

**LONGFINS UPDATED
CONSTITUTION 2007:**



PREAMBLE:

The Longfins was organized on December, 1998 as Free diving Spear fishing organization. The purpose of the club is to promote and encourage the sport of free diving, underwater hunting and safety, and to bring to its members the sound benefits and the pleasures from organized activity.

ARTICLE 1-GOVERNING BODY ARTICLE 1-GORVERNING BODY:

1. The Longfins shall be governed by the following board of directors:

- a. President
- b. Vice President
- c. Secretary
- d. Treasurer
- e. Weight Master (**Modified October 2006**)

1. The board will meet the third Monday (**Modified February 2006**) of every month at 7:30pm or more frequently at the discretion of the board. Any active member may attend board meetings.

2. The role of the board shall be:

- a. To determine the direction of the club.
- b. To set and maintain a budget of incomes and expenditures.
- c. To maintain an interaction between our club, the diving councils and other clubs.
- d. To define club dives (with input of the general membership) and publish the dates and locations chosen.

3. The office of the Longfins may be terminated, added to, or combined by legislative action only.

4. The succession of officers shall be in the order listed in the article 1, part 1. The highest officer present shall assume the duties of an officer who is absent.

ARTICLE 11 – DUTIES OF OFFICERS:

1. The President shall:

- a. Preside at all meetings and direct the activities of the Longfins.
- b. Have the authority to call special meetings and appoint committees.
- c. Assume responsibility for maintaining order at the club meetings and functions.
- d. Assume responsibility for the disposition and care of club assets.
- e. Assume responsibility for the proper functioning of officers and committees.
- f. Present all trophies and awards.

2. The Vice President shall:

- a. Assist the President in anyway possible to help officiate the club.
- b. Lead the board in securing speakers and/or entertainment for meetings and events.
- c. Preside at all meetings that the President is unavailable.
- d. Preside over any impeachment proceedings that does not involve the office of Vice President.

3. The Secretary shall:

- a. Keep an accurate record of the proceedings at the club meetings. At each club meeting he/she shall be prepared to read the minutes of the preceding regular meeting and or any special meeting held thereafter.
- b. Keep an account of any special events in the life of the club that are of historical interest and value.
- c. Develop and maintain a library to preserve written and visual materials of historical or informational nature.
- d. Engage in club correspondence.

4. The Treasurer shall:

- a. Enter regularly in records for that purpose; a full and accurate account of monies received and paid out of club funds.
- b. Make payments out of the club funds, by check or petty cash, only for authorized club business.

When necessary the President may make similar expenditures.

- c. The signatures of the President and/or Vice President shall be required on all checks.
- d. Keep a complete record of the club membership. The record shall indicate:
 1. The number of meetings and dives attended by prospective members during their probationary period.
 2. Date of admission to the club.
 3. Name, address and telephone number of each member.
 4. Status of each member as either active or inactive.
 5. Date of termination of membership.
- f. Collect all dues and special assessments authorized by the club. The treasurer is authorized to prorate or refund dues in keeping with fair and accepted accounting practices.
- g. Give a written and or oral financial report at the board meetings.
- h. Establish and maintain a checking account in the name of the club with a reputable financial institution at the least possible cost.
- i. Have above records available at board meetings. The President will have access to the records at all times. Other board members will have access at the board meetings or by special request.

5. Weight Master Shall: (Modified December 2007)

- a. Receive, record, and have the authority to question the validity of all proof of catch.
- b. Be the judge in the weigh-in and measuring of catches during any club competitions. He/She may be assisted by other members, for the integrity of the weight master and since this is a conflict of interest his catch must be monitored by another officer if one is present or by a long term member if no officer is present.
- c. be familiar with current fish and game laws.
- d. Posses and maintain the club scales, measuring devices, catch forms, first aid kit, and a copy of the current fish and game laws, the weight master must also keep track of all club points.

ARTICLES 111 – ELECTIONS:

1. Only active club member are eligible to election as officers of the club.
2. Nomination for the club officers will be taken at the September club meeting. With Elections at the November meeting.
3. Club officers shall be elected by simple majority of the club members present at the November club meeting. Must comply with by –laws and be a secret ballot.
4. Newly elected club officers shall take office and assume their responsibilities in November.
5. Should an officer resign prior to regular elections, a special election will be conducted and a member elected to fill the vacant office for the balance of the term.

