

Official Rules of the 2009 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:** April 24-26 2009. April 24th will be the captains meeting. Diving begins at 6:00am on April 25th and ends at 7:00pm on April 25th. Weigh in begins at 9:00am and the line closes at 11:00am on April 26th.
2. **Early Registration:** Early registration ends on April 17, 2009. All registration forms must be postmarked by this date.
3. **Late Registration:** Late registration will start on April 24, 2009 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, April 24, 2009 at 7:30PM. Every participant should be at the Captain's Meeting; however, at least one Representative Diver from each boat must be at the Captain's Meeting (to represent himself and those on his/her boat) 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 April 25, 2009 at 6:00am. Shooting must end at 7:00pm 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 9:00am and the line will close promptly at 11:00am on April 26, 2009. You must be in line with your fish properly iced in a cooler before the lines closes at 11:00am. 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. **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 accordance with his/her aggregate score, 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.
3. **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 accordance with her aggregate score.
4. **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 accordance with his/her aggregate score. In order to compete for this trophy you must be under the age of 18 on April 25, 2009.

FISH REQUIREMENTS

1. **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.
2. **Size limits:**

Category	Size Limits	Maximum Number
Grouper	22" Gag or Black; 20" Red; 20" Scamp	3 Total (2 gag, 2 red)
Snapper	12" Mangrove; 16" Mutton	3 Total
Hogfish	12"	3 Total
Sheepshead	12"	3 Total
Amberjack	30"	1
Cobia	33"	1

SCORING FORMAT

1. **Points per fish:** You will receive 5 points per fish weighed. Fish that do not meet the minimum requirements will not be weighed. The total number of fish that can be turned in is 14 for a total of 70 points
2. **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 that will be counted for each category of fish.

Category	Maximum points per pound
Grouper	15
Snapper	10
Hogfish	10
Sheepshead	10
Amberjack	20
Cobia	20

BEST BOAT SCORING

1. **Registration:** To register each boat member must list the boat name on their registration form. Make sure each member fills out the boat name properly on their registration form.
2. **Minimum Divers:** There must be a minimum of 3 shooters on a boat to qualify for best boat.
3. **Substitutions:** Boat members can only be changed at the captains meeting. All changes or corrections to boat members must be made at the captains meeting.
4. **Points per Boat:** The boat point score will be calculated using the aggregate scores for each member of the boat. Each score will be added together and the total will be divided by the number of boat members. If a diver listed as a boat member does not turn in any fish their aggregate score will be zero and they are still counted as a boat member for scoring purposes.

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 an aggregate tournament. There will be a prize table for participants to choose from. A person's turn at the prize table will be determined solely by aggregate score total. All persons who weigh a fish will get a turn at the prize table. Winning a trophy will not yield an earlier turn at the prize table.

There will be a total of 11 Trophies up for grabs:

1. **Tournament Champion**
2. **Best Freediver**
3. **Best Female Diver**
4. **Best Junior Diver**
5. **Largest Grouper**
6. **Largest Snapper**
7. **Largest Amberjack**
8. **Largest Cobia**
9. **Largest Hogfish**
10. **Largest Sheepshead**
11. **Best Boat**

RULE CHANGES

The tournament rules may be changed up until the Captains Meeting. We do not anticipate any major rule changes. Official rule changes will be posted on the SWFLSC website at www.swflspearfishing.org. Registrants are responsible for making sure they have checked for rule changes up until the Captains Meeting.