

# **Official Rules of the 2018 Big Bang! Open Tournament**

**INTRODUCTION** - The Big Bang! Open Tournament (“BBO”) above all is a social event and a time for people who enjoy Spearfishing to assemble together and enjoy each other’s company. In making the rules, we have made every effort to make the BBO as safe as possible. The website for registration information and announcements is [www.spearboard.com](http://www.spearboard.com) in the tournaments section.

**TOURNAMENT DATES AND LOCATION** – There will be no Captain’s Meeting for this year’s tournament. The Tournament shooting will be held for two days starting Friday, July 20, 2018 and ending Saturday, July 21, 2018. Participants can start shooting upon sufficient light, and shoot each day until there is no longer sufficient light. In other words, there is no need to rush. You have up to two days to get your diving drops and/or to enjoy the full benefit of what you may have paid for with a charter boat. However, you are NOT required to hunt two days if you decide one day is enough.

Participants agree and promise that only fish shot on Friday and Saturday, July 20-21, 2018 will be presented for weigh-in. Voice stress lie detection examinations will be used randomly and selectively at the weigh-in to verify this promise and compliance with other rules. If requested, you agree to submit to such an examination.

The Weigh-in, Meal and Awards Ceremony will be on Sunday, July 22, 2018, at the Moose Lodge at 3600 RCA Blvd. Palm Beach Gardens, Florida 33410 Phone (561) 626-4417. This facility has a covered fish weigh-in area, a great food & beverage facility and an air-conditioned spacious hall.

The fish weigh-in will be from 10:00AM to 12:00PM Noon. That means you can be in line anytime within that time frame. You may NOT use Sunday morning to dive for more fish. If you are not in line by 12:00PM Noon, your fish will not be weighed and you will be disqualified. This rule is strictly enforced. If you make it to line at 12:01PM or after, you will be disqualified. The committee will tabulate winners from 12:00PM to 1:00PM, during which time participants and their guest may enjoy beverages, a fully catered meal, and check out the prizes. Mixed alcoholic drinks and beer will be served at a cash bar.

**FORMAT** - This is an aggregate style fish tournament. As such, points are awarded for each fish turned in. One point or partial point is given for each pound or partial pound of the fish’s weight. For example, a 3.4 pound hogfish would be worth 3.4 points. Fish must be gutted. Do not weigh fish that you have shot with a powerhead. The weights at the scales will be calculated in pounds and ounces and will be converted to decimal weights for the scoring tabulation.

There will be a maximum of 20 points given per fish in every category. Points from all categories will then be added for your final point total (i.e., your “aggregate score”). After you have weighed your fish, you will be presented with a paper with your weights that you must sign, acknowledging that you accept the weights as stated. If you dispute your weight total, it must be done while at the weigh-in table. If you dispute someone else’s fish, you must do so at the time they weigh-in.

If ANY fish that you turn in is harvested on SCUBA, then you are not eligible to compete for the First Place Freediver Trophy.

**FREEDIVING TROPHY** - As mentioned above, there is a trophy for the First Place Freediver. This trophy shall be awarded to the freediver with the highest aggregate score of a freediver. Apart from the trophy, the winner shall take his turn at the prize table in accordance with his/her aggregate score, along with the SCUBA divers. In order to compete for this trophy, two things must happened:

1. You must circle or check “freediver” on the registration form, and
2. You must commit to freediving for the tournament, with no fish shot on SCUBA.

Apart from competition for the freediving trophy, freedivers shall compete based on the same rules and general format for the rest of the tournament, and shall take their turn at the prize table based on their overall aggregate score.

**CATEGORIES (See Notes Below Table)**

Fish Category	Minimum Size (Inches) and Location	Max. No. of Fish
Grouper	>24" Black Grouper >20" Red Grouper >20" Scamp Grouper >24" Gag Grouper No Warsaw Grouper is allowed.	1 Fish Total
Snapper	>12" Mangrove Snapper >12" Cubera Snapper >18" Mutton Snapper No Red Snapper is allowed.	2 Fish Total
Hogfish and Flounder	>16" Hogfish >12" Flounder	1 Fish Total
Triggerfish, Porgy and Sheepshead	>15" for Triggerfish >15" Porgy (15" to be consistent with Triggerfish length) >12" Sheepshead	2 Fish Total
Cobia or Jacks	>33" Cobia (only 1 per shooter) >28" Amberjack (only 1 per shooter) Certain other Jacks allowed. >24" African Pompano (See regs below) >11" Permit (See regulations below) (One Barracuda per shooter between 15 to 36 inches OR One Barracuda per boat greater than 36 inches of FORK Length is allowed in this category)	2 Fish Total
Wild Card Fish	Your Wild Card Fish can be a barracuda or any fish now eligible in the above categories except you may weigh in only one gag grouper or black grouper total. Barracuda MUST be between 15 inches and 36 inches FORK Length and NOT LARGER (Note – all registered shooters have a maximum number of two barracuda that can be weighed in for all categories). See full definition below.	1 Fish Total
<b>Fish Count</b>		<b>9 Fish Grand Total</b>

