

2026 Tournament Registration and Rules:

Registration for the tournament begins at 1:00 PM on **Thursday, July 23rd** and ends at 9:00PM that evening. **No late registrations will be accepted.**

Two days of fishing will take place on **Friday, July 24th and Saturday, July 25th**.
The **Awards Ceremony** will be held **July 25th, Saturday evening**.

If you are pre-registered, you must still check in during official registration hours to confirm participation and receive your tournament packet, including program, rules and regulations, meal tickets, and swag bags.

Sponsors and sponsor guests are also required to register during official registration hours.

A **Captain's Meeting** will be held at **7:00 PM on Thursday evening**. If you are unable to attend in person, the meeting will be livestreamed on the Port Mansfield Chamber of Commerce Facebook page.

Bad Weather:

One (1) full day of fishing constitutes a completed tournament.

OFFICIAL TIME SOURCE

The official time for the 51st Port Mansfield Fishing Tournament (PMFT) shall be the time maintained by the Tournament Weigh Station clock located at the Port Mansfield Event Center.

For Offshore Release verification, the official time shall be the time recorded and verified by the authorized Committee Boat issuing the verification number.

In the event of discrepancy between a participant's personal device and official Tournament time, the official Tournament time shall prevail.

No personal mobile device, watch, GPS unit, VHF radio time, or other private timekeeping device shall supersede official Tournament time.

All deadlines (including dock time, weigh-in deadlines, reporting requirements, and release verification times) shall be strictly enforced based on official Tournament time.

DEFINITIONS

For purposes of clarity and enforcement, the following definitions apply to all divisions:

Official Dock Time

The latest time by which a registered vessel must be physically inside the designated boundary and eligible for weigh-in.

Dock time is determined by official Tournament time.

Designated Boundary

The geographic boundary between Mansfield Marina and the official Weigh Station location at the Port Mansfield Event Center. Boats must be within this boundary prior to dock time to qualify.

Official Weigh Station

The designated weigh-in area at the Port Mansfield Event Center where fish are inspected, weighed, measured, recorded, and scored by the official weighmaster.

Object of the Day

The official PMFT-issued token, identifier, or marking required to appear in photographs and video submissions for scoring or release verification.

Failure to clearly display the Object of the Day in required documentation will result in disqualification of that entry.

Committee Boat

An authorized Tournament vessel designated by PMFT to verify offshore hook-ups, releases, and official release times. Only verification numbers issued by an authorized Committee Boat are valid.

Edible Condition

Fish presented at weigh-in must be in fresh condition suitable for consumption, as determined by the weighmaster or fisheries biologist.

Mutilated Fish

Any fish that has been altered, cut, damaged, frozen, spoiled, or otherwise modified in a manner that affects weight, length, or condition. Mutilated fish are not eligible.

Registered Angler

An individual properly registered and paid in the appropriate division prior to the close of registration.

Boat/Team

All registered anglers fishing from the same vessel in the same division.

Weigh-In-Station:

Tournament Headquarters is located at the **Port Mansfield Chamber of Commerce Event Center** in Port Mansfield, Texas.

All fish must be submitted in person by the registered angler for official weigh-in, measurement, and recording by the official weighmaster or deputy weighmaster at Tournament Headquarters.

Weigh-In Rules:

- Anglers must present their fish during designated weigh-in time slots.
- All fish must be in edible condition.
- Anglers are limited to weighing in once per day.
- Each boat may submit no more than its allotted number of fish per eligible species within its registered division.
- An official fisheries biologist may inspect all entries to verify species, freshness, and compliance.
- Any fish that does not meet applicable State or Federal regulations at the time of weigh-in will be disqualified. No substitution will be allowed.
- The weighmaster and/or biologist may provide recommendations to the Tournament Board.
- The decision of the Tournament Board on all matters, including disputes and rule interpretations, is final.
- Photographs of fish in question may be used in the decision-making process.
- All fish entered in the Bay Divisions must be weighed on the same day they are caught.
- The angler must select and present their heaviest eligible fish for weigh-in.
- The angler must accompany their fish to the weigh station and initial the weigh card to confirm accuracy.
- Only registered PMFT anglers may fish from a tournament boat.
- All captains or boat operators must be registered PMFT participants for fish caught aboard their vessel to be eligible.
- All fish are subject to further inspection if deemed necessary by tournament officials.
- All anglers must comply with all applicable State and Federal regulations.

