# *BOOTS & BUCKLES on The Bay*
## Fishing Tournament

## April 18, 2026
## Matagorda Harbor Pavilion
## (Next to Harbor Bait & Tackle)
## Matagorda, Texas

## ***Tournament Rules & Regulations***

1. Entry fee is $300 per team. All entry & side pot fees must be paid by 8:30 pm April 17, 2026 (the day before the tournament). Each team member must sign a release of liability prior to start of tournament.

2. Captain's Party (not mandatory if pre-registered) will be held at 7:00-8:30 pm at the Matagorda Harbor Pavilion in Matagorda on April 17, 2026 (location subject to change). Any questions will be answered here.

3. The tournament officially begins at 6:00 am on Saturday, April 18, 2026 unless threatening weather is present (see Safety & Weather).

4. A maximum of four (4) anglers per team, all of which must be registered in the tournament, with the option of one (1) captain. The captain is allowed to bait hooks, net fish, get out backlashes but is NOT allowed to cast or retrieve unless they are a registered team member.

5. Fishing guides are not allowed to enter the tournament. Teams may use a guide (at their expense). The guide is allowed to bait hooks, net fish, get out backlashes but is NOT allowed to cast or retrieve.

6. All teams and individuals must be paid tournament members to compete in the side pots.

7. There are no boundaries. All waters fished during the tournament shall be legally accessible to the general public.

8. All teams must leave and fish from one exclusive designated team vessel (boat or truck). Teams do not need boat access to enter the tournament.

9. All teams must fish within plain eyesight of their exclusive vessel at all times.

10. All fish must be caught by rod and reel in strict adherence to State Laws.

11. Live or artificial bait is acceptable. No bait acquired by illegal means, no pre-baiting fishing spots and no culling of dead fish.

12. In an effort to assist tournament officials in identifying registered teams on the water and in the harbor.

13. All fish to be weighed in must be legal size (no oversized "tagged" redfish or trout).

14. All fish to be weighed in must be caught after 6:00 am on April 18, 2026, when the tournament officially begins.

15. **RODEO ROUNDUP** - The team will weigh in one trout (20" or under), one redfish and one flounder. The teams must have all three to compete. Most weight wins. Top four places pay!

    a. 1st Place $2,000 plus 4 Grand Champion Buckles & 4 Pair of Boots
    b. 2nd Place $1,500 plus prizes
    c. 3rd Place $ 800 plus prizes
    d. 4th Place $ 500 plus prizes

    ***** In the event that four teams do not catch all three, the unclaimed prize money will be donated to the Fort Bend County Fair Scholarship Foundation. *****

16. **GRAND CHAMPION FLOUNDER** - All contestants must be paid team members to be eligible for the $750 cash individual "Heaviest FLOUNDER" prize. Winner will also receive a Grand Champion Buckle and one pair of Boots. **Additional places may be awarded based on number of teams. Places and awards to be paid will be announced at the Captain's Party.**

17. **GRAND CHAMPION REDFISH** - All contestants must be paid team members to eligible for the $750 cash individual "Heaviest Redfish" prize. Winner will also receive a Grand Champion Buckle and one pair of Boots. 20 – 28-inch slot on red fish (NO OVERSIZED REDS ARE ELIGIBLE). **Additional places may be awarded based on number of teams. Places and awards to be paid will be announced at the Captain's Party.**

18. All entrants are subject to random polygraph testing. You must be present within 15 minutes if called for a test or you will be disqualified. Alcohol can affect the polygraph test results. Any entrant that is unable to complete or take the test will be disqualified.

19. The winner is determined by the heaviest weight. In the event of a tie, the fish weighed in first, **WINS**.

20. Violation of any rule or un-sportsman like behavior will disqualify the entrant and/or team.

21. A written protest can be made, accompanied by a $300.00 cash fee no later than 4pm on the day of the tournament. The fee will be refunded if the protest is judged valid. The decision of the tournament director and their appointed committee (4 people min) concerning any tournament matters is final.

