

BAC FISHING RULES

Background

Historically we have made reference to the old NFSA fishing rules with amendments that we have introduced from time to time that are specific to BAC.

With the demise of the NFSA, a new body called the Angling Trust has taken over and their rules are available on their web site but these cover all aspects of both shore & boat angling and include AT sponsored festival rules. In order to have a set of rules aimed primarily at boat angling, being our main area of interest, it was agreed to formalise a set of rules that are specific to BAC based on the AT rules, where applicable, and on those amendments or new rules introduced previously by BAC.

It is believed that there is nothing in the rules set out below that has not previously been adopted by BAC.

These rules were approved for adoption by committee at the meeting held on 7th June 2011
Amendment re prize money approved by committee at the meeting held on 2nd October 2012 and prizes further amended by committee meeting on 4th Dec 2012 resulting from member feedback.

Amended August 2016 to include revision to existing limitations re eligibility of new members to submit specimen fish claims along with existing members paying their membership after 1st November. Dec 2016: change to prize money plus reverted to 1 rod & 3 hook rule for competitions thus cancelling the experimental change initially adopted for the 2015/6 season.

Eligibility to submit specimen fish claims or accrue championship points.

New members may not submit any specimen fish claims for fish caught less than 24 hours after their membership application is approved, nor may they accrue championship points for 24 hours after.

In the unlikely event of a new member being declined within the standard 28 day probationary period, any specimen fish submission from them or championship points accrued shall be null & void.

In exceptional circumstances, at least two senior club officers (from Chairman, vice Chairman, Secretary, Competition Secretary & Treasurer) may give provisional approval for a new applicant, prior to the next committee meeting, conditional on the applicable fee having been received. Under this specific provision, provided the application & fee is received prior to commencing a fishing session that results in a specimen fish claim or entitlement to championship points, the 24 hour restriction will not apply

Under normal circumstances, the 24 hour period will start from that provisional approval or from the resulting receipt of fee whichever is latest. The full new member approval process must additionally still be followed & the existing 28 day probationary period will remain commencing as from approval at the full committee meeting.

New members may otherwise compete in competitions as guests during the 24 hour restriction period.

Existing members who pay their new season membership fee after 1st November may not, except as provided for below, submit any specimen fish claims for fish caught less than 24 hours after the new season fee has been received by a committee member, nor may they accrue championship points for 24 hours after the new season fee has been received by a committee member. The only exception to this being when a senior committee member (Chairman, vice Chairman, Secretary, Competition Secretary or Treasurer) receive payment prior to commencement of a fishing session that results in a specimen fish claim or entitlement to championship points.

Existing members having paid after 1st November for the new season may otherwise compete in competitions as guests during the 24 hour restriction period.

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Requirements for weighing (BAC rules)

The weight of Tope plus Porbeagle, Thresher and Blue sharks (plus any other species of large shark) may be estimated with the fish still in the water. (Tope must not be brought ashore.)

All other specimen fish claims must have had the fish weighed on scales that satisfy at least one of the following conditions:

- A) Scales provided by BAC within the BAC compound.
- B) Scales that have a current (no more than 12 months old) certificate of accuracy issued by an approved certification agency with an accuracy of ½ oz or better.
- C) Scales that have been approved for accuracy by the BAC competition secretary within the previous 12 months. If these scales have an accuracy that is worse than ½ oz then the weight must be recorded rounded down to the nearest value equivalent to the accuracy of the scale.

Weighed Onboard

We currently have monthly specimen awards for specimens that have been **“weighed onboard”**, or estimated (in the case of those species listed above where estimating is permissible). This is in addition to & separate from, the monthly awards for fish weighed on shore.

All legal species are eligible for the **“weighed onboard”** monthly awards. This includes Tope & Undulate Rays which are not allowed to be brought ashore but excludes both species of Shad.

The above requirements B) & C) for scales DO apply to **“weighed onboard”** submissions.

