

OFFICIAL AFC VIRTUAL TOURNAMENT RULES

GENERAL INFORMATION

The eTournament Fishing app is *mandatory* for all AFC events. Available for both iPhone and Android, at least one team member *must* download and install the app. It is *strongly recommended* that *both* team members install the app on separate devices as a backup.

AMERICAN FISHING CLUB (AFC)

The American Fishing Club (AFC), a 501(c)(7) non-profit organization, promotes and supports sport fishing. All AFC tournaments are permitted and promoted through the club. A \$5 membership fee, included in each event's entry, supports competitive fishing and AFC members. Learn more at www.AmericanFishingClub.com.

PARTICIPATION

Participant limits for each event will be established prior to the tournament and designated as either a team event (with the approved number of participants per team) or an individual event. All participants are responsible for possessing any required state licenses necessary to legally participate. Anglers under the age of 18 must either compete with a parent or guardian or have documented parental/guardian consent. Tournament format, approved watercraft, and all event-specific rules and parameters will be outlined within the eTournament Fishing app.

- Party fishing is strictly prohibited. Participants must fish independently and may not engage in team fishing activities with other competitors or non-participants. Anglers may not receive fishing assistance, fish-location information, or any other competitive advantage from another angler while on the water. Additionally, the transfer of fish from one boat, angler, or participant to another is strictly prohibited under all circumstances. Any violation of this rule will result in immediate disqualification from the event and may result in suspension or permanent expulsion from the tournament circuit at the discretion of Tournament Officials.
- The use of live bait is permitted in AFC events unless otherwise specified in the tournament rules. All participants are responsible for ensuring that the purchase, possession, transport, and use of live bait comply with all applicable state and local laws and regulations. The use, possession, or transport of any prohibited live bait species during a tournament is strictly prohibited and will result in immediate disqualification from the event.

Virtual Boat and Livewell Inspection

Tournament Directors may request a virtual boat and livewell inspection at any time during the event. Inspections must be submitted through the eTournament Fishing App using the fish submission feature. Upon notification, the angler will have four (4) minutes to complete and submit the requested inspection. Failure to submit the inspection within the allotted time will result in immediate disqualification from the event. Anglers operating in Offline Mode are still required to complete the inspection within the four-minute time limit. The submission will be date and time stamped by the app and used to verify compliance with this rule.

Inspection Submission Procedure

1. The angler will receive a text message and an event chat notification requesting a virtual boat inspection. The notification will include the deadline by which the inspection must be completed and submitted.
2. The angler will initiate a fish submission in the eTournament Fishing App and select the minimum length option of 14 inches.

3. Using the measurement photo feature, the angler must stand at one end of the boat and capture an image showing the entire boat. If competing as a team, the co-angler must be clearly visible in the photograph.
4. The angler will then proceed to the video release portion of the submission and record a continuous video showing all livewells, bait wells, and coolers.
5. Once the required photo and video have been completed, the angler will submit the inspection through the app for review by Tournament Directors.
6. After review, Tournament Directors will reject the inspection submission so that it does not count toward the angler's daily catch limit.

CPRV FORMAT

All AFC events utilize a Catch, Photo, Release Video (CPRV) format unless otherwise specified by AFC staff. Holding fish on stringers, in baskets, coolers, or livewells is *strictly prohibited* during tournament hours. Possession of any fish species (excluding minnow-type bait) is also forbidden. All fish must be immediately released after digital documentation. This CPRV format promotes conservation and eliminates fish harvest. Livewells and portable containers are *not* permitted to hold any fish species other than minnow-type bait.

EVENT REGISTRATION

Event registration is handled exclusively through the eTournament Fishing app. Participants must locate and register for the appropriate AFC tournament directly within the app. For team events, only one team member is required to complete registration for the team. For individual events, each angler must register separately, even if multiple participants are fishing from the same boat.

Please ensure all cell phone numbers are entered accurately, as this information is used for account/team identification and authorized fish submissions. Registration must be completed by the published event deadline within the app. Team member changes may be made within the app prior to the registration cutoff; any requested changes after the deadline must be coordinated directly with Tournament Director Josh Sheldon.

PARTICIPANTS RESPONSIBILITIES

All participants are responsible for reading and understanding the tournament rules. Participants must have a functional cell phone with sufficient power and storage for the eTournament Fishing app.

Watching the eTournament Fishing app tutorials before the event is strongly encouraged.

PRE-TOURNAMENT OFF THE WATER RULE

If applicable, all AFC tournament participants must have their boats trailered and be off the water by 6:00 PM on the Friday before the tournament. Plan accordingly. In emergencies or unforeseen circumstances preventing compliance, contact AFC staff *before* 6:00 PM at 970-227-0401 or 303-514-1078 for guidance. Teams violating this rule will be limited to weighing four fish per day during the tournament.