ARTICLE 1V – MEMBERS:

1. Membership to the Longfins is open to all persons regardless of age, sex, race, religion, sexual preference, or physical disability.
2. Persons under the age of 18 must submit a waiver of liability signed by their legal guardian prior to acceptance into the club and must be accompanied by that guardian at all club events.
3. It is recognized that free diving and spear fishing are inherently risky activities. While it is the policy of the Longfins to promote and encourage safe practices, each member is ultimately responsible for his/her own safety. The club does not accept any liability for personal loss or injury.
4. Member categories:
 - a. Active Member – Must have completed the requirements for a new member and be voted into the club. Must have paid annual dues within the required time. (Voting takes place after 50 members)
 - b. Inactive Member – Members who have not paid annual dues within the required time will be reclassified as inactive. A member who is inactive may not vote, receive points for club dives, submit fish records, or receive the club newsletter.
5. Duties of members:
 - a. Uphold and abide by the conditions set forth in the constitution and by – laws.
 - b. Conduct themselves safely and abide by recognized safety rules.
 - c. Act in a courteous, civilized, and respectful manner whenever wearing the club emblem or acting as an identifiable member of the club.
 - d. Carry out all assigned duties and responsibilities to the best of their ability.
 - e. To observe and comply with all Federal, State, and Local regulations regarding diving and taking of game.
 - f. Abide by the rules of competition and act in a manner consistent with fairness and good sportsmanship.

ARTICLE V – NEW MEMBERSHIP:

1. After the Club has been formed, prospective members must be sponsored by an active member of the club.
2. Prospective members are subject to a 90 day probationary period. During this time they must attend two regular club dives. (Probationary period takes place after 50 members)
3. When the probationary requirements have been met, the probationer will be considered for membership only at meeting.
4. Within one month of acceptance into probationary period the new member must pay the dues as a specified by the treasurer.
5. Newly accepted members shall be credited with all points and records accumulated during their probationary period.

ARTICLE VI – TERMS OF MEMBERSHIP:

1. Active Members:

- a. To maintain active status in the club, members must pay their annual dues at or before the December club meeting.
- b. Members who maintain active status shall be credited with the points for club dives and fish records for the entire year.
- c. Active members shall receive all privileges and benefits of organized club activities.

2. Inactive Members:

- a. Members shall automatically be reclassified as inactive for failure to pay their annual dues at or before the December meeting.
- b. Inactive members shall automatically be reclassified as active members if their annual dues are received by the Treasurer on or before January meeting.
- c. Inactive members will not be credited with points for club dives and fish records accumulated prior to their reclassification as active members.

3. Termination and Reinstatement of Membership:

- a. Inactive members shall automatically be terminated from membership for failure to pay their club dues on or before February's meeting.
- b. After termination of membership, persons wishing to be reinstated must:
 1. Be recommended for reinstatement by an active club member.
 2. Receive an affirmation vote of 2/3 of the members present, in secret ballot voting to be reinstated.

4. Membership Requirements:

- a. Members are required to join the Underwater Society of America (U.S.O.A.) to be eligible to participate in inter-club dive meets or other sanctioned events. Members are encouraged but not required to join this organization to participate in the club dives.
- b. Annual dues are \$50.00, second family members are \$10.00 with membership to U.S.O.A.
- c. Members must possess a valid Florida fishing license when diving.

ARTICLE V11 – VOTING:

1. Only active members are eligible to vote.
2. A simple majority vote of the members present at regular club meetings is required to pass routine club business, expenditures or activities.
3. A 2/3 majority of the members present is required to:
 - a. Change the constitution.
 - b. Reinstate former members.
 - c. Terminate a membership for cause.
 - d. Impeach an officer.
4. A unanimous vote of the members present is required to accept a new membership.
5. A secret ballot vote will be taken when:
 - a. Electing officers.
 - b. Admitting new members (Unanimous).
 - c. Reinstating former members (2/3 majority).
 - d. Impeaching officers (2/3 majority).
 - e. Termination of membership for cause (2/3 majority).
 - f. When requested by any member.

