



## **THE TOBAGO FREEDIVE SPEARFISHING CHALLENGE 2011**

### **RULES**

#### **General**

Fish must be speared only while free-diving (breath-hold diving). The use of SCUBA diving equipment is prohibited and will cause instant disqualification.

All fish must be caught by the competitor using either a spear, polespear, speargun or similar device. Only spearguns working with elastic bands or compressed air are allowed, loading only by the muscular force of the competitor. No other means of unspecified methods are acceptable.

Guns fired by the discharge of explosive gases are forbidden. Any competitor carrying a powerhead for the specific use of safety only, must hold an appropriate firearms license for that weapon.

Participants are not allowed to spear any restrained fish (caught in nets, lines, traps, etc.)

All Boats are to be inspected at the beginning of each day of Competition. Contestants are not allowed to have any Scuba Equipment or Fishing Equipment on board (apart from Spearguns). Boat inspection will take place at designated Ports around the Island. There will be random inspections throughout the day.

Strict adherence to all maritime authority regulations shall be maintained, highlighting licensing and safe operating speeds whilst in proximity of persons or structures and objects in the water. All boats used in the course of the competition must comply with all requirements of the maritime authority, and must carry all appropriate safety equipment.

The competitors must not visit the competition zones the day before the tournament. Competitors must respect and avoid fishing in the **restricted areas** designated for this competition.

## **Restricted Areas**

In order to maintain a legal process and a respectable relationship with dive operators and the general local community, it has been decided to designate some areas of Tobago as **no take** zones for the purpose of this event.

The following areas must **NOT** be visited during the competition:

- a) Buccoo Reef Marine Park (it's against the law to harvest any marine creature in this area);
- b) Speyside (no competitor must remain in this area while the tournament is taking place);
- c) All major dive sites: Flying Reef, Stingray Alley, Kariwak Reef, Mount Irvine (wall and reef).

Any competitor catching fish in any of the areas mentioned above will be **disqualified** from the competition. Should a participant be found inside the Buccoo Reef Marine Park, he will be reported to the appropriate authorities to be prosecuted.

## **Safety**

Competitors must never have a loaded gun outside of the water.

All divers are required to tow a float or buoy at all times while in the water. Such float must have a positive buoyancy of at least 5 liters in volume and be colored red, orange or any other high visibility color.

It's obligatory to carry a sharp knife which shall be adequately sheathed and easily accessible. Competitors must carry a safety whistle.

Weight belts must be fitted with quick-release buckles

Competitors must not swim within 150 feet of any line fishermen or bathers.

All Junior contestants must be accompanied by an adult.

## Species

In order to maintain the sport of spearfishing as a selective and sustainable method of catching fish, some species are not allowed in the tournament while others have a minimum size limit in accordance with international regulations.

If you are not familiar with the following names, you can log on to [www.fishbase.org](http://www.fishbase.org) to find pictures and information of the below mentioned fish.

The following is the list of species that are **valid** for the tournament.

### Groupers (Serranidae)

Common Name	Scientific Name	Minimum Weight Pounds
Black Grouper	<i>Mycteroperca bonaci</i>	5
Yellowmouth Grouper	<i>Mycteroperca interstitialis</i>	5
Yellowfin Grouper	<i>Mycteroperca venenosa</i>	5
White Grouper	<i>Mycteroperca cidi</i>	5
Mottled/Comb	<i>Mycteroperca rubra</i>	5

Grouper		
Red Hind	<i>Epinephelus guttatus</i>	5

**Note:** Both the Giant grouper/Jewfish (*Epinephelus itajara*) and the Nassau grouper (*Epinephelus striatus*) are considered **Endangered species** according to the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) Red List of Threatened Species 2009 (<http://www.iucnredlist.org/>). Therefore, these species will not be considered in the competition.

#### Snappers (Lutjanidae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Mutton Snapper/Sub	<i>Lutjanus analis</i>	4
Mangrove/Gray Snapper	<i>Lutjanus griseus</i>	4
Schoolmaster	<i>Lutjanus apodus</i>	4
Yellowtail Snapper	<i>Ocyurus chrysurus</i>	4
Teardrop Snapper	<i>Lutjanus jocu</i>	4
Cubera Snapper/Dashe	<i>Lutjanus cyanopterus</i>	6

