entered into that SFC Qualifying Event.
 - (f)** SFC reserves the right to inspect any boat within 24 hours of competition at its sole discretion. If a Team does not allow the SFC Competition Chairperson or his/ her designee to inspect the boat, that Team will be disqualified from the SFC Qualifying Event.
 - (g)** These SFC rules and regulations are in addition to, and not a replacement for, the rules and regulations of each SFC Qualifying Event. Each Team and each Teammate must comply with all rules and regulations of SFC and each SFC Qualifying Event in which such Team participates; provided, that in the event of any conflict between the SFC rules and regulations and the rules and regulations of any SFC Qualifying Event, the SFC rules and regulations shall be controlling.
 - (h)** **"Ghost Team Member" Rule:** It is the sole responsibility of the three Teammates to make sure that all Team Members have been reported on the SFC Roster Card prior to the beginning of the tournament. All persons on-board the boat must be accounted for on the SFC Roster Card, even if they have not registered with the Sport Fishing Championship. If it is confirmed that a person is present on the boat without being reported by the Teammates on the SFC Roster Card in an effort to create a competitive advantage, that Team may be subject to disqualification from the SFC Qualifying Event and/ or the SFC's Billfish Championship at the sole discretion of Sport Fishing Championship Officials.
 - (i)** **"Working Charter Boat Exemption" Rule:** At the sole discretion of Sport Fishing Championship Officials, a working, licensed, fishing charter boat business may be permitted to provide services for multiple fishing Teams during the same SFC Billfish Championship Season, so long as a) the boat is providing support to the Qualifying Event by increasing the number of available vessels in the market, b) the charter boat captain and crew have secluded themselves from participating in the SFC's Billfish Championship and SFC Championship Fish competitions, and c) it is determined that the supporting Charter Boat provides no competitive advantage to the fishing team utilizing the charter boat services. For clarity, the Team's opportunity to register points in a Qualifying Event and register Qualified Catch points is shall not be deemed a competitive advantage to the fishing team. It is the responsibility of the fishing Team to submit a "Working Charter Boat Exemption Request" to Sport Fishing Championship Officials prior to the start of the tournament, and, the request may be approved or denied at the sole discretion of SFC Officials.
- 3) SFC Qualifying Events & Competition Schedule.** The following events will be recognized as SFC Qualifying Events in the 2024 SFC Regular Season with their regional division represented in quotations:
- (a)** Hurricane Hole Louisiana Open (Gulf), Grand Isle, LA, May 2-4, 2024
 - (b)** NEFMA Salt Life Bluewater Tournament, St. Augustine, FL (Atlantic), May 9-11, 2024
 - (c)** East Pass Challenge, Destin, FL (Gulf), May 14-18, 2024
 - (d)** Walker's Cay Open, Walker's Cay, BS (Atlantic), May 30 – June 1, 2024
 - (e)** Mississippi Gulf Coast Billfish Classic (Gulf), Biloxi, MS, June 6-8, 2024



- (f) Alabama Offshore Open, Orange Beach (Gulf), AL, June 13-15, 2024
- (g) Bay Point Billfish Open (Gulf), Panama City Beach, FL, June 27-29, 2024
- (h) Oak Bluffs Bluewater Classic, Martha's Vineyard, MA (Atlantic), July 11-13, 2024
- (i) Montauk Canyons Challenge, Montauk, NY (Atlantic), July 18-20, 2024
- (j) Tri States Canyons Shootout, Block Island, RI (Atlantic), July 24-26, 2024
- (k) To Be Announced, (Gulf Division Championship), August TBA, 2024
- (l) To Be Announced (Atlantic Division Championship), August TBD, 2024
- (m) Zane Grey Championship Playoffs (SFC Championship), To Be Announced, 2024

4) Qualified Catch.

