



2017 Flatsmasters Tournament Series Official Rules

1. The entry fee for Flatsmasters Tournament Series will be as follows:
\$400 + state sales tax (\$428 total) for each of the 4 tournament legs– No Entry Fee for the Championship
Payment may be made online at Flatsmasters.com, by mail, or in person at Laishley Marine in Punta Gorda or Capt. Teds Tackle in Port Charlotte (You may pay for up to six tournaments in advance)
There will be no **Entry Fee for the Flatsmasters Redfish Series Championship**
A late fee of \$25 will be assessed to any payment received within 1 day of the Tournament.
CASH ONLY payments at the Captain's meeting and in the morning at the dock
Any tournament may be rescheduled due to extreme weather. NO Refunds of Entry Fees
Captains Meetings are the Friday night prior to each event and are mandatory– At least 1 member of your team must be present. It is your responsibility to know the rules and any amendments of the rules or schedule announced at the Captain's Meeting
02. Flatsmasters teams may consist of up to 3 anglers, each angler must be a member of The Flatsmasters Angler's Club- dues are \$35 (including state sales tax) per angler per year- payable online, team members may substituted during the tournament year but all anglers must be members of the club. Points and Prizes are awarded to the Captain of the Team, the Captain may not be substituted, but 2 team members may fish with an absentee captain.
Championship teams must consist of anglers who have fished on that team at least 2 times during the regular tournament season
03. All contestants are required to follow all applicable federal, state, and local statutes, rules, and regulations (laws), any violations of such laws may result in disqualification from that particular event or expulsion from the tournament series. This includes slow or idle zones and manatee areas.
04. All **Flatsmasters Tournaments allow anglers to wade fish, when an angler is out of the boat wading, the boat outboard engine (combustible) must be off. The use of Paddleboards, Kayaks, or other paddled or poled craft deployed from a tournament boat is prohibited. The use of drones during tournament hours is also prohibited**
05. Anglers may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat, except areas designated as **off limits** or **no fishing** by local, state, federal, or Flatsmasters officials, or within 50 yards of a competitors boat "actively engaged in fishing". The definition of "actively engaged in fishing" is a boat with the trolling motor in operation with anglers fishing, a boat held in place by anchor, push pole, or Power Pole, or one or more anglers wading. There will be no fishing within 1,000 yards of the weigh in site.
06. No angler at anytime may alter any fish by length or weight with the intention of gaining advantage over another competing team. This includes prior to, during, or after the scheduled tournament day. In addition, no angler may hand or force feed any tournament fish. In addition, no team may enter a mutilated or altered redfish regardless of whether the redfish was caught in that condition. Tails previously trimmed are not allowed.
07. All boats used in tournament competition must contain recirculating or aerated live wells that are at least 2.4 cubic feet or 18 gallons in capacity. All competing boats must have all required US Coast Guard safety equipment. For the safety of all competitors, **All Flatsmasters teams are required to use kill or ignition cutoff switches and life vests during operation of the combustion engine.** Fuel may be carried only in factory installed fuel tanks. Additional fuel may be purchased from a retail facility.
08. No changing of boats without tournament officials permission, emergency phone # is 941-628-0702
09. No tournament boats may come together for any reason or pass anything between boats during tournament hours. Exceptions are for emergency purposes or in the weigh in line.
10. **A VHF radio is required** for each tournament boat for communication of the numbered start. The use of cell phones, radios, or other electronic devices will be prohibited during tournament hours for the purpose of discussing fishing with anyone
11. There will be a "pro style" numbered start. Teams will be released in order of receipt on their entry fees for each tournament. All boats must idle by the fishing pier or dock past the official starter with life vests on and kill switches attached. The start will be broadcast on VHF #68. Late check allowed until 8am. Boats late for the numbered start must remain at dock until checked.
12. No angler may fish in the confines of any commercial marina. A commercial marina is defined as any marina with a guide dock, boat ramp, bait dispensing facility, and/or fuel dock. An addition there will be no fishing within 100 yards of any public boat ramp, guide dock/ramp, bait dock, or fuel dock not in a commercial marina
13. Weigh-In begins at 3:30pm. All teams must be checked-in or be in the check-in line by their flight's deadline.
Flights will begin at 3:30pm, in 15 boat increments, 15 minutes apart.
Flight #1- 3:30pm Boats #01 through #15
Flight #2- 3:45pm Boats #16 through #30
Flight #3- 4:00pm Boats #31 through #45
Flight #4- 4:15pm Boats #46 through #60
Flight #5- 4:30pm Boats #61 through #75



