



2026 OFFICIAL BILLFISH RELEASE FORM

Please complete the form for each billfish released. The information from this form will be used to inform fishery management agencies about the billfish fishery in NC. This information will help NC anglers continue to enjoy the off-shore fisheries in NC.
Release data is needed regardless of the size of the fish or the gear used by the angler.

J-Hooks may be used with entirely artificial lures only. Circle hooks MUST be used on any natural bait or natural-artificial bait combination.



Boat Name _____ Captain (Name/Signature) _____

Date _____ Does boat have Sonar? YES NO Mate (Name/Signature) _____
(check one)

Complete your release form and turn into the correct tournament official, and incomplete form my disqualify releases.

Angler	L/JG/JB/A ¹	Angler DOB	Release Time	Fight Time	Species ²	Est. Size	Hook Type ³	Hook Location ⁴	Condition ⁵	Rig Type ⁶	Bait Type ⁷	Leader ⁸	Main Line ⁹
1.													
2.													
3.													
4.													
5.													
6.													
7.													
8.													
9.													
10.													

Filling in your release form:

- L/JG/JB/A— L for Lady, JG for Junior Girl, JB for Junior Boy, A for angler hooked. If it is a junior angler you must also include their date of birth.
- Species—Blue marlin (BM), white marlin (WM), sailfish (SF), spearfish (SP), roundscale spearfish (RS)
- Hook type—Circle (C) or J-hook (J). Also note the hook size (e.g. circle 7/0)
- Hook location—Jaw (J), Bill (B), Mouth Cavity (M), Gills (G), Deep/Gut (D), Foul (F), Unknown (U)
- Condition—Good (G): active, swam away well; no injuries/bleeding. Fair (F): Swam slowly; no injuries/bleeding. Poor (P): Bleeding and/or no swimming and/or tail-wrapped.
- Rig Type—Natural Dead (ND), Natural Live (NL), Combo-Natural/Artificial (C), Lure (L)
- Bait Type—Ballyhoo (B), Spanish Mackerel (SM), Squid (S), Mullet (M), or Other (O). *If rig is a lure, note the number of hooks in Bait Type.*
- Leader—Size of mono (Leader will be considered mono unless wire is noted)
- Main Line—Size of backing



**+ 25 RELEASE POINTS FOR JR. ANGLERS
+ 25 RELEASE POINTS FOR NON-SONAR RELEASES**

9. RELEASE POINTS - Cash prizes will be awarded to the boats that score the greatest number of points. Release points will be awarded when mate touches the leader or the 30' leader touches the rod tip. No release points will be awarded if the gaff breaks the outside vertical plane of the boat. In the event of a tie in total release points, the tie breaker shall be the largest single gamefish (dolphin and wahoo) by weight. If no gamefish are caught, the winner will be determined by the first boat to achieve the winning total. In order to qualify as a release, the billfish must remain in the water. (Federal Law).

125 RELEASE POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR:

1. All billfish including blue marlin, white marlin, sailfish, hatchet marlin and spearfish and
2. When mate touches the leader or leader touches the rod tip before the fish is released and
3. When team turns in a release form provided by the Tournament Committee attested to by signature of the captain and mate or angler on board the boat at the time of the release. This form may be submitted to Tournament HQ or the official Weigh Station in Morehead City or submitted electronically via the Big Rock app. Release forms must be turned in the day the fish was released, no later than 10:00 p.m. on Thursday and Friday July 9-10, and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 11, to qualify.

400 RELEASE POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR:

Blue marlin, if the team provides indisputable video or photo evidence to the Rules Committee. To qualify for the 400 points, teams must turn in a Release Form along with supporting video footage no later than 10:00 pm on Thursday and Friday July 9-10, and 6:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 11, to qualify. The release video must contain the following elements:

- a. The mate touching the leader or the leader touching the rod tip.
- b. Clear and indisputable evidence that the fish is a blue marlin.
- c. Date and time stamp of the release. It is the responsibility of the boat to ensure that their camera's clock/date is set accurately to reflect the time and date of the releases. The date and time stamp must be 100% accurate

There are two options to provide the video evidence:

1. Teams may turn in a release form in person along with the SD card, Micro SD Card or Compact Flash Card from their camera. Forms and Media Cards can be turned in at Tournament HQ or the Official Weigh Station in Morehead City or to the tournament representative at Hatteras Harbor Marina.
2. Teams may complete the release form and submit the supporting video evidence from their phone via the Big Rock App. Teams are responsible for ensuring the date and time of the release are clearly verified within the video using an approved method outlined in the Captain's Handbook.

25 BONUS RELEASE POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR:

1. All billfish released by a Big Rock Kid, defined as any angler age 16 & under. A kid must be the primary angler. The rod may be passed to other Jr. Anglers on board, age 16 & under.
2. A billfish hooked by an adult must be handed off to a Junior Angler immediately or in a timely manner.
3. The angler's age is verified on the release form attested to by signature of the captain, mate, or angler on board the boat at the time of the release.

25 BONUS RELEASE POINTS WILL BE AWARDED FOR:

1. All billfish released by A) Boats without omnidirectional sonar technology -OR- B) Boats with but choose not to use, omnidirectional sonar technology.

10. DISQUALIFICATION - A boat will be disqualified from the tournament if the boat, captain and crew violate any rules of the tournament.

BIG ROCK APP

Need Help? Contact:

Carlee Sharpe, Tournament Director (919) 801-8346

Madison Struyk, Executive Director (252) 725-1568