- (a) A "Qualified Catch" is defined, for each SFC Qualifying Event, as:
 - i. Any blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, spearfish (all species), or swordfish catch-and-release recorded by any Teammate or Team Member submitted on the SFC Roster Card at an SFC Qualifying Event that is recognized by the official rules of the SFC Qualifying Event during tournament competition; and
 - ii. During Tournament competition, if an SFC Qualifying Event permits the boat or angler to return to the docks with one blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, spearfish or swordfish to be weighed, the Fishing Team may record one fish per SFC Qualifying Event as a Qualified Catch.
- (b) Timely Reporting of a Qualified Catch – 10 Minute Rule: It is the responsibility of the Team to Register their Qualified Catch within (10) minutes of recording the catch. It is explicitly noted by SFC Billfish Division competitors that Sport Fishing Championship requires catches to be registered with Qualifying Event Tournament Officials within (10) minutes either via the SFC Scoring App, via Satellite Phone, inReach communication, or by emailing Tournament Officials at scoring@sportfishingchampionship.com. SFC offers inReach and Starlink devices for sale prior to all Qualifying Events. It is the sole responsibility of the competitors to assure they have the technology needed to record Qualifying Catches within (10) minutes. A Qualified Catch that is not reported in accordance with this rule may be subject to disqualification at the sole discretion of the Qualifying Event's Tournament Director, or SFC Competition Chairman.
- (c) The SFC awards Qualified Catch points using the following scoring system:
 - i. Blue Marlin: 450 points
 - ii. White Marlin: 125 points
 - iii. Spearfish: 125 points
 - iv. Sailfish: 100 points
 - v. Swordfish: 100 points
- (d) The SFC will take the official catch data from each SFC Qualifying Event and apply its scoring system to the data, and then publish the final SFC's tournament results. For clarity, if there is a "Billfish Competition" in an SFC Qualifying Event, then SFC's tournament results may not be equal to the tournament's final results (due to individual tournament multipliers, "first catch bonuses," and other scoring inconsistencies across the tournament circuit).
- (e) SFC reserves the right to enforce independent video verification reviewed by the SFC Competition Chairperson and polygraph test examination of any Teammates and Team Members in order to preserve the integrity of the competition. SFC at its sole discretion may verify Qualified Catches or disqualify the Qualified Catch or Fishing Team based on the results video verification and/ or polygraph examination.
- (f) Sport Fishing Championship competition officials support NOAA, ATCA, the Magnuson-Stevens Act and Code of Federal Regulations 50 CFR 635.21 (f) for the protection of Atlantic Migratory Species, which states: *Anglers fishing with natural bait (or natural/artificial combination bait) must only use non-offset circle hooks in billfish tournaments. Anglers may only use J-hooks in billfish tournaments if they are fishing with artificial lures.*
 - (a) The definition of "natural bait" as adopted by SFC means, any living or dead animal or vegetable substance which on account of the edibility, smell or taste thereof is used in angling to lure fish.



- (g) Competitors may fight a fish either free standing, in a harness or seated in a fighting chair. SFC Qualifying Events permit competitors to fight a fish based on their preference.
 - (a) While fighting a fish, a Teammate is permitted to assist the Angler by adjusting a harness or chair so long as the Teammate does not make intentional contact with the rod, reel or line.
 - (b) For the safety of all competitors, Teammates may reinforce the harness by pressing down on the back of the harness so long as the Teammate does not make intentional contact with the rod, reel or line.
- (h) Anglers are prohibited from fighting a fish with the rod inside the rod holder. Anglers may not advance or crank the line while the rod is in the holder.
- (i) A Teammate may pass the rod one time during the fight. If the rod is passed is must be done within the first minute after the hookup of the fish. Video verification may be applied to assure the rod was passed within 60 seconds of hookup.
- (j) Verifying a Qualified Catch: All Qualified Catches must be verified by video either through the SFCAA App or by submitting video to Tournament Officials within the time allotted during the Qualifying Event's competition hours. A Qualified Catch occurs when:
 - (a) The leader connection is wound to the tip of the rod, or,
 - (b) A Teammate makes contact with the leader in hand, and,
 - (c) Video verification includes the live fish swimming away.

