



## Big Tuna Challenge

### OMNIDIRECTIONAL SONAR STYLE FISHING DIVISION

Official Rules and Schedule: *revised 9.19.25*

#### Challenge Schedule:

**A) Captains' Party (6pm-8pm)– Thursday, September 18<sup>th</sup>, 2025:**

**Brielle Yacht Club Marina**-Late Registration & Captains' Meeting- A team member on each boat **MUST** attend the captains' meeting at 7:30pm & be responsible for relaying any last-minute changes to their team. A captain's package will be given to the member of each team including "Boat Number Validation Card" for your day(s) of fishing

**B) Available fishing days: Friday, September 19 through Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025.**

Choose a maximum of 2 available fishing Days: 1 Overnight (2 consecutive days) or 2 Separate Days.

**C) Results will be posted after close of weigh ins each day.**

**D) Award Party-Pig n Parrot, Saturday Oct 4<sup>th</sup>, 2025 (1pm-3pm)**

Dinner, final results and awards.

**Basic Omnidirectional Sonar-Style Boat Entry: \$1,500** (Non-refundable) **50 boat maximum**. Basic Boat Entry fee competes for **\$25,000** which will be distributed equally & awarded to 1<sup>st</sup> place Winner for the Heaviest Yellowfin, Heaviest Longfin and Heaviest Big Eye Tuna. **This challenge is separate from the Non-Omnidirectional Sonar-Style Boat division and its cash prizes**. Cash prize will be prorated if we have less than 50 Omnidirectional Sonar-Style boat entries. Cash & Checks are acceptable forms of payment. If payment is made by check, please issue separate checks for the Basic Boat Entry fee and for the Optional Added Skill Level Entry fees. **Zelle payments are accepted for Basic Boat Entry Fee ONLY on-line, processing fees apply**. Basic Boat entry may be completed online: [www.rtusachallenges.com](http://www.rtusachallenges.com) or at Captains' meeting. Registration is by boat rather than by angler. An unlimited number of anglers are allowed per boat. Captain & Mates are eligible to be an angler.

**Non-Omnidirectional Sonar Style Boat may not register in Omnidirectional Sonar-Style Boat Entry.**

**Optional:** (95% payout) **Added Skill Levels Entry Fee (Check or Cash ONLY)** for cash prizes are available to register at Captains' Party ONLY. You must register for the Basic Boat Entry & pay the fee in order to enter the optional added skill levels. (Displayed on website): [www.rtusachallenges.com](http://www.rtusachallenges.com)

In order to be eligible for awards & cash prizes, fish must be caught in compliance with all Challenge rules. Said rules include conformance to state and federal size limits and possession of a current NMFS angling, general or charter/head boat category HMS permit. For permit and registration information, visit [www.nmfspermits.com](http://www.nmfspermits.com) or call 727.824.5399 and visit [www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov/](http://www.saltwaterregistry.nj.gov/)



**Big Tuna Challenge-Official Rules and Schedule: revised 9.18.25**  
**OMNIDIRECTIONAL SONAR STYLE FISHING DIVISION**

- 1) All boats must depart from and return to Manasquan Inlet. **Boats must be docked in the Manasquan River.**
- 2) Boundaries are 125nm from Manasquan Inlet Sea buoy.
- 3) Tournament channel is VHF 71, alternate 69.
- 4) Only one day need be fished for the tournament to be considered official & prizes to be awarded.
- 5) Available fishing days are as follow: September 19<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup>,2025.
- 6) Each registered Boat will choose to compete a maximum of 2 fishing days.

The options for fishing those 2 days are as follow:

**Option 1: Overnighter:** Each registered boat may fish one overnight (two consecutive days) fishing trip. In this case, the boat must return to the inlet on the day after the boat departed the inlet.

**Option 2: Separate Days:** Each registered boat may fish any 2 separate fishing days. On each of those days, the boat must return to the inlet on the same day the boat departed from.

A) The times for departure from and return to the inlet are as follow:

- 1) Registered boats may not depart the inlet earlier than 12:00 AM the evening prior to a fishing day.
  - 2) Registered boats must return to the inlet by 7PM on the days from Friday, September 19<sup>th</sup> to Tuesday, September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. If registered boats are not inside inlet by the 7pm deadline with confirmation, that boat will be disqualified and will not be able to weigh in.
  - 3) Weigh station will be opened starting a 3pm each day.
- 7) All boats must declare their fishing day(s) by 11:59 PM the evening before each day the boat is fishing and must state whether fishing a single day trip or 2-day overnight trip. Entrants failing to declare the number of days will be recorded as a 2-day trip. It is the entrant's responsibility to ensure that all fish days are declared properly and in accordance with the rules.
- 8) **To declare a fishing day:** The captain on each boat **MUST** text Tournament Director Lenny (732)351-6363 before 11:59 PM the evening before each day the boat is fishing the following information noted below. Should there be a problem with the phone number, the alternate phone number for texting is: (609)377-0529
- a) Captain's Name
  - b) Boat Name, Boat Number & dock location.
  - c) Date of Departure
  - d) Declare and overnight or single fishing day.
  - e) A team photo displaying boat number in cockpit. (further explained at meeting)



