

Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club

Rules and Regulations

Approved by the GOFC Board of Directors on November 2, 2010

General Statements and Regulations

All club members are responsible for their safety and the safety of their boat and passengers. Members must determine the conditions under which their boat can be operated safely. An organized GOFC activity, such as a Tournament or Funament, is **not** an endorsement by the GOFC of safe conditions for any particular boat.

All Federal, State of Florida, and local (for example, County) rules and regulations are always in force and take precedence over GOFC rules and regulations.

Rules

1. **GOFC Home Fishing Area:** Club members may enter fish in GOFC contests that were caught from boats launched from locations between the Homosassa River in the south to the Fenholloway River to the north and out to a depth of 200 feet. Individual tournaments may restrict members to a particular port within our home waters.
2. **Member Eligibility:** Any GOFC member in good standing shall be eligible to participate in GOFC contests. A member in good standing is defined as a member who is current on dues and has a signed and dated membership application and waiver form on file for that year. The Board reserves the right to suspend any member without cause from any contest. Specific eligibility for specific contests and awards is defined further below.
3. **Membership Application and Liability Waiver:** Each year one member from each family membership group of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is required to fill out and sign a new Membership Application and Liability Waiver Form. This form, along with the yearly membership dues, is due by the January meeting. Anyone participating in any GOFC event (tournaments, learnaments or fundaments, etc.) is required to have a current Membership Application and Liability Waiver Form on file and be current in their dues.
4. **Club Contests:** There are several different contests sponsored by the GOFC. In each contest entrants will be ranked and prizes may be awarded. These contests include: tournaments, funaments, and yearlong competitions (the Ellett Contest, etc.) The following categories are used for GOFC yearlong competitions:

a) **The Big Ten** shall consist of the following species: spotted sea trout, Spanish mackerel, king mackerel, redfish, sheepshead, grouper, cobia, flounder, bluefish and greater amberjack. Greater amberjack will be referred to as amberjack for the remainder of this document.

b) **The Other Three** shall consist of the following species: dolphin, tripletail, and red snapper.

c) **Unusual Species** shall include all other (legal to take) species.

Individual tournaments or funaments may change or restrict the number of eligible species.

5. **Youth Category:** Anglers are considered a youth for contest purposes through the calendar year they turn 15.

6. **Yearlong Fishing Contests:** Each March at the Awards Banquet, awards will be given as follows.

Largest Fish: First, second and third place given (adult and youth) for the largest fish in each of the Big Ten category. First place given (adult and youth) for the largest fish in each of the Other Three category.

Outstanding Angler: Each angler (adult and youth) who enters one of each of the Big Ten species.

The John Ellett Award: The three men, three women and three youth anglers with the highest point totals for the year will be awarded first, second and third place in the John Ellett Contest.

Ellett points are calculated for the Big Ten species only. The largest fish caught by any member for each species is assigned 25 points. Each smaller fish of a species receives points based on the size (weight, or length for redfish) of the fish compared to the largest fish. For example, if you enter a 10 lb grouper and the largest grouper anyone enters is 20 lbs, you get half of 25 points, 12.5 points, since your fish is half the size of the biggest. Note that since the largest fish entered of a species can change as the year goes on, the points you receive for a fish can change from month to month. These point totals are updated on a regular basis and are published on the website and in our print publications.

The Ellett Contest runs from January 1 to December 31 of each year. All entries must be submitted by January 31 to count for the previous year's contest. The grace period to enter a fish is three months. For example, a fish caught on February 15th can be entered until May 15th. However, because the year's entries must be tallied by January 31 the grace period for November and December catches is less than 3 months.

Bonus Ellett points are awarded for participation in events. Members will be awarded 3 bonus points for participation in a club tournament and 1 bonus point for a learnament. There is no limit on the number of times the John Ellett Award can be won by a member.

The John Patrick Youth Award: This goes to the youth with the most species entered in one year; in the case of a tie, Ellett points will be used to break the tie. This award can only be received once.

The Dave Abril Youth Kingfish Award: A large trophy is awarded to the youth who entered the largest king mackerel for the year.

The Dick Bowles Most Unusual Species Award is for the most unusual species that is entered each year as judged by a panel of board members.

Other awards may be presented at the Banquet at the GOFC Board of Director's discretion.

Tournament Contests: Fish caught during the Spring and Fall GOFC Tournaments will automatically count for the yearlong contests. The top fish at each tournament will be recognized at a regular meeting after the Tournament. Specific categories and awards will be announced for each Tournament. You must be present at the weigh-in to receive Ellett Contest bonus points for the tournament.

