

# **Simrad / Navico / Meridian Tackle**

## **31st Australian Bluefin Tuna**

### **Championship**

#### **2026**



**Incorporating**  
**Australian International Tuna Tournament ( note\*\*)**  
**&**  
**The Smallfry & Junior Championships (note#)**

**Eaglehawk Neck, Tasmania,**  
**Friday 24<sup>th</sup> & Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2026**  
**CONDUCTED BY THE TUNA CLUB OF TASMANIA INC.**

### **CONTEST SCHEDULE**

TGFA Sanctioned Contest

#### **BRIEFING: Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2026**

Contest briefing at the Clubrooms (Pirates Bay Jetty) commencing 7:00pm.  
 A representative from each team "must" attend the briefing, at which time the Contest Entry Pack will be provided.  
 Club rooms will be open at 5:00pm to 10:30pm for refreshments and BBQ.  
 Calcutta 8:30pm approx.

#### **DAY 1: Friday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

Sail Past in Pirates Bay 7:00am for a 7:30am start (No Boats to leave Pirates Bay until Official Start called by the President)  
 Fishing Commences from conclusion of Sail Past until 3:30pm.  
 Weigh-in from 4:15pm until 5:00pm.  
 BBQ & refreshments at the Club rooms from approx. 3:00pm.  
 Luck Angler Draw 5.00pm (angler must be present to receive the award)

#### **DAY 2: Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2026**

Fishing Commences from 7:00am until 12:00pm.  
 Weigh-in from 12:45pm until 1:30pm.  
 Refreshments available at the Clubrooms from 12:00pm  
 Contest Dinner – 6:00pm , for a 7:00pm start (Note\*)

**Note\*** The Contest Dinner – will be held at the **Taranna Community Centre, Gourlay St Taranna**, at a cost of \$40.00 per head & \$20.00 per child 12 years & under. Those wishing to attend must book and numbers are restricted at the venue to 200 people. Numbers wishing to attend must be on the Entry Form and include payment with their Contest Entry Fee. Reservations cut off at 200, attendees will be made on a first in basis.  
**Late dinner bookings will not be accepted unless we have not exceeded our limit of 200 guests .**

**Note\*\*** The Inaugural Australian International Tuna Tournament (AITT) will be run in conjunction with the Australian Bluefin Tuna Championship (ABTC)

The AITT is a Game Fishing Association (GFAA) tag and release only tournament conducted under GFAA rules in a similar format as is the AIBT

Entry to the AITT is an additional \$25 per Boat/Team if also entered in the ABTC

Entry to the AITT as a stand-alone only tournament is \$100 per Boat/Team

AITT prizes and GFAA trophies awarded for: Highest Points Score Team, Highest Points Adult, Highest Points Score Junior and Highest Points Score Small Fry.

(It is highly recommended that teams enter both tournaments)

**Note # Small Fry Champion Trophy and Junior Champion Trophy** : Awarded annually for the highest aggregate points scored included all game fish species caught by a small fry / junior angler during the designated TGFA sanctioned competition each season.

### **CONTEST PRIZE CATEGORIES:**

please note that only one prize will be awarded to each fish

- Major Prize – Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna of the Contest\*
- Highest Tag and Release Point Score Team of the Contest
- Highest Point Score Team of the Contest
- Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna caught by an Adult Male Angler
- Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna caught by an Adult Female Angler
- Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna caught by a Junior Angler
- Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna caught by a Small Fry Angler
- Highest Point Score Southern Bluefin Tuna by an Adult Male Angler
- Highest Point Score Southern Bluefin Tuna by an Adult Female Angler
- Highest Point Score Southern Bluefin Tuna by a Junior Angler
- Highest Point Score Southern Bluefin Tuna by a Small Fry Angler
- Heaviest Billfish of the Contest\*\*
- Heaviest Shark of the Contest\*\*\*
- Skippers Award
- Unlucky Angler Awards
- Plus, some additional day one , day two prizes.

\*The prizes for the Heaviest Tuna of the Contest will be awarded to the Heaviest Southern Bluefin Tuna captured. If no Southern Bluefin Tuna are captured, then the prize will go to the Heaviest Yellowfin Tuna captured. If No Yellowfin Tuna are captured, the prize will go to the Heaviest Albacore Tuna.

**All fish must meet or exceed line class.**

\*\*\* The Billfish prize will not transfer to another category if unclaimed.

\*\*\*\* The Heaviest Shark prize will not transfer to another category if unclaimed.

## CONTEST RULES

### Authority :

The Contest is conducted by the Tuna Club of Tasmania Incorporated.

### Contest/Weather Committee

The Contest/Weather Committee consists of: Jeremy Cashion , Shane Kube , Steve Lichtendonk , Stuart Nichols & Robin Banks (subject to change).

