

2026 Los Cabos Billfish Tournament

Official Rules & Awards

October 7–11, 2026 · Cabo San Lucas, Baja California Sur, Mexico

Rules Version 8.26.26

This document contains the complete rules, awards and optional jackpot terms for the 2026 Los Cabos Billfish Tournament, presented by **The Marlin Group Network LLC** ("Marlin").

Tournament Entry:

The \$2,500 base entry fee qualifies teams to compete for the tournament's primary trophies. Trophies will be awarded to the top three teams, as well as to the top captain, top angler, and top lady angler, based on the release or weigh-in of qualifying fish (§9.1). **Cash awards are separate from the base entry and are available only through participation in the optional jackpot categories.**

Official version

The official rules of the 2026 Los Cabos Billfish Tournament are the printed rules distributed to teams at Registration. Online and electronic versions of these rules, including any version posted to the tournament website, are provided for information only and are unofficial. Where an online or electronic version conflicts with the printed rules distributed at Registration, the printed rules control.

This document is revision **8.26.26**. It supersedes all prior printings and postings.

Any rule change issued after this revision will be published online. Any change announced at the registration event will be circulated to all teams in writing via an email through CatchStat before Start Fishing on Day 1 and forms part of the official rules.

By entering the tournament and paying the entry fees, all participants agree to abide by these rules and to accept all decisions of the Tournament Committee as final.

1. Schedule & Key Deadlines

1.1 Schedule

Date	Time	Event
Wednesday, October 7	4:00–8:00 PM	Final registration, captains' meeting and kickoff party — Playa Grande Resort's Magno Hall & Auditorium
	7:00 PM	Captains' and anglers' meeting (attendance mandatory)
Thursday, October 8	6:30–7:00 AM	Visual check-out — Cabo San Lucas and San José del Cabo
	7:00 AM	Shotgun start — Lines In
	4:30 PM	Lines Out
	2:00–7:30 PM	Weigh station open — IGY Marina

Date	Time	Event
	7:30 PM	Deadline for release videos and catch affidavits
Friday, October 9		As Thursday
Saturday, October 10		As Thursday — final fishing day
Sunday, October 11	6:30–8:30 PM	Awards banquet and Early Bird drawing — Playa Grande Resort (dinner served 7:30 PM)

1.2 Key deadlines

A single deadline governs registration, paperwork and all optional jackpot decisions.

Deadline	When	Governs
Early Bird payment	On or before September 7	Eligibility and weighting for the Early Bird drawing (\$2.5)
Full refund cutoff	On or before September 7	Full refund of base entry and optional jackpots (\$3.1)
Close of registration	8:00 PM on October 7	All required paperwork and licenses; entry into or withdrawal from optional jackpots. After this time all entries are final and non-refundable
Before Lines In, Day 1	7:00 AM on October 8	Top Lady Angler designation in CatchStat (\$9.1); confirmation of CatchStat access; review of any rule-change notices (\$12.2)
Daily submission	7:30 PM each fishing day	Release videos and signed catch affidavit (\$7.6)

2. Entry

2.1 Base entry fee

The base entry fee is **\$2,500 per team**, whether a team targets billfish or gamefish. The base entry covers participation of all registered anglers on the team and allows the team to enter any of the optional jackpot categories. Registered captains and mates may also be registered anglers.

Each team entry includes one captain's bag, six tournament shirts, six tournament hats, and six tickets to all planned entertainment and social activities.

Only teams entered in optional jackpots are eligible for cash prizes. The base entry alone confers eligibility for trophies and overall awards only.

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to deny entry of any individual, organization or corporation.

2.2 Optional jackpot categories

Optional jackpots are separate from the base entry so each team may choose the categories it prefers. All tournament rules apply to all optional jackpots.

Levels are progressive. A team must be entered in Level 1 to enter Level 2, and in Level 2 to enter Level 3. The cumulative column below shows the actual cost of participating at each category's top level.

Category	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Cumulative
Winner-Take-All Heaviest Marlin	\$1,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$9,000
Heaviest Marlin 50/30/20	\$1,000	\$3,000	\$5,000	\$9,000
Daily Heaviest Marlin	\$1,500	\$3,000	\$4,500	\$9,000
Winner-Take-All Billfish Release Points	\$3,000	\$5,000	—	\$8,000
Billfish Release Points 50/30/20	\$3,000	\$5,000	—	\$8,000
Daily Billfish Release Points	\$3,000	\$6,000	—	\$9,000
TWD Heaviest Gamefish	\$1,200	\$3,000	—	\$4,200
Daily Heaviest Tuna	\$600	—	—	\$600
Daily Heaviest Wahoo	\$600	—	—	\$600
Daily Heaviest Dorado	\$600	—	—	\$600
All optional jackpots				\$58,000
Total all-in, including base entry				\$60,500

TWD means **Tuna, Wahoo and Dorado**. The abbreviation is used throughout this document.

