

Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club

First White Marlin Release of 2026 Fishing Season

1. The Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club is the premier offshore fishing club in Cape May, with purpose of promoting sustainable fishing in the area. The Club along with local sponsors has developed a contest and prize for the individual angler who releases the first white marlin of the year fishing out of Cape May, NJ. This angler does not need to be a member of the Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club or be on a CMMTC Club member boat. This is for the entire fishing community out of Cape May, NJ.
2. The angler who releases the first white marlin of the season will receive a prize valued at \$2,500 on Friday June 25, 2026 at 8 pm at The Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club. The prize will be comprised of \$2,000 and membership in the CMMTC value of \$500.
3. There is no registration and no registration required. Go fish and good luck.
4. There is no cost. This is a free contest to promote white marlin fishing in Cape May and to recognize the skill of the first angler each year that catches and releases the first white marlin.
5. All anglers and the boats must depart from Cape May Inlet (2CM buoy) and return to Cape May Inlet (2CM Bouy). The boat cannot enter or make port at any time in another other inlet for the release to count.
6. All fishing must occur within 125 nautical miles of Cape, May Inlet (2CM).
7. This is only for recreational anglers who fish on recreational boats that have a valid recreational rod and reel HMS permit.
8. You may fish at any time of day or night.
9. You may fish as many days as you wish.
10. You may fish overnight or multiple overnight trips.
11. All IGFA rules apply with the following exceptions:
 - The fish may be hooked by anyone and that rod may be passed to another angler who may not further hand off to any other angler.
 - Spreader bars, Crazy 8's, Wide Trackers may be used with or without hooks.
 - The use of non-offset circle hooks is mandatory in natural bait and natural bait/lure combinations.
 - No greensticks or dangles allowed.
 - No commercial vessels are eligible for the contest.

- No harpoons or darts are permitted.
 - Fish may not be caught on electric reels or electric assist reels
 - The use of live bait or live bait teasers is not allowed.
12. Release will be made when the mate touches the leader or the leader is wound thru the rod tip.
 13. The First White Marlin Release form can be downloaded from the website.
 14. Eligible species in this tournament are White Marlin only. No exceptions.
 15. Any interpretation of the rules or if necessary, disqualification will be by the Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club Board of Directors with input from the Cape May Marlin and Tuna Club Tournament Committee. The Board decision is final and not subject to appeal in any manner or jurisdiction.
 16. Polygraph examination of the winning angler, captain and crew may be required.
 17. The winning angler must appear in person on Friday June 25, 2026, at 7 pm for presentation of the prize and photographs. The winner may bring as many guests along with them as they would like for the presentation ceremony to occur at 8 pm.
 18. In the unlikely event that the first white marlin release does not occur prior to June 25, 2026 then the prize and award presentation will be held on July 10, 2026 at 8 pm.
 19. The winning angler must complete and submit the membership application and ultimately be approved by the membership committee and Board. Winning the prize is not automatic acceptance as a club member.
 20. Have fun and be safe!