**SPECIAL NOTES: Please be aware of person/vessel limits for certain species. ALL state and federal regulations will be enforced during the weigh-in. For example, Barracuda has size and vessel limits:**

**Florida Recreational and Commercial Regulations:**

<b>Minimum Size Limit</b>	<p>None</p> <p>Effective Jan. 1, 2017: Collier, Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties ONLY:</p> <p>15-36 inch fork length slot limit with 1 fish greater than 36 inches fork length per person or vessel per day allowed</p>
<b>Daily Bag Limit</b>	<p>2 fish or 100 pounds, whichever is more</p> <p>Collier, Monroe, Miami-Dade, Broward, Palm Beach, and Martin counties ONLY: 2 fish per person, 6 fish per vessel</p>

**GROUPER CATEGORY** - Species of legal Grouper eligible for this category might include Black Grouper, Gag Grouper, Yellowfin Grouper, Yellowmouth Grouper, etc. as long as they are legal to harvest in federal or state waters where you are hunting. No Warsaw Grouper is allowed. The Florida single-day possession rules at the weigh-in location in Palm Beach County apply. For example, you may weigh in only one black or gag grouper. Also, the Atlantic size limit of 20" for all harvested Scamp will be enforced, regardless of where the fish was actually harvested.

**SNAPPER CATEGORY** - Species of legal snappers eligible for this category might include Cubera Snapper, Dog Snapper, Mutton Snapper, etc. No Red Snapper may be weighed in for this category.

**COBIA OR JACK CATEGORY** - Only one cobia or jack is allowed. Species of legal jacks eligible for this category might include Amberjack, Yellow Jack, Almaco Jack, etc. that are legal to harvest in federal or state waters where you are hunting. Note that Amberjack is closed in the Gulf at the time of the tournament and we will allow the weigh-in of a barracuda in this category for all registered shooters. As a member of the Jack family, the species Permit or African Pompano may be weighed in the Cobia or Jack Category if shot in Federal Waters outside the Special Permit Zone (SPZ) (South of Cape Florida and Cape Sable) in compliance with the regulations below.

**Florida Regulations:**

Regulations	Florida Pompano	African Pompano	Permit inside SPZ (see map below)	Permit, all other state and federal waters
Minimum Size Limit	11" fork length	24" fork length	22" fork length	Not less than 11" or more than 22" fork length
Daily Bag Limit	6 per harvester per day	2 per harvester per day	1 per harvester per day	2 per harvester per day
Season	None	None	Closed May 1 - July 31	None
Gear	Hook and line, cast net and beach or haul seine	State waters: Hook and line only. Federal waters: Hook and line and spearing		
Remarks		Vessel limit: no more than 2 per vessel		May possess 1 over 22" included in the per person bag limit Vessel limit: no more than 2 over 22" per vessel

\*The recreational regulations in the chart above apply in Florida state and federal waters of the Gulf of Mexico and Atlantic unless otherwise noted.

**Special Permit Zone (SPZ)**

(South of Cape Florida and Cape Sable)