### Entries

One official Entry Form per Team must be in the hands of the Secretary of the Tuna Club of Tasmania Incorporated, Post Office Box 507 Sandy Bay 7006 or info@tunacluboftasmania.asn.au by COB **Friday the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026**.

**ABTC Contest Entry Fee: \$ 80.00 Per Adult Angler**

**ABTC Contest Entry Fee : \$ 30.00 Per U 16 Junior / U 11 Small Fry Angler – as at 24/04/2026**

**AITT Contest Entry Fee : \$ 25.00 per Boat / Team if also entered in the ABTC**

**AITT Contest Entry Fee : \$ 100.00 per Boat / Team if not entered in the ABTC**

**Dinner \$ 40.00 per person & \$ 20.00 per child 12 years and under**

**EFT Payments - Bendigo Banks – BSB : 633-000 – Account No : 219 661 782**

**Please Make Reference to “Your Boat Name” - Please use EFT Record as your official Receipt**

**Late Entry Fee : All entries will be accepted up until COB on 17<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at the above fees . Late entries will only be accepted if a 50 Boat / Team fleet has not been exceeded and if accepted will incur a \$200 late fee .**

### Event Cancellation:

If the entire event is cancelled due to bad weather no refunds will be given (due to expenditure already incurred by the club). Prizes remain the property of the Owners/Sponsors of the Contest. There will be no disputes in relation to this process

### Team and Angler Qualifications:

Anglers must be current members of a Game Fishing Club affiliated with the Game Fishing Association of Australia (GFAA). Presentation of current Membership cards may be requested.

The Contest is open to one Team per boat. Teams must consist of a minimum of two Anglers, but not more than six Anglers.

### Fishing Rules :

This Contest is a TGFA Sanctioned Contest and shall use the current Game Fishing Association of Australia (GFAA) rules, read in conjunction with Tasmanian Game Fishing Association (TGFA) rules and these Contest rules.

**All Vessels must leave from Pirates Bay and return to Pirates Bay** (Weather permitting) The Weather Committee may allow larger vessels to leave from Fortescue Bay on Day 2 if weather conditions restrict mooring at Pirates Bay. The Weather Committee to advise on this and vessels must seek approval. Any vessels that do not comply with this rule may be disqualified.

### Number of Rods and Minimum/Maximum Line Class :

Any number of rods may be fished, but Anglers are reminded that only fish hooked on rods, which are picked up immediately after the strike are eligible for Record Claims. Minimum line class is 2kg for this Contest.

### Fishing Boundaries:

The Contest fishing boundaries are the perimeter of the Grid Map, with no exceptions.

The Grid Map is supplied in the Entry Pack, which is distributed at the briefing session.

Use this Grid Map in place of any previous Grid Maps issued.

The Grid Map perimeter may be reduced in size due to bad weather.

The Weather Committee will look at and set the course from the weather forecast given and notify Anglers prior to the start of fishing.

**Fishing Times:**

**Day One – 7:00am for a 7:30am start for the Sail Past with fishing commencing at the conclusion of the Sail Past when called by the President and until 3.30pm.**

**Day Two - Commencing at 7:00am until 12:00pm**

No lines are to be put in the water before the official start time.

All lines are to be wound in at the finishing time of each days fishing.

No Berleying for Sharks or Live Baiting shall commence before the official starting time of fishing.

The President shall announce that fishing can begin.

Tuna Base will advise each day of the conclusion of the fishing

Any angler playing a fish at the designated finishing time may, with the permission of Tuna Base continue fighting that fish.

**Safety Regulations :**

All vessels are required to comply with safety and equipment regulations as prescribed by Marine and Safety Tasmania (MAST).

It is mandatory for all competing boats to submit a Vessel Detail Form with the Entry Form. Tasmania Police may be in attendance checking safety equipment and adherence to regulations.

The safety check list on the entry form must be filled out and signed by the skipper or team captain for the team to be entered into the contest.

**Insurance of Boats:**

It is a mandatory requirement that all Boats that fish this competitions must hold comprehensive marine insurance.

Your Insurance company, policy number and the expiry date details must be provided on the entry form or a copy of your Insurance policy attached to the entry form for your vessel to participate.

**Marine Radio Control and Skeds:**

All vessels are to be equipped with a good working VHF Marine Radio capable of contacting Tuna Base at Pirates Bay, or be able to perform a relay via Tas Maritime Radio or Another Vessel.

If your VHF Marine Radio fails or you cannot be heard by Tuna Base, Tas Maritime Radio or another vessel, you must return to Base. A limited number of spare VHF Radio will be available for vessels to then continue in the competition.

