

2024 AUSTRALIAN BLUEWATER FREEDIVING CLASSIC COMPETITION RULES

1. GENERAL RULES

- 1.1. All competitors compete at their own risk. It is important that competitors read all rules carefully.
- 1.2. All competitors must be insured members of the Australian Underwater Foundation (AUF) or the Underwater Skindivers and Fisherman's Association (USFA) for the duration of the competition.
- 1.3. The AUF Code of Practice will apply.
- 1.4. Where there is a contradiction between these Competition Rules and the AUF Rules, the Competition Rules will take precedence.

2. COMPETITOR BEHAVIOUR

- 2.1. Inexperienced divers must make themselves known to competition officials.
- 2.2. No competitor is to land on any of the Islands within the Solitary Islands Marine Park (except in an emergency).
- 2.3. The competition and any advertising decals supplied at registration must be displayed forward on all boats for promotional purposes.
- 2.4. Burleying is permitted. ONLY burley obtained in the water at the competition site during the hours of competition is to be used. No burley is to be taken from land.
- 2.5. Competitors should dive in pairs for the duration of the competition.
- 2.6. Fish must not be tethered to the body.
- 2.7. All fish must be captured by a single competitor using a hand spear or speargun by hand.
- 2.8. Competitors may only land fish between Evans Head in the north (29.10 S) and Hat Head in the south (31.06 S) for purposes of competing.
- 2.9. No breathing aid other than a snorkel shall be permitted.
- 2.10. Guns fired by the discharge of compressed or explosive gases into water are forbidden.
- 2.11. The use of explosives, torches, poison, or electricity in the capture of fish is forbidden. Competitors may carry powerheads for personal protection, provided they satisfy all legal requirements of NSW law in allowing their use.
- 2.12. Competitors must be immersed in the water at the time of spearing of any fish.
- 2.13. Assisted catches are not allowed. All fish must be taken unassisted by the competitor weighing them in.
- 2.14. Competitors must not enlist transport for their fish by another boat back to the weigh in, unless they accompany their catch with all their equipment.
- 2.15. Competitors must not load their guns out of water.
- 2.16. Competitors must not discharge their guns for any purpose other than for underwater fishing.
- 2.17. Competitors must not carry loaded guns on floats.
- 2.18. When not in use spear heads and knives must always be sheathed in an adequate manner. Snorkels are an adequate cover for spear heads out of the water.
- 2.19. A competitor must remain within 30m of his/her float when he/she is at or near the surface of the water.
- 2.20. Rock-hopping is allowed. Any rockhopper competing must comply with the competition rules.
- 2.21. Fish must not be speared when within traps, nets, or hooked on lines.
- 2.22. Variable weight diving is not allowed.

3. VESSELS

- 3.1. Vessels are to be arranged by competitors. The organisers take no responsibility for arranging any boats. It is the responsibility of each competitor to ensure their boats are equipped with the safety gear as required by NSW legislation.
- 3.2. Vessels may have a non-competing boat captain present in the boat during the competition. Only competitors are allowed to enter the water during the competition. The boat captain must not fish and must constantly supervise the competitors diving from their vessel.
- 3.3. All boat captains must be licensed as required by Transport for NSW.
- 3.4. All boats must be registered as required by Transport for NSW.

3.5. All vessels engaged in spearfishing activities during the competition shall fly, clearly visible above the vessel, an International Code A (blue/white) flag.

4. SAFETY VESSELS

4.1. Safety vessels may be operated by Marine Rescue NSW or otherwise arranged by the Organising Committee.

4.2. Competitors must not use safety vessels to transport fish.

4.3. Being towed in by a safety vessel would not disqualify the competitors on the towed vessel, provided that the competitors comply with the sign on and off requirements.

4.4. Competitors and vessel captains must comply with the directions of safety vessels.

5. SIGN ON AND OFF REQUIREMENTS

5.1. All competitors must not fish by any means before 5am on Saturday.

5.2. All competitors must be formally registered by 5pm Friday (REGISTRATION).

5.3. All boats must contact the Timekeeper to sign on both Saturday and Sunday between 5am and 8am. *Further details, including required information, will be provided at REGISTRATION.*

5.4. All competitors must sign off in person with the Timekeeper at Woolgoolga Beach Reserve by 3pm on Saturday and 2pm on Sunday.

