

# 2026 Wilson Harbor Invitational Rules

Mandatory Captain meeting Friday prior to the event at 6:00pm sharp! Location: *Wilson Harbor Boat House Restaurant*.

Registration for the Captain's meeting will open at 5:00pm. All teams should be registered prior to the 6:00pm meeting start time. Award ceremony for the 1K and Trout and Salmon Slam will be held directly following the captain's meeting.

## Eligibility

1. All U.S. and Canadian anglers must possess a valid NY State fishing license.
2. Team captains must be 18 years of age before May 16<sup>th</sup>, 2026.
3. A maximum number of **9 rods** to be fished at any one time. When fishing with less than 3 team members, adhere to NYS DEC regulations. At no time shall more than **9** fishing rods be deployed in the water, which includes the rod(s) that may have fish on them. They also count in the act of fishing.
4. The tournament committee reserves the right to decline entry or participation by any person, team or boat, as deemed necessary, to ensure such things as integrity, image, reputation, and relationships with sponsors, participants and supporting groups.
5. All NYS/DEC fishing rules apply. **Boundaries**
  1. New York waters of Lake Ontario only. Canadian anglers are welcomed to participate but NY waters only during the WHI.
  2. The WHI rules committee reserves the right to look at a protested team's GPS coordinates, if it involves a possible boundary violation. Any team that intentionally deletes that day's coordinates may be disqualified from that day's event.
  3. Competitors must not go ashore anywhere but the designated areas. If a team must go ashore or dock early, they must notify the tournament committee and be given consent prior to touching land or docking.

## Entry

1. Canadian entries are permitted and will be received at Par.
2. Entries are due (1) week prior to tournament. There will be a **\$200 late fee** (US currency) for all entries/balances received after the initial deadline and before the final cutoff date.
3. Entry fee: each day is: \$400. Entry fee for the overall is \$200. Entry fee for Dreamweaver Challenge: \$600
4. The WHI will keep 10% of "all" entry fees and 5% of entry fees for the DW Challenge for the administration of the event.
5. Payout will be 15% of field for Saturday and Sunday and Top 3 for the overall.
6. Payout for the DW Challenge will be 50/30/20. If event is a one-day event due to weather, we will pay the top 6 places.
7. Teams registered in the DW Challenge qualify for \$300 per day. If one day is cancelled, we will pay 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> for that day, \$300 each in certificates
8. Teams entering this year's event are **NOT** automatically included in the 1K a Day.
9. It is the Captain's responsibility to ensure that he is at the Captain's meeting. If the Captain cannot attend, he must send a qualified representative. That representative will assume his/team responsibility.
10. In the event of a cancellation, the WHI will return all fees with exception of the administration fees.

## Communication (this is a no communication event)

1. No open communication of any kind is permitted during the event hours.
2. Open communication is permitted at these times only: immediately following finish times each day, once dockside, if the event is delayed/postponed, to monitor/talk to tournament control on Channel 16 or 9.
3. Communication is also permitted if there is a need to contact the tournament committee for emergency contact only. I.e., Coast Guard and to maintain contact with tournament control in the event of foul weather, delays or emergency.
4. Under a no communication rule: All communication capable items on the tournament vessel, such as: cell phones, pagers, wireless internet devices, pads, text messaging/email watches, etc... are to be turned off, concealed in bag provided by the tournament committee.
5. Tournament boats are also prohibited from all open water boat-to-boat contact unless it involves law enforcement or an emergency. Exceptions must be pre-approved by the tournament director or will result in disqualification for the day.
6. In case of an emergency or rule clarification, a cell phone or VHF marine radio may be used only to contact a tournament committee member or USCG.
7. Tournament Control contact number will be: **814-602-8436-Candie**

