

2019



OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

- 1.) Fishing hours will be from **7:00am to 3:30pm, August 24th, 2019.**
(Foul weather date will be Sunday, August 25th, same fishing hours)
*Should the weekend be a total loss, deemed unfishable, the payouts will be by lottery draw for the main event, largest walleye and calcuttas. This will be done at 12:30pm on Sunday, if required.
- 2.) There will be a shotgun start from the **lighthouse at Chadwick Bay**, Dunkirk, NY. There will be starting/location device or boat (to be announced at the captain's meeting). The shotgun start will be specifically **7:00am** sharp. Monitor VHF Channel 68 for the official countdown and call.
 - **If you depart prior than our official shotgun start at 7:00am, you will be immediately disqualified.**
- 3.) **ALL** waters of Lake Erie and the Niagara River are legal fishable tournament waters, this includes Canadian waters.
- 4.) Each boat will utilize a maximum of up to **nine (9) rod/reels per boat - total.** All other USA and Canadian laws apply.
- 5.) Boats may have from two **(2) to (5) anglers** per boat.
- 6.) Two team # signs will be provided (port and starboard); it is the team captain's responsibility to clearly post them visible to other tournament officials and tournament boats. If these numbers are not visibly displayed, you will not be identifiable therefore disqualified from the competition. Please make sure the signs are posted before your boat is inspected.
- 7.) Each Team will present up to **six (6) walleyes** in their box. The largest being identified with the ZIP-TIE provided. The only species allowed in the box are walleyes.
 - **Any more than six walleyes or any other species in the box will immediately disqualify the box and the team for the event. All culling is to be completed prior to entering the cooler check in station.**
 - **The fish will be presented in a cooler with bagged or blocked ice only. No loose ice or water baths allowed.**
- 8.) The walleyes presented must be a minimum of **20" from nose to tail**; any fish short of 20" will be removed from that boxes total weight; the remaining limit can be weighed without penalty. An official tournament measuring board will be on stage to measure any questionable short fish. In an effort to expedite the weigh in show, please do not bring fish smaller than 20" in your cooler.
- 9.) Any fish found being altered in any manner is unacceptable and will result in immediate disqualification. **Fish should be handled in a manner that does not change the national digression or increase the fish's weight.** This includes but is not limited to water bath, injection of any materials (ice, water, bait, lead, etc.), rubber banding of the fish's mouth, plugging of the anus, weight clipping of the gills, and clubbing or instantly killing the fish. Bagged or block ice is permissible. A live well (by Webster's definition - a well for keeping fish alive in a fishing boat by allowing seawater to circulate through it) is permissible, but dead fish cannot be kept in a live well with water in it (this would be considered a water bath).

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- 10.) The team “puck” will be issued upon completion of the morning boat check. EVERY boat will be checked prior to departure at the **Chadwick Bay Marina**. Bring your boat check slip to the marina pavilion to pick up your puck. If you depart without your puck, you will not be able to weigh your fish.
- 11.) The team “puck” is returned to the cooler check in station at the **Chadwick Bay Marina Pavilion** when you drop off your fish cooler with tournament officials. It would be appreciated if you would please return you puck regardless if you are presenting a cooler for weigh in or not to help with the accountability that the entire fleet has returned safely.
- 12.) Boat checks will begin at 5:30am, **NO boat/team** can depart the docks or launch prior to having boat checks completed and team puck in hand. Monitor VHF Channel 68.
- 13.) Tournament boats cannot make contact with each other at any point or time once your boat check is complete. No boat is allowed to float or pass equipment, fish, bait, ice, coolers, food or drink between them; at any point throughout the day after you boat has been check. This includes at the dock, leaving Chadwick Bay, on the lake during traveling or fishing, or returning back to Chadwick Bay. Any noted or witnessed contact between boats will result in an immediate disqualification for any/all boats involved.
- 14.) There is **NO stop** fishing time, HOWEVER, your cooler must be turned in to the check in station by **3:30 PM Sharp! (NO EXCEPTIONS)**. Coolers will be transported by tournament staff to weigh-in. Once the coolers are dropped off and in the possession of the tournament officials, they will be sealed and labeled. Tournament coolers cannot be re-opened by the team from this point on. If any access to the cooler is attempted by the team, the cooler/team will be disqualified.
- 15.) Fish will be weighed in at Rookies On The Lake. Weigh-In will begin at 5:00pm. Teams will be called to get their cooler and present their fish to be weighed.
- 16.) In the event of a tie for the largest walleye (for Big Fish Friday & Main Event), the respective prize will be split equally. During the main event, if there is a tie in box weight, the big fish weight will be used first to break the tie. If the tie still cannot be broken, the respective prize money will be equally split.
- 17.) All slip fees, launch fees, lodging fees and all other associated fees are the responsibility of each team.
- 18.) Liability & Rules Waiver must be signed by all participating anglers. Waivers must be handed in no later than at registration before the captain’s meeting.

Any teams that win more than \$599.99 will be required to complete IRS Form W-9 and will receive a 1099-MISC no later than January 31, 2020. See the tournament staff after the weigh-in show to complete the form and collect your prize.

- 19.) The tournament is an **OPEN** communication event.
- 20.) All boats must depart and return under their own power. Jumping boats or transferring coolers is a violation of rule #13 and therefore not allowed.
- 21.) As the event will have a professional weigh in, it is mandatory that each team will be properly dressed. Ideally team t-shirts or jerseys are the best choice; as they look professional and show well for pictures and videos. No Ripped, bloody t-shirts, tank-tops or cut off sweat pants are allowed. No alcohol or smoking is allowed on stage.