TOURNAMENT FISHING HOURS

Tournament hours for each event are listed within the app. Official tournament time will be determined solely by the GPS/cellular device time displayed in the app. No other timekeeping methods will be recognized. The app is programmed to prevent fish submissions before the official start time and after the official end time of each tournament day. Fishing outside of designated tournament hours is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification.

MANDATORY ANS INSPECTIONS (*Where required*)

All watercraft used in AFC tournaments must undergo a mandatory Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) inspection and comply with regulations for the specific body of water. Participants are solely responsible for following ANS procedures and being ready by the official start time. Teams without a pre-event inspection or those failing inspection will forfeit their launch order and launch *only* after successfully passing the required ANS inspection, going to the end of the launch line. *Pre-event ANS tagging is strongly recommended.*

PRE-LAUNCH VIRTUAL BOAT INSPECTION

Each tournament morning, prior to the official start time, all teams must complete a mandatory virtual boat inspection from the designated launch location(s). GPS data submitted through the daily boat inspection process will verify the team's/individual's presence at the correct launch area.

- Ten minutes before lines in, the eTournament Fishing app will activate and teams will use one daily submission to provide verification that all livewells and baitwells are empty and dry. This process includes submitting a measurement photo taken within approximately 50 yards of the designated launch ramp, along with a short release-style video showing all livewells and baitwells clearly open, empty, and dry. These submissions are sent directly to AFC tournament officials for review through the eTournament Fishing app and will not count toward the team's daily fish submission limit.
- For events involving kayaks or other approved flotation devices, the morning check-in process will require participants to use the eTournament Fishing app to submit their first daily entry from their launch location. The submission must include a video of the kayak or flotation device clearly showing that no fish are tethered, stored, or otherwise attached to the vessel.
- This verification submission will be reviewed and rejected by tournament officials, so it does not count toward the participant's daily fish submission limit.

BOAT LAUNCHING PROCESS

As soon as the anglers have completed their virtual boat tour has been completed and submitted they are free to launch.

END OF DAY/EVENT CHECK-IN

Immediately following the conclusion of each tournament day, all teams must open the eTournament Fishing app and verify that no fish submissions remain highlighted in red with the status "Being Uploaded." Teams or individual participants will have 60 minutes after the official close of the event in the eTournament Fishing app to complete all uploads or contact tournament officials regarding any submission issues. Failure to do so will result in late fish being rejected.

LENGTH TO WEIGHT CONVERSION

The eTournament Fishing app automatically converts fish length (in quarter-inch increments) to weight. When submitting fish, teams select the length, which is then converted to weight for calculating all results.

ALL ANGLERS WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR USING A PROFESSIONALLY MANUFACTURED BUMP BOARD FOR MEASUREMENT PHOTOS.

DAILY VIRTUAL LIVEWELL LIMIT

Teams may submit a maximum of 75 fish per day (one of the submissions will be for the prelaunch boat tour). Each submission counts toward the daily virtual livewell limit. The app will prevent submissions exceeding this limit.

DAILY BASKET

Of the 75 submitted fish, the team's 5 longest will comprise their daily basket. The app automatically selects the 5 longest for calculating the daily total weight. Final standings are determined by the combined total weight from Day 1 and Day 2 (if applicable).

CHECK-IN TO THE EVENT

Participants *must* check in to the event via the eTournament Fishing app *before* the start, while a strong cellular or Wi-Fi connection is available. This enables the app's online functionality when service is good and offline mode when service is poor or nonexistent. To check in, open the app, navigate to your registered event, and tap the "Check-In" box. *Refer to the eTournament Fishing participant tutorial videos for detailed instructions.*

SUBMITTING FISH

It is *strongly recommended* to watch the eTournament Fishing tutorial videos and familiarize yourself with the fish submission process. Participating in the free practice tournament within the app is also recommended to practice submitting fish before any live event.

CPRV REQUIRED FISH SUBMISSION ELEMENTS

For the CPRV format, a measurement photo *and* a release video are required for each fish submission.

MEASUREMENT PHOTO

Immediately after catching a fish to be submitted, the participant *must* take the measurement photo.