**Either (a) or (b) AND (c) must occur and be verified by a Qualifying Event Video Official to register points in the competition.*

5) SFC Regular Season Tournament Scoring System.

- (a) Registered Teams that finish in the top twenty of all registered Teams at each SFC Qualifying Event will earn SFC Season points based on the following tiered system:

<u>Place</u>	<u>Points</u>		<u>Place</u>	<u>Points</u>
1 st	3,500		11 th	1,200
2 nd	3,000		12 th	1,000
3 rd	2,800		13 th	900
4 th	2,600		14 th	800
5 th	2,400		15 th	700
6 th	2,200		16 th	600
7 th	2,000		17 th	500
8 th	1,800		18 th	400
9 th	1,600		19 th	300
10 th	1,400		20 th	200

- (b) In the event that multiple teams “tie” for placement in a tournament by recording identical scores, each of the Teams that tie will receive the number of points equal to their “place” in the tournament. As an example, if three Teams tie for 3rd Place at an SFC Qualifying Event, each Team will be rewarded 2,800 points.
 - i. The team or teams that register the next-highest score would then be awarded the "Place" that equally represents their placement in the Qualifying Event after all previous teams have been taken into account. As an example, if one team finishes in 1st Place, one team finishes in 2nd Place, and three teams tie for 3rd Place, the team or teams that received the next-highest score would finish in 6th Place (because five teams scored higher).
 - ii. The SFC will determine one winning team per Qualifying Event. There will not be a "tie" for First Place (1st). In the event that two or more teams conclude the tournament tied for First Place, the following tiebreakers shall go into effect:
 - 1. Tiebreaker 1: First blue marlin caught in the Qualifying Event.



2. Tiebreaker 2: First white marlin caught in the Qualifying Event.
3. Tiebreaker 3: First sailfish caught in the Qualifying Event.
4. Tiebreaker 4: First swordfish caught in the Qualifying Event.
5. Tiebreaker 5: First Qualified Catch (any species) caught in the Qualifying Event.

(c) In the event of an event cancellation, the event will be removed from the SFC Regular Season and will not be considered an SFC Qualifying Event for the current SFC Regular Season. SFC has the sole right to add or remove SFC Qualifying Events to the SFC Regular Season at any time at its own discretion.

6) Awarding A Winner: 2024 Zane Grey Championship Playoffs

(a) The 2024 SFC Billfish Championship Season will conclude in a three-day, 12-team, elimination tournament that will be hosted at the Zane Grey Championship Playoffs (the "Playoff(s)"). At the conclusion of the SFC Billfish Championship Season, the following teams will advance into the 12-team playoff:

- (a) Gulf Division Championship winning team and the second place and third place Gulf Division teams.
- (b) Atlantic Division Championship winning team and the second place and third place Atlantic Division teams.

(b) In order to qualify for the Atlantic Division Championship, Caribbean Division Championship, Coastal Division Championship or Gulf Division Championship, the Team must compete in a minimum of three divisional SFC Qualifying Events.

- i. A minimum of ten (10) Teams must qualify in the SFC's Billfish Championship's Atlantic Division and Gulf Division, per Division competition, in order for SFC to syndicate the division championship competition. If ten (10) teams do not qualify for either a division championship it is at the SFC's sole discretion whether or not to award a winner or the competition may be deemed null and void. SFC will make best efforts to award a champion in each of the three division championships and in the event of an act of God or multiple postponements or cancellations of events.

(c) The SFC will also award regional Division Championships in the Atlantic Division and Gulf Division with division-specific Qualifying Events noted above in Section 3. The SFC will award one Division Champion based on the aggregate of Fishing Team's top three regional division-specific Qualifying Event ("tournament") scores.