2.3 Payout and deductions

Two separate deductions apply, and they are different in kind:

Deduction	Rate	When it applies
Marlin administrative fee	15% of funds collected	Always — whether a category pays out or is refunded
Mexican tax withholding	15% of payouts	Only on winnings. Never on refunds. Required by Mexican law; rate is currently 15%

2.4 Entering and withdrawing from optional jackpots

Optional jackpot entries may be added or withdrawn until **8:00 PM on October 7, 2026**, at the close of registration. **After that time all optional jackpot entries are final and non-refundable.**

2.5 Early Bird drawing

The winner of the Early Bird drawing receives a free base entry to the following year's tournament. **The Early Bird Deadline is September 7, 2026.** To be eligible, a team's paid base entry must be received on or before that date.

Weighting. For each full month prior to the Early Bird Deadline in which a team submits its base entry, the team receives one (1) entry in the drawing — with a minimum of one (1) entry for any team whose base entry is received by the deadline, to a **maximum of six (6) entries**. A team entering six or more full months prior therefore receives six entries.

Eligibility is void if the base entry is subsequently canceled or refunded. Drawing entries are forfeited with the entry.

The drawing is held at the awards banquet and is conducted by the Director of Tournament Operations. Attendance is not required; a winner who is not present is notified at the email address on file in CatchStat. The free entry is valid for the following year only and is non-transferable.

3. Cancellation & Refunds

3.1 Cancellation by a registrant

Team cancels	Base entry	Optional jackpots
On or before September 7, 2026	Full refund	Full refund
After September 7, until 8:00 PM on October 7 (within 30 days of tournament registration)	No refund	100% refund
After 8:00 PM on October 7	No refund	No refund

3.2 Cancellation of the tournament

Force majeure. If the tournament must be canceled before the scheduled fishing days due to events beyond Marlin’s control — extreme weather, natural disaster, terrorist acts and other force majeure events — 85% of optional jackpot funds will be refunded.

Cancellation for any other reason. If Marlin cancels the tournament for any other reason, including insufficient participation, the base entry fee and all optional jackpot fees will be fully refunded.

Days lost during the tournament. A day lost to port closure is treated as a day on which no qualifying fish were weighed or released, and the daily jackpots for that day roll forward under \$9.5.

3.3 Refund process

Refunds are issued by The Marlin Group Network LLC within four weeks of receipt of the required paperwork, provided all tournament entry fees have cleared. A refund requires a completed **Prize or Refund Disbursement Form** from the team’s Primary Contact — entry funds are often pooled from several team members — together with banking details where applicable. **No W-9 is required for a refund.** Marlin reserves the right to issue a refund by check, ACH, wire transfer or credit card. **Where a team paid by credit card, the refund may be issued to that card.**

4. Registration Requirements

4.1 Registration and the captains’ meeting

Final registration and the captains’ meeting take place from 4:00 to 8:00 PM on October 7, 2026 at the Playa Grande Resort’s **Magno Hall & Auditorium**. All teams must send at least one representative to obtain tournament credentials and the captain’s bag.

Each team’s primary contact must attend the captains’ and anglers’ meeting at 7:00 PM. All anglers and boat captains are encouraged to attend. Teams are bound by instructions and rule changes issued at that meeting, subject to §12.2.

4.2 Required paperwork

The Team Representative must provide all required paperwork to the Tournament Committee **by 8:00 PM on October 7, 2026**. Paperwork is submitted to lcbt@marlinmag.com.

1. Vessel Registration Document (Certificate of Documentation) or Temporary Import Permit
2. Vessel Insurance (deck sheet cover page)
3. Captain's License or Captain's License Passport
4. All registered anglers' and crew members' fishing license numbers, entered in CatchStat
5. The Primary Contact's cell phone number, email address and physical address

4.3 Fishing licenses

Mexican law requires every person aboard the boat to hold a valid Mexican fishing license, including guests and any person who does not fish.

Ensuring that every person aboard is licensed is the boat captain's responsibility.