2017 Flatsmasters Redfish Series Official Rules– continued

14. This is a catch & release tournament. All fish must be released alive after weigh in. **You will however be allowed to weigh in two dead fish per year but not in the same event. The penalty is 1 pound for redfish.** An oxygen release tank will be available for teams inline for the weigh in. At the time your fish are measured they will be determined alive or dead. No iced or mutilated fish will be accepted.
15. In all Flatsmasters Tournaments, the tie breaker for First Place will be a One Hour Shoot-Out between the 2 tied teams. The team with the heaviest legal tournament fish wins. All normal tournament rules apply. In case of no fish the prizes will be combined and split. All other ties will be decided by the time each team completes their weigh-in.
16. **In the Flatsmasters Redfish Series all baits are allowed.** Receiving bait from an outside source during tournament hours is prohibited except an established retail bait facility- Bait & Tackle Shop. No transferring of bait or anything else between boats during tournament hours.
17. Only one rod at a time may be used per angler. A cast must be fully retrieved before another rod is picked up. All fish must be caught alive in a sporting manner. Foul hooked fish can not be weighed in. A fouled hooked fish is defined as any fish that does not have at least one hook in the mouth region.
18. **The Top 25 teams by points total after the 4 Qualifying events will be invited to the No Entry Fee Championship Tournament. Teams earn points at each event based on their order of finish. 1st place=100 Points, 2nd Place=99 Points, Etc. EXCEPT for the Fourth Event on Sept. 16 where teams will earn double points- 1st Place=200 Points, 2nd Place=198 Points, Etc.- Teams with no weight receive 0 Points**
19. Team of The Year presented by Power-Pole– The team with the best 4 tournament points total will be declared Team of the Year and receive free series entry into the 2017 Flatsmasters and an 8' Power-Pole Blade Power Pole
20. Sportsman Rule - All participants in The Flatsmasters Tournament Series will conduct themselves in a sportsman-like manner during all Flatsmasters activities. This includes prior to and following all Flatsmasters events including Capt. Meetings, Weigh-Ins, and all other Flatsmasters related events. Unacceptable behavior will result in expulsion from all future Flatsmasters events. Derogatory comments and or unacceptable use of social media is also grounds for expulsion from future events. Disqualification or misconduct in any other fishing tournament within 36 months prior to the tournament date is grounds for an application not being accepted or returned.
The Flatsmasters may refuse any tournament application, or deny a previous application by returning the entry fee or balance of fees to the Captain.
21. Polygraph tests will be given at each event. Each contestant agrees to submit, by their signature on the official entry form, to the polygraph test to determine the results of the tournament and shall not contest the results. Failure to be available for the test is grounds for disqualification. If weigh master of polygrapher determines that an angler is unable to take a test, all prizes and points will be forfeited. Polygraph tests may be required up to one week after the event.
22. Protests are allowed up to 30 minutes after the last boat weighs in. All protests must be in writing and accompanied by \$300 fee. If protest is upheld the fee will be returned, If denied, tournament will retain the protest fee. A polygraph test will be given to determine protest. Weighmaster reserves the right to retain any fish for further inspection.
23. The Flatsmasters Redfish Series is a professional sporting event. All contestants agree to make their boat and team available to all media, Flatsmasters staff, TV & photographers during the entirety of any Flatsmasters Event. All teams are required to sign a media and liability release prior to participating in any Flatsmasters event.
24. The Flatsmasters retains the right to amend or add/delete to these published rules at any time during the tournament season in order to maintain the quality and competitiveness of The Flatsmasters.

Tournament Business Office– 941-637-5953

There is no one at this number on tournament weekends

Please use the number below

Tournament Weekend Emergency Number

941-628-0702