Bay Division Requirement:

All Bay Division fish entered for scoring must be weighed on the same day they are caught.

Exception: A boat rendering assistance to a disabled vessel that prevents timely weigh-in on Day One may request review by the Tournament Board.

Legal Fish:

All anglers must possess a valid **2026 Texas Fishing License** with a current Saltwater Endorsement.

All fish must meet current Texas Parks and Wildlife saltwater length and bag limits.

Mutilated fish will be disqualified.

Night Fishing:

Night fishing IS **NOT permitted** in the Bay and Kayak Divisions.

Bait:

In accordance with Texas Parks and Wildlife regulations, the Tournament allows the use of all legal live and artificial baits.

Exception: Participants competing for the **Terry Neal Perpetual Award** and the **Tom Floyd Perpetual Junior Award** must comply with the specific bait restrictions outlined for those awards.

Tackle:

The Tournament will be conducted in accordance with the rules of the **International Game Fish Association (IGFA)**, unless otherwise specifically stated in PMFT rules.

Junior Divisions:

Entrants in the Junior Divisions (Bay and Offshore) must be **16 years of age or younger as of the official registration date of the 51st PMFT (July 23, 2026)**.

Any participant who has reached their 17th birthday prior to July 23, 2026, is not eligible to compete in a Junior Division.

Polygraph Tests & Protests:

Polygraph examinations may be administered to any contestant at the discretion of the Tournament Board.

Statements may also be obtained from members of a contestant's fishing party.

Any contestant who is a contender for any award **must remain accessible by phone** and must be in suitable condition to undergo testing. Contestants should refrain from excessive alcohol consumption or the use of any substances that may impair testing.

Entry into the tournament constitutes agreement to submit to and pass a polygraph examination if requested.

Failure to:

- Submit to testing,
- Pass the polygraph examination, or
- Comply with Tournament Board directives

shall result in immediate disqualification and forfeiture of all trophies, titles, awards, prizes, and fish pot winnings.

Polygraph examinations shall be administered at a time and location designated by the PMFT Tournament Board and may take up to three (3) hours.

Protest Procedure

Any protest must be filed in writing and hand-delivered to a member of the Tournament Board or the Tournament Chair on the same day as the alleged infraction.

The Tournament Board's decision on all protests and disputes is final.

Disqualification & Future Eligibility

Any participant who:

- Refuses to take a requested polygraph,
- Fails a polygraph examination, or
- Is disqualified by the Tournament Board for rule violations

may be barred from future Port Mansfield Fishing Tournaments beginning July 25, 2026, and thereafter, at the discretion of the Tournament Board.

Fraudulent Activity Reporting

The Tournament Board and all officials associated with weigh-in operations (including weighmasters and biologists) are required to immediately report suspected fraudulent or unlawful activities to Texas Parks and Wildlife Law Enforcement.

Conservation:

To promote conservation of game fish, anglers are encouraged to release fish smaller than those already retained.

All fish caught remain the property of the angler. The Tournament assumes no responsibility for the storage, preservation, refrigeration, or disposal of any catch.

Responsibility:

Each angler agrees to act responsibly and in accordance with all Tournament Rules and Regulations.

Each angler further agrees to indemnify, defend, and hold harmless the Port Mansfield Fishing Tournament (PMFT), the Port Mansfield Chamber of Commerce, its Board of Directors, members, volunteers, sponsors, weighmasters, and affiliated representatives from and against any and all claims, liabilities, damages, or expenses arising from any act or omission of the angler during or in connection with the Tournament.