The tournament collects and tracks fishing license numbers for registered anglers and crew only. These are entered in CatchStat. The tournament does not collect or track fishing licenses for guests.

Registered anglers and crew under 18 require a completed Parent or Guardian Authorization.

It is the responsibility of registered boat captains and anglers to comply with all Mexican federal and state laws regarding fishing licenses, size limits, bag limits and any other applicable regulations.

4.4 Boat and crew requirements

Each team must designate a **Primary Contact** authorized to make decisions for the team, with a cell phone number, email address and physical address on file. All correspondence is sent to the Primary Contact.

Without exception, each boat must have one designated boat captain and at least one designated mate aboard. Designated captains and mates may also be registered anglers.

4.5 Substitutions and boat changes

If a registered angler drops out, an additional angler may be added provided he or she registers and provides a fishing license. Anglers are tracked by boat and their licensing is carried forward accordingly.

Teams may change boats any change boats if all required paperwork is submitted and approved by the tournament director before leaving port.

4.6 CatchStat

The tournament uses CatchStat for registration, team management, live scoring and release video verification. CatchStat is used to deliver information on which team eligibility depends, including rule-change notices under §12.2, the Top Lady Angler designation under §9.1, and Early Bird notifications under §2.5.

Teams are responsible for maintaining accurate and current CatchStat records, including a monitored email address, and for confirming before Lines In on Day 1 that at least one team member can sign in and view the "My Teams" page. A team unable to access My Teams must contact Tournament Control before Day 1.

Live Scoring and Awards & Payouts shown in CatchStat are provided for entertainment purposes only. Official standings are maintained by the Tournament Committee.

5. Fishing Rules

5.1 Fishing hours

Lines In is 7:00 AM. Lines Out is 4:30 PM. The Tournament Committee may adjust starting or ending times if necessary.

5.2 Morning check-out and shotgun start

Two water-based visual check-out locations operate from **6:30 to 7:00 AM**: Cabo San Lucas, in front of the arch, and San José del Cabo, offshore of Puerto Los Cabos Marina.

Boats must pass one of the committee boats in an orderly manner, display their boat number for verification, and wait for a committee member to confirm check-in via radio. After check-in, boats line up behind the committee boat until the 7:00 AM shotgun start is announced over the radio.

5.3 Late starts

Boats delayed by mechanical problems may check out over the radio at any time during the day but **must notify Tournament Control before 7:00 AM** with details of the issue, estimated departure time and location.

5.4 Official time

Tournament Control's clock is the sole official time for the start of fishing, catch and release, and the end of fishing each day. Tournament Control's log of reported catches and releases is the official record for all scoring and tie-breaking.

5.5 Fishing boundary

A **50-nautical-mile (57.5 statute mile) radius** fishing boundary from the Cabo San Lucas coordinates **22°52'35.6" N, 109°53'39.9" W** is in effect for the duration of the tournament.

Plot the boundary before Day 1. The boundary is 50 **nautical** miles. Teams should confirm their unit settings and plot the boundary circle before the first fishing day.

5.6 GPS tracking

All teams must have GPS tracking on for the entire duration of the tournament and **must not erase their GPS tracks until 24 hours after the 4:30 PM Lines Out on the final fishing day.**

Where an official protest is filed against a team, the Tournament Committee may require that team to produce its GPS tracks for all three days of the tournament. **No routine reporting or submission of GPS tracks is required** — tracks are requested only in connection with a protest. A team under protest that cannot produce its GPS tracks shall be deemed in violation of the boundary and its catches for the day under protest shall be disqualified.

Where GPS tracks show that a vessel fished outside the boundary, **catches made by that vessel on any day on which a boundary offense is confirmed are disqualified**. Catches made on days on which the tracks show no boundary offense remain eligible for awards.

5.7 Eligible species, minimum weights and limits

Species	Eligibility
Blue and black marlin	Minimum eligible weight 300 lbs . A maximum of two blue or black marlin may be retained and weighed per boat per day, and no more than one per angler per day. Two retained marlin must therefore be caught by two different anglers. Retaining more than the permitted number results in disqualification from the tournament.
Striped marlin, sailfish, spearfish	Release only . These species may not be weighed.
Yellowfin tuna, bigeye tuna, wahoo, dorado	Minimum eligible weight 20 lbs

5.8 Bait

Live bait, dead bait, lures and any combination thereof are permitted.

- All live-bait fishing must stop 15 minutes before Lines In, by **6:45 AM**. Any tournament boat fishing for live bait between 6:45 AM and 7:00 AM will be disqualified for that day. Live-bait fishing may resume after the 7:00 AM start.
- Live bait may not be purchased or received from another boat during tournament fishing hours.