If your VHF Radio stops working, you must return to base. Mobile phones are for emergency only, not for a principle form of communication to Tuna Base.

**Tuna Base Marine Radio Frequencies used will be VHF Channel 73:**

Tuna Base will contact all vessels at ten minutes past each hour of the day, please have your grid position information ready, it is the onus of each Skipper to contact Tuna Base direct. Vessels are to use boat number, the phonetic alphabet and clear and concise radio etiquette.

Any angler fighting a fish at the designated finishing time may, with the permission of Tuna Base continue fighting that fish.

**Tas Maritime Radio Relay Assistance:**

If Tuna Base does not make contact, it is the onus of the Skipper to then wait to the end of each Tuna Base Radio sked for Tas Maritime Radio's Call for Radio Relay Assistance back to Tuna base.

**Reporting Procedure for Radio Skeds:**

All vessels will Log on prior to leaving Pirates Bay with the following details:

- Vessel name and boat number
- Number of persons aboard

On the FIRST and each subsequent HOURLY sked vessels will report the following:

- Boat Number
- Position as a grid reference, using the phonetic alphabet
- Number & Type of fish captured to be weighed
- Number & Type of fish Tagged and Released

On the FINAL sked vessels will report the following:

- Boat Number
- Position as a grid reference using the phonetic alphabet
- Number & Type of fish captured to be weighed
- Number & Type of fish Tagged and Released
- Estimated time of arrival at port
- Advise Tuna Base if you still have a fish in play and request permission to continue playing that fish

Upon Returning home to Pirates Bay vessels will report the following:

- Boat number
- Officially sign off with Tuna Base. The Skipper MUST receive acknowledgement that they have made contact with the Radio Operator. If Radio contact is not made, the Skipper is to report in person to the Radio Room adjacent to the Weigh Station and sign off in person.

**If a vessel fails to log off on return to Port by radio or in person, the vessel, its Skipper and Crew WILL be disqualified from the Tournament immediately.**

**Failure to Report on Skeds :**

It is mandatory for ALL vessels to report on each sked. Failure to report on **two (2)** consecutive skeds will result in an Emergency Search Procedure being instigated.

If a vessel is found to not have a legitimate reason for not answering on two skeds, the vessel, its Skipper and Crew may be disqualified from the Tournament immediately.

**Boats wishing to talk to each other are asked to use alternative channels and keep the designated VHF Channel 73 clear for skeds & base communication**

**Minimum Weight Requirements for Tasmanian Game Fishing Association (TGFA) Sanctioned Tournaments :**

All Tuna weighed must equal or exceed line class being used for the capture, however all fish must have a minimum weight of 4kg.

- All Sharks have a minimum weight requirement of 60kgs.
- All Billfish have a minimum weight requirement of 60kgs.

**Capture Limits :**

For conservation purposes, each angler can weigh a combined maximum number of two (2) fish and each team can weigh a combined maximum number of four (4) fish from the below capture limits list. Example (One Shark & One Bluefin = two (2) fish - which is an Individuals maximum to be weighed)

**Daily Limits :**

- Each team can weigh a maximum number of 1 Billfish.
- Each team can weigh a maximum number of 2 Sharks.
- Each team can weigh a combined maximum of 4 Southern Bluefin, Yellowfin, Albacore, Bigeye Tuna, Dolphin Fish & King Fish.
- Individuals can weigh in 1 Shark or 1 Billfish
- Individuals can weigh in a combined maximum of 2 Southern Bluefin Tuna, Yellowfin Tuna, Albacore Tuna, Bigeye Tuna, Dolphin Fish & King Fish.

Contestants are responsible for the correct weighing and recording of the weight of their fish.

The Weigh Master and a member of each fishing team must sign the ticket.

Incorrect tickets will not be considered for scoring.

All fish are to be weighed in within 45 minutes of the commencement of weigh-in time, unless alternative arrangements have been made with the Weigh Master(s). No extension to weigh in times will be permitted on day two due to time constraints with presentations and dinner.

All anglers are reminded that there are State Fisheries Regulations pertaining to bag and possession limits which apply across this two day Tournament.

**Weighing & Cleaning of Fish:**

The Contest Committee will appoint the Weigh Master(s).

All fish are to be weighed at the Weigh Station situated at Pirates Bay.

The net weight recorded shall be the weight used for scoring purposes.

All fish will be weighed on the Tuna Club's certified digital scales.

Fish will only be weighed-in gilled and gutted or sashimi style.

Anglers should expect their fishing equipment to be inspected for GFAA compliance and present this on request.

The Weigh Master(s) may require an additional small incision to be made on sashimi style presentations, so a gut inspection is possible.

Sharks are to be gutted only.

