

IGFA Rules

Question & Answer

Top-Shots & Backing

More anglers are using the benefit of low-stretch and thinner diameter braided lines and even dacron as backing on their reels. However, some anglers incorporate a section of top-shot monofilament line for "shock" purposes over these braided lines on their reels at the same time. This has brought up the question of IGFA compliance when using the application of multiple lines as a mainline on one reel. Below are some of the specific questions we have received.

Q: In order to downsize the size of my reels I want to use a 30 lb monofilament top-shot over 30 lb spectra backing. I've had the monofilament pre-tested at IGFA and expect it to break well within the 30 lb category. Is this acceptable for IGFA records?

A: *IGFA rules state that if backing is attached to the top-shot so that it is capable of leaving the spool, the catch will be considered under the heavier of the two lines. You indicated you want to use 30 lb spectra backing, which has a very high probability of breaking in the 50 lb or greater category. If this were the case, your catch would not be placed in the 30 lb category.*

Q: What if my top shot is sufficiently long that the backing never leaves the reel?

A: *As long as the two lines are joined so that it is possible for the backing to leave the reel, your catch will be placed under the heavier of the two lines.*

Q: What can I do if I simply want to use backing as a spool filler so that I can use a very light line top shot?

A: *Tape over your backing and then tie your top shot to it as you would if tying it directly to the spool. Your catch will now be considered under the breaking strength of your top shot because there is no way that backing can physically leave the reel.*

Please send any IGFA Rules-related questions to:
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