5.9 Prohibited assistance and outside information

Airborne assistance. The use of spotter aircraft, helicopters, drones or any other airborne craft to locate fish or assist in fishing is prohibited. Teams may not solicit, receive or act upon fish-location information from any airborne source, whether or not operated by or for the team. Violation results in disqualification.

Drones for filming and photography are permitted. Drones may not be used to locate fish.

Assistance with fish. Teams and boats may not receive assistance in landing or releasing fish.

Mechanical failure. Boats may receive aid from other boats due to mechanical failure. Transfer of a fish to another vessel is permitted **only** in the event of mechanical failure and **only with prior approval from the Tournament Director. The transferring crew must capture the transfer in its entirety on video and submit it to Tournament Control on arrival at the weigh station.** Supplemental angles from additional cameras recording the transfer concurrently may be submitted.

6. Angling Rules & Tackle

6.1 Governing rules

IGFA International Angling Rules apply unless otherwise stated in this document. It is the responsibility of each team and crew member to know, understand and abide by the angling, tackle and tournament rules during this competition.

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to examine any tackle, hooks, line or leaders at any time during the event. Refusal to allow examination results in immediate disqualification without refund of any jackpot or registration fees.

The following departures from IGFA Rules apply:

6.2 Rod Pass

From the time a fish strikes or takes a bait or lure, the registered anglers must hook, fight, release and land or boat the fish. During the fight, **the rod may be physically passed one time only**, to another registered angler.

6.3 Line

Monofilament, multifilament and lead core multifilament line may be used up to a maximum 130-pound test. Tournament and non-tournament lines are eligible; **any line whose stated test is 130-pound or less on the label is permitted**. Wire lines are not permitted, except where used as leader material.

6.4 Reels

Power-driven reels of any kind are prohibited, including motor, hydraulic and electrically driven reels, except for those used to deploy dredges, daisy chains, teasers or kites.

6.5 Hooks

All tournament participants must use non-offset circle hooks for all species whenever live or dead natural bait is used. Adding a skirt or other material over natural bait does not change this requirement — the presence of natural bait determines the hook requirement.

6.6 Acts and situations that disqualify a catch

1. Failure to comply with tournament rules, equipment or angling regulations.
2. Resting the rod in a rod holder, on the gunwale of the boat, or on any other object while playing the fish.
3. Handlining, or using a handline or rope attached in any manner to the angler's line or leader for the purpose of holding or lifting the fish.
4. Shooting, harpooning or lancing any fish at any stage of the catch.
5. Chumming with, or using as bait, the flesh, blood, skin or any part of mammals other than hair or pork rind used in lures designed for trolling or casting.
6. Changing the rod or reel while the fish is being played.
7. Splicing, removing or adding to the line while the fish is being played.
8. Intentionally foul hooking a fish.
9. Catching a fish in a manner that the double line never leaves the rod tip.
10. Using a size or kind of bait that is illegal to possess.
11. Attaching the angler's line or leader to part of a boat or other object for the purpose of holding or lifting the fish.

12. A fish that escapes before gaffing or netting and is recaptured by any method other than as outlined in these angling rules.
13. Mutilation to the fish, prior to landing or boating the catch, caused by sharks, other fish, mammals or propellers that remove or penetrate the flesh. Injuries caused by leader or line, scratches, old healed scars and regeneration deformities are not considered disqualifying injuries.
14. A fish hooked or entangled on more than one line.
15. A rod that breaks while the fish is being played in a manner that reduces the length of the tip below minimum dimensions or severely impairs its angling characteristics.
16. A catch that violates laws or regulations governing the species or the waters where it was caught.

7. Catch Reporting & Verification

7.1 Reporting obligations

The official tournament VHF channel is **28**; the backup channel is **27**. Tournament Control may also be reached at **+1-850-380-8961** by call or text. Both channels reach the same person.

All reporting is mandatory. Teams **must** report the following, in each case with boat name, boat number, angler name and species:

Event	When it must be reported
Billfish hookups	At hookup
Billfish release	Immediately upon release — as soon as the leader is inside the rod tip or the leader has been touched
Boated fish intended for weighing	At the time the fish is boated
Lost fish	Promptly

7.2 Official Release Time

A **release occurs** when the leader/mainline connection is clearly visible inside the rod tip, the swivel is reeled all the way to the rod tip, or a team member touches the leader while the fish is still hooked.