Fish **“weighed onboard”** or estimated are not eligible for main trophies except for Bullhuss, Spurdog, Smoothounds (all), Skates & Rays (all), Conger, Bass (recently added to list), Tope, Porbeagle, Thresher and Blue sharks (plus any other species of large shark).

The only exception would be if a trophy for a species not in this list would not otherwise be won due to no weighed on shore submission then the competition secretary may use his discretion to allow it to be won by a **“weighed onboard”** submission.

Fish for which a **“weighed onboard”**/estimated claim is submitted, must be returned unharmed. If such a fish is subsequently retained & killed it must be weighed ashore subject to the constraints associated with weighed on shore submissions.

“weighed onboard” submissions do not currently require witness signatures but, as this could be open to abuse, this would be reviewed if it became apparent that there were problems.

The annual best specimen sweep

is only open to **weighed on shore** submissions due to the level of prize involved & the consequential increased risk of abuse.

Weighed On Shore

All specimens that are **weighed on shore** must have at least one witness to the weighing who must satisfy him/herself that the scales were correctly set to zero before the weighing & that all the details were correctly recorded.

In the event that a fish is a potential club record, the submission must be witnessed by two people one of which must be a committee member or an approved (by BAC) angling shop supervisor eg Alan Bravery of Scotties. It must be weighed on scales for which a current certificate of accuracy applies.

In the event of a potential Island or National record, additional constraints apply:-

Island records require the species to be identified by one of an approved list of fish identification officers. Ross Staplehurst is one such person.

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For a potential British record, the fish must be retained (preferably preserved frozen). Further advice should be obtained from the club or online (British Record Fish Committee).

<http://www.anglingtrust.net/page.asp?section=121>

Specimen Fish Claim Forms

Official BAC Claim Forms are normally provided in the BAC scales room but any written submission that includes all the information that the BAC official claim form requires would also be acceptable. Completed submissions must, within seven days of the capture, be either placed in the box provided in the BAC scales room or given to the Competition Secretary. BAC cannot normally accept delays due to passing a submission via a third party.

General Fishing Rules

Equipment

Ref AT Specimen award scheme rules:

- A) **Not more than two rods with not more than three single hooks between the two rods (of which two can form a pannel)**

or alternatively

- B) **two pannel mounted baits between the two rods may be used.**

In the latter case, only one pannel mounted bait is allowed on each rod (ie no additional hooks/bait on either rod) and so constructed that the measurement between the eyes of the two hooks do not exceed 20cm and both hooks are fixed in a single bait mass.

Spare rods may be assembled with a reel attached, line through the rings/rollers, attached to a line swivel equivalent. Reels must be operated by hand (subject to AT Rule G 5.1, Electric Reels); and reels designed to be cranked by both hands at the same time are prohibited.

The use of fishing poles is permitted but not handlines.

Spare baited traces are allowed and no more than three hooks may be attached to any trace.

A treble hook counts as one hook but no more than one treble hook in conjunction with no more than two single hooks may be used in a rig, with the exception of plug type spinning lures which are permissible when used alone & not in conjunction with a second lure or other hook.

Boat Vs Shore & area limits:

Ref AT rule G 1.8 : Catches from piers, harbour walls, breakwaters (including pontoons and marina pontoons) and shore, are all termed shore captures.

Ref BAC rules:

Captures from such venues but which are not accessible to all BAC members (other than through physical disability) are not acceptable.

Shore submissions are restricted to those captured from IW shores.

If an angler steps onto a boat moored alongside any such structure whilst playing a fish then the capture will be deemed a boat capture.

Whilst BAC puts no geographical limit offshore on boat captures, a limit does apply to the length of trip plus departure & return points. To be eligible, the boat must have left & returned to any Island port without calling into any other port that is not on the Island in between and the total duration of the period between leaving & final returning shall not exceed 48 hours.

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Ref AT rule G 4.7 Eligible Species.

Skate are classified scientifically as "round" fish and therefore they are barred from any class for "flat" fish.

Octopus, Crustaceans, Squid and Cuttlefish are ineligible.

