



# THE 69<sup>TH</sup> SPEARFISHING NATIONALS 2024

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## Western Australia

20-26 April 2024

Preliminary Information Pack

## **VENUE INFORMATION**

After ten years, the Australian Underwater Federation Spearfishing Nationals are coming back to Western Australia in April 2024. WA Undersea Club and the Spearo's of WA are thrilled to extend a warm invitation to all passionate divers to join us at the prestigious 69<sup>th</sup> National Championships, set to take place in the breathtaking coastal town of Dunsborough, Southwest Western Australia.

The south coast's pristine waters and abundant marine life make it the ideal location for this championship. Nestled along the rugged coastline of the Indian Ocean, the southwest cape boasts clear waters, diverse underwater terrain, and a thriving aquatic ecosystem, providing a challenging yet rewarding site for spearing. With its breathtaking natural beauty and the warm hospitality of the local community, WA's southwest offers competitors and spectators alike an unforgettable experience both in and out of the water.

The Australian National Spearfishing Championships will be a shore-based pairs competition with a series of exciting categories, that will test your skills, precision, and resilience as a spearo. Whether you're a seasoned competitor or a newcomer looking to embrace the thrill of spearfishing at a national level, this event promises to be an unforgettable event that celebrates the art and passion of spearfishing while exploring the pristine underwater wonders of Australia's southwestern coast.

## **GENERAL INFORMATION**

In keeping with the AUFs motto of 'SAFE SUSTAINABLE SELECTIVE SPEARFISHING' the National Titles will be in a true-pairs format. The system aligns with current 'best practice' pairs competitions being held in places like Queensland, Western Australia and New Zealand, along with the Inter-Pacific.

Wind and swell conditions will dictate the terms of where and when we dive. However, the selected competition zones around the southwest cape offer flexibility and good protection from prevailing conditions in the event of unfavorable weather. The Australian Spearfishing Championships will be conducted from shore at each location and held over 3 days (Heats 1 to 3). Priority will be given to the open spearfishing events, followed by film fishing/swim race.

All competitors must be financial members of the Australian Underwater Federation. Overseas CMAS recognized countries competitors are also welcome and should register without delay.

## **COSTS**

Approximately \$300 per person

We will be trying to keep registration fees to an absolute minimum. Food and drinks at the Registration and the Final Presentation are at competitor's own expense. Online registration and final fees are to be advised.

## **ACCOMMODATION**

Competitors will be responsible for arranging their own accommodation and it is highly recommended to book accommodation ASAP to secure a booking.

Dunsborough is a popular holiday destination, so there is an array of accommodation such as caravan parks, motels and holiday house rentals. However, it does get busy, so we recommend booking well in advance.



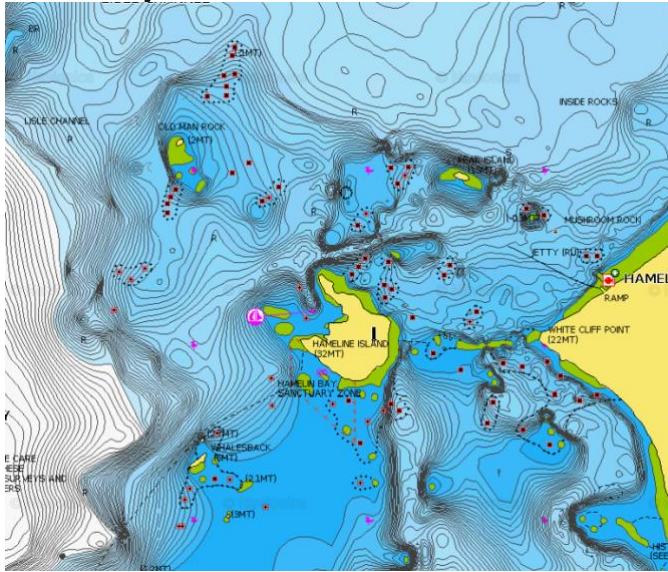
### **PRELIMINARY AGENDA OF EVENTS**

Please note that events or locations may change due to weather and/or other unforeseen events. The location of each day's event will be advised by 6:00pm the day prior.