Only fish within officially recognized PMFT divisions and categories will be accepted at the weigh-in station. Any unauthorized species or fish outside the angler's registered division presented at weigh-in may result in immediate boat/team disqualification at the discretion of the Tournament Board.

Changing Divisions:

After registration, any angler or boat wishing to change divisions (for example, Offshore to Bay due to weather conditions) must report to the Tournament Director prior to fishing in the new division.

Fish entered in one division shall not be eligible for awards in any other division.

All division change requests are subject to review and approval by the Tournament Director, whose decision is final.

PIGGY PERCH DIVISION

The Piggy Perch Tournament will be held on **Saturday, July 25, 2026**.

- Registration: Friday, July 23, 2026, from 1:00 PM to 9:00 PM
- Fishing begins: 7:00 AM Saturday
- Weigh-in: 11:00 AM
- Awards: 11:30 AM

Parents or guardians must register participating children during official registration hours.

Official Piggy Perch rules will be provided at registration and are also available on the Tournament website.

For conservation purposes, all Piggy Perch not submitted for weigh-in must be released immediately.

BAY DIVISION

The Bay Division consists of two separate categories:

1. Open Division

Live bait and/or artificial lures permitted.

2. Artificial Only Division

Artificial lures only. No natural or live bait permitted.

Each Boat/Team:

- May consist of no more than five (5) registered anglers.
- Must declare its division at the time of registration.
- All anglers aboard the same vessel must compete in the same division.

Wade fishing is permitted; however, all anglers must remain within sight of their registered vessel at all times.

Bay Division Awards

Each Bay Division will award:

- Boat – 1st and 2nd Place
- Women – 1st and 2nd Place
- Junior (16 & Under) – 1st and 2nd Place
- Grand Champion – Awarded to the angler with the highest combined weight. Must weigh one (1) Speckled Trout, one (1) Redfish, and one (1) Flounder during the two days of fishing to qualify.

NO oversized tagged fish will be weighed in

Division Integrity Rule

Anglers registered in the Open Division are not eligible for awards in the Artificial Only Division. Anglers registered in the Artificial Only Division are not eligible for awards in the Open Division. Women and Junior awards are division-specific and must align with the Boat/Team's registered division.

Bay Fishing Hours

- Fishing begins at 6:45 AM on both tournament days.
- All Bay Division boats must be inside the designated boundary (between Mansfield Marina and the Weigh Station) no later than 3:00:00 PM on Friday and Saturday.
- Weigh-in will begin at 1:00 PM each day.

Tiebreakers:

All tournament standings will be determined by total weight. In the event of a tie, standings will be determined by total length. If a tie still exists, the earliest recorded weigh-in time will determine the winner. All decisions of measurement and time recording by tournament officials are final unless overturned through the official protest process.

All Bay anglers are restricted to one (1) fishing line in the water per angler at any given time.

Any fish hooked by one angler and handed to another angler to reel in shall be disqualified.

Bay Junior Division

All Bay Division rules apply equally to Junior and Adult anglers. Juniors are eligible to compete for:

- Grand Champion Bay

Junior anglers must hook, fight, and land their own fish.

Any fish hooked by another angler and handed to a Junior to reel in will not be considered a legal catch.

KAYAK DIVISION

The Kayak Division is an **Open Division**, permitting both live bait and artificial lures.

Awards:

- 1st and 2nd Place
- Grand Champion

Grand Champion Kayak Award

Awarded to the angler with the highest combined weight. Must weigh one (1) Speckled Trout, one (1) Redfish, and one (1) Flounder during the two days of fishing to qualify.

- One (1) Redfish
- One (1) Flounder

- One (1) Trout

Kayak Line Restriction

Kayak anglers are restricted to one (1) fishing line in the water at any given time.

Kayak Fishing Hours & Launch Location

- Fishing begins at 7:00 AM on both tournament days.
- Official weigh-in for Kayak Division is from 1:00 PM to 3:30:00 PM on Friday and Saturday.
- Kayak anglers must launch from Port Mansfield.
- NO transporting Kayaks from a motorized vessel.