However, the BAC may also bar the catching of other species of fish.

Monkfish (*Squatina squatina* aka Angel Shark), European Eel, Shad & Tope must be returned unharmed in all circumstances.

The Angling Trust recommend that Spurdog, Undulate Rays & Porbeagle should be returned and BAC recommend that Thresher & any other large shark species should be returned unharmed in all circumstances.

The Mako, Porbeagle, Thresher, Hammerhead and Blue Sharks are ineligible except in a Shark Competition; but if there is a special class for them in a competition, they can be estimated & returned for that class only. Mackerel are not accepted in competitions.

Ref AT rule G 5 Encouragement And Dispensation For The Disabled.

Ref AT rule G 5.1 Use of Electric Reels and Winches.

Electric reels and winches are not permitted unless dispensation is given by BAC to accommodate a disabled angler who otherwise would not be able to fish.

Ref AT rule G 5.3 Casting Assistance.

A competitor may cast for another angler who is deemed incapable of casting due to physical disability provided that such an arrangement is requested from BAC, and agreed, prior to the commencement of any competition.

Ref AT rule B 7. Assistance.

No other person may touch an angler's rod, reel or line after his fish is hooked or give any assistance to an angler which would be to the detriment of the fish except that another person(s) may land/gaff or net fish when it is brought within range & may also unhook it once inboard.

Fish may also be unhooked at the side of the boat provided the trace attached to the fish is held by the person unhooking.

Anglers may not rest their rods on the gunwales of the boat or other such structure whilst winding fish in.

Hooks may be baited by another person.

Ref AT rule B 8. Hooked Fish.

The deliberate foul hooking of fish is not permitted but accidental foul hooked fish are allowed.

In the event of fish being hooked (fair or foul) by two or more anglers or caught on lost traces that tangle with an angler's line, they shall not be eligible for weighing in.

Ref AT rule B 9 Undersized Fish.

It is each angler's responsibility to ensure all undersized fish are returned immediately to the water. Fish may be kept in water but any physical attempt to extend their length is not permitted & will lead to disqualification in competitions.

Ref AT rule B 10 & BAC rules Minimum Sizes.

The minimum size limits shown on the BAC web site shall apply. (Normally the same as AT sizes)

Should a legal minimum size become larger than that published by BAC then the legal limit takes precedence. No fish under 8 ozs will be considered for any BAC award, prize or record.

Specimen Fish Calculations

All calculations of relative percentage of club records shall be calculated from the club record that existed on the last day of the preceding season and shall not take account of any new record that may have been subsequently set in the current season.

If no previous record exists for the species submitted, the submission shall be considered as 100%.

Any further submissions for a previously unrecorded species that are also received in the same season shall also be recorded at 100% irrespective of whether or not they beat previous submissions.

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The largest submission in the season of such a previously unrecorded species shall, however, take absolute precedence over any smaller submission for that species for the purpose of awarding any applicable trophy, or prize.

In any "Open" competition, BAC may elect (with committee agreement) to vary the above & base any specimen prize on current published Isle of Wight boat records but this must be clearly stated in all documentation (posters, entry forms etc).

Competition Rules

Competitions are defined as a fixed duration event of (normally) less than 24 hrs as listed in the fixture list each season. Competition rules do not apply to annual trophies, fish of the month awards & specimen sweep. The Club's General fishing rules apply to these.

Normal club competitions are open to participation by non members but the club reserves the right to charge enhanced guest entry fees if it wishes.

Competitions specifically listed as being "Open" are subject to additional rules.

Whilst non-members competing in all types of competitions are eligible to win general prizes, only fully paid up BAC members may win BAC trophies & the BAC specimen sweep.

Fixture List

As long as the club year remains as ending on the last day of October, the competition secretary, having been elected at the AGM, shall prepare a list of suggested competitions and submit the list for approval by the committee ideally by the time of the committee meeting held at the beginning of January.