- i. In general terms, the SFC will combine the team's three best regional-division-specific tournament scores, and all other division-specific Qualifying Event scores will be dropped.
- ii. Division Championships are awarded at the final Regular Season event in each respective regional division, not at the final event of the SFC's Regular Season (Zane Grey Championship Playoffs). The Gulf Division Champion will be syndicated at the TBA Gulf Division Championship Event (TBA), and the Atlantic Division Champion will be syndicated at the TBA Atlantic Division Championship Event (TBA).

(d) Scoring Examples:

Team A:

1 st SFC Qualifying Event	2 nd SFC Qualifying Event	3 rd SFC Qualifying Event	Total
3,000	2,800	500	6,300

Team B: * WINNER *

1 st SFC Qualifying Event	2 nd SFC Qualifying Event	3 rd SFC Qualifying Event	Total
2,600	3,500	3,000	9,100

Team C:



1 st SFC Qualifying Event	2 nd SFC Qualifying Event	3 rd SFC Qualifying Event	Total
3,000	2,000	2,400	7,400

(e) Tiebreakers: In the event that two or more Teams have equal scores at the conclusion of the SFC’s Regular Season (or at the conclusion of a final regional division event for Division Championships), the following tie breakers will be implemented in order to crown one team the Champion:

- i. Tiebreaker 1: Highest place finish in an SFC Qualifying event.
- ii. Tiebreaker 2: Most blue marlin caught in the SFC Regular Season.
- iii. Tiebreaker 3: Most white marlin caught in the SFC Regular Season.
- iv. Tiebreaker 4: Most sailfish caught in the SFC Regular Season.
- v. Tiebreaker 5: Most swordfish caught in the SFC Regular Season.
- vi. Tiebreaker 6: First blue marlin caught in the SFC Regular Season.
- vii. *****Tiebreakers for Division Championships would be based on the tiebreakers listed above but as of the date that the regional Division Championship is being awarded. Results following the conclusion of the Division Championship (i.e. in the Playoffs) would not be considered after the Division Championship has been awarded already.**

(f) The SFC will award its prizes in the Billfish Division (including Atlantic and Gulf Divisions) in equal distributions to the three teammates listed on the team's final Qualifying Event Roster Card, unless otherwise requested and coordinated between the three teammates and the SFC at the SFC's sole discretion.

7) Zane Grey Championship Playoffs Competition Format.

a) The 12-team Zane Grey Championship Playoffs will be hosted across three days at the Zane Grey Championship Playoffs (TBA Location). Seeding for the 12 Qualifying Teams as determined above in Section 6.a:

Seed 1 (First Round Bye)	Highest Scoring Division Winner (Atlantic or Gulf)
Seed 2 (First Round Bye)	Second-Highest Scoring Division Winner
Seed 3 (First Round Bye)	Third-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 4 (First Round Bye)	Fourth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 5	Fifth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 6	Sixth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 7	Seventh-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 8	Eighth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 9	Ninth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 10	Tenth-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 11	11th-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team
Seed 12	12th-Highest Scoring Qualifying Team

If two or more teams have identical total season point totals as outlined in Section 6.a above, Playoff Seeding shall be determined by the Zane Grey Championship Playoff Committee and Competition Chairman (the Playoff Committee) at the sole discretion of the Committee. The Playoff Committee shall make best efforts to seed teams based on their performance against the field during the regular season division Qualifying Event competitions.

i) **Single Division Qualification Rule:** A team may compete in multiple SFC Divisions during the Regular Season. If a Team qualifies for the Zane Grey Championship Playoffs in multiple divisions, the Team will advance to the Playoffs and receive the highest Seeding position based on the criteria in Section 6. The Team will vacate the lower seeding(s) and the Zane Grey Championship Playoff Committee will then invite the next-highest scoring team from the Division in which the



Playoff Seed was vacated. The Playoff Committee will continue to invite Teams in the Division from the vacated position until the playoff bracket is filled.

