



60th Anniversary Cairns Black Marlin Tournament
21 - 26 September 2026

Tournament Rules

The tournament is: Leader must be in hand at time of release. Tagging is optional, no additional points will be allotted to tagged fish. Only non-offset circle hooks may be used for ALL bait.

For competitive events, omnidirectional sonar will not be allowed during official fishing hours (including prior to official fishing hours each day), but may be used after hours for safe passage if required.

[IGFA Rules and Equipment Regulations apply.](#)

(Download at link).

Sailpast

All boats must participate in the sailpast at 0700 hours on Tuesday morning, 22 September 2026, proceeding past the Cairns Marlin Marina in single file as outlined at the briefing.

Fishing Area

The fishing area is east of the Great Barrier Reef, between the southern end of #6 Ribbon Reef and the southern end of Jenny Louise Shoal Reef. (Be aware of Green Zone rules/regulations.)

Line Class

Heavy tackle 37kg and 60kg only, conforming to IGFA rules.

Scoring

No line class point score. Leader in hand at time of release counts as one [1] fish. Most fish released wins. In the case of a tie, the team catching the most fish first on countback wins.

Registration requires must be completed online via the official tournament app gateway (Snap Events). All billfish must be released with a photograph of the release uploaded via the official app. Only marlin (blue, black, striped) count toward point score.

Anglers

Maximum 4 anglers per team.

Vessels

Teams to arrange their own boats and charter fees. Boats must be seaworthy and have minimum \$10,000,000.00 public liability insurance. Completion of registration constitutes confirmation that the vessel has a valid and current public liability Certificate of Currency.

In case of bad weather, the Cairns Professional Game Fishing Association tournament committee will make the decision to cancel or postpone the whole or any day of the event. The decision will be final. It is the responsibility of the boat skipper and team to make individual decisions regarding the safety of their vessel and the people on board at any time during the tournament. Individual insurance policies must be adhered to regarding weather limits.

Compulsory Attendance

Boat Skipper and Team Captain MUST attend the registration and welcome reception/ briefing. All boats must be present at or adjacent to the Cairns Marlin Marina before the sailpast. Winning boats may have their tackle inspected by the tournament judges.

Return to Port

All vessels and anglers must return to the Cairns Marlin Marina, Yorkey's Knob or Bluewater by 2000 Friday, 25 September to qualify for prizes. Skippers must advise tournament base upon return before 2000 hours.

Judging & Protests

Tournament judges will appointed by the committee. Protests must be submitted in writing and in the hands of judges by 2000 hrs Friday 25 Sept. The judges' decision is final.

Fishing Times

Fishing times Tuesday to Thursday will be 1030–1730 hrs. Friday will be 0930–1600 hrs. At cease fishing on Tuesday to Thursday boats that are still hooked up may continue to fight

the fish until a result is confirmed. On Friday, September 25 all boats must return to port by 2000 hours.

All hookups, releases and lost fish must be reported as soon as possible to Tournament Base and acknowledged.

Score sheets and tournament app photographs must be handed in/uploaded to judges at the Marlin Marina by 2000 hours, Sept 25 to qualify for prizes.

Radio Skeds

Radio skeds will be conducted on VHF Channel 81 at 1205, 1405, 1705 hrs Tuesday to Thursday and on Friday at 1205, 1405, 1605 hrs. Captains must report Persons onboard (POB) and location. At the final sked of the day advise location staying overnight ie. anchorage or returning to port.

VHF channel 23 in the Cooktown area may be used for relays if required. Mobile phones and Satphones must be used if radio comms cannot be established. Any phoned in sked information will be relayed to all participants on the radio. Failure to contact base on two successive skeds will result in disqualification of the days results.

Risk

Participants acknowledge that at sea events carry inherent risks. Participants acknowledge and agree that any decision to proceed to sea to participate in the tournament and the risk in that decision at all times rests with the participants. The committee or judges will not be held responsible for the actions of participants travelling to or exiting any port, or at sea, and the participants release and discharge the committee and judges from all and any liability whatsoever in this regard. By submitting an entry, participants acknowledge and agree to this Release and Discharge.

Cancellation of Tournament

The committee and judges reserve the right to cancel the tournament for any reason including for reasons of natural disasters, inclement weather, war, pandemics or other act of god events or events beyond their control and their decision shall be final and binding on the participants.

In the event the tournament is cancelled for any reason then the committee and judges will look to provide a pro-rata refund of application fees, less administration costs and other non-revocable expenses as determined by the committee and judges in their sole discretion.

All anglers and crew should comply with the [CPGFA Code of Practice](#) and ethical angling.