Kayak Scoring – (Weight / Length / Time)

Each angler may weigh in:

- One (1) Redfish
- One (1) Flounder
- One (1) Trout

Tie-breakers are determined as follows:

All tournament standings will be determined by total weight. In the event of a tie, standings will be determined by total length. If a tie still exists, the earliest recorded weigh-in time will determine the winner. All decisions of measurement and time recording by tournament officials are final unless overturned through the official protest process.

OFFSHORE DIVISION

Fishing Hours

- Offshore boats may not depart their dock or Port of Choice until **6:00 PM on Thursday** of tournament week.
- Fishing may begin at **6:00 AM on Friday**.
- Weigh-in will be held each day **from 5:00 PM to 7:00 PM**.
- **Billfish needs to be weighed-in the day it was caught.**

All Offshore boats must be inside the designated boundary (between Mansfield Marina and the Weigh Station) no later than **7:00 PM on Saturday**.

Offshore Rules – 2026

IGFA Rules apply unless otherwise stated herein.

Anglers may be assisted into the fighting chair or harness only. All other IGFA fighting rules remain in effect.

- All fish must be caught in accordance with applicable State, Federal, and NOAA regulations.
- No firearms, explosives, entangling devices, nets, long lines, electric reels, or other non-sporting devices are permitted.
- All fish must be presented in edible condition. This rule will be strictly enforced.
- No mutilated or frozen fish will be accepted.

Determining Winners

Highest total points determine the winner(s).

Tiebreakers:

1. For weighed fish — greatest length prevails.
2. For released billfish — earliest recorded official release time prevails.
3. If tied between weighed fish and release categories — the boat with the greater total weighed points prevails.

Single Heaviest Format

Each angler may weigh in only one (1) fish per eligible species per day.

The 2026 PMFT Offshore Division is **no longer a two-day combined weight event**.

Awards are based on the **single heaviest qualifying fish per eligible species per day**.

Angler Registration Requirements

- Anglers must be registered in the Offshore Division.
- The angler must declare the boat from which they will fish at registration.
- Fish must be weighed in from the vessel on which they were caught.
- Fish and/or anglers may not switch boats during the tournament.

Boats fishing from other ports may weigh in at Port Mansfield. Fish may be transported by land if caught from a properly registered vessel.

Anglers from other ports must be in the official weigh-in line prior to the 5:00 PM deadline.

Offshore Boats

Offshore boats may fish from ports other than Port Mansfield; however:

- The boat and all anglers must be registered prior to the start of fishing.
- Fish must be brought to the Port Mansfield Event Center weigh station by the official deadline.

Offshore Division Scoring

A) Blue Marlin

Scored as:

Weight × 3 points

Minimum qualifying length: **101 inches**

B) White Marlin & Sailfish

Scored as:

(Weight × 5 points) + 100 bonus points

Minimum qualifying lengths:

- White Marlin — 67 inches
- Sailfish — 64 inches

C) Other Eligible Offshore Species

Scored at one (1) point per pound:

- Blackfin Tuna
- Yellowfin Tuna
- Bonito
- Ling (Cobia)
- Wahoo
- Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi)
- King Mackerel

Not eligible for points:

- Jack Crevalle
- Barracuda
- Amberjack

Catch is limited to the single heaviest qualifying fish per eligible species per day.

Catch & Release Class

Anglers may elect to release billfish.

Points awarded for verified Catch & Release:

- Blue Marlin — 800 points
- White Marlin — 500 points
- Sailfish — 300 points

Release must be verified in accordance with Tournament procedures and IGFA standards.

Catch & Release Documentation Requirements

To qualify for Catch & Release points, clear photographic or video documentation from a digital camera must be presented at the weigh station.

All photos and videos must clearly identify:

- The fish
- The angler
- The official PMFT “Object of the Day”

All digital media must be submitted at the weigh station on the final day or at the time the fish is being scored.