The various times proposed for each competition shall, especially for those over high tides, take into account the time (relative to high water) at which most participating boats would normally be able to get off and back on their moorings. Competitions shall not be unduly biased to favour larger boats on prime moorings. The gap between end of sign on & start fishing and also the gap between stop fishing & scales close must be selected so as not to unduly disadvantage boats of average speed.

The list shall contain competitions for the entire calendar year which will result in some competitions falling in the following club season.

A Copy of the competition list shall be supplied to each fully paid up member of BAC prior to the first competition after completion of all spring boat lifts.

Competition Entry

BAC reserves the right to refuse entry without explanation and shall in such a case return any entry fees that may have been paid.

Any angler found breaking the rules will be disqualified but the entry fee will not be refunded.

Anglers may sign on for normal club competitions either:

- A) in advance by contacting the competition secretary (providing that he is agreeable to this),
- B) signing on at the club in the normal way on the day prior to the start of the comp
- C) contacting the competition secretary by VHF radio or phone after the declared sign in time has finished but this must be done prior to the start time of the competition.

Signing on in advance or by vhf radio or phone is a commitment to pay the competition entry fee irrespective of whether or not the angler actually fishes it. The only exception is if the competition is subsequently cancelled. Any angler who signs on in any of these ways but fails to pay the entry fee is not permitted to participate in further competitions until the outstanding fee is paid.

Open competitions will have special entry requirements which will be advertised.

If an "Open" competition is postponed to a reserve date, entry fees will normally be automatically held over to the reserve date. If the open competition cannot be held at all, entry fees will be refunded but the club reserves the right to request proof of payment (eg entry form counterfoil stamped as paid.)

Minimum number of contestants

Ref BAC rules: a minimum of 10 contestants must participate for the competition to carry championship points and for the award of any trophy allocated specifically for that competition.

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Cancellation or Amendment of Competitions

Competitions may only normally be cancelled for reasons of unsafe weather conditions which may include the harbour being frozen over. When deciding if it is safe to go ahead with a competition in marginal conditions, consideration must be given as to what would be considered unsafe for the average size of boat likely to be competing in that particular competition.

Cancellation may only be done no earlier than the day previous to the competition day for strong wind forecasts unless extreme circumstances exist when, as a minimum, the chairman's permission must be obtained.

Any cancellation will normally be indicated, as soon as practical, on a sign at the club house and also indicated on the club web site.

Once a competition is officially declared as cancelled it may not be reinstated but it is permissible for members to arrange a private competition between themselves in lieu but no championship points can be awarded neither can any trophy be won that was specifically for the cancelled competition.

The only exception to this shall be any open competition that cannot be fished on its listed alternative date & which is agreed in committee to be held on a further alternative date not previously published.

Target species listed for individual competitions shall not normally be changed except for special circumstances such as a Cod ban being introduced.

If a competition is listed as being for species other than flatfish, it may not be changed to a flatfish competition unless agreed by committee plus the membership are given a minimum of two weeks notice to allow for bait in the form of worms to be arranged.

Competition Times

Published competition times are start & finish actual fishing times. There is no restriction on when a competitor can leave harbour.

Competitors must have returned & recorded their catch by the published scales closed time for their catch to count.

Any competitor who chooses to fish before the start of the competition must retrieve their line immediately prior to the start of the competition. No fish shall count until after the first time the competitor has lowered their line after the competition start time.

All competitors shall retrieve their lines at the end of the competition. If a competitor chooses to leave their line in the water at the end of the competition, no fish shall count if found to be hooked on subsequent retrieval.

Special Rules for Equipment in competitions. Ref AT rules B 2 & B 3

Club general fishing rules apply but with the additional constraint that an angler may use only one rod at the same time, with reel and running line and no more than three hooks.

For the 2015/6 season the additional constraint in the previous sentence did not apply but has been reverted to for the 2016/7 season ie now back to 1 rod & 3 hooks max .