- The measurement photo *must* be taken from directly overhead ("straight down perspective") with no angle. Avoid casting shadows on the fish.
- The measurement photo *must* clearly show the entire fish and be in focus. Providing a clear photo for accurate verification is the participant's sole responsibility.
- The measurement photo *must* show the fish's mouth (open or closed) touching the "bump end" of the measuring board. Failure to clearly show the mouth touching will result in a 1/2-inch deduction from the submitted length.
- Your hand *must* be placed behind the fish's eye, holding the fish flat against the measuring board.
- **The official measurement photograph must clearly display the fish's tail in contact with the measuring board to allow for accurate length verification. If the farthest point of the tail touches or extends beyond a graduation mark, the measurement may be rounded up to the nearest 1/4 inch. No second hand, finger, tool, or other object may be used to hold, position, or manipulate the fish's tail during the measurement process. The tail must rest naturally on the measuring board without assistance.**
- Absolutely no use of a towel while measuring a fish. A towel may not be present in the measurement photo without express permission by tournament directors for select cases of disability.
- **The fish's tail must be flat against the measuring board with no fingers between the fish and the board. No fingers will be permitted under any portion of the fish while it is on the measuring board. ANY VIOLATION OF THIS RULE WILL RESULT IN A 1 INCH PENALTY FOR THAT FISH.**
- The minimum length for fish submission is 14 inches. If a fish's tail touches the 13 3/4-inch mark, rounding up to 14 inches is allowed for submission. Fish not reaching the 13 3/4-inch mark does not meet the minimum length requirement and cannot be submitted.
- **No participant may manipulate, alter, or handle a fish in any manner intended to artificially increase its measured length or cause harm to the fish. This includes, but is not limited to, "popping the fish's back" or any other technique used to stretch, distort, or misrepresent the fish's natural length. Any evidence of fish manipulation will result in immediate disqualification from the tournament. In addition, the incident may be referred to local Parks and Wildlife for further investigation and potential enforcement action.**

TROPHY PHOTO

If a trophy photo is required, follow the sequence shown in the eTournament Fishing app. The trophy photo should clearly showcase the fish, emphasize its size and clearly identify the angler who caught it. Trophy photos may be used for promoting future events and by anglers in their in-app profiles. Clear, professional-quality photos are highly encouraged.

RELEASE VIDEO

After taking the measurement photo and/or trophy photo, the participant will take the release video.

- If no trophy photo is required, the release video *must* show the fish clearly on the measuring board and being lifted off the measuring board and completely released back into the water.
- The fish cannot be thrown into the water over the side of the boat or over the motors. **The fish must be laid back in the water and released from that position.**
- The video must be long enough to show the fish swimming away. Any videos that do not show the fish swimming away will result in a rejection of that fish.
- If a trophy photo is required, the release video may begin immediately after the photo is taken.
- **CRITICAL: Verify the video recorder's timer is actively running *after* pressing record to guarantee the video is capturing.**
- Failure to clearly show the fish's release in the video will result in the submission being rejected, and that fish will still count towards your daily virtual livewell limit.
- If a legal fish cannot be released due to its condition, the team must retrieve the fish and remove a significant portion of its tail fin. This marks the fish as already submitted and accounted for. Anglers *must* immediately notify tournament officials, providing the corresponding fish number from their app submission.

TAP THE SUBMIT BUTTON

After taking the measurement photo and release video, tap the orange "SUBMIT" button to begin uploading the fish submission.

FISH SUBMISSION STATUS

You can monitor the status of your fish submissions directly in the app. A submission showing "**Being Uploaded**" in red means the upload is still in progress and the app must remain open so the fish can continue uploading to the cloud. Once the status changes to "**Pending Review**," the upload is complete and the tournament director has successfully received the submission for review.

AT THE END OF THE DAY

At the end of the day, or after your final fish submission, verify that all entries show "**Pending Review**." If any submission still displays "**Being Uploaded**," pull down on the screen to refresh and restart the upload process. Once every submission reads "**Pending Review**," your fish have been successfully uploaded and received for director review.

ATTENTION ALL PARTICIPANTS

Participants are responsible for ensuring all fish submission elements comply with the guidelines. Visit www.eTournamentFishing.com for information on app functionality and the fish submission process.

APP USE IN AREA WITH POOR OR NO CELLULAR SERVICE

The eTournament Fishing app records your catch with or without a cellular data or Wi-Fi connection. However, you *must* check in before the event starts while connected to cellular data or Wi-Fi. Open the app, go to your registered event, and tap the "Check-In" box. See the user tutorials at www.eTournamentFishing.com for more information.

PROTESTS OR ALLEGATIONS OF MISCONDUCT

Protests must be submitted to AFC staff in writing within 45 minutes of the boat check-in time. The written protest must detail the alleged violation, identify the angler involved, and state the time of the violation. A \$100 cash protest fee is required, refundable if the protest is upheld. AFC staff will investigate and make a final, non-appealable ruling. Unfounded or inconclusive protests forfeit the \$100 fee, which will be added to the event payout. Contestants agree to provide phone records if requested by AFC staff during an investigation.

LIVE LEADERBOARD

The live leader board will not have boat numbers, or names that are visible to the field or participants. The leaderboard will have individual weights for each team, but those weights will only be associated with the confidential PIN issued to each team prior to the tournament.

SPONSOR MONIES/PRODUCT DONATIONS

Individual sponsors may contribute funds or products to each side pot. If available teams must enter side pots to be eligible to win (all teams are automatically entered into the big fish side pot). Sponsor contributions to each side pot will be announced before each event.

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