Jacks, Crevalles, etc. (Carangidae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Barjack/Bluestripe Cavali	<i>Caranx rubber</i>	3
Greenback Cavali	<i>Caranx crysos</i>	3
Rainbow Runner/Salmon	<i>Elagatis bipinnulata</i>	3
African Pompano/Threadfish	<i>Alectis ciliaris</i>	3
Horseeye jack/Horseeye cavali	<i>Caranx latus</i>	5
Pompano/Permit	<i>Trachinotus falcatus</i>	5
Crevalle Jack/Yellowfin Cavali	<i>Caranx hippos</i>	5
Yellow Jack	<i>Caranx bartholomaei</i>	5
Black Jack	<i>Caranx lugubris</i>	5
Almaco Jack/Lesser Ambj.	<i>Seriola rivoliana</i>	5
Greater Amberjack	<i>Seriola dumerili</i>	10

Kingfish, Tuna, etc. (Scombridae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Bonito	<i>Euthynnus alletteratus</i>	3
Carite	<i>Scomberomorus maculatus</i>	3
Blackfin Tuna	<i>Thunnus atlanticus</i>	3
Kingfish (Blackeye)	<i>Scomberomorus cavalla</i>	5
Albacore	<i>Thunnus atlanticus</i>	5
Yellowfin Tuna	<i>Thunnus albacares</i>	10
Wahoo	<i>Acanthocibium solanderi</i>	10

Grunts (Pomadasydae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
White Margate	<i>Haemulon album</i>	3
Black Margate/Lippy	<i>Anisotremus surinamensis</i>	3

Barracuda (Sphyraenidae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Barracuda	<i>Sphyraena barracuda</i>	6

Dolphinfish (Coryphaenidae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Dolphinfish/mahi-mahi/Dorado	<i>Coryphaena hippurus</i>	6

Cobia (Rachycentridae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Cobia/Codfish	<i>Rachycentron canadus</i>	6

Hogfish (Labridae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Hogfish/Hog Snapper	<i>Lachnolaimus maximus</i>	3

Snook (Centropomidae)

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>	<b>Minimum Weight Pounds</b>
Snook	<i>Centropomus undecim</i>	3

### **Species that will cause disqualification:**

Turtles of any kind, boxfishes (Ostraciidae), Angelfishes (Pomacanthidae), Parrotfish, porcupinefishes, sharks and rays of any species including mantas and eagle rays.

### **Important Notes:**

Species not found in the above list will not be considered in the competition.

All Fish caught on the day must be stored in a cooler with Ice.

All Fish brought to the Scale belongs to the Tournament.

All contestants who bring fish to the scale must also bring the speargun that they used to shoot the fish.

The Judge's decision is final.

### **Weighing of the Fish and Points System**

The Tournament starts on both days at 6 a.m after boat inspection. On Saturday 7<sup>th</sup>, the scale opens at 2 p.m and closes at 4 p.m. On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup>, the scale opens at 12 noon and closes at 2 p.m.

One point will be awarded to the diver for every pound of fish caught.

One point will also be awarded for **every fish** caught.

**The Challenge Champion is the contestant with the highest amount of points.**

**There is also the Heaviest Fish Category and the Junior Category.**

Following international procedures for spearfishing competitions aiming at giving all competitors the same chance to win and reducing luck, it has been decided that any fish weighing more than 20 pounds will count as a 20 pound fish. This means, that if a competitor lands a 50 pound fish, this will count up to **20 pounds only**. There will however be a prize for the heaviest fish.

An example of this point system would be:

Competitor A			Competitor B		
Catch	Weight in Pounds	Points	Catch	Weight in Pounds	Points
1 Black Grouper	16	16 + 1	1 Teardrop Snapper	16	16 + 1
1 Cubera Snapper	43	<b>20</b> + 1	1 Barracuda	20	<b>20</b> + 1
1 Pompano	11	11 + 1	1 Hog Snapper	4	4 + 1
			1 Carite	4	4 + 1
			1 Carite	3	3 + 1
	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>50</b>		<b>Total Points</b>	<b>52</b>

**Explanation:** The Cubera Snapper that Competitor A caught was 43 pounds and it weighs as a 20 pound fish. One **extra point** was awarded **for every** fish caught.

In the previous example, Competitor B wins the competition, but competitor A wins a prize for biggest fish.

### **Minimum Weight**

If a fish weighs less than the minimum weight required provided in the tables above, the fish will not be considered in the competition.

To avoid catching **very small fish**, it has been agreed that if a fish weighs less than half of the minimum weight allowed, there will be a **penalization** equal to the minimum weight of the fish.

### **Example:**

Black Grouper (*Mycteroperca bonaci*) -----Minimum weight: 5 pounds

Fish caught in competition -----Actual weight: 2 pounds

There is a **penalization** -----Equals to minimum weight of fish: **5 points reduced**

**Important Note:** Any person found to be discarding a whole fish in any manner, will be disqualified from the tournament.

All participants shall be asked to sign both a waiver and an acknowledgment of the above rules before becoming eligible to enter the Tobago Freedive Spearfishing Tournament 2011.