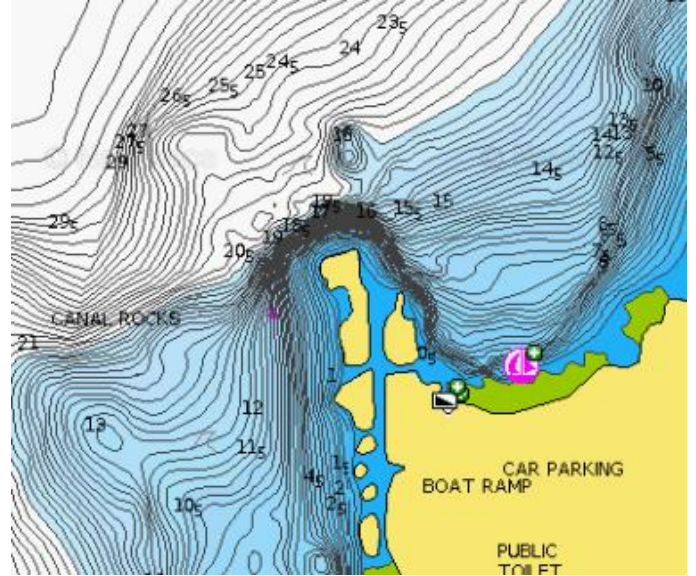
<b>DAY</b>	<b>EVENT</b>	<b>ADDITIONAL INFORMATION</b>
<b>Day 1</b> Saturday 20 April	<b>Registration and Briefing</b> 5 pm meet other competitors and buy your own counter meal / drinks 6 pm Team managers meeting	<b><u>Location:</u></b> Dunsborough Bay Yacht Club 307 Geographe Bay Road, Dunsborough
<b>Day 2</b> Sunday 21st	<b>Spearfishing Heat 1:</b> <b>Australian Spearfishing Championships</b>	Each day competitors to meet at the start location at 6:00am for briefing and gear safety inspection. Competition 7:00am – 1:00pm Weigh-in commence 3:00pm
<b>Day 3</b> Monday 22nd	<b>Spearfishing Heat 2:</b> <b>Australian Spearfishing Championships</b>	As above for Day 2.
<b>Day 4</b> Tuesday 23rd	<b>Film fishing &amp; swim race</b> <b>Sub-juniors</b> if required Times to be notified.	This day may be changed if the weather has been unfavorable or the forecast isn't suitable.
<b>Day 5</b> Wednesday 24 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Spearfishing Heat 3:</b> <b>Australian Spearfishing Championships</b>	As above for Day 2.
<b>Day 6</b> Thursday 25th	Spare day to be used in inclement weather only, Presentation will change to 6pm	<b><u>Location:</u></b> TBC
<b>Friday</b>	<b>Presentations</b> <b>Time &amp; venue TBC</b>	

# POSSIBLE DIVE SITES

## Hamelin Bay



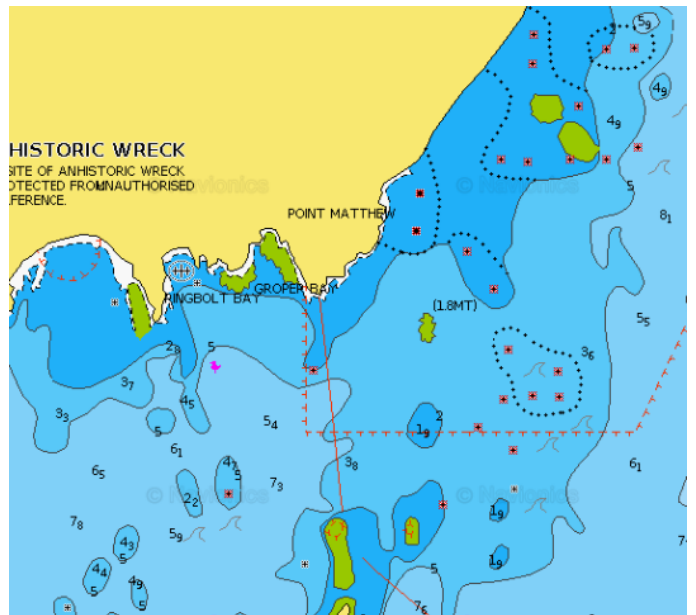
## Canal Rocks



## Sugarloaf Rock



## Dead finish - Augusta



## SCORING SYSTEM

The standard Australian Underwater Federation scoring system will be used, namely 100 points per species, 10 points per kilogram of weight; and max weight of any one fish of 15 kg.

Each pair can weigh in one of each species on the score sheet. Possession limit of 2 demersal fin fish per day applies to each competitor, as well as west-coast individual species bag limits. No unlisted species will be eligible; only those on the score sheet are eligible (**Score sheet attached**).

Despite diving in a true pair, each diver will need to weigh in their catch separately to ensure compliance with possession limits as well as working out the scores for nominated pairs. Each competitor can weigh in one of each species per day.

