



2026 Firecracker Open: July 3-6

Fishing Days July 4 & 5

Unofficial Tournament Rules



Rules updated 7/3/26 during registration and communicated to all team captains to correct misalignment between Firecracker Open Rules, the General HMTS Rules, and the Blue Marlin World Championship Rules, allowing the deployment of omnidirectional sonar prior to start fishing.

TOURNAMENT TIMELINE

- **Friday, July 3, 2026 — REGISTRATION & CAPTAINS MEETING**
 - **1PM - 3PM:** Early Registration at Fuel Dock office
 - **4PM:** Final registration & Captains' Meeting with Dinner & Kuleana Rum Works Bar at Hawaii Big Game Fishing Club
 - **5PM:** 100% refund from Base Entry withdrawal deadline*
 - **6PM:** Official briefing
 - **8PM:** Clubhouse registration deadline*
 - **10:30PM:** Final registration withdrawal deadline*
- **Saturday, July 4, 2026 — FISHING DAY 1**
 - **6AM:** Boats allowed to leave Honokohau Harbor
 - **6:15AM - 8AM:** Last minute Optional Addition at Fuel Dock
 - **6:15AM - 8:30AM:** Visual check-out of vessels leaving harbor.
 - **8:30AM:** Start Fishing ANYWHERE!
 - **4:30PM:** Stop Fishing
 - **6PM:** Dock Time deadline — all boats inside Honokohau Harbor*
 - **6:30PM:** Deadline for release video submissions*
- **Sunday, July 5, 2026 — FISHING DAY 2**
 - **6:15AM - 7AM:** Visual check-out of vessels leaving harbor.
 - **7AM:** Start Fishing SHOTGUN START!
 - **4PM:** Stop Fishing
 - **6PM:** Dock Time deadline — all boats inside Honokohau Harbor*
 - **6:30PM:** Deadline for release video submissions*
- **Monday, July 6, 2026 — AWARDS BANQUET (in conjunction with Kona Throw Down registration)**
 - **4 PM:** Awards Banquet with Dinner, Kuleana Rum Works Bar, & Live Music at Hawaii Big Game Fishing Club
 - **6:30PM:** Awards Presentation & Giveaway Drawings

** Please read through the rules to see specifics for timeline items*

THE TOURNAMENT

The Firecracker Open is a two-day, billfish team event with the top-team honors trophy awarded to the team that weighs the largest marlin, 400 lbs or more. If no qualifying marlin are weighed, top-team honors will be awarded to the team with the most points.

Eligible species for the tournament include blue marlin, black marlin, and ahi. Points categories award 1 point per lb for weighed blue or black marlin 400lbs or bigger, 165 points for each tagged and released blue or black marlin, and 1 point per pound for each pound over 100 for each ahi.

ELIGIBLE SPECIES: Blue Marlin, Black Marlin, Ahi

MINIMUM WEIGHT: 400 lbs for Blue & Black Marlin, 100 lbs for Ahi

DAY 1: LINES-IN: 8:30 AM, **LINES-OUT:** 4:30 PM **START ANYWHERE**

DAY 2: LINES-IN: 7:00 AM, **LINES-OUT:** 4:00 PM **SHOTGUN START**

RADIO CHANNEL/TOURNAMENT CONTROL: VHF Channel 68, unless otherwise announced

ROUND UPS: 10AM, 12PM, 3PM

PLEASE TEXT ALL TAG & RELEASE VIDEOS TO (808) 430-4000

BASE ENTRY FEE

The mandatory base entry fee is \$1,000 per team. 35% goes to the tournament, then the Base Entry prize money will be disbursed accordingly: 70% is awarded to the team who weighs the single largest marlin, 400 lbs or more, and 30% is awarded to the team who scores the most points overall.

This basic entry fee covers tournament participation, tournament shirts, any team gifts, and entry to all planned entertainment or social activities of up to six (6) registered participants. Additional anglers may be added for a registration fee of \$200 each, which includes an additional ticket to social activities. Guest access to social events may be added for a fee of \$100 each. Additional crew members may participate at no additional charge, but will need to purchase a \$100 guest pass for social events. The tournament committee reserves the right to deny tournament entry of any individual, organization or corporation.