5.5. If during the hours of the competition, a text message and/or a radio message is broadcast on VHF 16 / 27.880 MHz signalling the end of the competition by the Organising Committee, all competitors must cease fishing immediately and report to the Timekeeper at Woolgoolga Beach. This would only occur in an emergency.

5.6. All times are in AEDT.

6. SAFETY EQUIPMENT

6.1. A sheathed knife is to be carried by each competitor during the hours of the competition.

6.2. A float, coloured RED, ORANGE, OR YELLOW is to be towed by each competitor. An international letter "A" flag must be fixed to each competitors float and weighted so as to fly vertical at all times - even in windy conditions and is to be used for the duration of the competition.

6.3. Each competitor's safety equipment must be presented at the request of any Competition official.

6.4. A competitor's personal float must be capable of supporting him/her with the competitor wearing a minimum of swimming costume, wetsuit, fins, snorkel, and mask.

7. WEIGH IN

7.1. Only fish listed in Schedule A – Species List are eligible for weighing.

7.2. Any competitor entering the sealed off weigh-in area with their catch shall be deemed to have presented those fish for weigh in.

7.3. Fish presented for weigh-in must be in a presentable manner, with no man-made deformations. Any fish deemed non presentable by the weigh master will not be accepted.

7.4. The competitor or his/her agent should watch the weigh-in of their catch. If neither is available, the Weighmaster may designate someone to do so.

7.5. A single set of scales will be used wherever possible, but should it be impracticable to weigh very large fish on these scales, a second set of scales may be used.

7.6. No competitor's fish shall be allowed to be kept in water.

7.7. Only officials appointed by the Weighmaster may handle, process or record fish. Fish may be tailed by slicing off all or part of the tail fin after weighing.

7.8. Only the Weighmaster shall handle fish for measurement or weighing purposes.

7.9. At the weigh-in on both Saturday 3pm and Sunday 2pm: Each competitor may weigh a maximum of 5 fish with a limit of one of any species (species limit applies to each day individually).

7.10. All fish presented for weigh-in are to be a minimum of either 45 cm (18 inches) in length, or their NSW minimum legal-size limit, whichever is greater.

7.11. At the discretion of the Weighmaster, a fish which has clearly been bitten by a shark may still be allowed to be weighed if the remaining component meets the minimum length requirements in section 7.10.

7.12. Fish deemed mutilated by the Weighmaster cannot be weighed.

8. SCORING

8.1. The following scores will be assigned for eligible fish presented at the weigh in:

8.1.1. 150 points per unique species.

8.1.2. 10 points per kg up to a maximum of 25 kg.

8.1.3. The maximum a competitor can possibly weigh are 5 fish over 25 kg of 5 different species scoring $5 \times (150 + 250) = 2000$ points, per day.

8.2. In the event of a tied final score for any position in any event or category, the competitor with the greatest number of scoring species over the competition will be placed ahead of another competitor. Should this not decide the placing's, then the competitor with the heaviest fish will be declared the winner.

8.3. Preliminary score sheets will be posted on www.chbfreedivers.com by the Fishing Referee. The time of release shall be as soon as practical after the weighing-in of all competitor's fish.

9. PENALTIES

9.1. The penalties prescribed below can be modified by the Organising Committee if, at their sole discretion, they determine that mitigating factors exist.

9.2. A penalty will be incurred by any competitor proven to have not complied with the rules under clauses 1, 2, 3 or 4.
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THAT COMPETITION DAY

9.3. A penalty will be incurred by any competitor proven to have not complied with the Sign on and off rules under clause 5.
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THAT COMPETITION DAY

9.4. A penalty will be incurred by any competitor who enters the sealed off weigh in area with a fish less than 450mm long.
PENALTY: 150 POINTS REMOVED FROM COMPETITOR'S SCORE

9.5. A penalty will be incurred by any competitor who takes or presents any fish measuring less than the legal minimum length (prescribed by NSW Fisheries Laws).
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE COMPETITION

9.6. A penalty will be imposed on any competitor proven to have been fishing in any of the Sanctuary Zones of the Solitary Islands Marine Park.
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE COMPETITION

9.7. A penalty will be imposed on any competitor who takes any fish on the list of Protected Species for New South Wales as set out in the NSW State Fisheries Regulations.
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE COMPETITION

9.8. A penalty will be imposed on any competitor who is found spearfishing without the required safety equipment specified in clause 3.
PENALTY: DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE COMPETITION

10. PROTESTS

10.1. In the Australian Bluewater Classic all protests, including those involving discrepancies in the score sheets, must be notified within one (1) hour of the score sheets being displayed by the Fishing Referee.