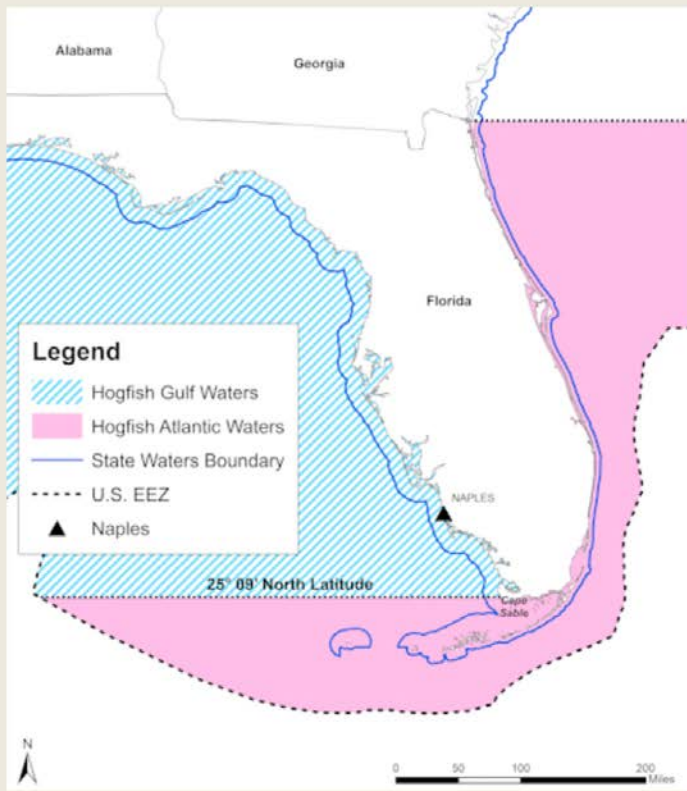
**HOGFISH FLOUNDER CATEGORY - The regulations regarding Hogfish have changed as follows:**

Regulations	Gulf State Waters	Atlantic State Waters (includes all state and federal waters south of Cape Sable, including the Florida Keys)
<b>Minimum Size Limit</b>	14" fork	16" fork
<b>Daily Bag Limit</b>	5 per harvester	1 per harvester

**State Waters Harvest Seasons**

Gulf state: Open year-round

Atlantic state (includes all state waters south of Cape Sable in the Gulf and Monroe County): Open May 1-Oct. 31



**The Flounder Regulations for Florida Waters are as follows:**

**Florida Regulations:**

\***Note** -The following regulations also apply to *P. lethostigma* (Southern flounder), *P. dentatus* (summer flounder) and *Etropus crossotus* (fringed flounder).

Regulations	Gulf State Waters	Atlantic State Waters
<b>Minimum Size Limit</b>	12" total length	
<b>Daily Bag Limit</b>	10 per harvester per day	

**WILD CARD CATEGORY** – This category is designed to level the playing field due to grouper and snapper closures in various regions. Your wild card fish can be a Barracuda between 15 inches and 36 inches FORK Length and NOT LARGER (See Size and Vessel Limits above for the Palm Beach County Weigh-In Site). Also, your one wild card fish can be any fish now eligible in the above categories except you may weigh in only one gag grouper or black grouper total in order to comply with the possession limit where the weigh-in is located. All Registered Shooters have a maximum number of two Barracuda that can be weighed in for all categories (1 in Wild Card Category and 1 in Cobia/Jack Category). However, in lieu of Barracuda, the species Permit or Pompano may be weighed in the Cobia or Jacks Category. Contestants who weigh in barracuda (or any other fish) have the option of donating them to scientists for research.

Therefore, you may still bring in nine fish as in the past and the maximum potential points will remain the same (9 x 20 = 180 points).

In submitting your signed entry forms, you agree to abide by any and all rules currently in effect as of the tournament dates.

Note: fish measurement is based on the current measurement to fork or overall as required by the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission no matter where the fish was harvested. Cobia, Jacks and Hogfish are measured to the fork. The weighmaster has the final say on all fish being weighed.

Some good resources for current recreational regulations are the following websites:

<http://myfwc.com/Fishing/Saltwater/Recreational>  
<http://www.eregulations.com/florida/fishing/saltwater/>  
[http://gulfcouncil.org/fishing\\_regulations/](http://gulfcouncil.org/fishing_regulations/)  
<http://safmc.net/regulations/>

**PRIZES AND TROPHIES** - As stated, this is an aggregate tournament. There will be a nice prize table. 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. You must be present in person to weigh your fish and collect prizes. Exchanges shall be at the discretion of the prize donors and prizes certificates must be claimed within one year of winning.

There will be a total of eleven (11) Trophies up for grabs as follows:

- 1.) 2018 Big Bang! Champion
- 2.) Best Freediver
- 3.) Largest Grouper
- 4.) Largest Snapper
- 5.) Largest Hogfish/Flounder
- 6.) Largest Trigger/Porgy/Sheepshead
- 7.) Largest Jack/Cobia
- 8.) Largest Wild Card Fish
- 9.) Best Female Diver
- 10.) Best Junior Diver
- 11.) Best Boat

The 2018 Big Bang Open Winner (best overall aggregate score), shall be awarded his or her trophy, and have first pick at the prize table. The 2018 Big Bang! Open First Place Freediver shall be awarded his or her trophy, and go to the prize table in accordance with his/her aggregate score. All "Largest Fish" trophy winners will be awarded their trophy, plus take their turn at the prize table as dictated by their aggregate total. The Best Aggregate Female and Best Junior will get a trophy, and take their turn at the prize table as dictated by their aggregate score.