Any competitor, pair or team who infringes fisheries or marine park limits or regulations will be disqualified from all competitions.

## TITLES AND TROPHIES

The Australian National Spearfishing Titles shall be swum in a pairs with Titles and Trophies being awarded to categories within **True Pairs Competitions**, **Nominated Pairs Competitions** and **Individual Competitions**.

## PENALTIES

A 100 point penalty will apply in each instance any competitor's fish presented for weighing is: an ineligible species; under legal length; under minimum weight; or in excess of the allowable number for that species.

Any competitor, pair or team who infringes fisheries or marine park limits or regulations will be disqualified from all competitions.

## TRUE PAIRS CATEGORIES

CATEGORY	REQUIREMENTS
<b>Australian Champions</b> Open Spearfishing Championship	Any gender / Any State combination / Any age Except sub-juniors
<b>Runners-Up</b> Open Spearfishing Championship	Any gender / Any State combination / Any age Except sub-juniors
<b>Parent and Junior</b>	Parent and Junior in same True Pair. Child aged 15-17 <u>Nomination Required</u>
<b>State Team Championship</b>	Team Event Top 3 same State True Pairs All ages / Any gender / Same State combination Nomination <u>not</u> required
<b>Top Team Championship</b>	Team Event Top 2 True Pairs All ages / Any gender / Any State combination <u>Nomination Required</u>
<b>Most Species</b>	'Most Species' title is awarded to the pair with the most species caught across all Spearfishing Championships. In the case where more than one fish per species is weighed-in, then those fish shall count as only one for the purposes of this award.

In **Nominated Pairs Competitions** the pair does not have to swim together (such as in True Pairs); rather any two competitors in a particular category (ie age / gender) can nominate prior to the commencement of the Open Spearfishing Championship. Nominated Pairs categories are as follows:

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>Grand Master</b>	For competitors aged 64 years and over
<b>Master</b>	For competitors aged 55 to 63 years
<b>Veteran</b>	For competitors aged 45 to 54 years old
<b>Senior</b>	For competitors aged 25-44
<b>Intermediate</b>	For competitors aged 18-24
<b>Junior</b>	For competitors aged 15-17
<b>Women's</b>	For female competitors aged 15 and over

In **Individual Competitions** (except the Fin Swimming), the competitors must swim in a pair or be accompanied by a safety observer. Individual Competition categories are as follows:

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>
<b>Sub-Junior</b> Spearfishing Championship	Individual Competition swum with an observer For competitors aged under 15 years Scores taken from the Sub-Junior Spearfishing Championship
<b>Fin-Swimming</b>	Individual Competition
<b>Film-Fishing</b>	Individual Competition (swum in pairs)
<b>Super-Diver</b>	Individual Competition
<b>Most Meritorious Fish</b>	Individual Competition As judged by the Championship Director from fish taken during either the Open or Sub-Junior Spearfishing Championships
<b>Largest Fish</b>	Heaviest fish weighed in during the competition.

## GUIDELINES FOR TRUE-PAIRS

- AUF True-Pairs events closely follow the rules set down for the Interpacific events.
- True-Pairs are to use the same safety equipment as previously for individual events.
- Two divers of similar capability team up and nominate to compete together as a True-Pair.
- The divers may have one gun each and spare guns unloaded on the float.
- Both divers must practice '**one up-one down**'. This means:
  - watching your buddy dive down, and return safely to the surface;
  - make eye contact after a dive - a blackout can occur up to 15 seconds after ascent; and
  - if you are diving with someone not as adept as you are, stay within their comfortable limits, not yours.
- The True-Pair tows one complying float:
  - During competition the members of each team cannot be more than forty (40) metres horizontally apart from each other.
  - There must be one line no longer than 4 metres long attached to the float.
  - The diver on the surface must remain within 4 metres of the float and be holding or attached to this line at all times and not leave the surface.
  - There may be another long line that can be used by the second diver or to anchor the float.
- Divers can alternate roles but alternate but may not to be submerged below the surface at the same time. Penalty is disqualification.
- Whilst the spearing diver is submerged the surface diver should always do their best to stay above the submerged diver and be aware of their position at all times.
- Both divers can assist each other in any way they need to but must do so in a safe manner.
- It's not mandatory but recommended that the float also be equipped with a coiled 50mtr light line and small drop weight in case the surface diver feels the need to immediately search and possibly dive to locate the submerged diver. If deployed it would anchor the float in the proximity of the potential search area as a reference point.
- The pair are allowed to take only the number of each species on the scoresheet between them as declared for the particular event.
- It's also recommended that the pair work in depths and conditions where, either one could rescue the other in an emergency.
- These guidelines also apply when training / scouting for an event.
- Scuba, Hookah or similar may not be used when scouting.
- Dive well within your limits. Don't push yourself. Never risk your life or that of another for the sake of a fish.



