



GOLDEN MEADOW-FOURCHON TARPON RODEO 2026 RULES AND REGULATIONS

HOOK & LINE DIVISIONS

1. The registration fee is \$35 for Adults and Children. You must register prior to entering the fishing competition. Late registrants will have date and time of ticket sale written on their ticket stub. They will not be able to enter a fish before a period registration. When the angler is not present, fish must be tagged with name and ticket registration number. Ticket sales close at 12:00 p.m. on Saturday, July 4. Anglers must clearly print their names on their rodeo tickets for correct spelling and use on the Leader Board.
2. Each fish must be obtained by the respective tackle in its category (Hook & Line, Spearfish, and Kayak) to be eligible for competition.
3. Fishing area will extend to all Louisiana inside and coastal waters and; adjacent federal waters, which are accessible to all rodeo participants.
4. Fishing will begin at safe light on Thursday, July 2, and close at 5:00 pm on Saturday, July 4, 2026. Scales will be open as follows:

Friday, July 4 1:00 pm – 7:00 pm

Saturday, July 5 1:00 pm – 5:00 pm (Children's Division, 4:00 pm)

5. Weights of the fish shall be determined in pounds and ounces. Weighing devices shall be approved by the Judge. Fish shall not be weighed except in the presence of the weigh-master and the angler's registration ticket and number. Tarpons under 60 pounds will not be eligible.

When the angler is not present, all fish must be tagged with the angler's name and ticket registration number. Anglers are required to place tags on securely. Fish will not be considered unless properly tagged.

6. In the event of a tie, the first fish entered (based on weigh-in time) places.
7. The rodeo weigh-master is the supreme judge, and all decisions are final. He decides how many fish an angler can weigh. He is an employee of the Golden Meadow-Fourchon International Tarpon Rodeo and not a board member. He is a professional at his job and SHALL NOT be subject to any type of abuse.

8. Each fish may only be entered into one category with the exception of the Rat Red Stringer and Leopard Redfish categories.
9. The rules and regulations shall be available for examination by any qualified contestant.
10. Prizes will be awarded for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places in all categories (See exceptions for Leopard Redfish in the Kayak Division): Additionally, awards for an **OUTSTANDING FISHERMAN** in BIG GAME, SHORELINE, and INSHORE divisions will be presented.
11. **OUTSTANDING FISHERMAN** – This will be determined by the angler with the most points in a division. Anglers will be awarded 3 points for 1st place, 2 points for 2nd place and 1 point for 3rd place. In the case of a tie, total weight of fish that place in the respective Division will determine the tie breaker.
12. **BIG GAME TAG & RELEASE DIVISION** - Winner will be decided by points and awarded to the boat. Blue Marlin 500 points, White Marlin 200 points, Sailfish 150 points. Awards are given to the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place boats. An official tag and release card must be submitted to the weighmaster to receive tag and release points. Tie breakers will be determined by the date and time fish were released.
13. **TARPON TAG & RELEASE CATEGORY** - An official tag and release card must be submitted to the weighmaster to receive tag and release points. Tie breakers will be determined by the date and time fish were released.
14. **FISHING LICENSE** – All participants 16 years of age and older must possess a valid Louisiana fishing license unless otherwise exempt by age.
15. After 90 days, all unclaimed prizes will become the property of the Golden Meadow-Fourchon International Tarpon Rodeo.

ELIGIBLE FISH (HOOK & LINE)

BIG GAME DIVISION

Yellowfin Tuna
Wahoo
Dolphin
Blackfin Tuna
Swordfish

BIG GAME TAG & RELEASE DIVISION (Boat Award Only)

Blue Marlin
White Marlin
Sailfish

INSHORE DIVISION

Drum
Flounder
Gafftopsail (Saltwater Catfish)
Rat Red (under 27")
Rat Red Stringer (4 fish)
Sheepshead
Speckled Trout

SHORELINE / TAG & RELEASE DIVISION

Tarpon
Tarpon Tag & Release
Bonita
Cobia (Lemon Fish)
Grouper
Jack Crevalle
King Mackerel
Mangrove Snapper
Spanish Mackerel
Red Snapper

KAYAK DIVISION

NOTE: The following rules & regulations apply to the Kayak Division IN ADDITION TO those listed under Hook & Line.