**METHODS OF HARVEST** - Fish presented for weigh-in may NOT be taken using a powerhead. Fish may be harvested either Freediving, or with use of SCUBA. In order to be eligible, the person weighing the fish must have speared and brought or sent the fish to the surface, without the assistance of another diver.



**JUNIORS** - Juniors between the ages of 12 – 17 years of age shall be permitted to participate, however, the following rules apply:

1. The legal waiver form must be signed by the junior's parent or legal guardian;
2. If parents/guardians are entrusting their child to dive on the vessel of a third person, he/she will ensure that proper paperwork has been executed and delivered to third party to enable him/her to consent for medical treatment for junior;
3. Juniors shall take their turn at the prize table based on their aggregate score, just like adults. As stated, the highest junior aggregate score also gets a trophy.

**LADIES** - Ladies will also have their prize table rotation determined by the overall aggregate score, in the same pool with men and juniors. There shall also be a trophy for the female diver with the highest aggregate score.

**BEST BOAT** - The 2018 Big Bang! Open will include a "Best Boat" award. In the interest of making this fair, a three-person boat should be on equal footing with a six-person boat. Consequently, the winner will be determined by the boat with the highest diver average aggregate score, based on the top three individual scores on each boat.

See the following examples to further explain the best boat rules:

1. Boat One has only two shooters on their vessel. Boat One is not eligible to participate in the best boat competition, because there must be at least three registered contestants on the boat to compete for best boat.
2. Boat Two has three shooters. Their aggregate total is 240. All shooters will be counted on Boat Two, because the top three shooters are counted, and 240 is their score.
3. Boat Three has six shooters. The top three shooters on that boat had the following scores: 90, 85, and 80. Their aggregated score is 255. The other three shooters are not counted, as only the top three are used to compute aggregate score.

Please fill in the NAME of the boat you will be on, which is located on the registration form. We cannot be responsible for a correct boat score if you do not name the boat you are on.

**MYSTERY PRIZE CHANCES** - Everyone who weighs a fish, even just a single fish, will get a single mystery Prize chance designation on the computerized weigh-in list. After the first 20 persons go to the prize table, mystery prize names on the computerized list will be called intermittently. If your name is called, you go to the prize table at that time. This will not affect your regular turn to the table based on your aggregate score, making it possible to go to the prize table twice.

**CATERED MEAL AND BEVERAGES** - One of the things that makes the Big Bang! Open Tournament such a great value is that we include a fully catered meal and non-alcoholic beverages for all participants. Alcoholic beverages will be available under the Moose Lodge liquor license at their bar.

You may bring family members (i.e., spouse/kids) and friends who did not participate or register in the tournament. The cost of the catered meal and beverages to non-contestants is \$20 per person.

Beverage is defined as water, soda and other non-alcoholic beverages that might be available.

There will only be a limited amount of meal tickets for purchase. For this reason, we reserve the right to turn non-ticket holders away on the date of the event. Do not assume that additional tickets will be available on the day of the weigh-in/prize ceremony. The Catered Meal will take place after the weigh-in and start between 12:00PM and 1:00PM.

## **REGISTRATION**

1. Pre-registration is \$85.00.

2. Late registration will be \$130.00. Registrations not received by Big Bang! Open by Tuesday midnight on July 17, 2018 are late. Late registration can also be accomplished by fax or email until midnight on July 19, 2018.

3. Extra Meal Tickets: There will be a place on the Registration Form to order extra meal tickets for family and children.

**GEOGRAPHICAL ISSUES** - Given that this format is unique due to the weigh-in on the day after the shooting, there may be questions about hunting boundaries. In short, if you can drive your fish and be in the weigh-in line by the designated time, you can hunt in the Atlantic or Gulf, whether in Florida or out of Florida. You may not hunt in the Bahamas or any other foreign country. The Bahamas includes the various surrounding banks considered Bahamian Territory. You may not have someone fly your fish in from anywhere. Geographically diverse hunting locations will enable more Spearboard members to be involved.

**DISQUALIFICATION AND PROTEST** - We will have a protest committee available. It will be comprised of the lead weighmaster, the event owner, and a third person chosen by the event owner. Protests must be filed at the time fish are weighed (yours or someone else's). We reserve the right to disqualify individuals for suspect fish, unsportsmanlike conduct, or disruption. If you have a dispute, we will do everything possible to address it. We just ask for courtesy, and your participation in this event means that you will accept the committee's majority decision in a respectful manner, without further recourse. Persons not in line by the designated time will be disqualified, and this will be strictly enforced, especially in light of how liberal the weigh-in time is. "In line" means that you, or a member from your boat, are presently in line with your fish. By registering in the BBO, you agree to take a lie detector test should it be requested by the protest committee whether randomly or because of an issue.