- b) **Playoff Day 1: Playoff Day 1 and Day 2: Playoff Days 1 and 2 are head-to-head, single day elimination competitions between two teams in the Playoff bracket. Playoff Day 1 matchups shall be:**
 - i) Seed 11 v Seed 12
 - ii) Seed 9 v Seed 10
 - iii) Seed 7 v Seed 8
 - iv) Seed 5 v Seed 6
- c) **Playoff Day 2: Following the conclusion of Playoff Day 1, four teams will be eliminated from the competition and the advancing four Teams will compete on Playoff Day 2. The Playoff matchups will be reseeded so the highest seed will face the lowest remaining seeds as follows:**
 - i) Seed 1 v Lowest Remaining Seed
 - ii) Seed 2 v Second-Lowest Remaining Seed
 - iii) Seed 3 v Second-Highest Remaining Seed
 - iv) Seed 4 v Highest Remaining Seed
- d) **Playoff Day 3: Following the conclusion of Playoff Day 2, four teams will advance to Playoff Day 3, also known as the Zane Grey Championship Finals (the "Finals") – the final competition day of the 2024 SFC Billfish Championship Season. Playoff Day 3 will be a four-team, winner take all competition. The Team that scores the most points on Day 3 of the Playoffs will be determined the winner of the 2024 SFC Billfish Championship.**
- e) **Playoff Tiebreakers: In the event that two or more Teams have equal scores at the conclusion of Playoff Day 1, Day 2 and/ or Day 3, the following tie breakers will be implemented:**
 - i. Tiebreaker 1: First blue marlin caught on day of competition when the tie occurred.
 - ii. Tiebreaker 2: First white marlin caught on day of competition when the tie occurred.
 - iii. Tiebreaker 3: First sailfish caught on day of competition when the tie occurred.
 - iv. Tiebreaker 4: First swordfish caught on day of competition when the tie occurred.
 - v. Tiebreaker 5: Most Qualified Catch Points registered during the Regular Season (in top three SFC Qualifying Events as outlined in Section 6.d above).
- 6) **Recording of Qualified Catch Media.** Fishing Team, and its teammates and team members, explicitly acknowledge that Sport Fishing Championship prizes are funded and supported by corporate sponsors and media partners of the SFC, and that, in good faith, Fishing Team shall make best efforts to accommodate a single-person camera operator in order to support the competition's television and multimedia production. In particular, Fishing Teams that are considered "featured teams" – as defined solely by SFC officials – and Fishing Teams atop the Qualifying Event's leaderboard will have special emphasis on accommodating SFC's television and multimedia production efforts, by way of providing space and lodging for a camera operator to film on the boat during competition hours.
- 7) **Additional Requirements for SFC Billfish Championship Participants.** Sport Fishing Championship requires all members of participating Teams to agree to the terms set forth in the following league policies prior to registering in order to be eligible for the Competition:
 - a) Sport Fishing Championship Competitor Terms & Conditions
 - b) Sport Fishing Championship Competitor Code of Conduct & Sexual Harassment Policy
 - c) Sport Fishing Championship Gambling & Wagering Policy

**At the sole discretion of the Sport Fishing Championship additional league policies or amendments to existing policies may be made at any time.*
- 8) **Release of All Claims.** In consideration of being accepted for participation in the Sport Fishing Championship, each Teammate hereby releases, forever discharges, and agrees to hold harmless SFC and its officers, directors, employees,



agents, volunteers, partners, members, and or attorneys (collectively the “Releasees”) for any and all losses, claims, or demands of any kind or character whatsoever arising from the negligence or gross negligence of the Releasees or from any other cause connected with or occurring during any SFC Qualifying Event. Each Teammate expressly acknowledges that he/she has received reviewed and agrees to abide by the SFC rules and regulations and this release. Furthermore, each Teammate expressly acknowledges that activities relating to deep sea fishing are extremely dangerous and involve the risk of serious injury or death, and each Teammate hereby assumes full responsibility for the risk of bodily injury or death due to the negligence of the Releasees or any other cause connected with or occurring during any SFC Qualifying Event.

9) Zane Grey Championship Playoff Bracket

