

St. Pete Open 2019 Rules

Tournament Rules & Regulations

Last Minute Rule Changes May Be Instituted at the Captain's Meeting Starting at 8:00 P.M., 8/16/19

Tournament Cap:

The St. Pete Open will accept 300 public (Non-St. Pete Underwater Club Members) registrations. It is highly recommended that each shooter registers as early as possible to ensure entry. Registration will close once 300 public entries have been received. Only those who have completed the on-line Registration and Waiver forms, or paper registration and waiver forms, are considered registered and may participate. If you did not Pre-Register early, there is no guarantee that you will receive the requested size shooter shirt.

Early pre-registration ends 7/18/19.

Last year, the tournament cap was reached prior to the Captains meeting. We fully expect the same this year. **DO NOT WAIT UNTIL THE CAPTAIN'S MEETING TO REGISTER**

Registrations are NOT transferrable

One tournament participant from each boat/crew/team must be present at the Captain's Meeting Friday night. Attending tournament participant may pick up 5 additional shooter bags for others shooting on the same boat only. No boats are permitted to leave port prior to Captain's Meeting. Failure to check in and claim shooter bags may result in disqualification. There will be no reimbursements for the tournament fees once paid by the participant. No exceptions.

Tournament Harvest Times:

This tournament is a one-day tournament. Harvest may begin on Saturday at 12:00 A.M. **Harvested fish must be in the weigh-in line on Saturday at 7:30 PM.** (19-1/2hrs.) No eligible species may be harvested prior to Saturday 12:00 A.M. (the day of the tournament) and may not be in the possession of the participant (on the boat, cooler or any other location where the participant is or has been before the tournament). Fish must be presented in a manner that is consistent with a fish harvested on the same day of the tournament. Fish must be gutted, well iced, and suitable for human consumption. There are no boundaries for this tournament.

Methods of Harvest:

This is strictly a spearfishing tournament. Both tank and free diving are permissible. In order to be eligible, fish must have been caught by the participant using a spear loaded or propelled by his/her own muscle power. Lobster may be grabbed, snared, or netted per Florida Law Enforcement and Federal regulations. "Powerheads" are

not allowed to obtain any eligible species, if it is suspected, the fish shall be inspected by the weigh crew, and at least one current SPUC Officer, or past club President, and the shooter shall be disqualified if it is determined the fish was taken with a power head. NO EXCEPTIONS! Hook and Line caught fish may NOT be entered.

Categories:

There are 8 categories for this tournament. Each registered shooter may enter ONE fish in each category. Eligible fish sizes are based on Gulf of Mexico Federal Rules, all lengths are minimum required. Fish below the eligible length limit will not be weighed. Shooters submitting short fish at the weigh in line may be disqualified. **FWC may be present at weigh-in as they have been in the past. Short fish maybe subject to prosecution by FWC. So do not bring any undersized fish to weigh-in line**

1. Black Grouper – (24" minimum overall)
2. Grouper – Red, Yellowfin, and Yellowmouth (20" minimum) Gag (24' minimum) Scamp (16" minimum Gulf, 20" minimum Atlantic), (No Goliath, Warsaw, Yellow edge, Coney's or Hinds).
3. Snapper - Gray (Mangrove), Cubera, Dog, Schoolmaster, Yellowtail (12" minimum) Mutton (18" minimum)" (No lanes, Beeliners, Mahogany, Queen.)
4. Pelagic – Greater Amberjack – (34" minimum fork length) Kingfish – (24" minimum). African Pompano – 24". Dolphin (Mahi) – (20" Atlantic, No size limit in Gulf of Mexico) Permit – (11" minimum). Wahoo – (No size limit). Blackfin Tuna – (No size limit). Almaco Jack – (No size limit). Rainbow Runner (No size limit). (No Bonito, Spanish Macs)
5. Hogfish – (14" minimum to fork).
6. Cobia and Barracuda – Cobia (33" min to fork), Barracuda – (28" minimum overall).
7. Spiny/Shovel Lobster – 3" minimum on carapace for spiny. No weighing of broken off parts, no holes in any part of lobster. (No Spanish lobster)
8. Sheepshead – (12" minimum overall).

All Fish listed above may be eligible, if in season at time of tournament. Any fish not listed is not eligible for tournament.

All local, Florida & Federal rules, size limits, license requirements, and bag limits apply. There are no boundaries.

A Category Ticket will be given for each category when one species from that category is weighed. This category ticket will be added to a raffle for that category's

major Category Prize. Be sure to keep these tickets as the prize is a major prize and anyone who weighs a fish in each category has an equal chance to win.

Mystery Tickets:

Three (3) Mystery Tickets will be given to each participant at the Captains Meeting. Additional Mystery Tickets CAN NOT BE purchased.

Prize selection:

All registered shooters will compete against each other for position on the prize board. Order of prize pick is governed by the WEIGHT of fish entered. Each shooter will place on the Prize board ONE TIME. Places will be determined in the order or categories listed above. First pick will be heaviest **Black Grouper**, second pick will be heaviest grouper, third pick will be heaviest snapper, etc., ninth pick will be second heaviest **Black Grouper**, tenth pick will be the second heaviest grouper, eleventh pick will be the second heaviest snapper, and so on. Once a shooter is placed on the prize board, his subsequent entries will be disregarded. Mystery tickets will be drawn at random intervals during the process of prizes selection.

Trophies are awarded for 1st, 2nd & 3rd place in all eight (8) categories.