The Official Release Time is the time given by Tournament Control in response to a call in, per Tournament Control's clock. The captain may call the release in as soon as any of the conditions above is met.

The time displayed in a release video is required so that reviewers can match footage to the correct entry on the catch affidavit. **It does not determine the Official Release Time.** All money and trophies are awarded on the basis of the time logged by Tournament Control.

7.3 Daily Catch Control Card

Daily Catch Control Cards are provided in each team packet at the captains' meeting. It is each team's responsibility to ensure the cards are aboard before the start of fishing. Teams are informed of the specific Daily Catch Control Card to use prior to each day's start of fishing.

7.4 Release video requirements

All teams are responsible for providing and operating their own video equipment to verify billfish releases. Before departing each day, teams must record video of their boat name and team number using all release cameras.

To score an official release, footage must include all of the following:

1. Clear identification of the species.
2. The leader/mainline connection clearly visible inside the rod tip, the swivel reeled all the way to the rod tip, or a team member touching the leader while the fish is still hooked.
3. The time of catch, shown via GPS time or video of a phone screen.
4. The Daily Catch Control Card designated for that day.
5. **Full release of the fish, showing the line cut or the hook removed, and the fish swimming away freely.**

Supplemental angles. Where a single camera does not capture every required element, supplemental footage from additional cameras recording **the same release concurrently** may be submitted. Footage from separate events may not be combined.

Teams must retain the original, unedited video files until final results are posted.

A dead fish is not a release. The fish must be shown swimming away freely under its own power.

7.5 Catch affidavit

After each release, the official time, species and angler name must be recorded on the catch affidavit. **Each day's catch affidavit must be signed by the boat captain and by every registered angler aboard the vessel that day.**

The catch affidavit is accepted as the supporting record of which angler caught each fish. **Any falsified affidavit results in disqualification from the tournament without refund.**

7.6 Submission methods and deadline

All release videos and the signed catch affidavit must be submitted by 7:30 PM local time each fishing day, unless the Tournament Director grants an extension under §8.1. Electronic submission is an option, not a right; Tournament Control may require in-person presentation at any time.

Option A — Electronic submission via CatchStat

Available via the CatchStat mobile app or at <https://lcbt.catchstat.com>. A team member's email must be on the team roster and correctly linked so that the "My Teams" page is visible after sign-in.

Tournament Control adds billfish releases to CatchStat throughout the day, normally within minutes of the release being called in. Once an entry appears in the team's list of catches, upload the release video or videos to the matching fish, angler and release time entry.

The signed catch affidavit may be delivered in person, uploaded as an attachment to any catch entry on the team, or emailed to LCBT@marlinmag.com.

Option B — In person at the weigh station

Deliver the original release videos and the signed catch affidavit to Tournament Control at the IGY Marina weigh station by 7:30 PM each day.

Verification and responsibility

- Verified releases are visually marked as verified in the team's Fish Log in CatchStat.
- Tournament Control reviews and verifies all submitted releases each day. Due to volume, verification may take several hours after the 7:30 PM deadline.
- The deadline is satisfied when the release videos and signed affidavit are successfully uploaded or delivered and correctly associated with the catch by 7:30 PM. Verification may occur later.
- If any issue is identified — poor image quality, incomplete footage or missing required elements — Tournament Control may require the team to present the original video in person.
- It is each team's responsibility to ensure uploads are complete and visible in CatchStat, or delivered in person, by 7:30 PM, and to monitor status thereafter.

Releases not submitted by this deadline will be disqualified unless a specific extension has been granted by the Tournament Director.

8. Weighing

8.1 Weigh station hours and late-fight extension

Weigh station hours are **2:00 PM to 7:30 PM** at the IGY Marina. All fish to be weighed must be at the scale by 7:30 PM.

Late-fight extension. Where a fish hooked before the 4:30 PM Lines Out is still being fought at Lines Out, the team may **request** an extension of weigh station hours. The request is made on the call reporting the fish as boated, and the captain should provide the boat's distance from the marina or estimated time of arrival. The Tournament Director will grant a specific extended time, **to a maximum of 9:00 PM on the day of the catch.**

The extension is not automatic. A fight that continues only a few minutes past Lines Out on a boat close to the marina will not require one. Teams must ask, and the extended time granted will reflect the boat's stated arrival time so that weigh station personnel can be present.

8.2 Weigh station process

Teams intending to weigh a billfish, tuna, wahoo or dorado must notify Tournament Control at the time it is boated and take video or a photograph of the fish with the Daily Catch Control Card to confirm the catch is complete.