No profanity, unsportsmanlike conduct, actions or deliberate vulgarity will be allowed on stage, this will result in immediate disqualification.

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- 22.) Tournament team registration begins at 6:00pm on **Friday, August 23rd** at **Rookie's On The Lake, 19 Lake Shore Dr, E, Dunkirk, NY**. Each team must be checked in no later than 6:30pm. Additional tournament information will be presented at that time.
- 23.) **Captain's Meeting (Mandatory)** - At least one member of each team must be checked-in/registered and be present for the captain's meeting on **Friday, August 23rd, 2019**. Captain's meeting starts at **6:30 pm sharp**; registration begins at 6:00pm. Registration and captain's meeting will be at **Rookie's On The Lake, 19 Lake Shore Dr E, Dunkirk, NY**.
- Teams not registered by 6:30pm and present for Captain's meeting will be penalized 2 hours for departure for the day of fishing (9:00 am departure time will be enforced).**
- 24.) **Big Fish Friday** - Big Fish Friday (BFF) is not part of the payout structure or a requirement of the main event. Our tournament scales will be utilized for weighing of the fish for this portion of the event. Rules are provided separately for Big Fish Friday portion of the fishing. It is each participating team's responsibility to know, understand and abide by the rules that apply for Big Fish Friday if they so choose to fish this portion. Please reference the Big Fish Friday information sheet provided.
- 25.) Unsportsmanlike conduct of any kind will not be tolerated. Abuse, verbal or otherwise directed towards the tournament committee members, its volunteers or supporting staff, will result in immediate disqualification, NO Exceptions.
- 26.) The intent of the rules is to promote good sportsmanship and good competition. Any infraction of the rules in the opinion of the tournament committee will result in disqualification. The tournament committee's decision will be final for all matters pertaining to the interpretation of the rules.
- 27.) **Protest/Challenge Submittals** - In the event a team wishes to enter a protest to formally challenge a competitor conflict, a formal document will be available for submittal. This form, in addition to a charge of \$200 will be presented to Tournament Officials. Submittals must be made no later than 15 minutes after the weighing in of the last team on the day of the event. Should the challenge be awarded in favor to the protest submitting team, the \$200 fee will be refunded to the challenging team. Should the challenge be invalid, the \$200 fee will be forfeited.
- 28.) The Innovative Outdoors Walleye Challenge maintains zero tolerance of cheating or misconduct within **ANY** tournament venue anywhere throughout the USA or Canada. The Innovative Outdoors Walleye Challenge will prohibit participation of any captain or team member(s) found/documentated as cheating or misconduct within **ANY** tournament event.
- 29.) Polygraph testing and/or legal deposition will be utilized for winning teams (this could include any or all members of the team) within various portions of the tournament payout structure. This includes Big Fish Friday and the Main Event. Refusal or being unable to participate when called to test will result in automatic disqualification. All test results will be considered final with no exceptions. Any form of deception recorded by the test will be considered a failure and result in disqualification.
- 30.) Teams/boats cannot go ashore once they have departed boat check. All boats must leave the harbor by water and return by water.

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- 31.) **Weather CALL** - In the event we have unfavorable weather conditions for the event, the following process will be followed for both Big Fish Friday and Main Event Saturday.

Big Fish Friday

- a.) Tournament officials will monitor <http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/data/Forecasts/FZUS51.KBUF.html>. Monitor VHF channel 68.
- b.) If there is a *Small-Craft Warning* posted for Dunkirk, NY prior to opening fishing hours (6:00am) for anytime during the days event, the Big Fish portion of the event will be cancelled. The monies/prizes will be determined via lottery draw for all teams entered into this section of the weekend.
- c.) If weather is rough or unfavorable conditions are present, but no *Small-Craft Warning* has been posted, Big Fish Friday will be considered OPEN and fishable. It is the team captain's responsibility to make the judgment/decision if he feels his team/vessel can safely fish the conditions.
- d.) In the event, a *Small-Craft Warning* is posted once fishing hours have started (past 6:00am), fishing will be considered OPEN and fishable. It is the team captain's responsibility to make the judgment/decision if he feels his team/vessel can safely fish the conditions.

Main Event

- a.) Tournament officials will monitor <http://www.ndbc.noaa.gov/data/Forecasts/FZUS51.KBUF.html>. Monitor VHF channel 68.
- b.) If there is a *Small-Craft Warning* posted for Dunkirk, NY prior to opening fishing hours (7:00am) for anytime during the days event, the Main Event Saturday, the day will be considered officially cancelled and the fleet will prepare for Sunday as the make-up blow day.
- c.) Should Sunday be utilized as the tournament main event day, all rules, times and processes will apply as Saturday.
- d.) In the event the weather is rough or unfavorable conditions, but no *Small-Craft Warnings* are posted; the Main Event will be considered OPEN and fishable. It is the team captain's responsibility to make the judgment/decision if he feels his team/vessel can safely fish the conditions.
- e.) In the event, a *Small-Craft Warning* is posted once fishing hours have started (past 7:00am), fishing will be considered OPEN and fishable; It is the team captain's responsibility to make the judgment/decision if he feels his team/vessel can safely fish the conditions.

- Monitor and use VHF Channel 16 for safety and emergency information, monitor VHF Channel 68 for Tournament updates and information.

The rules are presented to be clear, understood by teams captain/team members and provide an even playing field for each team. If you have any questions, please see a tournament official at the captain's meeting for clarification.

The tournament officials have the final decision in any/all reported or identified situations/incidents that require attention.