## WEIGH-IN

22. The weigh station will be located at Matagorda Harbor Pavilion, Matagorda, TX.

23. The weigh-in station will open at 2pm and close at 4pm on the day of the tournament. To weigh in your fish, you must be recognized in line by a committee member before 4pm.

24. All fish will be weighed on the same scale and measured on a check-it-stik slant board.

25. Fish will be weighed in the following categories.
    a. Rodeo Roundup - Team Stringer (1 trout (20" or under), 1 redfish, 1 flounder)
    b. Individual Heaviest Flounder
    c. Individual Heaviest Redfish
    d. Team Side Pot
    e. Individual Sheepshead Side Pot
    f. Individual Redfish (most spots) Side Pot

26. The largest fish in each category will be chosen by the contestant, weighed in one time and marked by the weigh master.

27. Any entrant who attempts to enter a fish that is not of legal size will be disqualified. No oversized "tagged" redfish or trout will be accepted. **All fish must be caught by registered tournament entrants, during tournament hours, on the day of the tournament. ALL TEAMS ARE REQUIRED TO FOLLOW TEXAS PARKS AND WILDLIFE FISHING AND BOATING REGULATIONS AND ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL LICENSES/PERMITS REQUIRED BY LAW.**

28. Official records maintained by the weigh master and not the status board will determine the winner.

29. All fish submitted for weigh-in must be in a fresh, edible condition. Frozen, thawed, spoiled or mutilated fish, or fish altered from its natural state will be disqualified. Weigh master and tournament directors have final decision on validity of fish.

## SIDE POT RULES

30. All teams and individuals must be paid teams and team members to be eligible to compete in the side pots.

31. Fish used in the "Rodeo Roundup", "Grand Champion Trout" and "Grand Champion Redfish" competitions can be used in side pot contests.

32. **Optional Team Stringer Side Pot - $100 per team** – Up to two (2) trout (must be 20" or less) and up to two (2) redfish. Most weight wins. Top three places pay, based on entries. Payout: 1st place – 50% of Team Side Pot Entries, 2nd Place – 20% of Team Side Pot Entries, 3rd Place – 10% of Team Side Pot Entries.

33. **Optional Individual Sheepshead Side Pot – $20 per team -** The sheepshead that is the heaviest will win this side pot. One winner - payout is 80% of the Individual sheepshead Side Pot Entries.

34. **Optional Individual Redfish Side Pot – $20 per team** - The redfish that has the most spots will win this side pot. No oversized (tagged) redfish. One winner – payout is 80% of the Individual Redfish Side Pot Entries.

35. **Tie Breaker –** In the event of a tie in any division the tie breaker is the team/individual that weighs in earliest.

## SAFETY & WEATHER

36. Boat operators should check their safety equipment prior to the tournament, and it is recommended that while wade fishing, you wear a PFD.

37. If threatening weather is present, the tournament start may be delayed. The decision to delay the start time will be made at 6:00 am and not before. It is the responsibility of the contestants to verify the status of tournament by contacting Harbor Bait & Tackle at 979-863-7620.

38. If severe or threatening weather compels the tournament committee to cancel the tournament, the tournament will be rescheduled.

## ***For tournament questions and information***

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| Fair Office | ajan@fbcfa.org |
| Tournament Chairman – Darren Ondruch | 281-541-6397 |
| Tournament Co-Chair – Garren "Pugs" Schmidt | 832-473-3716 |

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*The Fort Bend County Fair Association reserves the right to refuse application or entry from any prospective entrant with or without cause. Any applicant refused entry will be entitled to a full refund of the entry fee. All tournament entrants and participants must be willing to submit to a polygraph. Results of the polygraph are final. Violators will be banned from future participation in this tournament.*

*All rules are subject to change --- final rules will be provided at check-in.*

*Directors, volunteers, sponsors, organizers and any other entities involved in the Boots & Buckles on the Bay fishing tournament are not responsible for any accidents or injury, nor loss, damage or theft to any property.*

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