Category Tickets & Prizes:

After you weigh in your fish you will also receive a "Category" Prize ticket for each of the eight (8) categories that you weighed in a fish. Example; you weighed in a snapper, grouper, hogfish, and a cuda therefore you will receive a Category Prize ticket for each of those "category" fish, a total of four Category Prize tickets. Weigh in a fish/lobster for each of the 8 categories and you get 8 Category Prize tickets. At the end of the awards ceremony we will pick one ticket for each Category Prize. Each Category Prize is valued at a high dollar amount. You can win more than one category prize!

Grand Category Prize:

After all the Category Prizes are handed out then ALL tournament category tickets are combined, and a single ticket is pulled for the Grand Category prize which goes to one lucky shooter!!

Divisions:

In addition to the prize board, there will be trophies awarded for three Divisions.

Women's Division (For those shooters who possess two X chromosomes)

Juniors Division (for those shooters 17 and under ON THE DAY OF THE TOURNAMENT)

Free dive Division (For those shooters who are afraid of breathing compressed Air)

Scoring includes all eight categories. The aggregate score for all divisions is 1 point per pound, with a maximum 20 points for any single fish. In order to qualify for the Free Dive division, all shooters fish MUST be harvested while free diving.

Lionfish:

In order to educate our community about the value of harvesting lionfish, and to promote the work of REEF Monitoring LLC, the St. Pete Open will award prizes for the harvest of lionfish.

A trophy will be awarded to the person with the largest lionfish as determined by REEF Monitoring. Any registered shooter may enter ONE lionfish. Fish entered for the largest lionfish trophy may be either retained by the shooter or donated to REEF Monitoring.

There will also be a lionfish raffle. For each lionfish DONATED to REEF Monitoring, a shooter will receive one raffle ticket. Donate 5 lionfish, get 5 lionfish raffle tickets. Donation of lionfish is MANDATORY in order to receive raffle tickets. There will be a maximum of 20 raffle tickets per shooter. At the end of the awards ceremony, these tickets will be drawn to determine the winner of the Lionfish raffle prize(s).

Reef Monitoring will process lionfish under the pavilion prior to the category weigh stations. Lionfish do not have to be gutted. Reef Monitoring will be the official recorders and have the final report as to the winning size and will distribute raffle tickets. All lionfish must be presented to Reef Monitoring officials on ice and in a "fresh caught" condition

General Rules:

Each participant is responsible for their own safety, at a minimum it is requested that participants wear an inflatable rescue device and all safety equipment that is standard for the sport and local conditions.

No boat may approach under power, without permission, within 150 feet of an anchored boat flying a diver's down or Alpha flag.

No participant may receive assistance with any fish until he/she has one hand on the boat. Participants may help each other net lobster.

This Tournament is for Honor, Respect, Camaraderie, and for Fun! If you must cheat to win, you are cheating yourself of your own Honor and Respect.

In the event a boat becomes disabled, all participants catch may be brought into the weigh-in area by at least one of the participants from the same boat/crew/team. This person is responsible for weight verification & Category Ticket pickup.

Weighing of Fish:

Weigh Scales will be open for weighing fish at 6:00 PM. Participants must have their fish **in the weigh-in line by 7:30 PM or they will be disqualified, No**

Exceptions. That does not mean in your boat, on the dock or under the pavilion, it means in the weigh-in line. Fish must be brought to the **Pre-check table on ice and in a proper container for inspection. ALL FISH MUST BE PROPERLY GUTTED, CLEAN OF DIRT AND DEBRIS AND PROPERLY ICED DOWN.** If any fish does not look fresh and/or the catch looks like it was taken with an explosive device, that catch, and the participant may be disqualified. Fish must be weighed by at least one participant from the same boat/crew/team.

All fish and lobster weighed from any one participant must be weighed at the same time. No two fish of the same species will be weighed to determine which is heavier. Only one fish per category, per participant can be weighed in. **Tournament record fish must be re-weighed and verified before it can become a tournament record.**

It is the participant's responsibility to VERIFY his/her catches and weights with the weigh masters recording AND pick up the Category Tickets for each species weighed in. **Once the participant signs the weigh-in slip, he/she cannot challenge or protest his/her recorded weights.** The Category Ticket/recording area is located at the end of the weigh-in stage. It is the shooter's responsibility to obtain their Category tickets at this time. Category tickets will not be re-issued for lost or unclaimed tickets.

Each participant entering this tournament has given implied and expressed consent for the St. Petersburg Underwater Club to use his/her name and/or likeness to promote the efforts of the St. Petersburg Underwater Club, the St. Pete Open and/or spearfishing.

Disqualification: A tournament participant can be disqualified from all aspects of this tournament and from any future St. Pete Open Tournaments for any of the following: 1) Infraction of tournament rules. 2) Rough play, unsafe or careless behavior. 3) Unsportsmanlike conduct during any of the tournament activities. 4) Failure to comply with any protest investigation 5) Failure to abide by the final decision of the Tournament Rules Committee. Immediate disqualification will be in effect if any participant is uncooperative with an investigation of potential rules violations. This may include but not limited to, at request of the tournament rules committee, submitting to a polygraph test, the presentation of dive computer data and/or GPS route information from the tournament day and prior days. (6) The St. Pete Underwater Club reserves the right to exclude any individual from any aspect of the St. Pete Open and/or reject the registration from any individual whom the SPUC or tournament committee considers a liability, safety hazard or distraction. Decisions and interpretations of all these rules by the Tournament Rules Committee shall be final. All rules violations and protests will be decided by a majority rule of the Tournament Rules Committee. This committee shall consist of the current SPUC President, the current SPUC Vice-President; the current SPUC Secretary. If any member of this Tournament Rules Committee is involved in the dispute, then that member will be replaced by the current SPUC Treasurer or Last Year's SPUC President or other SPUC past presidents.

All Rules are subject to change at last minute of Captains Meeting, as to why all shooters should attend.