## SAFETY NOTICE TO COMPETITORS

In the interest of a safe and incident free competition we all need to take responsibility. The organisers have taken reasonable measures to ensure this is possible. Please ensure you fulfill your responsibility to take care of your own and fellow competitors' safety.

Here is relevant information on safety during the event and some tips to help each competitor remember their role in helping make this happen.

- Each safety boat has a first aid kit with the operator on board. One safety boat will be equipped with defibrillator and oxygen resus.
- Each safety boat is equipped with communication to the other safety boat, as well as shore base, and emergency services.
- A competitor may only approach, touch or hold onto a safety boat under instruction from the crew.
- Each safety boat has emergency water on board, however this is only for emergency use. Competitors are strongly encouraged to carry sufficient water on their personal float for hydration as assistance from a safety boat for any reason (except for emergency / safety at the discretion of the safety boat operator) will result in disqualification from the days event.
- A competitor may enter a safety boat or seek assistance from a safety boat at any time but doing so, for any reason (except for emergency / safety reasons sanctioned at the discretion of the safety boat operator) disqualifies that competitor, and their pair, from that day's competition. Where sanctioned assistance is given divers cannot gain any advantage from assistance from a safety boat over other competitors.
- If you suffer a cut, ensure you stop the bleeding and seek assistance if necessary.
- Full length wetsuits with hoods are recommended due to risk from: stinging jellyfish, cuts and abrasions and sun exposure.
- Divers are strongly encouraged to wait until they have swum clear of other divers before loading their speargun.
- Ensure you have the safety equipment as set out in the "A Section Rules" as a minimum.
- Use a float capable of carrying your fish out of the water or enclosed.
- If a competitor's flag is laying in the water during the competition the safety boat crews will ask the competitor to right it. The flag must be upright and visible as much as possible allowing for weather conditions. Floats and dive flags must be clearly visible to boat traffic at all times, to ensure the safety of the diver.
- If the flag continues to lie down in the water and not remain upright, safety boat crew are permitted to examine the float setup to check for problems and record the diver number, it will then be reported to the Championship Director. Divers must co- operate with safety boat instructions at all times.
- One of the biggest risks to a competitor in the water is collision with a craft / boat.
- The more visible you are the less likely this is to happen. Put your head up often and look about for boat traffic. If surfacing and hearing a boat raise your gun above your head as you ascend.
- The safety boats will aim to redirect/inform approaching watercraft of the large amount of divers present whenever possible.
- Ocean currents create a risk of being swept out to sea, it can happen, and has happened in high level competition so please be vigilant. Always be aware and stop, look, and monitor what the current is doing.



- If you become aware of a strong rip or dangerous current, please notify the safety boat crew so they may warn other competitors.
- In case of exceptionally high risk (for example a large predatory shark or dangerous weather change) the safety boat crews have the authority to remove competitors from the water. In this case the competition will cease for the day and no results will be recorded.
- To draw attention from one of the safety boats you may:
  - Raise your gun in the air if it is not an urgent situation
  - In an urgent situation
    - Wave your gun in the air, covered with a safety sausage
    - Blow your whistle and use your signaling mirror
- Rocks close to the shoreline / reef can be covered in weed which is extremely slippery.
- Care must be taken when exiting the water onto rocks.
- Whenever a competitor is out of the water, tips of guns must be covered, or spearhead removed.
- Aim to eat healthily and avoid excessive alcohol consumption during the week of competition. Energy levels and hydration are key elements to personal performance and safety during such physically demanding competitions.
- Wherever possible try to remain in sight of another person or float so you may attract attention for assistance. Raise your head often and think about the movements and safety of yourself and other competitors.
- Lastly, please remember that all committee members and helpers are volunteers.
- Organisation and planning for this competition has taken the majority of the past year. Please treat all volunteers, helpers and organisers with respect. Constructive comments are welcome, however inappropriate or abusive language/attitude is not.
- Competitors should familiarize themselves with the Spearsafe website



<https://spearsafe.com.au/>

## ONLINE RESOURCES

### FISHING RULES

[Fisheries WA - Recreational Fishing Guide](#)

[Recfishwest Mobile App](#)

### FISH ID

[Fish Identification Guide - Fisheries WA](#)

<https://fishesofaustralia.net.au/>

[Recfishwest Mobile App](#)