If no qualifying marlin are weighed, that payout portion of the base purse will be awarded to the team with the most overall points, and the second place payout will be awarded to the team with the second most points.

CAPTAINS MEETING AND REGISTRATION

The final registration, captains' meeting and kickoff party will take place from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m. on July 3rd at the Hawaii Big Game Fishing Club. All teams that are preregistered and teams needing to register must send at least one representative to obtain tournament credentials and attend the captain's meeting in case there are any last minute changes to the schedule or rules. Regardless of attendance, all participants accept and agree to be bound by all instructions and/or rule changes made orally or in writing during that meeting.

Upon the conclusion of the Captain's Meeting at 8:00 p.m. on July 3, 2026, acceptance of check or cash payments shall be at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director. Tournament registration shall remain open for modifications and payments via credit card or credit on file (roll-forward) until 10:30 p.m. on the same day. Registrants may make changes either through CatchStat or by contacting the Tournament Director directly, provided such changes are submitted prior to the 10:30 p.m. deadline.

Teams that withdraw from optional categories before the 10:30 p.m. deadline shall be entitled to a full refund (100%) of fees paid for those optional categories. **All entrants are responsible for their own registration: every team acknowledges that their registration as displayed on CatchStat will be deemed correct and authorized at the 10:30pm cutoff unless the Tournament Director confirms otherwise.** Any team that withdraws from the tournament or from any optional category after the 10:30 p.m. deadline expressly acknowledges and agrees to relinquish any right to a refund and shall forfeit 100% of all entry fees paid.

In an effort to maximize participation, optional additions will be accepted until 8 a.m. on July 4, 2026. Entry must be made in-person at the Fuel Dock, or via phone call to the Tournament Director, and *only credit card payments* will be accepted.

RULES AND LAWS

It is each registered team member's responsibility to understand and abide by IGFA angling rules, local and federal laws and regulations, Hawaii Marlin Tournament Series rules, and the specific tournament rules for which they are participating in. Each participating vessel must designate a Professional Licensed Captain.

1. DAY 1: DEPARTURE POINT AND START ANYWHERE / "LINES-IN"

All vessels must depart from Honokohau Harbor each morning and return there each evening. **ON DAY 1**, boats are not permitted to leave Honokohau Harbor prior to 6:00 a.m. each morning. Teams are required to check in with Tournament Control by radio with their grid location between 8:00 a.m. and 8:25 a.m. prior to the start. "Start Fishing" will be announced by Tournament Control at 8:30 a.m. unless otherwise specified. No lines (other than used for bait fishing), teasers or dredges will be permitted before the official fishing hours each day.

2. DAY 2: DEPARTURE POINT AND SHOTGUN START / "LINES-IN"

All vessels must depart from Honokohau Harbor each morning and return there each evening. **Day 2** fishing day will begin with a shotgun start. Teams shall stage between the Green Buoy and the northern boundary, no deeper than 100 fathoms. "Start Fishing" will be announced by Tournament Control at 7:00AM unless otherwise specified. Teams are required to check in with Tournament Control by radio when they are "On the Line" prior to the start.

3. BAIT FISHING

Dead and live bait caught prior to tournament fishing days is permitted for use during this tournament, and bait fishing is permitted outside of fishing hours, however, all bait fishing must stop 15 minutes before lines-in. Bait fishing may resume after the official start time of each day. Other than tackle used specifically for bait fishing, no tackle (including teasers/mud flaps/dredges/etc) intended for engaging in marlin fishing or ahi fishing shall be deployed before the official fishing hours each day.

4. LINES-OUT AND RETURN DEADLINE

Teams with a boated fish or catch affidavit to submit must cease fishing at the call of "Stop Fishing" (lines out) —at 4:30 PM on Day 1, and 4:00 PM on Day 2— and proceed directly to the Fuel Dock for submission. All fish, catch affidavits, and terminal tackle must be checked in by boat, at the Fuel Dock, unless an exception is made by the tournament director. Teams without any potential qualifying fish or catch affidavits may fun-fish after "Stop Fishing." Any catch resulting from a hook-up made after the official "Stop Fishing" call will not count toward the tournament or series. All vessels with fish to weigh or catch affidavits to submit must be inside Honokohau Harbor by 6:00 PM. Any boat not inside the line between the green and red harbor entrance lights by that time will have its catch(es) disqualified, unless prior arrangements have been made with the Tournament Director.

