

2019 Year Long Big Fish Contest

1. The ACFA recognizes nine categories in its Big Fish Contests which run from 12:01 am. November 15th until 12:00 am (midnight) through the following November 14th. To avoid confusion of using local names in our classifications “Ground Mullet/Whiting” is considered to be any of the three species of kingcroaker: Southern (*Menticirrhus americanus*), Gulf (*M. littoralis*), or Northern (*M. saxatilis*). And “White Trout” is considered to be either the Sand seatrout (*Cynoscion arenarius*) or Silver seatrout (*Cynoscion nothus*). Likewise our “Flounder” species include either Gulf (*Paralichthys albigutta*) or Southern (*Paralichthys lethostigma*). **To encourage conservation of the resource each category has the following minimum weight requirements to qualify for this contest:**

ADULTS (men and women over 16 yrs of age)

Species	Min. Weight	Species	Min. Weight	Rules (10-14)
Blackfish	7 #'s	Speckled Trout	4 #'s	** Effective 2017, CPR is now a points category in the Big Fish Contest** (min. Length 23")
Flounder	2 #'s	White Trout	0.50 #'s	
Gr. Mullet/Whiting	0.50 #'s	Spanish Mackerel	2 #'s	
Sheepshead	5 #'s	Redfish *	5 #'s	

JUNIORS (Boys and girls under 16 yrs. of age)

Species	Min. Weight	Species	Min. Weight	Rules (10-14)
Blackfish	5 #'s	Speckled Trout	2 #'s	** Effective 2019, JUNIOR CPR (Min. Length 20")
Flounder	1 #	White Trout	0.50 #'s	
Gr.Mullet/Whiting	0.50 #'s	Spanish Mackerel	1 #	
Sheepshead	2 #'s	Redfish *	2 #'s	

* Redfish can be submitted for BFC using a Big Fish Card. Length must be recorded on the card **and a photo included** verifying the 'pinched tail' length is less than 26 inches at the time the fish is weighed to confirm compliance with Alabama redfish slot limit of 16 to 26 inches. **In lieu of a photograph, entry of redfish from another tournament (complying with the AL 'pinched tail' length measurement) may be accepted. But a signed BFC card (or receipt) with the measured length must still be submitted.** (See Tournament Rule #9). However, redfish in a FRESH condition (i.e. obviously caught in the previous 24-36 hours, and NOT frozen) may be weighed the day of a tournament (as a Big Fish entry ONLY) but the angler MUST first declare the date the fish was caught, and it is not eligible for Tournament points or plaques.

2. Each fish entered must be legally caught by hook & line (on rod & reel, bait or lure) in Alabama State Waters (to 3 miles).
3. Each qualifying member is allowed a maximum of two (2) fish in each Big Fish category. **To qualify you must be a paid member for the calendar year of the contest ending, or renew your membership by March 1st of the following year, or else entries made prior to that date will be considered forfeit.**
4. Points will be awarded for each of the top ten (10) places in each category (including CPR), as follows:
- | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|----|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|------|
| PLACE | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10th |
| POINTS | 10 | 9 | 8 | 7 | 6 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |
5. Five (5) bonus points will be awarded to any member that breaks an existing, or establishes an AFCA club record.
6. The member with the highest overall number of Big Fish points will be declared the club's Big Fish Champion. Top three places for each of the nine categories will be recognized with a plaque at the December Awards Banquet.
7. Weight verification in one of the following manners are acceptable:
- a. Weigh Master at ACFA club tournaments
 - b. Tournament Official at other tournaments, in writing on an ACFA Big Fish Card (or paper with the info **and signature** on it) **or accessibly published in print or the internet. But the member is still required to notify the Statistician and provide a link to verify the fish weight. (including a photo or video verifying redfish length)**
 - c. Business with calibrated scales, in writing, on an ACFA Big Fish Card, or (in lieu of) on a business receipt (preferably with phone#) Showing the date, member's name, species of fish, weight, name of the business, signature and name of the person actually weighing the fish. *All entries must be legible and complete and contain the same info as required on the ACFA Big Fish Card or the entry may be rejected.
8. All entries must be received (via hand or US MAIL delivery) or a photo of the signed BFC Card emailed to the ACFA Statistician within 30 days of the catch in order to be entered. a. Entries mailed at the end of the season MUST be postmarked no later than 11:59 pm on November 14 and be delivered to the Statistician within 3 'Working Days' (i.e. M-F) in order to be accepted for this year. Late or delayed entries will automatically be placed in the next year's contest.

Mail entries to: ACFA Big Fish Contest c/o **Robert Thornton 7404 CAROL ACRES LANE MOBILE, AL 36619** (phone: 251-232-1904). Email entries can be sent to thorntonr17@yahoo.com. (entry must be a scan or photo of the BFC card clearly showing date, time, name and signature of person validating the catch) *It is highly recommended you make a good photocopy of your Big Fish Contest submission before mailing it in. ** And check back to BE SURE he got your entry! Certain rules specified in the tournament rules apply to the Big Fish Contest. (See Redfish in particular)

9. In case of a tie the earliest received date (and time) of a business receipt or the ACFA card will take precedence over the later entry.

Year Long CPR Contest Rules:

10. In an effort to promote good conservation practices and exercise proper catch and release tactics, the ACFA will run a year-long Catch, Photograph, and Release (CPR) category for the 10 longest speckled trout within the Big Fish Contest.

11. The contest duration is the same as the Big Fish Contest (November 15th until the following November 14th @ midnight) and all other BFC rules apply plus the following (**ADULTS: 23"** minimum length, **JUNIORS: 20"** minimum length to qualify for CPR).

12. A member must submit (within 30 days of the catch) photographs (digital or print) or video to the Statistician that allows

- Verification of the angler (either the member or their dependent) along with their catch.
- An accurate length of the LIVE speckled trout and
- During the release process.

Of course, a certain amount of leeway in the 'A' and 'C' requirement can be expected for anglers fishing solo. But procuring a sufficient quality image of the fish measurement that allows verification of length and good handling to ensure the survival of the fish is primarily the responsibility of the angler who is 'on his honor' to follow the spirit of "a good release". Every 'reasonable' effort will be made to verify all entries. However, entries not meeting the above criteria, that is;

- Do not allow verification of length or of poor photo quality or exhibiting poor release techniques may be rejected at the discretion of the judge (i.e. Statistician) and his rulings will be final in this matter. Fish must be measured in a 'natural position' (i.e. flat) with mouth closed and tail 'fanned' (not pinched or bent to artificially exaggerate the length) and centered over the tape or rule. The picture MUST show the entire fish and allow an accurate measure of the length (to the nearest 1/4" or 1/8").

13. You can post your entries on the ACFA website @ <http://dallas138.arvixeshared.com/~acfafish/forum/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=15349> or on the ACFA Facebook page @ <https://www.facebook.com/groups/106719252709176/>

14. The members **in each Division** with the three (3) longest verified live release speckled trout will receive plaques at the Awards Banquet in December. NOTE: Each member (or dependent angler) is allowed a maximum of two (2) fish in CPR.

15. Results will be posted monthly in the newsletters included with the rest of the Big Fish Contest standings and statistics.

** Under no circumstances will the Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association (ACFA) be held responsible for the welfare, conduct or actions of any members, guests, or their equipment while attending meetings or engaging in ACFA tournaments or the challenge. **