**WEIGH-IN PROCEDURE** - In order to weigh your fish, your cooler must be inside the gated area surrounding the weigh-in scales area no later than 12:00 PM. At 12:00 PM, the line will be closed and the weighmasters notified of the last person in line. If your cooler is still in your truck at that time, you will be disqualified regardless of when you arrived. This rule will be strictly enforced.

You must weigh your fish in person in case there are any questions about following the rules. We will have a lot of fish to weigh, and your cooperation is vital. After you arrive in the weigh-in area, please observe the following:

1. All fish must be gutted. This should be done before arriving at the tournament site. Fish cannot be gutted while at the scales. Accordingly, un-gutted fish will be disqualified. The weighmaster, event owner, or weigh-in crew do not have nor will they supply knives for the purpose of gutting fish.

2. Please make sure that your fish meet the minimum size for the tournament. Fish may shrink after they are harvested, and tournament size limits may be greater than the minimum size limits in the area where your fish were shot. Measuring devices are available for your use BEFORE you present the fish to the weighmaster. The line assistants will not measure or approve your fish for you. All fish must qualify using OUR measuring device. Please refer to the tournament rules for minimum sizes. The weighmaster has the final say on all fish being weighed.

3. You may weigh only 1 grouper, 2 snapper, 2 hogfish/flounder, 2 porgy/sheepshead and 1 jack or cobia plus 1 wild card fish as explained above for a grand total of 9 fish.

4. Please make sure that your fish are presented by category in the following order: grouper, snapper, hogfish/flounder, porgy/sheepshead and jack/cobia, then your wild card fish.

5. You must select your two largest and heaviest fish in each category. The weighmaster will not and

cannot assist you with this decision. It is not necessary to present your largest fish in a category first.

6. There is no need to remove zip ties from your fish. Excessively large and thick zip ties may be removed at the sole discretion of the weighmaster.

7. Be ready when it is your turn. If your fish do not meet ALL of the above requirements at the time that they are presented to the weighmaster, you can be asked to go to the back of the line.

8. After your fish are weighed, please sign your receipt and THEN retrieve your fish quickly to keep the lines moving.

The weighmaster has the final say on all weighed fish. If you have any questions, please ask one of the line assistants. The weigh-in team has volunteered their time to make your competition run smoothly and enjoyably. Should you have a question about, or wish to dispute a fish's size or weight, please do so WITH THE WEIGHMASTER only. Thank you for your cooperation.

**NOTICE** - The location of the weigh-in is at a privately owned site. There are hazards associated with this location. Persons bringing children agree to supervise them and ensure that they are staying free of hazards, and otherwise are properly supervised. **NO PETS ARE ALLOWED**

**PHOTOGRAPHY & VIDEO RELEASE** - I hereby grant for me and any attending dependents or guests to Enterprise Publications/Productions/Entertainment ("Enterprise") permission to use my/their likeness in a photograph or video recording in any and all of its publications, including websites and television productions, without monetary or other consideration. I understand and authorize Enterprise to record my/their likeness, voice, name, appearance, interview or performance on videotape, audiotape, film or any other media (the "Recording") and to exploit the Recording or segments of the Recording worldwide and in perpetuity, including but not limited to broadcast, non-broadcast, video and audio cassettes, transcripts, online, Internet, satellite, microwave, cable, commercial and non-commercial, national and international distribution, subscription, non-theatrical and home video media, and all other television formats, and all other media, and by all means whether now known or hereafter created; to edit the Recording; and to use the Recording or any part thereof, for any purpose whatsoever. I hereby acknowledge and agree that the Recording is the exclusive property of Enterprise, its licensees, sub-licensees and assignees, who shall retain all right, title and interest in and to the Recording.

**RULE CHANGES** - BBO Rules may be changed until the day of the actual weigh-in due to potential changes already approved by FWC, so that your dive plans can be formulated in advance unless there is a critical change. Any and all rule changes will be posted on [www.spearboard.com](http://www.spearboard.com) in this sub-forum: <http://spearboard.com/forumdisplay.php?f=345> . Registrants are responsible for making sure they have checked for rule changes up until 11 pm on Saturday, July 21st, 2018.