

**Big Wahoo Challenge Unofficial Rules: Revised 11.16.25**

- 1) Registration is by boat not by angler. Max 6 anglers per boat. Captain and mate(s) are eligible anglers. Basic Boat Entry Fee: **\$700**. Late registration fee at captains' meeting (**\$800**). Basic Entry Fee entitles teams to compete for Cash prizes (\$10,000). Top 3 places (Wahoo) will be awarded cash prizes. Cash prizes will be prorated if we have less than 25 boat entries. Registration is completed online at [www.bigwahoochallenge.com](http://www.bigwahoochallenge.com).
- 2) **Optional:** Added Skill Level Entry Fee for cash prizes are available at Captains' meeting ONLY. You must register the Basic Boat Entry & pay the fee in order to enter the optional added skill levels.
- 3) The captain or team member on each boat must attend the captains' meeting (Friday, 11.28.25 at 7:30pm SHARP) & be responsible for relaying any last-minute changes to their team. A captain's bucket will be given to a member of each team including a validation card for your 2 days of fishing.
- 4) All anglers must possess a valid fishing license and follow all Federal and local laws.
- 5) Species eligible for challenge: Wahoo & Mahi ONLY.
- 6) Each team's captain chooses 2 of 5 available fishing days: (Saturday 11.29 thru Wednesday 12.3.25) to compete.
  - A) The captain representing each team must text the Director (Lenny) 609.377.0529 the morning of their 2 chosen fishing day. To clarify: Text before you leave your slip or before boat leaves boat ramp the days you commit to compete. You will receive a confirmation text or call from Lenny (Director).
  - B) The captain on each team should use his cell phone to take a photo of every wahoo or dolphin immediately after fish has been boated with the angler holding validation card next to their fish. All photos of every fish should be texted to Lenny (Director) before weigh in.
- 7) Lines in 6:00 am, Lines out 2:00 pm. You do not have to fish the entire time frame. Any fish hooked up prior to 2:00pm deadline may be fought until caught or lost and must have a continual video from a team's cell phone filming before 2:00 pm: the "hook up," the angler fighting the fish and the fish secured in boat or lost. Fish will not qualify if video is not submitted to Lenny (Director) before your weigh-in. **Make sure you have phone charged.**
- 8) Boundaries for fishing: **North boundary line: Ajax reef to South boundary line: Tennessee reef** (You must stay inside EEZ (Exclusive Economic Zone) line. No crossing of the Gulf stream to fish Bahamas. Boats may be trailered but need to be launched between Ocean Reef & Islamorada. (Further explained at Captain's meeting)
- 9) A maximum of 5 lines may be fished at one time, Electric reels are allowed, Planers & wire lines are permitted, trolling, kite fishing, chumming, jigging and live baiting are allowed. **NO SPEAR FISHING.** You may fight fish out of the rod holder. No commercial gear is permitted.
- 10) Tournament channel is VHF 71, alternate 69.
- 11) Hook & hand is permitted with one pass as soon as possible.
- 12) Be sure to remove all Wahoo & Mahi from day(s) prior to your competition day or you will be disqualified. Your boat may be subject to a visual inspection via FaceTime or the presence of committee.
- 13) Scales open at 2:00 pm each day. Each team captain chooses a maximum of 3 Wahoo & 3 Mahi to bring to scales for weigh-in. A team member on each boat chooses 1 vehicle to transport all eligible species to **Yellow Bait House (101741 Overseas highway, Key Largo, FL. 33037)** no later than 6pm that same day. A staff member will confirm arrival of vehicle with fish to weigh at designated area. (Further explained at Captains' meeting.) If vehicle with fish is not at drop off area by 6pm that day, all fish will be disqualified.
- 14) In case of a tie in weight, winner will be decided by the first to weigh. Order of weigh in will be based on time of arrival **at The Yellow Bait House**. For example, an arrival time of 5:15 pm on day 2 would beat an arrival time of 5:40 pm on day 1 assuming a tie in weight.
- 15) Only participants of tournament may submit a dispute or protest with a signed document and a \$500 fee paid to director the day of the alleged infraction. All disputes will be settled at the discretion of the committee. All decisions of the committee are final. Tournament Director has the right to cancel, postpone event or refuse any boat or participant from participating in this event.
- 16) Rules are subjected to change & will be made official at Captains' Meeting 11.28.25.
- 17) Participants of this tournament enter at their own risk. Officials, committee members, sponsors and ALL persons connected directly or indirectly with the operations of this Wahoo Challenge, shall be exempt from any & all liability for loss, damage or negligence, harm or injury suffered by any participant, entrants, sportfishing vessel and equipment which may occur during the tournament. By checking box in registration, you agree to adhere to all tournament rules. 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/)