## Fishing Hours

1. Official start time will be 6:00 am and teams will be released by shotgun start (or horn).
2. In the event of inclement weather, announcements will begin at 5:00 am on channel 16, then 9, in order to advise the teams of delays. Weather delays will occur in one-hour increments.
3. All vessels are permitted to leave dockside as early as 5:30 am. Waiver forms must be completed and sent to the tournament each morning between 5:00 am and 6:00 am. (Shotgun start)
4. When leaving dock between 5:30 am and 6:00 am, vessels **MUST** remain inside the staging areas located on either side of the pier heads. (300 yards to the east, north or 300 yards to the west of pier heads)
5. There is **NO** official stop time. All teams **MUST** be in line at the pre-check area (Wilson Boat House Restaurant) for weigh in no later than **3:00 pm for Wilson Boat Yard Marina teams and 3:20 for all other teams**. Teams must manage their own time.
6. All vessels must return to port under their own power or face disqualification.
7. There will be no makeup day.

## Scoring

1. A maximum of 6 fish will be weighed in for each day of this tournament. Teams will not be permitted to retrieve fish if they bring less than 6.
2. Only Chinook and Coho Salmon will be eligible for weigh in.
3. Minimum length for **Chinook= 20 inches** and **Coho= 18 inches**. Measurements will be from tip of nose to tip of tail (pinched for maximum length).
4. Culling will be allowed for this event. Teams, regardless of having more than (4) anglers on board, may keep up to up to a **(4) person limit of salmon** (12). Teams with (3) anglers or less must abide by NYS/DEC laws of (3) salmon per licensed angler. There shall be no disposing of dead fish or removal of fish from one's live well/cooler to maintain creel. Even if the fish is alive. Once you decide to keep a fish by placement in the cooler, live well of floor box, it counts toward the boat limit.
5. Points are awarded at 10 points per fish one point per pound.
6. All fish must be caught and retrieved legally by hook, line and reel. Incidentally hooked fish landed while in the act of trolling can be kept.
7. In the event of a tie in total weight, the tiebreaker will go to the team with the largest single fish.
8. The team with the most points will be deemed winner each day.
9. The team with the most combined points from each day will be the overall winner.
10. Teams registered for Saturday only: In the event Saturday is cancelled, that team can choose to compete Sunday. However, their score will be counted toward the Saturday field of teams. Refunds can also be given upon request, less the 10% administration fees.
11. Teams registered for both days: In the event one of the days is cancelled, teams scores for that day will be counted against that day's field to determine each day's winners, based on one day's competition.
12. Teams registered for the Overall: In the event one of the days is cancelled, the overall winner will be based on that single competition day for those entered in the overall. It becomes a one-day shootout for that day plus the overall.

## Weigh In (This is a dry cooler weigh-in)

1. Upon returning to port, fish must be immediately transported to the designated weigh in location and be in line, **no later than 3:00 pm for Wilson Harbor Boat Yard Marina Teams and 3:20 for all other teams**. Weigh in location will be at the Wilson Boat House Restaurant.
2. One team member must accompany the days catch to the weigh in and must remain there until the cooler is surrendered by the tournament committee.
3. All coolers may be required to pass through a pre-check area where they may be marked with the number of fish to be weighed and cooler taped shut. Any fish close to the established minimum length will be measured.
4. \*No intentional weight enhancement or altering of your catch is allowed. \*However, teams can keep their fish in a live well or cooler containing water and/or ice.
5. All coolers at weigh in are required to be free of water, all forms ice, block/bag ice, bait coolers, etc... and contain 6 fish maximum.
6. Teams that violate Rule #5 in any form, will be given a **25-point** penalty.
7. Any fish determined to be under sized or of the wrong species will be disallowed. A penalty of **25 points** per fish disallowed will be assessed against your final score. There will be no replacing that fish.

## Weather

1. In the interest of safety, the day's fishing may be cancelled by the tournament committee. However, once released to fish and bad weather or rough water occurs, it will be the Captain's discretion to decide whether his team stays out or comes in early. In other words, once released it will be the Captain's decision whether to fish or not, not the WHI tournament committee. (REFER to Rule 2 under Boundaries).
2. \*All team members and all tournament boats are prohibited from entering the waters of Lake Ontario if Saturday is cancelled. Any exceptions must be preapproved by the tournament committee. Boats can move within the harbor for fueling, maintenance, etc...
3. There will be no make-up days.