10.2. All protests during the "Classic" shall be handed in writing to the Fishing Referee who shall ensure they are in order prior to presentation to the Organising Committee. The Organising Committee shall consist of up to five persons including the Fishing Referee who shall preside as Chairman over the meeting, and present to it all relevant details after investigation, and indicate where applicable rules and regulations pertaining to the matter apply.

10.3. Protests in this competition may be made by any competitor or official and must be handed to the Fishing Referee or appointed Deputy no later than one hour from the time of conclusion of the weigh-in for the day's event.

10.4. All protests must be in writing, dated and complete with the name and signature of the person protesting.

10.5. Protests in this competition must be accompanied by a fee of AU\$50 to be refunded if the protest is upheld, or at the discretion of the Committee if the protest is rejected.

10.6. In the case of exceptional circumstances for which no provision has been made in the Rules, the Committee may, on protest from the competitor concerned, use its discretion to lift a disqualification and impose a different penalty.

11. PRIZES

11.1. Prizes shall be awarded at the discretion of the Organising Committee.

11.2. Competitors must be present at the presentation to receive their prize.

12. COMPETITION OFFICIALS

12.1. The nominated officials can be changed by the Organising Committee without notification to competitors.

12.2. The following officials will be in place during the event.

12.2.1. **FISHING REFEREE:** Who will determine the eligibility of presented fish in accordance with these rules.

12.2.2. **TIMEKEEPER:** Who will oversee the sign on and off requirements in accordance with these rules.

12.2.3. **WEIGHMASTER:** Who will oversee the weigh in on 3pm Saturday and 2pm Sunday in accordance with these rules.

12.2.4. **ORGANISING COMMITTEE:** Who has an overarching decision-making role on all matters and will decide all protests made in accordance with clause 6.

12.3. Each Official may assign assistants as required.

SCHEDULE A – SPECIES LIST

All fish presented for weigh-in must come from the following list of 28 categories. Competitors may only weigh in **one fish** from each of the 28 categories each competition day.

Only **5 fish** may be weighed in by each competitor on each competition day.

Fish not listed cannot be presented or attain any score in the competition.

All fish must be minimum of 45cm in length **and** meet the NSW legal minimum requirements.

SPECIES CATEGORIES

- 1) Amberjack (All Combined)
- 2) Barracuda (All Combined)
- 3) Bonito (All Combined)
- 4) Cobia
- 5) Dolphin Fish - **60cm Legal Length**
- 6) Jobfish (All combined)
- 7) Kingfish (Yellowtail) - **65cm Legal Length**
- 8) Mackerel (Spanish) - **75cm Legal Length**
- 9) Mackerel (Spotted) - **60cm Legal Length**
- 10) Mackerel (School)
- 11) Mackerel (Other combined except scad and slimey)
- 12) Marlin (All Combined)
- 13) Mulloway - **70cm Legal Length / Max 2 per boat**
- 14) Queenfish (All combined)
- 15) Rainbow Runner
- 16) Sailfish
- 17) Samson Fish
- 18) Snapper
- 19) Tailor
- 20) Trevally (Diamond)
- 21) Trevally (Golden)
- 22) Trevally (Giant)
- 23) Trevally (Other combined)
- 24) Tuna (Yellowfin)
- 25) Tuna (Dogtooth)
- 26) Tuna (Northern Bluefin)
- 27) Tuna (Other combined)
- 28) Wahoo

**Combined means that all species and sub-species of this fish, which are not listed separately or specifically excluded, will be combined under this category. Weigh in limits and scoring apply to the category (ie combined group – not individual sub-species).*