



FORT MYERS BEACH TARPON HUNTERS CLUB

CLUB RULES and GUIDELINES

Revised Rules 9 & 11. May 2021

- 1/ The Tarpon Hunters Club of Fort Myers Beach season is from January 1st through the last scheduled hunt (normally in October). Dues are to be paid by January 1st for fish to count. A member is considered delinquent after March 15th and any members failing to submit dues by that date will automatically forfeit their active membership. Fish only count for awards from January 1st to 12 midnight of the last scheduled hunt date.
- 2/ All members of the Tarpon Club are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsman or sportswoman like manner. Any member considered by the Club Board not doing so, may have their membership revoked.
- 3/ To qualify for a club family membership, all members must live at the same postal address.
- 4/ Fishing boundaries for the club are as follows:
Southern boundary is Wiggins Pass. East, on the Caloosahatchee River to the Franklin Locks.
North, to the Lee County line. Offshore lines are 240 degrees from Wiggins Pass and 270 degrees from the north Lee County line as far out as you care to fish.
The fishing areas include all of Cayo Costa, Johnson Shoals, Boca Grande Pass and approx. two thirds of Gasparilla Island. There is a water tower on Gasparilla Island that is inside the boundary by about one mile, but will serve as a good visual aid as to our northern boundary.
- 5/ The Tarpon Hunters Club will use the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) rules as a general guideline for official catches and releases.
- 6/ For conventional tackle (above 20lb line class) a Tarpon must weigh 50 lbs. minimum to be eligible, and must be hooked and fought by one person. No other person may touch the rod, reel or line after the fish is hooked or during the battle. Boat rod holders may be used. Stainless steel hooks must not be used. Our club recommends the use of "circle" hooks.
- 7/ A "released" Tarpon is one that the leader had been touched by the angler or another person, not necessarily a club member. Alternatively, the leader knot or swivel, may be wound up to **touch the tip** of the rod. After either of these actions, the Tarpon is considered "released". Upon a "release" the rod may be passed to other anglers to fight the Tarpon until the fish is detached. The time of "release" should be noted for our clubs records.
- 8/ Leader length may be no longer that 8 ft. for line class above 20 lbs.
- 9/ Hunts: - Tarpon caught must be reported by the hunt deadline to be eligible for hunt prizes.
1 Day Hunt, Midnight to Midnight. 2 or 3 Day Hunt, Midnight of the first day through 4pm of the last day (weigh-in at dock)
Hook-ups and "releases" must be reported as they occur by texting/phoning the current weigh-master.

Note: - Anglers with a “released” Tarpon during a 2 or 3 day hunt must be present at the weigh-in, on the dock by 4 pm latest - for the fish to count for that hunt.

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- 10/ Tarpon “released” at anytime during the season count towards your total for the year. Tarpon hooked prior to the starting time of a hunt are not eligible for the hunt, but qualify for a “release” for the year. Tarpon are not eligible for your yearly total, if “released” during an official club function, for example a club meeting, club picnic etc, or between 4 & 5pm during a weigh-in at the dock after a two or three day hunt.
- 11/ There are three divisions per hunt, unlimited, light tackle and fly. There will be awards for 1st and 2nd Tarpon “released”. No ties in regards to hunt winners, time of “release” always takes precedence.
- 12/ All “releases”: - The weigh-master must be notified within 24 hours of a “release” to count for that year. Include name of Angler, time of release, approximate weight of fish, line weight, bait used, location of hook up, and boat Captain’s name.
- 13/ A “Junior member” is a member who is 16 yrs. old or younger on or before the 1st of January and is then considered a Junior member for the rest of that season.
- 14/ A “Rookie member” is a member who has never caught a legal Tarpon with the club. The member will be considered a Rookie for the remainder of the season of their first club release.
- 15/ During a Couples hunt, the lady must catch the 1st fish.
- 16/ Any fish caught with a paid Charter Captain will not count as a club release.
- 17/ A club member may belong to more than one Tarpon club, but “releases” will qualify for one organization only. That club must be specified on our membership application each year.
- 18/ Any ties that occur for all hunts or annual awards will be decided by the time of first fish “release”.

Note: - Tarpon weight may be estimated by using the MirrOlure Tarpon weight computer.
A copy of this table can be supplied by the club.

Light Tackle Division Regulations (20lb. Line class & under)

- L/1 Club will recognize 4 lb.(2kg.), 8 lb.(4kg.), 12 lb.(6kg.), 16 lb.(8kg.), and 20lb.(10kg.) line classes
An information sheet is available from the club detailing leader lengths and specifications.
- L/2 Any world record fish caught by a club member will get a special trophy at the Awards Banquet at the end of that season.
- L/3 4lb. Line class: - Tarpon must be 36 inches long to be legal. (To the "V" of the tail), not 50 lbs. as for conventional line classes.
- L/4 A Sportsman trophy will be presented to a member with the most “releases” on 12 lb. line or less.
- L/5 A trophy will be given to any club member who catches 3 or more Tarpon on 3 different line classes in one season. (This includes unlimited and fly rod classes). Called the “Tarpon Grand Slam Award”
- L/6 Awards will be given for first and second place to club members with the most releases on fly rod (any leader length allowed) and each line class, at the annual Awards Banquet.