## Misconduct and Prevention Controls

1. Cheating will not be tolerated. Any individual or team found guilty will result in immediate disqualification. This individual and possibly team members, will also be barred from all future events and tournaments operated as, or in conjunction with The Wilson Harbor Invitational or G.L.S.E.
2. Insubordination of any kind directed toward tournament officials, volunteers, observers, sponsors, and opposing teams will result in disqualification of that team for future year event(s).
3. The tournament committee's decision will be final for all matters pertaining to the interpretation and conduct of these rules. In the interest of good sportsmanship, the "spirit of the rule" will prevail in all judgment cases.
4. Random lie detector tests can be given to the prize winners in the WHI, Trout and Salmon Slam and 1K A Day. This will be at the discretion of the tournament committee.
5. Spotter boats may be used to spot check all tournament boats on the water.
6. Random boat and cooler checks may be conducted before, during and after by a tournament official. Teams who refuse boat inspections or cooler checks will be disqualified.
7. Random fish may be cut open for inspection after they are weighed. Refusal will result in disqualification.
8. Random coolers may be collected and transported by a tournament official once teams dock. They will be sealed and become the responsibility of the official for purpose of transportation to the weigh-in. Refusal will result in disqualification.

9. Lie detector tests may be given to any participants upon request by tournament officials. Failing a test can result in disqualification. Refusal to take a test can result in disqualification.
10. To protect the integrity of the event, anyone accused of cheating in any organized fishing tournament or derby, prior to this event, and after vetting such claim, can be requested to take and pass a lie detector test. Failure to pass a lie detector test will disqualify said person from competing in any of the WHI/Trout and Salmon Slam, 1K A Day, and all GLSE events. The test will be paid for by GLSE.
11. There will be no refunds given if you are disqualified for any reason.
12. Fish disposal and drop off: Any fish found deposited in dumpsters, marinas, or any other place where they will be deemed unsightly or as trash may lead to prosecution. Those individuals will be excluded from future events held or related by the WHI/GLSE.

### **Protests**

1. Any contestant witnessing a violation of the rules is **required** to IMMEDIATELY report the alleged violation to the tournament committee for investigation.
2. Any team has the right to file a protest by notifying the tournament committee and pledging \$100. The \$100 will only be refunded if they win the protest.
3. Protests must be presented to the tournament committee within 15 minutes prior to the start of the weigh in unless it involves the weigh-in itself.
4. Tournament officials can choose to use a lie detector test to help decide protests.

### **Liability & Disclaimers**

1. All vessels fishing in this event must carry liability insurance.
2. All contestants are required to sign waiver forms on Saturday and Sunday morning prior to leaving dockside. There are no exceptions! Waivers to be signed and sent via text pic to 814-602-8436 prior to 6:00 am. **Text pics can be sent between 5:00 am and 6:00 am each day of the event (Do not send prior to 5:00 am or day before).**
3. The tournament committee will take every reasonable precaution to protect both person and property. All contestants agree to hold all those associated with the production of The Wilson Harbor Invitational/Great Lakes Special Events harmless from any liability or claim of damages.

### **Disclaimer/Agreement**

1. Wilson Harbor Invitational reserves the right to modify or add rules up to the time of the Captain's meeting, as necessary to maintain the integrity of the event.
2. By agreeing to fish the Wilson Harbor Invitational, Trout and Salmon Slam and 1K A Day, you understand and agree to abide by all tournament rules and NY State DEC and OMNR (teams fishing CND waters for 1K and Slam) rules.
3. By agreeing to fish the Wilson Harbor Invitational, Trout and Salmon Slam and 1K A Day, you also agree to allow the WHI/GLSE to use your team's names, team's boat and team member's pictures/videos for future advertisements.

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