All fish to be weighed must be brought to the designated IGY Marina weigh station during weigh station hours aboard the registered vessel and removed from that vessel. Transfer of a fish to another vessel is permitted only in the event of mechanical failure and only with prior approval from the Tournament Director (\$5.9).

8.3 Inspection of fish

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to inspect any fish for mutilation or foreign material prior to weighing.

A fish found to be mutilated will not be weighed. A team discharges its obligation by presenting the fish to the weighmaster for inspection; whether the fish proceeds to the scale is at the Committee's discretion.

Adding any foreign material to a fish, or otherwise altering a fish to increase its weight, is prohibited.

8.4 The scale

All fish are weighed on a scale **certified within the previous twelve months. Each fish is weighed once.** The weight recorded by the official scale is final and may not be challenged.

8.5 Mandatory weighing and limits

A blue or black marlin brought aboard and retained must be weighed. A team may not subsequently decide to discard a retained fish rather than present it at the scale. Failure to present a retained marlin for weighing results in immediate disqualification from the remainder of the tournament and forfeiture of all previously earned points.

A maximum of **two** blue or black marlin may be retained and weighed per boat per day, and no more than **one per angler** per day. **Two retained marlin must therefore be caught by two different anglers.** Retaining more than the permitted number results in disqualification.

8.6 Under-minimum penalty

A boated blue or black marlin weighing under the 300 lb minimum is **ineligible for any cash award** and incurs a penalty against the team's **Total Points** of 300 points, plus 2 points for every pound under the minimum.

Example: a fish weighing 280 lbs results in a total deduction of 340 points, with no other points awarded for that fish.

9. Awards & Jackpots

9.1 Overall awards — trophies, no cash payout

Determined on **Total Points** (\$9). There is no cash payout for any award in this section, and no separate entry is required — all teams compete for these awards by virtue of their base entry.

Award	Basis	Tie
First, Second and Third Place Overall	Trophies and top honors are awarded to the teams that weigh the three heaviest blue or black marlin of 300 lbs or more. If no qualifying marlin are weighed for any of the top three positions, top honors roll to Total Points. No team can occupy multiple positions.	The team reaching the highest score first wins, with the other team assuming the next award position, based on official release and boated times
Top Captain	The captain whose team scores the most Total Points	The team reaching the highest score first wins
Top Angler	The angler with the most Total Points	The angler reaching the highest score first wins

Award	Basis	Tie
Top Lady Angler	The female angler with the most Total Points. Female anglers must be designated as female in CatchStat before Lines In on fishing Day 1 to be eligible.	The angler reaching the highest score first wins

9.2 Cash jackpot categories

All optional jackpot divisions are subject to the deductions in §2.3. Only teams registered in a category are eligible for that category's cash and prizes.

Winner-Take-All Heaviest Marlin — Levels 1, 2, 3

Awarded to the team weighing the heaviest blue or black marlin of 300 lbs or more.

- **Tie:** the award earned is split evenly between all teams that tied.
- **No qualifying fish:** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.

Heaviest Marlin 50/30/20 — Levels 1, 2

Awarded to the teams weighing the three heaviest qualifying marlin over the three days of fishing: **50% heaviest, 30% second heaviest, 20% third heaviest.**

- **One qualifying fish:** that team wins the first, second and third place awards.
- **Two qualifying fish:** those teams take first and second place and split the third place award evenly.
- **Tie:** where teams tie, the shares for the placements they jointly occupy are combined and divided equally among them. The next heaviest qualifying marlin takes the next available placement. *(A tie for heaviest therefore splits the 50% and 30% shares evenly — 40% each — and the third heaviest fish takes 20%.)*
- **No qualifying fish:** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.

Daily Heaviest Marlin — Levels 1, 2, 3, 4

Awarded to the team weighing the heaviest qualifying marlin on each fishing day. Each jackpot entry fee includes all three days of fishing, and the pot is divided three ways among Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3.

- **Tie:** that day's portion of the jackpot is split evenly among the teams that tied.
- **Rollover and no qualifying fish:** see §9.5.

Winner-Take-All Billfish Release Points — Levels 1, 2

Awarded to the team with the most Billfish Release Points over the three days of fishing.

- **Tie:** the team reaching the highest score first wins, based on the Official Release Time.
- **No teams score release points:** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.

