

## Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association Tournament Rules REVISED: January 2019

All 8 club tournaments are included in your yearly membership dues which must be paid prior to fishing in a tournament. Your membership extends to your family: spouse and children (and **grandchildren**) who have not reached their 16th birthday by February 1st.

1. Competition is open to all members in good standing (paid dues prior to tournament day and legally licensed for Alabama saltwater fishing). Their spouse and children (**or grandchildren**) under 16 years of age as of Feb 1 of that tournament year. PLEASE make a note to the Weigh-masters of the member's name when their dependents (spouse or children) enter a fish. This is especially important for helping to verify the spelling and validity of step children or **grandchildren** who have a different last name from the accompanying adult. PLEASE use the same name for each tournament!
2. Tournaments begin at 5:00 am. and end at 3:00 pm. except for the Causeway Classic (starts at 6am).
3. All fish MUST be caught by the entering angler during the tournament hours on hook and line (rod and reel) using bait or lure in Alabama State waters (out to 3 miles). 45 feet deep water is generally (not officially) accepted as the southward extent of 'state waters'. You are on your honor!
4. Tournament weigh-in is from 1:00 pm. until 3:00 pm. The Weigh Master keeps "official time". **You MUST be in line at the weigh in table with your fish by 3pm.**
5. Each fish should be weighed in by the member or family member who caught it. You MUST be on the premises. You are ultimately responsible to ensure your catch is recorded correctly.
6. Fish that are not fresh or in good condition will be disqualified (see Rule 6). This includes ANY redfish that has been mutilated in a way that alters (shortens) the length.
7. All decisions made by the Weigh Master and/or his assistants (club president and officers) are final. No changes will be made to the weigh sheets after 3pm.
8. To qualify for the monthly awards, all fish weighed in an ACFA tournament must be a "legal Alabama catch". (See AL MRD regulations.) For unregulated species with no minimum length (i.e. spanish mackerel) the minimum weight must not be less than one pound. With the exception of "White Trout" and "Ground Mullet/Whiting", which must weigh at least 0.50 pounds. To avoid confusion in 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 flounder (*Paralichthys albigutta*) or Southern flounder (*Paralichthys lethostigma*). **NOTE:** There is no minimum weight for the Junior Angler category fish, but those

must still meet any size limits specified by the AL MRD (Rule # 12) & Junior Angler fish MUST meet minimum weights (above) to qualify for points & plaques. The Big Fish Contest may have additional rules.

9. Only legal 'slot' Redfish (**16"-26" with pinched tail**) will be weighed in the tournaments (to assure length compliance to state law and ACFA rules). It is the angler's responsibility to bring the redfish to the weigh in table in a "FRESH" and pliable condition that allows it to readily be accurately measured. ONLY redfish that are 'straight' can be accurately measured, so the angler must prepare the fish for that. Fish that are 'spoiled', frozen, mutilated or have been mistreated may be rejected at the discretion of the Weigh Master. His ruling to accept or reject a fish is final by the end of the tournament. (Rules #5 & #6) Note: no flounder or sheepshead less than 12 inches may be entered in ACFA tournaments. Also, no Speckled Trout under 14 inches. No Redfish less than 16" (nor over 26"), or Blackfish under 18". (See Rule 8 & 12)

10. Only one fish in each category per member can place in each tournament. NOTE: a second category fish may be weighed in as a Big Fish Contest entry as long as it meets the minimum requirements for that species (see Big Fish Contest Rule #1). Also, fish eligible for the Big Fish Contest (even if caught prior to tournament hours) may be weighed at tournaments, provided the angler first declares the fish is ONLY for the BFC. You are on your honor!

11. In case of a tie, the first fish weighed in places highest. Times recorded on the weigh in sheets are considered "official".

12. All state and federal laws and licenses apply. (See Rule #8) PLEASE CALL ALMRD 251-861-2882 OR 251-968-7576 FOR UPDATED INFORMATION. IT IS THE FISHERMAN'S RESPONSIBILITY TO KNOW AND ABIDE BY THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS IN EFFECT.

13. Tournaments will not be canceled due to weather conditions except when a "Small Craft Advisory" is predicted or expected to be predicted **for the general area** by the NWS for the Tournament day. Still members shall fish at their own risk, and should exercise good judgment of when and where to fish. The ACFA encourages safe boating practices, and assumes no responsibility for participating fishers or their equipment\*\*. It is not worth risking life and property to get a plaque!

**14. Tournament points will be awarded as follows: PLACE: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 POINTS: 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 Bonus Points: \* One (1) Tournament "Species Point" will be awarded to each member who weighs a fish (of the eligible species) at any tournament** provided that fish is 'legal' and meets the minimum set weights (see Rules 8 & 9) for any of the 4 or 5 specified tournament categories. (i.e. you may get 1 point per species in that tournament even if they do not place in the top 5). \*Five (5) additional Tournament Points will be awarded to any member that places in the top five in Speckled Trout, Redfish and Flounder for the August Grand Slam Tournament. \* Five (5) additional Tournament Points will be awarded to any member who breaks or establishes a club record in a tournament. \* One (1) "Species Point" will be awarded to each ACFA member who

weighs in a Speckled Trout during the Speckled Trout Challenge and three (3) additional points will be awarded to any ACFA member that places in the top ten. (i.e. IF you make the top 10 you earn 4 points, if not you earn 1 point). (NOTE: The Challenge is NOT a regular club tournament though entries will be accepted for the Big Fish Contest by the Weigh master at his convenience).

15. For every tournament the top three places in each category will receive a plaque at the next club meeting (unless they DECLINE at the weigh in), except in the Speckled Trout Challenge and Grand Slam Tournaments (see below). **As of 2019 Junior Anglers will be running a separate Tournament division and receive TOURNAMENT POINTS in addition to plaques for their tournament category fish (1st through 3rd place) only against other Junior Anglers. Any qualified dependant of a member (Junior Angler) may choose to waive the Junior classification (at their first tournament) and fish against the adults for the entire season.**

16. The Club's Tournament Point Champion **and Junior Tournament Champion** will be recognized at the year-end Awards Banquet in December. The member (or dependants) accumulating the highest number of tournament points at the season's end in October will be declared the victor.

17. All weigh-in locations will be announced in the newsletter and at the regular club meeting prior to the tournament. Our Weigh in site for most tournaments is the American Legion Post 200 on Dauphin Island Parkway Hwy 193 (near the Greer's Food Tiger store). The Speckled Trout Challenge (in May) and the Causeway Classic (in October) will likely have weigh ins on the Causeway (location: 'TBA' means "To Be Announced" in the newsletter and meeting).

### **NETMAN (or WOMAN) of the Year**

18. Any ACFA angler at the time of their weighing in a tournament fish who declares the eligible member or dependent who actually netted that fish for them (including themselves) will be awarded the same number of points as Tournament Points in a separate contest category called "Netman of the Year". These points will be tallied and kept for the duration of the tournament season and the anglers in each division with the most accumulated "net" points will receive this award during the December Banquet.

\*\* Under no circumstances will the Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association (ACFA) nor its officers 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. \*