5. OPTIONAL CATEGORIES AND DIVISION LEVELS

All optional jackpot divisions are 85% payback. Tournament rules apply to all optional jackpots. Only teams entered in the optional categories are eligible for corresponding cash prizes. Teams only compete against other teams entered in their specific optional categories and division levels.

BIGGEST MARLIN JACKPOT

Divisions: \$100, \$300, \$500, \$1000, \$2000, \$3000

The team that weighs the heaviest marlin, at or over the 400-pound minimum, throughout all tournament fishing days, will win the entire cash award in their respective division.

DAILY BIGGEST MARLIN

Divisions: \$200, \$600, \$1000, \$2000, \$4000, \$5000

The Daily Biggest Marlin cash prize for each division will be split evenly between the teams that weigh the heaviest marlin, at or over the 400-pound minimum, of each tournament fishing day. If no qualifying fish on an individual day are weighed, that day's payout will be applied to the other day's fishing.

TOP 3 MARLIN (50/30/20)

Divisions: \$1000, \$2500, \$5000

The Top 3 Marlin cash prize will be awarded to the teams that weigh the three qualifying heaviest marlin in the tournament and will be awarded accordingly, 50% heaviest, 30% second heaviest and 20% third heaviest. In the event of a tie, the award earned and the next lower level will be split evenly. For example, if two teams weigh the heaviest marlin of equal weight, they will split the first and second heaviest marlin award evenly, and the next heaviest marlin by weight (or a third tied weight boated at a later time) will win third place. If only one team weighs a qualifying marlin, they will win the first, second and third place payouts. If only two teams weigh a qualifying marlin, they will split the third place award evenly. If there is a tie for third place, the team who boated the third place fish first, according to the radio log, will be awarded the third place payout. Only three teams will be awarded cash from this category, regardless of how many teams tie.

MOST POINTS JACKPOT

Divisions: \$100, \$300, \$500, \$1000, \$2000, \$3000

The team that scores the most points, throughout all tournament fishing days, will win the entire cash award in their respective division. Scores will be determined by combining the points awarded from 1 point per lb for weighed blue or black marlin 400lbs or bigger,, 165 points for each tagged and released blue or black marlin, and 1 point per pound for each pound over 100 for each ahi.

DAILY MOST POINTS

Divisions: \$200, \$600, \$1000, \$2000, \$4000, \$5000

The Daily Most Points cash prize for each division will be split evenly between the teams that score the most points of each tournament fishing day. If no points are scored on an individual day, that day's payout will be applied to the other day's fishing..

BIGGEST AHI JACKPOT

Divisions: \$500

The team that weighs the heaviest ahi, at or over the 100-pound minimum, throughout all tournament fishing days, will win the entire cash award in their respective division.

DAILY BIGGEST AHI

Divisions: \$800

The Daily Biggest Ahi cash prize for each division will be split evenly between the teams that weigh the heaviest ahi, at or over the 100-pound minimum, of each tournament fishing day.

If no qualifying fish on an individual day are weighed, that day's payout will be applied to the other day's fishing.

TOP 3 AHI (50/30/20)

Divisions: \$500

The Top 3 Ahi cash prize will be awarded to the teams that weigh the three heaviest qualifying ahi in the tournament and will be awarded accordingly, 50% heaviest, 30% second heaviest and 20% third heaviest. In the event of a tie, the award earned and the next lower level will be split evenly. For example, if two teams weigh the heaviest ahi of equal weight, they will split the first and second heaviest ahi payout evenly, and the next heaviest ahi by weight (or a third tied weight boated at a later time) will win third

place. If only one team weighs a qualifying ahi, they will win the first, second and third place payouts. If only two teams weigh a qualifying ahi, they will split the third place award evenly. If there is a tie for third place, the team who boated the third place fish first, according to the radio log, will be awarded the third place payout. Only three teams will be awarded cash from this category, regardless of how many teams tie.

