

## USING A CIRCLE HOOK BEFORE A PLUG

Can I attach a large circle hook to the ring of a plug rather than using the stock treble hooks?

In Figure 1 the connection of the circle hook to the plug is compliant with IGFA rules. The hook does not precede the lure more than the hook's length.

FIGURE 1

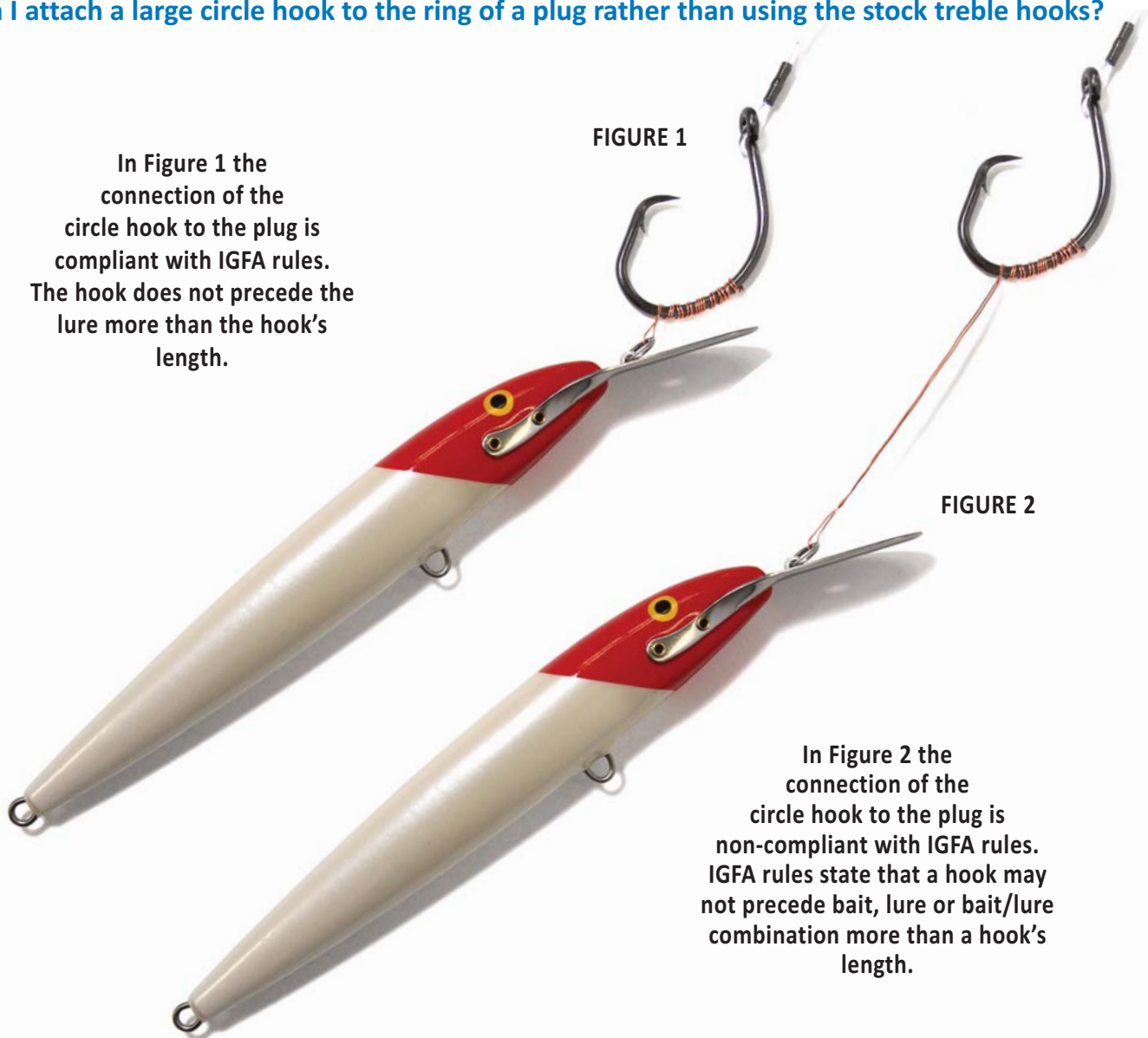


FIGURE 2

In Figure 2 the connection of the circle hook to the plug is non-compliant with IGFA rules. IGFA rules state that a hook may not precede bait, lure or bait/lure combination more than a hook's length.

**Question:** *When targeting powerful game fish such as tarpon, barramundi and grouper, trolling large sub-surface plugs is one of my favorite techniques. However, after years of experimentation, I prefer to remove the "stock" treble hooks and attach a large circle hook to the ring of the plug. I prefer the single circle hook to the multiple treble hooks because I find that I experience better and "cleaner" hook-ups, rather than foul hooking the fish in the face, gills, or other part of the body. Not to mention it is much safer for the angler when handling the fish. Is it legal by IGFA rules to remove the treble or assist hooks from a plug and attach a single hook to the front of the plug, as shown here?*

**Answer:** This is a great question and something that we don't see often on artificial baits. However, IGFA rules state that "a hook may not precede bait, lure or bait/lure combo by more than one hook's length." Therefore, the rig shown in Figure 1 (above) is IGFA legal, as the hook does not precede the lure by more than one hook's length.