Participants must provide any necessary cables, memory cards, or connections required to download and review images or video.

Failure to provide accessible media for verification will result in disqualification of the release.

Required Image & Video Standards

All images must:

- Clearly show the official PMFT Object of the Day
- Clearly identify the species
- Show date and time of catch
- Include signatures of the fishing party and crew (when required)

Mandatory Reporting Procedure

All billfish hook-ups and landings — whether boated or released — must be reported immediately to an official committee boat at the time of the event.

A verification number must be obtained from the committee boat to qualify for release points.

The time recorded and verified by the committee boat shall be considered the official time.

In the event of a tie, the angler who accumulates the highest release points at the earliest verified time will be declared the winner.

Species Identification Requirement

To be scored as a Blue Marlin, the photo or video must clearly demonstrate that the fish is a Blue Marlin.

If the species cannot be positively identified as a Blue Marlin, it will be scored as a White Marlin.

If the fish is identifiable only as a billfish but species cannot be determined, it will receive the minimum billfish release score of 300 points.

Continuous Video Requirement

Video documentation must include:

- The angler fighting the fish
- Clear display of the PMFT Object of the Day
- Positive identification of the billfish species
- The mate with leader in hand
- Wiring and safe release of the fish
- The fish swimming away under its own power

The recording **MUST** remain continuous during:

- Wiring
- Release
- Complete cockpit pans

Stopping or editing the recording during these sequences will result in disqualification of the release.

If the mate has the leader in hand and the hook pulls or the leader breaks, the fish may still qualify provided all other documentation requirements are satisfied.

Release Condition Rule

All billfish intended for Catch & Release scoring must remain in the water at all times.

Any photo or video showing the fish brought aboard or resting on the boat will result in disqualification of release points.

Final Authority

The decisions of the Weighmaster and Tournament Committee are final in all matters of scoring and eligibility.

The Tournament will be conducted in accordance with IGFA Rules unless otherwise specifically stated. Women and Junior division contestants may receive assistance transferring the rod from the rod holder to the fighting chair only.

Any mutilated fish will be disqualified.

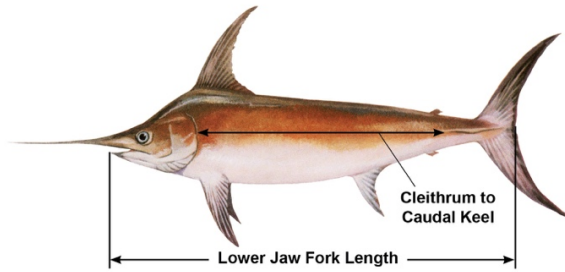
Minimum Length Requirements

All billfish must be measured along the side from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail.

Minimum lengths for eligibility:

- Blue Marlin — 101 inches
- White Marlin — 67 inches
- Sailfish — 64 inches

Failure to meet minimum length requirements will result in disqualification.



BAY DIVISION AWARDS

Open Division Bay Awards

(Boat – 1st & 2nd Place)

Artificial Only (Lures) Division Bay Awards

(Boat – 1st & 2nd Place)

Grand Champion Bay Boat

Awarded to the Boat/Team with the highest combined two-day weight within its registered division (Open or Artificial Only), based on all eligible species: Redfish, Trout and Flounder.

All 3 species must be weighed in each day to be eligible for Grand Champion Bay (Redfish, Trout and Flounder)

Women's Division – Grand Champion

Awarded to the female angler with the highest combined two-day weight based on eligible species (one (1) Redfish, one (1) Trout and one (1) Flounder) within her registered division.

Junior Division – Grand Champion

Awarded to the junior angler (16 & under) with the highest combined two-day weight based on eligible species one (1) Redfish, one (1) Trout and one (1) Flounder) within their registered division.

KAYAK AWARDS

(1st & 2nd Place Only)

Grand Champion Kayak

Awarded to the angler with the highest combined weight. Must weigh one (1) Speckled Trout, one (1) Redfish, and one (1) Flounder during the two days of fishing to qualify.