6. TIE RESOLUTION AND PAYOUT POLICY

In the event of a weight tie for the Base Purse weighed marlin, the payout will be awarded to the team who boated the fish first, according to official boated time on the radio log.

If a qualifying marlin is weighed, and there is a tie for most points in the base purse category, the points winner will be determined by who arrived at the high score first, according to official release or boated time.

If no qualifying marlin are weighed, and there is a tie for most points in the base purse category, 70% of the entire base purse will be awarded to the team who arrived at the high score first, and 30% will be awarded to the team who arrived at the high score second.

There will only be two places paid from the base payout, regardless of the number of teams tied. Any trophies/titles will be awarded to the team who reaches the high score first.

In the event of a weight tie for Biggest Marlin, Daily Biggest Marlin, or Ahi optional categories, the cash award will be split evenly among all teams tied. In the event of a tie for optional points categories, the team reaching the high point total first—based on official release or boated times—will receive 60%, the second team will receive 40%, and there will only be up to two places paid, regardless of how many teams are tied.

7. REFUND/ROLLOVER POLICY FOR UNCLAIMED PRIZE DIVISIONS

If no qualifying fish are weighed in the “Biggest Marlin Jackpot”, “Daily Biggest Marlin”, “Biggest Ahi”, “Top 3 Marlin”, “Top 3 Ahi”, or “Biggest Ahi Daily” optional divisions, the portion of Entry Fees and/or Optional funds designated for awards will be refunded, or teams may choose to apply their refund amount toward the following 2026 HMTS tournament. The same refund policy applies to “Most Points Jackpot” and “Daily Most Points” optional divisions if no team scores points. If a team in a specific optional category has no matching competitors at the end of final registration, 100% of their specific optional division will be refunded. Refunds will be processed by ACH, check or wire transfer to the Team Representative within 4 weeks of all tournament entry fees clearing the bank and refund paperwork submitted.

8. CANCELLATION REFUND POLICY

Registrants who cancel their participation before 5:00 PM on July 3, 2026 will receive a full refund of their base entry fee and any optional jackpots. Any team wishing to cancel registration following that deadline will receive a 65% refund of their base entry fee and a 100% refund of their optional entry categories until 10:30 PM that same day. After that time, teams expressly acknowledge and agree to relinquish any right to a refund and forfeit 100% of all entry fees paid.

If the tournament must be canceled before scheduled fishing days due to unforeseeable events beyond Bonnier’s control (e.g., extreme weather, natural disaster, terrorist acts, and other force majeure events), 65% of the Entry Fee and 100% of the Optional Jackpot funds will be refunded. If Bonnier cancels the tournament for any other reason (e.g., insufficient participation), the Entry Fee and Optional Jackpot fees will be fully refunded. Refunds will be issued by ACH, check or wire transfer within 4 weeks of all tournament entry fees clearing the bank and refund paperwork submitted.

The Hawaii Marlin Tournament Series committee reserves the right to update or change these rules at any time. By entering a tournament in the Hawaii Marlin Tournament Series and paying the entry fees, all participants agree to abide by the tournament rules and accept all decisions made by the Tournament Committee as final.

HMTS Contact Information:

Website: HawaiiMarlinTournamentSeries.com

Mailing Address: PO Box 2567 Kailua-Kona, HI 96745

HMTS Tournament Director: Laura Dowsett

Email: laura.dowsett@marlinmag.com

Cell: 808-430-4000

Firecracker Open 2026 Entry & Optional Categories

July 3rd - 6th (Fishing Days July 4 & 5)