### WEATHER

[http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/meteye/?loc=WA\\_MW016](http://www.bom.gov.au/australia/meteye/?loc=WA_MW016)

<http://www.bom.gov.au/wa/forecasts/leeuwin-coast.shtml>

<http://www.bom.gov.au/wa/forecasts/bunbury-geographe-coast.shtml>

## CONTACTS AND FURTHER INFORMATION

### **Competition Director**

Arnie Piccoli

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## Preliminary Scoresheet

Each pair can only weigh **1** of any individual species.  
Recreational fishing size limits and combined bag limits below must be adhered to. Additionally an AUF standard minimum weight of 500g for all fish weighed also applies.

### Demersal scalefish: TOTAL mixed species daily bag limit per fisher **2** / per pair **4**

Baldchin groper (400mm)	<i>Choerodon rubescens</i>
Blue morwong (410mm)	<i>Nemadactylus valenciennesi</i>
Breaksea cod (300mm)	<i>Epinephelides armatus</i>
Wirrah spp. (300mm)	Genus <i>Acanthistius</i>
Harlequin fish (300mm)	<i>Othos dentex</i>
Cod, other (300mm)	Family <i>Ephinephelidae</i>
Dhufish (500mm)	<i>Glaucosoma hebraicum</i>
Boarfish (300mm)	Family <i>Pentacerothidae</i>
John Dory (300mm)	<i>Zeus faber</i>
Emperors and seabream Spangled (410mm) Other (280mm)	<i>Lethrinus</i> spp.
Foxfish (300mm)	<i>Bodianus</i> spp.
Pigfish (300mm)	<i>Bodianus</i> spp.
Bight redfish (300mm)	<i>Centroberyx gerrardi</i>
Swallowtail (300mm)	<i>Centroberyx lineatus</i>
Snapper (500mm)	<i>Chrysophrys auratus</i>

### Large pelagic finfish: TOTAL mixed species daily bag limit per fisher **3** / per pair **6**

Amberjack (600mm)	<i>Seriola dumerili</i>
Samsonfish (600mm)	<i>Seriola hippos</i>
Yellowtail kingfish <i>Seriola lalandi</i> (600mm)	<i>Seriola lalandi</i>
Mackerel, shark (500mm)	<i>Grammatocynus bicarinatus</i>
Mackerel, Spanish (900mm)	<i>Scomberomorus commerson</i>
Billfish N/A	Family <i>Istiophoridae</i>
Trevally, golden (300mm)	<i>Gnathanodon speciosus</i>
fTunas (300mm)	<i>Thunnus</i> spp.
Wahoo (900mm)	<i>Acanthocybium solandri</i>

### Nearshore/estuarine finfish: TOTAL mixed species daily bag limit per fisher **16**

Tarwhine (250mm)	<i>Rhabdosargus sarba</i>
Bream, Yellowfin (300mm)	<i>Acanthopagrus morrisoni</i>
Bonito (300mm)	Genus <i>Sarda</i>
Estuary cobbler (430mm)	<i>Cnidoglanis macrocephalus</i>
Flatheads (300mm)	<i>Platycephalus</i> spp.
Flounders (250mm)	Families <i>Pleuronectidae</i> , <i>Bothidae</i> and <i>Paralichthyidae</i>
Leatherjackets (250mm)	Family <i>Monacanthidae</i>
Mulloway (500mm)	<i>Argyrosomus japonicus</i>
Pike, longfin (300mm)	<i>Dinolestes lewini</i>
Snook (300mm)	<i>Sphyrnaena novaehollandiae</i>
Tailor (300mm)	<i>Pomatomus saltatrix</i>
Silver trevally (250 mm)	<i>Pseudocaranx</i> spp.
Western Australian salmon (300mm)	<i>Arripis truttaceus</i>
Whiting, King George (280mm)	<i>Sillaginodes punctata</i>
Sea sweep (300mm)	<i>Scorpius aequipinnis</i>

### All other species: TOTAL mixed species daily bag limit per fisher **30**

Western Rock Blackfish (300mm)	<i>Girella Tephthaeops</i>
Whiting, other (250mm)	Family <i>Sillaginidae</i>
Mullets (300mm)	Family <i>Mugilidae</i>
Moonlighter (300mm)	<i>Tilodon sexfasciatus</i>
Sand Bass (300mm)	<i>Psammoperca datnioides</i>
Red Scorpionfish, Western (250mm)	<i>Scorpaena sumptuosa</i>
Silver Spot (250mm)	<i>Chironemus maculosus</i>