

2016 Destin Fishing Rodeo Rules

Anglers must declare division of entry at the time of weigh-in. Anglers cannot win multiple awards for single fish (excluding bonus and jackpot awards).

SCOPE: These rules govern the Annual Destin-Gulf Coast Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo to be held October 1 through October 31.

1. GENERAL:

- 1.1. Contestants shall abide by the Rodeo rules. All rules are interpreted by the Rodeo Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors. The decisions of the official Rodeo Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors shall be final.
- 1.2. Rules may be modified, interpreted or changed without notice to meet unusual or emergency conditions by action of the Rodeo Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors.
- 1.3. Any winning angler or captain is subject to a polygraph test to verify authenticity of catch. The Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors will determine cause for the test.
- 1.4. Anyone who fails a polygraph test or is determined cheating (by the Rules Committee and/or Board of Directors) will be disqualified from participating in the rest of the year's Rodeo and the following two years' Rodeos. All catches in the current Rodeo will be disqualified.
- 1.5. Scales are considered accurate to the point of failure. Failed scales will be substituted with State certified, calibrated scales. No fish will be re-hung or re-weighed.
- 1.6. Pier, Bridge, Jetty and Surf, Kayak and Paddleboard entries must be caught within the area between Pensacola Pass to St. Andrews Bay.
- 1.7. All Boats must enter the Gulf through Destin's East Pass with the exception of extended voyage trips which have called and received authorization from Rodeo office prior to departure.
- 1.8. Boat Entry: A copy of a State/Coast Guard issued Boat Registration Form must be on file with the Rodeo prior to first weigh-in. Boats and/or competitors entered after the beginning of the Rodeo in any division are not eligible for competition until the day following registration.
- 1.9. All fish must be caught on rod and reel, using hook and line. Handheld electric reels may be used.
- 1.10. Fish can only be weighed in the division the boat the fish was caught on was registered.
- 1.11. Boats may not leave Destin East Pass prior to 12:01 a.m. and must return to weigh-in by 7:00 p.m. daily. A daily bag limit will apply. Overnight fishing prohibited except in the Extended Voyage Division.
- 1.12. Prize winning fish shall be the largest by weight. In the event of a tie, the first fish recorded shall be the winner. Minimum weight of one pound is required for eligibility.
- 1.13. All fish are to be drawn (from anal vent through the breastplate to the throat with all entrails removed) and washed for inspection prior to being recognized by the weighmaster. Whole fish brought to the Rodeo weighmaster will be sent to the back of the line. An exception will be made for Triggerfish, Sheepshead, Pompano, Flounder and Sharks. Sharks will be weighed and recorded whole. If the shark is in contention for a prize, it will be gutted to determine that it is a legal fish. The whole weight will be the recorded weight. Fish in contention for world or state records will be weighed prior to being drawn for Rodeo entry at the request of the angler.
- 1.14. It is the responsibility of the angler to dispose of all fish.
- 1.15. Angler must be clearly identified prior to weighing fish. Only two fish per specie, per day, per person will be weighed. Boat captain and angler must be present, sign official entry form and verify the weight and angler of each fish officially entered in the Destin Fishing Rodeo at the time of weigh-in. The Angler's SSN will be required prior to being awarded a cash prize. By signing the official entry form, the captain also attests the angler whose name appears on the entry form did catch the fish being weighed. The captain's signature and initials at Division Line further attests to the division being entered. No changes in division will be allowed after the entry form is signed. The Captain's Signature proves ALL information on the form is correct.