ARTICLE V111 – IMPEACHMENT OF OFFICERS:

1. Any member may make a motion to impeach any officer.
2. A written notice must be provided to all club members prior to a vote of impeachment.
3. A 2/3 majority of the members present, in secret ballot voting, is required to impeach an officer.

ARTICLE 1X – TERMINATION FOR CAUSE:

1. Any member may make a motion to terminate a club membership for cause
2. A written notice must be provided to all club members prior to vote to terminate for cause.
3. A 2/3 majority of the members present, in secret ballot voting, is required to terminate a membership for cause.
4. A members automatically subject to termination for cause for:
 - a. Misappropriation of club funds.
 - b. Willful or chronic violations of fish and game laws.
 - c. In any way capitalizing on the club name without club approval.
 - d. Violation of the club constitution or by-laws.
 - e. Willful cheating or unsportsmanlike conduct during any competition.
 - f. Gross violation of accepted safety practices.

ARTICLE X – CLUB PROPERTY:

1. The constitution of the Longfins shall be used in conjunction with, and supplemented by, a set of bylaws. The by-laws shall govern the administration of the
2. Club business not specifically covered by the constitution.
3. A 2/3 majority vote, of the members present at a regular club meeting, is required to pass or amend the by-laws.

ARTICLE X11 – MEETING AND DIVES:

1. Club meetings:
 - a. Regular meetings shall be held once a month at 7:30 p.m. on the third Monday **(Modified February 2006)** of the month.
 - b. Special meetings may be called by the President or by a vote of the members present at a regular club meeting.
 - c. The parliamentary procedure of the meeting of the club shall be guided by ROBERT RULES OF ORDER REVISED.
2. Club dives:
 - a. The fish limits for the club dives shall be a 15 fish limit. This may be temporarily altered by a vote of the members at the time the dive is planned.
 - b. Prior to the start of each club dive, a sign – in a staging area will be determined by consensus of the members present. At the beginning of the meet all participating divers must sign-in-for the competition. At the termination of the meet all divers must be in the staging area or out of the water.
 - c. The regular club dives shall be 7 hours in a duration stating at 8:00 a.m. and ending at 3:00 pm. unless otherwise decided at the sign-in for the competition.
 - d. The day before the start of a club dive, that dive may be canceled or postponed if seas are greater or expected to be greater than 3-5 ft by the president. It may also be postponed or cancelled by the President for any unforeseen safety reasons that could affect the clubs membership up to the time of the dive. (In the event the President is not available the Vice President assumes these responsibilities)
 - e. Special dives or make-up dives may be called by the President or by a vote of the members present at a regular club meeting.

ARTICLE X111 – POINT SYSTEM:

1. Active club members and probationary members may accumulate points by participating in club dives.
2. Points shall be scored on a 1 point per fish plus 1 point per pound. However, maximum score for a single fish will be 20 points plus one per piece totaling a maximum of 21 points.
3. Fish counted during club dives must be:
 - a. An edible species of fin fish. Sharks, Rays and Skates are eligible.
 - b. A minimum of 12 inches in length or as dictated by Federal, State or County Laws and regulations in length and number.
 - c. In season and of legal size according to fish and Game laws.

ARTICLE XIV – ANNUAL AWARDS:

1. Awards to recognize outstanding achievement by club members shall be presented, by the outgoing President, at the annual club outing.
2. All prizes shall be purchased out of club funds. If not donated.
3. Awards shall be given only for game taken while free diving.
4. The following awards shall be presented for club competitions”
 - a. The largest fish.
 - b. First, second, third team high aggregate.
 - c. Any awards decided upon at the November club meeting.
 - d. **(Modified December 2006)** a new award was voted in by members making it mandatory to award a Sportsmanship of the year Award to a member each November by the President. The rules and guidelines are as follows:
 - Rookie of the year is not eligible.
 - Club champion is not eligible.
 - Any competitor having gross violations of club rules is ineligible.
 - Candidate must have had interaction with new members.
 - Candidate must have supported club functions.
 - A current member must nominate a candidate and explain why he/she is worth of Sports Man of the year.
 - Voting will be done by a show of hands.