1. **PADDLE / PEDAL-CRAFT ONLY** - No trolling motors, sails, gas engines, “mother ships,” etc. Tandem kayaks, canoes, pirogues, paddleboards are allowed. A participant may wade fish or fish from the bank as long as they remain within 100’ of their LAUNCHED paddle craft. With regard to this rule, “launched” means your kayak is off of your vehicle/trailer and that a portion of the paddlecraft is in fishable waters (not a parking lot puddle).
2. **WATER COURTESY / ENCROACHMENT** - Apply the golden rule. Do your best not to disturb someone else’s fishing area by encroachment, noise, etc. If you encounter another angler in a narrow ingress/egress area, as quietly as you can, ask which side he or she would like you to cross. Generally, a good rule of thumb is that if you can both cast to a common point you have encroached.
3. **CAJUN SLAM** – This is comprised of (1) Rat Red, (1) Speckled Trout, and (1) Flounder. The heaviest combined weight determines position. ALL 3 FISH STRINGERS WILL TRUMP 2 FISH STRINGERS.
4. Each fish may only be entered into one category within the Kayak Division with the exception of the Leopard Redfish Category. Redfish may also be entered into the Shoreline Division under the Redfish Stringer Category.
5. First, second, and third places only will be awarded for each eligible species with the exception of the LEOPARD REDFISH (Redfish with most spots) and OUTSTANDING KAYAK FISHERMAN.
6. **OUTSTANDING KAYAK FISHERMAN** – OUTSTANDING KAYAK FISHERMAN – This will be determined by the angler with the most points in a division. Anglers will be awarded 3 points for 1st place, 2 points for 2nd place and 1 point for 3rd place (no points awarded for Leopard Redfish). In the case of a tie, the total weight of fish that place will determine the tie breaker.

ELIGIBLE FISH (KAYAK)

Cajun Slam
Rat Red

Speckled Trout
Leopard Redfish (most spots)

SPEARFISHING DIVISION

NOTE: The following rules & regulations apply to the Scuba Diving Division IN ADDITION TO those listed under Hook & Line.

1. Diving is limited to Louisiana and the Gulf of Mexico.
2. All fish must be speared by the diver while submerged and must be brought to the boat by the diver who speared it. Fish first caught by means other than a spear gun are not eligible.
3. All fish are subject to autopsy. Any attempt to defraud or cheat in the rodeo disqualifies the offender and his entries.
4. All types of spear guns are allowed except those with free spears or powered by explosive means. A line either to the gun or to the diver will attach all spears. No power heads allowed to be used at any time during the rodeo.
5. All spear guns will be loaded and unloaded in the water.
6. Any infraction will result in immediate disqualification of all fish entered by the offender.
7. No ties considered. All entries must exceed the weight of the earlier fish of that category.
8. A **King Spearfisher Trophy** will be awarded to the diver with the most points earned in the rodeo by winning the first, second, and third places in the spear fishing competition. In the event of a tie, total weight of fish that place will determine the tie breaker.

Point System: First place 3 points, second place 2 points, and third place 1 point.

9. A **Team Trophy** will be awarded to the diving club with the most points accumulated in the rodeo according to the above system.
10. ALL DECISIONS OF THE WEIGH-MASTER ARE FINAL AND ARE NOT TO BE TAKEN UP WITH OFFICIALS OF THE RODEO.

All fish in the Spearfishing Division must be weighed by 5:00 pm on the last day of the rodeo.
NO EXCEPTIONS.

ELIGIBLE FISH (SCUBA DIVING)

Barracuda
Cobia (Lemon Fish)
Grouper
Jack Cravalle

Mangrove Snapper
Sheepshead
Red Snapper

CHILDREN'S DIVISION

1. All fish will be registered at the official weigh station. Fish may be presented to the weigh master until 7:00 pm, except on the final day. All fish must be entered by 4:00 pm on Saturday, July 4, 2026.
2. Children 12 and under.
3. Registration fee is \$35. Children must follow the adult hook and line regulations.
4. In general, children must follow the adult hook and line rules and regulations with the following exceptions: eligible fish will be solely those listed in the Inshore Division of Adult hook and line, not counting the Bull Red and Rat Red Stringer.
5. Each fish may only be entered into one category with the exception of the Rat Red Category. These fish may also be entered into the Leopard Redfish Category.
6. First, second, and third places only will be awarded for each eligible species.
7. An **Outstanding Fisherman and Fisherette** will be awarded in this division. Awards are presented at approximately 7:30 pm preceding the adult award presentations.

ELIGIBLE FISH (CHILDREN)

Drum
Flounder
Gafftopsail (Saltwater Catfish)
Rat Red

Sheepshead
Speckled Trout
Leopard Redfish (Most Spots)