

Official Rules of the 2013 Southwest Florida Open

INTRODUCTION

The Southwest Florida Open is a recreational event sponsored by the Southwest Florida Spearfishing Club. It is being held to promote spearfishing in Southwest Florida and to enjoy each others company. We encourage all participants to follow all safety regulations for boating and diving. The Southwest Florida Spearfishing Club also recommends that no competitors exceed the recreational diving limit of 130 feet.

TOURNAMENT DATES AND REGISTRATION

1. **Tournament Dates:** September 13 – September 15 2013. September 13th will be the captains meeting. Diving begins at 6:00am on September 14th and ends at 9:00pm on September 14th. Weigh in begins at 11:00am and the line closes at 12:00pm on September 15th.
2. **Early Registration:** Early registration ends on September 6, 2013. All registration forms must be postmarked by this date.
3. **Late Registration:** Late registration will start on September 13, 2013 at 5:30pm and run until 7:30pm. This is the only date and time for Late Registration. If turning in a Late Registration for someone on your boat, please make sure every part of the Waiver and Registration form is properly and completely filled out!
4. **Captains Meeting:** A Captain's Meeting will be held on Friday, September 13, 2013 at 7:30PM. Attendance at the Captains meeting is required. You must have at least one Representative Diver from each boat at the Captain's Meeting to pick up any entry paperwork, get any last minute rule changes, and get the official tournament time.
5. **Diving:** Participants can begin diving and shooting fish on September 14, 2013 at 6:00am. Shooting must end at 9:00pm the same day. All fish taken must be legal according to the local rules and regulations.
6. **Weigh-in:** The weigh-in will begin at 11:00am and the line will close promptly at 12:00pm on September 15, 2013. You must be in line with your fish properly iced in a cooler before the line closes at 12:00pm. At least one member of a boat/team must be with the fish in line at all times. Each participant must be with their fish at the time they are weighed. No one may weigh-in fish for another participant.
7. **Awards Ceremony:** The Awards Ceremony will begin once the weigh-in is completed and all scores are recorded. Once the trophies have been handed out the participants will then have an opportunity to pick prizes from the prize table in the order they placed according to their scores.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

1. **All Participants:** Both men and women divers are welcome to participate. Divers under the age of 18 **MUST** have a signed release from their legal guardian. No Diver is officially entered in the tournament until the Southwest Florida Spearfishing Club has received a properly filled out Waiver, Registration, and all fees have been paid.
2. **Boat Teams:** There must be a minimum of 3 shooters on a boat to qualify for the cash awards for the top three boats. If you do not have 3 divers then your team must register a phantom diver to bring the total up to 3.
3. **Freedivers:** A trophy shall be awarded to the freediver with the highest aggregate score of a freediver. Apart from the trophy, the winner shall take his/her turn at the prize table in a random drawing, along with the SCUBA divers. In order to compete for this trophy you must circle or check "freediver" on the registration form, and commit to freediving for the tournament, with no fish shot on SCUBA.
4. **Female:** A trophy shall be awarded to the female diver with the highest aggregate score of a female. Apart from the trophy, the winner shall take her turn at the prize table in a random drawing.
5. **Junior:** A trophy shall be awarded to the junior diver with the highest aggregate score of a junior. Apart from the trophy, the winner shall take his/her turn at the prize table in a random drawing In order to compete for this trophy you must be under the age of 18 on September 14, 2013.

FISH REQUIREMENTS

- All Fish:** All participants must follow and abide by all local, State and Federal laws. All fish must be legally taken and landed by the diver who is awarded the points, and brought to the scales before the close of the tournament. Powerheading of fish is not allowed. All competitors' fish must be presorted, fully and properly gutted, on individual stringers and on ice. All fish turned in must be in a fresh and whole condition and have all appearances of freshness. Fish that are shorter than Federal/State size regulations or that do not appear to be well iced and look fresh as per the judgment of the tournament Weighmaster, cannot be weighed, or if already weighed it can be disqualified. Due to the changing regulatory environment if a listed species is closed in the Gulf of Mexico then it will not be allowed in the tournament. The tournament committee reserves the right to make last minute changes to the categories to compensate for changes in state or federal regulations.

- Size limits:**

Category	Size Limits	Maximum Number per Boat/Team
Grouper	22" Gag or Black; 20" Red, Scamp or Warsaw	2 Total
Snapper	16" Mutton; 12" All other legal snapper	2 Total
Hogfish	12"	2 Total
Sheepshead	12"	2 Total
Pelagics	Permit 22" Kingfish, Wahoo, African Pompano (all) 24" Amberjack 30" Cobia 33"	2 Total
Lobster	Slipper or Spiney	2 Total
Lionfish	No size limit	2 Total

- Individual Maximums:** Divers who qualify for the Female, Junior and Freediver trophies can only turn in 1 fish per category. Each fish turned in must be speared by the diver turning in the fish. The fish may have been used in the Boat/Team aggregate and can be weighed again by the diver who shot the fish. Points will be capped the same as for the boat scoring as outlined below.
- Largest fish:** The largest fish shot by a diver can be weighed separately for the largest fish trophy. The fish may have been used in the Boat/Team aggregate and can be weighed again by the diver who shot the fish.

SCORING FORMAT

- Points per pound:** One point or partial point is given for each pound or partial pound of the fish's weight. For example, a 4.8 pound snapper would be worth 4.8 points. Fish must be gutted. There is a maximum number of points per pound per fish that will be counted for each category of fish.

Category	Maximum points per pound per fish
Grouper	15
Snapper	10
Hogfish	10
Sheepshead	10
Pelagics	20
Lobster	No maximum
Lionfish	No maximum

DISQUALIFICATION

Disqualification is automatic for latecomers. The Official Time shall be announced at the Friday Captain's Meeting and kept by the Weighmaster. Latecomers (who wish to have their fish weighed-in for club tournaments) can have their fish weighed at the end of the official weigh-in, but only with the Weighmaster's approval. Any cases of cheating will result in a disqualification.

PROTEST

Any diver or tournament officer may file a protest with the Tournament Weighmaster. Any protest must be filed in a timely manner. A Protest Committee will be made up of the current officers of the SWFLSC and the Tournament Weighmaster. All Protest Decisions will be made in a timely manner and all decisions will be final.

PRIZES AND TROPHIES

As stated, this is a Boat/Team tournament. The top 3 boats will be paid cash based on the total monies collected in registration fees.

1st place payout is 50%

2nd place payout is 30%

3rd place payout is 20%

There will be a prize table for participants who were not on a boat/team that placed in the top 3 to choose from. A person's turn at the prize table will be determined solely by random drawing. Winning a trophy will include you in the random drawing even if you were on a winning boat/team.

There will be a total of 5 Trophies up for grabs:

1. Tournament Champion First Place Boat/Team
2. Best Freediver
3. Best Female Diver
4. Best Junior Diver
5. Largest Fish in any Category

RULE CHANGES

The tournament rules may be changed up until the end of the Captains Meeting. We do not anticipate any major rule changes. Official rule changes will be posted on the SWFLSC facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/events/374681662635458>

Registrants are responsible for making sure they have checked for rule changes up until the Captains Meeting.