Billfish Release Points 50/30/20 — Levels 1, 2

Awarded to the top three teams with the most Billfish Release Points over the three days of fishing: **first place 50%, second place 30%, third place 20%.**

- **Tie:** the team reaching the highest score first wins, with the other team assuming the next award position, based on the Official Release Time.

- **No teams score release points:** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.

Daily Billfish Release Points — Levels 1, 2

Awarded to the team scoring the most Billfish Release Points on each fishing day. The pot is divided three ways among Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3.

- **Tie:** the team reaching the highest score first wins that day, based on the Official Release Time.
- **Rollover and no teams scoring:** see §9.5.

TWD Heaviest Gamefish — Levels 1, 2

Applies to tuna, wahoo and dorado. Eligible tuna are yellowfin and bigeye. The prize is divided evenly three ways and awarded to the teams weighing the heaviest of each species over the three days of fishing: one third to the heaviest tuna, one third to the heaviest wahoo, one third to the heaviest dorado.

- **Tie:** that portion of the award is split evenly between the teams tied.
- **One species not weighed:** the payout for that species is split evenly among the teams that weighed the heaviest fish of the other qualifying species.
- **One qualifying team only:** that team wins the entire payout.
- **No qualifying gamefish:** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.

Daily Heaviest Tuna, Daily Heaviest Wahoo, Daily Heaviest Dorado — \$500 each

Each pot is divided three ways among the teams weighing the heaviest fish of that species on Day 1, Day 2 and Day 3.

- **Tie:** that day's portion of the jackpot is split evenly among the teams that tied.
- **Rollover and no qualifying fish:** see §9.5.

9.3 Ties — summary

Tie rules are category-specific and follow one principle: **points categories break on who reached the score first; weight categories split evenly**. There is no general tie rule other than as stated for each category above.

9.4 Awards are provisional

Awards presented at the awards banquet are provisional. Where a protest or verification review is subsequently resolved against a team, the award is withdrawn and passes to the next eligible team. Cash prizes are disbursed only after final results are confirmed.

9.5 Daily categories — rollover

The following applies to all **Daily** categories: Daily Heaviest Marlin, Daily Billfish Release Points, Daily Heaviest Tuna, Daily Heaviest Wahoo and Daily Heaviest Dorado.

- **Where no qualifying fish is weighed, or no team scores, on an individual day,** that day's portion of the jackpot rolls over to the next day's fishing.

- **Where no qualifying fish is weighed, or no team scores, on the final day of fishing,** the final day's jackpot is awarded to the winner or winners of **the most recent prior day on which a winner was determined.**
- **Where no qualifying fish is weighed, or no team scores, on any day of the tournament,** the entry is returned less a 15% fee.
- **A day lost to port closure** is treated as a day on which no qualifying fish were weighed and no team scored.

10. Prize Disbursement

Marlin is required by Mexican law to withhold city, state and federal taxes from tournament winnings. The amount can change from year to year and is currently **15% (\$2.3).**

Following the tournament, the Tournament Director provides each winning team with the following forms:

1. A **Prize or Refund Disbursement Form**, on which the team's Primary Contact gives instructions for distribution of the funds. **One form is submitted per team.**
2. A **W-9** from each individual who will receive winnings, if applicable.
3. An **ACH Authorization Form** from each individual who will receive winnings, providing banking information.

Each registered team representative is in control of any prize winnings and must sign the Prize or Refund Disbursement Form specifying how funds are to be distributed. **One Prize or Refund Disbursement Form is submitted per team, by the Primary Contact.** Where funds are to be disbursed to multiple parties, **each individual receiving funds must provide a W-9 and an ACH Authorization Form.**

Funds are disbursed within 30 days of receipt of the completed package for the entire team, provided all tournament entry fees have cleared the bank. All funds are paid from a US bank account in US dollars.

11. Protests & Dispute Resolution

11.1 Filing a protest

Participants may lodge protests against any catch which they believe was not made in accordance with these rules. **Protests must be based on what the protesting party personally witnessed.**

All protests must be stated in writing and accompanied by **\$1,000 USD.** Protests concerning days of fishing must be in the hands of the Tournament Director **no later than 9:00 PM on the day of the alleged incident.**

The \$1,000 deposit is refunded in full if the protest is upheld.

11.2 Boundary protests

A protest alleging that a vessel fished outside the boundary must be **jointly filed by two participating tournament vessels that both witnessed the infringement.** The **\$1,000 deposit is split between the two protesting parties.**

11.3 Investigation

Following the filing of a protest, the Tournament Committee may take whatever investigative steps it considers necessary, including examining release videos, requesting and reviewing GPS tracks, and taking statements.