Funaments: Fish caught during Funaments are treated like tournament fish, except that prizes and awards are typically not given for Funaments.

7. **Fish Entry Conditions:**

- a) All fish entered must be whole and still in skin and/or scales.
- b) All fish must be legal and meet all Federal, State, local, and GOFC rules and regulations
- c) All fish entries must comply with Florida Recreational Saltwater Fishing Regulations as posted on www.myfwc.com with regard to size limits, closed seasons, etc..
- d) All fish must be caught on hook and line/rod and reel.
- e) All anglers must hook, fight, and bring to the boat each fish on their own.

8. **Fish Entry Documentation:** The Board requires that members document all entries with a GOFC Fish Entry Form as described below:

GOFC Fish Entry Form: This is an official GOFC entry form, available at our monthly meetings and online on our website. One entry form must be completed for each fish you want to enter. If the fish is an unusual species or of a weight that requires weigh slip documentation you must complete the online portion of the form, print the form, and sign the form (you, angler, and witnesses). Return the form (with a State Certified Scale Weight Slip, or proof that the scale used was certified by the GOFC) to the GOFC records keeper. Recommended proof that a fish was weighed on a GOFC certified scale is a photograph containing both the fish and the GOFC

certified scale taken in such a manner that the tag proving the scales certification is visible in the photo.

State Certified Scale Weigh Slip: This is a written document, preferably on a card or sheet of paper with the name of the establishment where the fish was weighed printed on it. The following information should be included: the date the fish was caught, the species of the fish, location where the fish was weighed, the weight of the fish, the name of the angler and the name and signature of the person who weighed the fish.

Note: At GOFC Tournaments and those Funaments where a record of entered fish is kept, entry form and weigh slip documentation will be handled by GOFC Board Members or representatives. All other entries for fish caught outside of Tournaments and Funaments must be handled by individual members.

The Board requires members to document the following fish with a GOFC Fish Entry Form and to be weighed on either a GOFC Certified Scale or a State Certified Scale. Fish that fall into this category shall be referred to in this document as "Documentation Required" fish or abbreviated using the acronym DR fish.

a) All entries in the Other Three categories.

b) Big Ten entries as described below.

trout: equal to, or over 4 pounds

cobia: equal to, or over 25 pounds

sheepshead: equal to, or over 6 pounds

flounder: equal to, or over 2 pounds

Spanish mackerel: equal to, or over 5 pounds

king mackerel: equal to, or over 25 pounds

grouper: equal to, or over 12 pounds

redfish: equal to, or over 6 pounds

amberjack: equal to, or over 25 pounds

bluefish: equal to, or over 3 pounds

Weighing required by the Board for the above defined DR fish shall be done in the following manner. For fish that weigh less than the above defined DR fish thresholds, non-certified scales, including hand held scales may be used. A weigh slip is not required.

For fish that weigh equal to or above the DR fish thresholds, state certified or GOFC certified scales must be used to weight the fish and a weigh slip is required for submission. If a fish

weighing above the appropriate limit is turned in without a weigh slip and the Board decides to accept it, the weight of the fish will be reduced to one ounce less than the limit weight. Thus if you catch a 7 pound redfish and turn it in without a weigh slip, the Board may give you credit for a 5 pound, 15 ounce fish.

DR fish **MUST** be weighed while the person doing the weighing is standing on land. Fish that do not qualify as DR fish may be weighed on a boat. It is recognized that in some conditions it can be difficult to get an accurate weight in a rocking boat. Members are encouraged to use an average of the high and low readings produced by the motion of a rocking boat when weighing fish.

Club Records: For a fish to be certified as a new club record the following documentation is required: Weigh slip from a State Certified Scale, a digital photograph of the fish, and a witness by one of more qualified GOFC Board Members to verify species and weight of the fish. The fish should be kept on ice until it is witnessed by an appropriate board member. See the Contact Us page of the GOFC website for qualified board members with appropriate credentials.

Weigh Stations: If you need to get an official weigh slip for an entry, you can weigh your fish on any state-certified scales. Commercial establishments that use a scale to determine the value of an item sold to the public can be requested to prepare a weigh slip, as those scales will be certified. The GOFC also has two scales, which can be used for weigh slips. Since establishments change and the location of the GOFC scales change from year to year, these establishments and locations will be updated early each year and published on the GOFC website.

Complaints and Comments: All complaints, comments, appeals and information concerning the rules should be addressed to the GOFC President. The Board will review complaints and appeals and the Board's decision will be final.