- 1.16. Fish which have spoiled, frozen or appear to have been frozen, or chemically treated are not eligible for competition. (SHARKS MAY BE SHOT)
- 1.17. Any boat or individual in arrears to the Destin Fishing Rodeo after December 31st of the year the debt is incurred will be ineligible for all subsequent Rodeos until the debt is satisfied.
- 1.18. In an effort to expedite the weigh-in process, the largest fish in each division should be presented first.
- 1.19. The following persons are not eligible for awards (except, the King Mackerel Jackpot Awards, Captains Awards or Mates Awards if they have participated as such within the current calendar year: (a) Captains/crew members related to revenue generation while underway on charter/commercial boats; (b) commercial fishermen returning from a commercial trip are ineligible to enter fish from that trip; anyone who plans on selling their catch is ineligible to participate; (c) commercial fishing pier owners/operators may not enter a fish in pier, bridge, jetty and surf division; (d) Rodeo officials (See Definition A).
- 1.20. To expedite the weigh-in process during heavy traffic times, all boats will be required to check-in with the DOCKMASTER and be visually recognized. Open Division contenders will be given a time-stamp to avoid controversy in case of a tie. Order of weigh-in will be left to the discretion of the DockMaster.
- 1.21. Unsportsmanlike action by Rodeo participant may disqualify that individual from this and future events.
- 1.22. Complaints or protests must be in the form of a written statement and personally turned in to the Rodeo officials on duty not later than 7:00 p.m., seventy-two (72) hours following the occurrence which occasioned the complaint. A cash deposit of five hundred dollars (\$500) must accompany the protest. The burden of proof is on the Protester. If the complaint or protest is found to be valid, the deposit is returned, If not, the deposit becomes the property of the Destin Fishing Rodeo, Inc..
- 1.23. Participants in the Rodeo may not possess in excess of the FWC Recreational bag limits. Commercial quantities may not be possessed even for boats commercially permitted.
- 1.24. BRUCE CHEVES DAY – October 16 is Bruce Cheves Day at the Destin Fishing Rodeo. The traditional ‘Ringing of the Bell’ and other celebratory events will be conducted to celebrate the longtime weighmaster and storyteller.

2. DIVISIONS OF COMPETITION:

Specific awards and prizes for the Divisions of Competition are listed in the Awards Schedule/Prize List.

- 2.1. EXTENDED VOYAGE DIVISION. In order to qualify in the EXTENDED VOYAGE Division, the trip must be declared and the boat must return a different calendar day than when it departs, vessel must be at sea for a minimum of 19 hours (exceptions (i.e. medical or weather related) must be approved by BOD and/or the Rules Committee). Once a vessel has been declared on an Extended Voyage, all fish brought back from the trip must be weighed in the Extended Voyage Division, Billfish Division, Mako My Day Overall Shark or Billfish Catch and Release Division. **Boats must notify Rodeo Headquarters prior to departure by calling 850-837-6734.** Fish must be weighed on the day of the vessel’s return to port. Extended Voyage entries eligible only in the Extended Voyage Division, Mako My Day Overall Shark, Billfish Division and the Billfish Catch and Release Division. Two licensed captains are required aboard fare carrying vessels at all times and both captains must sign entry forms at the dock. Dates of Extended Voyages and both captains’ names must be declared prior to departure. Fish caught on Extended Voyages ARE NOT ELIGIBLE FOR RODEO RECORDS, JACKPOT AWARDS or BONUS AWARDS (Special awards offered from time to time).
- 2.2. BILLFISH CATCH & RELEASE DIVISION: This is a BOAT award. It is the responsibility of the Captain to present Photo documentation of the catch to the Rodeo office within 48 hours of the catch. Photo must include the Current-Year Rodeo Flag or sticker or a digital date-stamp to qualify as an official entry. Digital photos may be e-mailed to fishing@destinfishingrodeo.org.
- 2.3. BILLFISH DIVISION: The Billfish Division includes of the Largest Blue Marlin, White Marlin, **Swordfish** and Sailfish of the tournament. The Rodeo has added 3” to the Federal size limit of these species. Length is measured from lower jaw to fork. The minimum length of a Blue Marlin is 102”; White Marlin is 69” and the Sailfish is 66”. The Rodeo encourages anglers to check the leaderboard before killing a billfish. Billfish can be caught and released as entry in the Billfish Catch and Release Division with photo documentation.