for reference only

Category	Payout Structure	Eligible Species	Min Weight	Division	Entry Fee	Entry Choices (boxes to be checked by teams)	Totals (to be filled out by teams)
Base Entry	70% Biggest Marlin 30% Most Points	Blue & Black Marlin Ahi	400 lbs, 1pt per lb or 165 pts T&R 1 pt per lb for each lb over 100 lbs		\$1,000.00	☐	Base Entry TOTAL:
Biggest Marlin Jackpot	Winner-Take-All	Blue & Black Marlin	400 lbs	Division 1	\$100.00	☐	Biggest Marlin Jackpot TOTAL:
				Division 2	\$300.00	☐	
				Division 3	\$500.00	☐	
				Division 4	\$1,000.00	☐	
				Division 5	\$2,000.00	☐	
				Division 6	\$3,000.00	☐	
Daily Biggest Marlin	2 way split	Blue & Black Marlin	400 lbs	Division 1	\$200.00	☐	Daily Biggest Marlin TOTAL:
				Division 2	\$600.00	☐	
				Division 3	\$1,000.00	☐	
				Division 4	\$2,000.00	☐	
				Division 5	\$4,000.00	☐	
				Division 6	\$5,000.00	☐	
Most Points Jackpot	Winner-Take-All	Blue & Black Marlin Ahi	400 lbs, 1pt per lb or 165 pts T&R 1 pt per lb for each lb over 100 lbs	Division 1	\$100.00	☐	Most Points Jackpot TOTAL:
				Division 2	\$300.00	☐	
				Division 3	\$500.00	☐	
				Division 4	\$1,000.00	☐	
				Division 5	\$2,000.00	☐	
				Division 6	\$3,000.00	☐	
Daily Most Points	2 way split	Blue & Black Marlin Ahi	400 lbs, 1pt per lb or 165 pts T&R 1 pt per lb for each lb over 100 lbs	Division 1	\$200.00	☐	Daily Most Points TOTAL:
				Division 2	\$600.00	☐	
				Division 3	\$1,000.00	☐	
				Division 4	\$2,000.00	☐	
				Division 5	\$4,000.00	☐	
				Division 6	\$5,000.00	☐	
Top 3 Marlin (50/30/20)	50% Biggest Marlin 30% 2nd Biggest Marlin 20% 3rd Biggest Marlin	Blue & Black Marlin	400 lbs	Division 1	\$1,000.00	☐	Top 3 Marlin TOTAL:
				Division 2	\$2,500.00	☐	
				Division 3	\$5,000.00	☐	
Biggest Ahi Jackpot	Winner-Take-All	Ahi	100 lbs	Division 1	\$500.00	☐	Biggest Ahi TOTAL:
Daily Biggest Ahi	2 way split	Ahi	100 lbs	Division 1	\$800.00	☐	Daily Ahi TOTAL:
Top 3 Ahi (50/30/20)	50% Biggest Ahi 30% 2nd Biggest Ahi 20% 3rd Biggest Ahi	Ahi	100 lbs	Division 1	\$500.00	☐	Top 3 Ahi TOTAL:
Across the Board Entry					\$50,700		Entry TOTAL:

(Base Entry pays out 65%. Optionals pay out 85%)

All entry fees paid via credit card are subject to a 3.5% credit card fee determined at the time of entry.
Credit card fees are NOT reflected in the totals on this sheet.

Please make checks payable to: **BONNIER LLC**

2026 REGISTRATION TIMELINE:

Upon the conclusion of this tournament's Captain's Meeting at 8:00 p.m. acceptance of check or cash payments shall be at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director.

Tournament registration shall remain open for modifications and payments via credit card or credit on file (roll-forward) until 10:30 p.m. on the same day. Registrants may make changes either through CatchStat or by contacting the Tournament Director directly, provided such changes are submitted prior to the 10:30 p.m. deadline. Teams that withdraw from optional categories before the 10:30 p.m. deadline shall be entitled to a full refund (100%) of fees paid for those optional categories. **All entrants are responsible for their own registration: every team acknowledges that their registration as displayed on CatchStat will be deemed correct and authorized at the 10:30pm cutoff unless the Tournament Director confirms otherwise. Any team that withdraws from the tournament or from any optional category after the 10:30 p.m. deadline expressly acknowledges and agrees to relinquish any right to a refund and shall forfeit 100% of all entry fees paid.**

In an effort to maximize participation, optional additions will be accepted until 8 a.m. on Fishing Day 1 of this tournament.

Entry must be made in-person at the Fuel Dock, or via phone call to the Tournament Director, and only credit card payments will be accepted.

Tournament Director: Laura Dowsett — laura.dowsett@marlinmag.com — 808-430-4000 | hawaiimarlintournamentseries.com | hawaii.catchstat.com