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- 9) Participants shall comply with I.G.F.A equipment & angling rules with the following exceptions: Hook & Hand is permitted (ONLY one pass). (further explained) You can fight fish in a stand up or a fighting chair. You can lean your body or use your hand on gunnel for support while fighting fish. Fish may NOT be fought from rod holder or using the covering board, rail or any other tool for leverage (further explained at captains' meeting), Spreader bars, J-hooks, Bait/J-hook, trolling, kite fishing, popping, jigging, live baiting, chunking, chumming, daisy chains with a hook, wire lines, planers, dart gaffs are permitted. No commercial gear such as green sticks, bandit gear etc., or similar recreational gear may be used. No electric reels may be used for Tile fishing, high speed Wahoo trolling or Day/Night time Swordfishing. Electric reels may be used ONLY for: Teasers, Dredges or if you are deploying a kite. Spearfishing, spotter planes & Drones are not permitted. Tournament Director retain sole authority of interpreting and implementing I.G.F.A's rules.
- 10) **This is an Omnidirectional Sonar Style fishing challenge. Definition of Omnidirectional Sonar Style fishing:** The use of any deployable omni-directional sonar or deployable searchlight-style sonar system is **Allowed** before, during & after declared fishing day(s). For the purpose of this rule, "deployable" means any sonar device capable of being lowered, extended or otherwise positioned beneath the vessel's hull while underway or fishing, and "omni-directional" or "searchlight-style" means sonar system capable of continuously scanning 360 degrees around the vessel or projecting a steerable, directional beam. (Further explained at captains' meeting).
- 11) There is no limit on the number of lines or teasers.
- 12) Line class shall be limited to the manufacturer's stated rating of no greater than 130 lbs. The use of Tournament Grade Line is not required. The use of any pound test backing is permitted.
- 13) The captain or a member on each team should take a photo using cell phone of every Tuna, Swordfish, Mahi-Mahi, Wahoo & Tilefish immediately after fish has been boated with the angler and texted to Lenny (Director). Make sure you have phone charged.
- 14) **Scales open at 3pm each day & will stay open until last boat that made the 7pm deadline inside the Manasquan inlet with confirmation. All boats having fish to weigh-in must call in to Weigh Master (VHF #65, 71, or Phone (732)351-6363 upon entering inlet. Each team captain chooses a maximum of 3 tunas from each eligible species & only 1 Mahi-Mahi, 1 Wahoo, 1 Swordfish & 1 Tilefish for weigh-in. Brielle Yacht Club Marina is the only weigh-in station.**



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 Tuna species eligible for cash prizes: Yellowfin, Longfin & Big Eye. BLUEFIN TUNA are not eligible for awards. In case of a tie in weight, the award for the tied placements are combined and averaged for awards determination. All weights will be rounded off to the nearest 0.2lb.

- 15) In the event of a participant boat disability prior to a fishing day, participants may transfer to a substitute boat and assume the disabled boat number without paying an additional entry fee or added skill level entries. Note: Added skill levels for the Boats under 40 ft do not transfer and are non-refundable if the substitute boat is greater than 40 ft or Boats with outboard motors do not transfer and are non-refundable if the substitute boat is not powered by outboard motors. The disabled and substitute boat must be reported to Tournament Director (Lenny Strobel) prior to departure for that day of fishing by contacting Lenny at (732)351-6363.
- 16) Only participants of tournament may submit a dispute or protest with a signed document on the day of the allegation and must pay a \$1,000 fee to director on the day of alleged infraction. All disputes will be settled at the discretion of the committee. All decisions of committee are final.
- 17) Tournament Director has the right to cancel, postpone event or refuse any boat or participant from participating in this event.
- 18) All winners may be subject to a "polygraph".
- 19) The Tournament director and hosting facilities assume no liability or responsibility for any damage or loss.
- 20) Award money will be paid by check in the name of the Entrant whose name appears on the Basic Boat Entry Form or any individual crewmember. All winners will be required to submit federal/state tax information before and award will be presented. An IRS Form 1099 will be issued to all award recipients. Awards will be mailed within 14 days after the treasurer receives the entrant's completed IRS Form W-9. If a protest or polygraph test has not been resolved by that time, the disputed award will be made as soon as the issue is resolved.