- 2.4. SHARK SATURDAYS: The largest legal specie of shark brought to the weigh scales on every Saturday in October will be awarded a \$250 Cash Prize. No Nurse, Lemon or federally protected shark will be allowed and all state and federal laws and rules must be adhered to including HMS permit requirement for federal water fish.
- 2.5. LADIES, SENIOR AND JUNIOR AWARDS: Only Ladies, Seniors and Juniors may enter fish in the Ladies, Senior and Junior Divisions. Ladies, Seniors and Juniors may cross in there appropriate categories (ie. Boat Type). Division must be declared at time of entry.
- 2.6. KAYAK DIVISION - ONLY human powered kayaks will be allowed. NO pier/shoreline/wade/jug/trot line/hand line/cast or drag net/bow fishing allowed. All Kayaks should be launched from shore. No assistance from another vessel is allowed. Fish caught in the Kayak Division are eligible to weigh in the Kayak and all Open Divisions
- 2.7. PADDLEBOARD DIVISION - ONLY human powered Paddleboards will be allowed. NO pier/shoreline/wade/jug/trot line/hand line/cast or drag net/bow fishing allowed. All Paddleboards should be launched from shore. No assistance from another vessel is allowed. Fish caught in the Paddleboard Division are eligible to weigh in the Paddleboard and all Open Divisions.
- 2.8. PIER, BRIDGE, JETTY & SURF DIVISION – \$25 fee (for anglers 15 years and older) must be paid prior to weighing fish in PBJs division. Only fish caught on Pier, Bridge, Jetty or surf are eligible in this division. “LARGEST” fish Junior and Senior awards may be a specie outside the division (except for sharks and rays).
- 2.9. KING MACKEREL JACKPOT - Open to all registered boats (Fare Carrying or Private) that have paid the Jackpot entry fee (\$100 per boat) and filled out the Jackpot entry form.
The Jackpot will be split as follows:
Largest King Mackerel 50% / Second Largest King Mackerel 30% / Third Largest King Mackerel 20%
Jackpot Fee must be paid the day before fish may be weighed in. Prize money will be paid to the person named on the entry form.
- 2.10. Big Mac Classic Daily Award- Based on 31 boat participation - \$100 buy in – Guaranteed the first year. Pays \$100 a day for largest King Mackerel of the day.
At the end of the tournament the remainder of the pot will be split 25% to angler in pot with largest King Mackerel and 75% to Ronald McDonald House Charities.

3. AWARDING OF PRIZES:

- 3.1. A prize not claimed within thirty (30) days after the date of the award shall revert to the Rodeo.
- 3.2. **DAILY prizes must be claimed within 48 hours of the close of scales the day of catch.**
- 3.3. The Rodeo will award 3 Charter Captain’s Awards (One Charter Boat, One Party Boat and One 25’11” and under Charter Boat) and 2 Private Boat Captain’s Awards (One Private Boat and one 25’11” and under Private Boat). Winning captains will be determined at the end of the tournament using a simple formula: 1st Places = 20 points, 2nd Places = 10 points, Bonus Weekly = 7 points, Daily Awards = 1 point. No points will be awarded for the First Fish.
- 3.4. **Overall Prizes may only be picked up by the person who won the prize. A signed letter from the prize winner indicating permission for a named other person to retrieve their prize may be faxed to the Rodeo at 850- 654-1165 or scanned and e-mailed, no later than Monday, November 2, 2015 to fishing@destinfishingrodeo.org.**
- 3.5. All awards are ANGLERS Awards (except for Captain’s Jackpot Awards and Billfish Tag and Release Awards). 1099’s will be issued to the winners in accordance with the U.S. Internal Revenue Service.
- 3.6. Kids Certificates and/or Fishing Rods will be given to any child 12 or under who presents a fish to the Rodeo Dock before 5 p.m. (time exception will be made for anglers on registered vessels) every day. Only 1 rod and certificate per child per month.

DEFINITIONS:

1. **Rodeo officials:** Paid employees and the Official Rodeo Judges judging that day.
2. **Immediate Family:** Father, Mother, Brother, Sister, Son, Daughter, and Spouse.
3. **Charter Boat:** A boat owned and operated as a charter fishing business in Destin as determined by the Rules Committee.
4. **Private Boat:** Vessel that has not carried passengers for hire as determined by the Rules Committee.

5. **Party Boat** - A boat owned and operated as a charter fishing business in Destin as determined by the Rules Committee and participates in the Beaufort Head Boat Survey.
6. **Non-motorized** Vessel – ONLY human powered vessels will be allowed. NO gasoline or electric motor propelled boats, sail boats, airboats, float tubes, or poled boats may be used.
7. **25 and Under** – Any vessel 25'11" and below as per official state vessel registration. Valid registration papers must be produced at the time of Rodeo registration.
8. **Open Awards Classification:** Awards eligible to all anglers registered in the Destin Fishing Rodeo.
9. **Registered Entry:** A registered entry is an entry that is recorded with an official Rodeo Judge and eligible to be recorded on the leader board at the weigh station.
10. **Crewmember:** Any person who collects over 50% of their annual income from the professional operations while underway of any commercial/for-hire fishing vessel.
11. **Legitimate Entry for Captain Awards:** The heaviest fish in each category from a boat, per trip, that takes a position on the leaderboard. In the event of a tie, the earliest weigh-in prevails.
12. **Junior Angler:** any angler age 6 – 14 years old on the day of the competition. Anglers under the age of 6 are eligible for a certificate and rod and reel.
13. **Lady Angler:** female anglers age 15 and older on the day of competition.
14. **Senior Angler:** Any angler 65 years or older on the day of competition.