Polygraph. As part of the resolution of a protest, the Tournament Director may at his discretion require the boat captain and all registered anglers who were aboard on the day in question — that is, all signatories to that day's catch affidavit — to submit to a polygraph examination. **Refusal to cooperate results in disqualification without refund.**

11.4 Outcomes

Outcome	Deposit	Consequence
Upheld — including where GPS tracks show a boundary violation, or tracks were not retained as required	Refunded in full	The protested catch is disqualified. For boundary offenses, see §5.6
Not sustained — lacks evidence to uphold claim	Forfeited	No further consequence for the protesting parties
Boundary protest disproven — GPS tracks place the accused vessel inside the boundary	Forfeited	The teams that jointly filed are disqualified from the competition
Knowingly false — any protest the Committee finds was made in bad faith	Forfeited	Disqualification and ban from competition, at the Committee's discretion

All disputes are ruled on by the Tournament Committee and are final and binding. **Decisions of the tournament organizers and Committee are final, nonappealable and nonjusticiable.**

12. Conduct & Enforcement

12.1 Sportsmanlike conduct

All participants are expected to maintain a reasonable and sportsmanlike demeanor at all times throughout the tournament, and must exercise good and courteous sportsmanship whether at the dock, underway or fishing. Unsportsmanlike or threatening conduct toward tournament organizers or other participants, or any other behavior which the tournament organizers deem inappropriate in their sole discretion, will result in immediate disqualification of the entire team with no refund of entry fees.

12.2 Rule changes

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to update or change these rules at any time.

Any rule change or instruction issued at the registration event, whether in writing or orally, will be circulated to all teams in writing via an email through CatchStat before Start Fishing on Day 1. Teams are bound by rule changes so circulated.

12.3 Deliberate breach

Any angler, captain or mate who deliberately breaks these rules will be immediately expelled and disqualified from this and future tournaments **without a refund** of any jackpot or registration fees.

Consequences for a protest found to have been made in bad faith, and for a boundary protest disproven by GPS tracks, are set out in §11.4.

13. Weather & Safety

There is no weather committee. The tournament is conducted on a "fish-at-your-own-risk" basis. If any portion of the tournament is fished and a team or teams land or release fish that match the tournament's eligible species and minimum weight limits, prizes will be awarded.

Port closure. A closure of the Port of Cabo San Lucas by Mexican authorities closes tournament fishing for that day **for all teams, regardless of departure point**. A day lost to port closure is treated as a day on which no qualifying fish were weighed or released (§9.5).

Resumption of fishing will be communicated by **6:00 AM** the following morning on the tournament VHF channel, via an email through CatchStat, and on the tournament's social channels.

A resumption announcement by the tournament organizers does not guarantee the safety of participants. The decision to fish or not should be based solely on each team's own judgment.

14. Liability, Media Rights & Releases

Tournament Participant Release. Every participant must accept the Tournament Participant Release before fishing. It confirms that offshore tournament fishing carries a real risk of serious injury or death, that the participant accepts those risks, and that the participant gives up the right to sue the tournament, its sponsors, The Marlin Group Network LLC, other participants, and vessel captains and crew — including for their own negligence. It also covers indemnification, authorization for emergency medical treatment, insurance participants are expected to carry, and use of photographs and video taken at the event.

Participants are asked to accept the Release when they register. **Read it in full — this summary is not a substitute for the Release itself.**

- Tournament Participant Release: <https://www.marlinmag.com/tournament-participant-release/>
- Parent or Guardian Authorization, required for registered anglers and crew under 18: <https://www.marlinmag.com/minor-parent-guardian-participant-authorization/>

Media rights. All recordings, images and audio taken at the event become the property of **The Marlin Group Network LLC** and may be used for promotional purposes. Tournament media — website, social channels and video — is for entertainment and marketing only.

15. Contacts

Purpose	Contact
Tournament Director	Bert Merritt — bert.merritt@marlinmag.com
Paperwork, licenses and affidavits	LCBT@marlinmag.com
Tournament Control — during fishing	VHF channel 28 (backup 27); call or text +1-850-380-8961
Registration, scoring and video upload	https://lcbt.catchstat.com
Tournament website	loscabosbillfishtournament.com

The Los Cabos Billfish Tournament is presented by The Marlin Group Network LLC. By entering the tournament and paying the entry fees, all participants agree to abide by these rules and accept all decisions made by the Tournament Committee as final.