OFFSHORE AWARDS

(Adults & Juniors – 1st & 2nd Place)

NO SHARKS ELIGIBLE

Trophies Awarded for the Following Species:

- Dolphin (Mahi-Mahi)
- Blue Marlin
- Blackfin Tuna
- White Marlin
- Bonito
- Sailfish
- Wahoo
- Yellowfin Tuna
- King Mackerel
- Ling (Cobia)
- Red Snapper

Released Billfish Award

Awarded to the contestant accumulating the highest verified Catch & Release points.
Release points count toward Offshore Grand Champion.

Grand Champion Offshore

Awarded to the contestant with the highest total accumulated points across all eligible Offshore species, including release points.

PERPETUAL AWARDS

Terry Neal Perpetual Award

(Biggest Speckled Trout – *Lures Only* – Catch, Video & Release)

Any registered angler wishing to compete must attend the mandatory Captain's Meeting on **Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM** to:

- Have their Check-It Stick inspected and approved
- Receive their official PMFT token

The token must appear clearly in all photo/video documentation.

The Speckled Trout must be measured properly on the approved Check-It Stick and safely released on video.

Photo/video must clearly show:

- Fish length
- Token
- Date & time

Tie-breaker: Phone time stamp.

All measurements must comply with current TPWD regulations.

Tackle Box Tom Floyd Junior Perpetual Award

(Biggest Speckled Trout – *Lures Only* – Catch, Video & Release)

Same rules and requirements as the Terry Neal Award.

Open to registered **Junior anglers only**.

Mandatory Captain's Meeting attendance required on **Thursday, July 23, 2026, at 7:00 PM** for:

- Check-It Stick approval
- Official token distribution

Tie-breaker: Phone time stamp.

James "Jim" Rowland Perpetual Award

(Biggest Flounder – Lures or Bait)

Open to any registered angler.

Mandatory Captain's Meeting attendance required.

Awarded to the angler weighing in the single heaviest Flounder during the tournament.

Flounder may be weighed dead or alive.

NEW Jeff Johnson Junior Grand Champion OFFSHORE Perpetual Award

Awarded to the contestant with the highest total accumulated points across all eligible Offshore species, including release points.

Awarded to a junior angler (16 & under)

OVERALL GRAND CHAMPION AWARDS

- Grand Champion Offshore
- Grand Champion Bay (artificial and open division)
- Grand Champion Lures Only

GENERAL LIABILITY & ASSUMPTION OF RISK

Participation in the Port Mansfield Fishing Tournament (PMFT) is voluntary.

All participants acknowledge that fishing, boating, offshore travel, and related activities involve inherent risks including, but not limited to:

- Severe weather
- Rough seas
- Equipment failure
- Marine hazards
- Accidental injury or death

By registering and participating in PMFT, each angler, captain, crew member, parent/guardian (for minors), and guest:

1. Assumes all risks associated with participation.
2. Agrees that the decision to fish or remain in port is solely the responsibility of the captain and crew.
3. Releases and holds harmless the Port Mansfield Fishing Tournament, the Port Mansfield Chamber of Commerce, its Board of Directors, officers, employees, volunteers, sponsors, weighmasters, biologists, committee boats, and affiliates from any and all liability, claims, demands, damages, or causes of action arising out of participation in the Tournament.
4. Agrees that all decisions of the Tournament Board and officials are final.
5. Acknowledges that rule violations, fraudulent activity, or unsportsmanlike conduct may result in disqualification and forfeiture of prizes.

Parents or legal guardians of minor participants expressly assume all risks on behalf of the minor and agree to these terms.

The Tournament reserves the right to refuse entry, revoke participation, or disqualify any participant at its sole discretion in order to protect the integrity and safety of the event.

PLEASE OBSERVE THE "NO WAKE" ZONE IN THE HARBOR

Willacy County Navigation District (956) 944-2325

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James Dunks, Tournament Director

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