No additional values will be added for cleaned fish.

After weighing it is the Angler's responsibility to immediately remove fish from the Weigh Station area.

Fish are to be cleaned at sea only. No cleaning or filleting of fish shall take place near the Jetty or the Tuna Club Rooms or Car Park. Teams not complying will be disqualified.

Fish must be presented in a suitable an unbloodied state so a positive image including photos is portrayed.

If, in the opinion of the Angler, the fish is a potential record the fish may be weighed whole, then taken away for cleaning, and then re-weighed for the Contest.

**Scoring**

Scoring of fish for points shall be as follows

**CAPTURE:** 
$$\frac{\text{Weight of fish} \times 100 \times \text{fighting factor as per score book list}}{\text{Divided by line class}}$$

**Swordfish will not attract points in the capture section**

**Sharks will not attract points in the capture section**

**Tag and Release Rules:**

All fish that are tagged require a digital photo with date showing the fish with correct tag placement, that the fish is greater than 60cm in length and the photo/s must be presented at the same time as the tags are handed in to the Club Tagging Official.

All tag cards need to be fully completed including longitude and latitude, weight and length details etc, the line class and the time the fish was tagged. All this information must be provided and will be used in the case of a count back in a tie. If you do not provide all these details the fish will not be counted. The onus is on the Angler to have all cards correctly and fully completed. Also note Radio log sheets may be cross referenced to verify time accuracy.

All Tuna's must be 600mm/60cm or greater in length to be eligible to be tagged. Tuna's smaller than this will not be eligible for tagging or accrue tag points. Photographic evidence needs depict the fish is 60cm or greater and tag placement is correct. Striped Tuna are not eligible for Tag and Release points in this contest.

We advise that fish between 60cm in length and under 70cm to have Club ruler included in the photograph. (Club ruler available at briefing night) or another means that clearly denoting fish length in the photograph.

The Tagging Official will have the final say. There will be no disputes to this process.

**Tag and Release: (Note Size Restrictions for Tagging)**

- Southern Bluefin Tuna            10,000 points    Must be a min 150cm in length
- Southern Bluefin Tuna            5,000 points    Must be a min 60cm in length
- Yellowfin Tuna                    5,000 points    Must be a min 60cm in length
- Albacore                            100 points      Must be a min 60cm in length
- **Striped Tuna are not to be tagged and points will not be awarded**

**\*\* Swordfish are not eligible for tag and release points in this Bluefin Tuna Contest \*\***

**\*\* Marlin are not eligible for tag and release points in this Bluefin Tuna Contest \*\***

**\*\* Sharks are not eligible for tag and release points in this Bluefin Tuna Contest \*\***

### **Traffic Management & PWS Events Authority**

The Tuna Club has a Special Events Authority to help manage the parking and public access to the lower car parking area during the Tuna Contest. We wish everyone to have a great time and be safe and for everyone to go home happy after the Contest.

Please be aware there are other users and allow an extra 10 or 15 minutes as there may be congestion due to high numbers of boat trailers using the ramps and parking facilities. Head lights should be turned off when launching your boat on the ramp before dawn. This makes it easier for other users to see and not be blinded when backing down to the adjacent ramps. Please be careful when backing your trailer, small children and at times tourists may walk in front or behind your vehicle and trailer as they are not use to what we do each time we are at the ramp. (Don't be scared to use the car horn) Please take instructions from the Car Parking Attendants when entering the lower Car Park. The attendants are there to help you get your boat into the water ASAP and are attempting to stop any congestion or Car Park bottle necks from taking place. **NO RAMP RAGE PLEASE !!**

Vessels returning to Pirates Bay are requested to keep the lower landing on the big jetty and the landing jetty on the south side of the main ramp clear as much as possible and use courtesy as there are multiple users including a number of commercial operators who need access to these facilities as well as contestants. Toilet facilities are provided adjacent to the lower Car Park a short distance from the Club Room. All contest participants are asked to use these facilities, remembering Tasmanian Game Fishing is on public display at this event and a positive image can only assist our sport.

Good luck everyone.

### **Disputes**

The Committee reserves the right to re-classify, refuse entry to any individual or team, settle any disputes and make decisions or variations relating to the conduct or the prizes of the Contest.

In all cases any decision made will be binding and final. Once a decision has been reached by the Committee, that will be final and no further correspondence will be entered into.

The Committee reserves the right to test line classes, randomly check rods, reels and tackle and place observers on any boat.

### **Protests**

**Any protest must be lodged with the Contest Committee in writing within 45 minutes of the close of fishing.**

**\*\*\*\* These briefing notes should only be taken as preliminary.**

**Final notes and contest instructions will be issued at the compulsory contest briefing on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of April 2026.**