Spare rods may be assembled with a reel attached, line through the rings/rollers, attached to a line swivel equivalent. Reels must be operated by hand (subject to Rule G 5.1, Electric Reels); and reels designed to be cranked by both hands at the same time are prohibited. The use of a fishing pole is permitted but not a handline.

Ref AT rule B 10. Minimum Sizes.

BAC rule: Unless specified otherwise at the start of a competition, size limits will not apply to Catch & release competitions for most caught of a single species.

BAC rule: Unless specified otherwise at the start of a competition, size limits will not apply to Catch & release competitions: Points per different species.

BAC Rule: Unless specified otherwise at the start of a competition, the minimum size limits shown on the BAC web site shall apply to Weigh Ashore Competitions.

Fish below the minimum sizes shall not be brought to the scales. It is each angler's responsibility to ensure all fish brought to the scales are sizeable. BAC may provide a Master Measure and adjudicator for anglers to have their catch checked, at the anglers request, by BAC prior to presenting the fish to the scales, however, the onus of responsibility is on the angler.

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Each undersized fish brought to the scales will result in an 8 oz deduction from the overall bag weight & may result in disqualification.

Mackerel

Mackerel are not accepted in competitions.

Best Specimen in Competitions Annual Trophy.

If a particular competition is listed as being for a particular species or a restricted list of species, then only specimens of these species shall be eligible for this trophy from such a competition.

Ref AT rule B 14. Loss or Damage.

BAC shall not be held responsible for any loss, accident or damage occasioned to any member, competitor, official or member of the public.

Ref BAC rules:

It is the responsibility of each individual to determine for himself if conditions are forecast to be safe for putting to sea in any particular boat. Consequences of such decisions rest entirely with the individual.

It is also the individual's responsibility to ensure that the boat is seaworthy & carries appropriate safety equipment.

Ref AT rule B 15. Litter.

Any angler found leaving litter or throwing litter into the sea during or after the competition will be disqualified.

Prizes

Entrance Fee £5.00

Starting from comp on **31st Dec 2016:**

Each ordinary club comp **where fish are returned to the scales:**

Less than 10 entrants (no championship points) First prize = gross entry fees.

10 or more entrants: **a guaranteed first prize of £50.**

Any additional entry fees received will be used to provide a second prize up to a maximum of £30 (would require a total of 16 entrants).

Any further surplus entry fees will be used to provide a third prize up to a maximum of £20 (would require a total of 20 entrants).

Any further surplus to be put towards the considerable costs of annual trophy engraving.

No cash prizes will be given for other comps. where fish are not returned to the scales.

An optional sweep for these comps may be arranged but limited to the best specimen of a stated species brought ashore where that species is considered a prime eating species.

Cash prizes for club champion & pairs no longer apply.

Points

Championship Points awarded for the first 10 positions in any comp starting at 10 for first down to 1 for tenth plus 1 for anyone weighing in & 1 for everyone entering.

Grievances relating to competitions

Should a competitor disagree with the declared result of a competition, or have any other grievance relating to the competition, he must immediately raise his concern with the competition secretary at the time. Only in exceptional circumstances will a complaint be considered within the seven days after the competition & this must be put in writing to the committee for consideration. Leaving before the declaration of the result would not normally constitute an exceptional circumstance.

Ref AT rule B 18. Fair Play.

As well as the above rules, the rules of fair play will apply. Competitors must conduct themselves in a manner within the spirit of the sport.

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Competition Secretary additional Responsibilities

Unless an assistant competition secretary is officially appointed for the purpose, the competition secretary is required to carry out the following duties in addition to running competitions: -

- A) Record & retain all specimen fish submissions.
- B) At the end of the club year, determine the winners of all trophies, awards etc. & pass this information to the cup custodian to allow any engraving of trophies to be done.
- C) Support the chairman/president in presenting the trophies at the appropriate event.
- D) As far as is reasonable, maintain current the specimen board & championship points list within the clubhouse & forward updates to these to the Publicity Officer.
- E) In the event of standing down from the post, transfer all information to the succeeding competition secretary in an orderly manner