

LAKE THOMPSON WALLEYE TOURNAMENT RULES 2026

ALL RULES SHOULD BE READ BEFORE TOURNAMENT BEGINS. ANY QUESTIONS REGARDING THE RULES/TOURNAMENT SHOULD BE BROUGHT UP DURING THE RULES MEETING ON FRIDAY NIGHT.

- 1) **CHEATING:** Cheating will result in immediate disqualification from the tournament. Your entry fee will not be refunded, and you will not be permitted to fish this tournament next year.
- 2) **ELIGIBILITY:** Any person 18 years old or older will be eligible to compete. Persons under 18 can participate only as a teammate of a parent, guardian, or relative 18 years or older. The \$200 entry fee must accompany a **completed and signed** entry form. Entries are composed of two (2) people per boat.
- 3) **REGULATIONS:** All contestants must observe US Coast Guard and South Dakota Game, Fish, & Parks Department rules, regulations, laws, and license requirements. **ALL BOATS MUST CARRY STATE REQUIRED SAFETY ITEMS.**
- 4) **PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICES:** Any time up to the rules meeting on Friday, June 5th.
- 5) **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Contestants will be expected to be courteous, safety conscious, and practice fundamental sporting principles.
- 6) **TACKLE:** Artificial and live baits may be used according to the South Dakota Game, Fish, & Parks rules & regulations. **(Importation of bait fish into South Dakota by anglers will not be allowed (S.D.GF&P))**
- 7) **FISHING AREA:** Lake Thompson north of 218th Street (Oldham grade) including Schaeffer's slough west of 441st Avenue.
- 8) **FISHING:** It shall be illegal for two contestant boats to pull up to each other during tournament hours. Fishing contestants must maintain a 50-foot distance from other contestants when fishing. Contestants may not leave their boat at any time to land fish or untangle lines or lures. All boats will be allowed to land only at tournament headquarters during tournament hours.
- 9) **FISHING HOURS:** Saturday, June 6th and Sunday, June 7th. There will be 2 heats, starting at 7:00 AM till 3:00 PM, and 8:00 AM till 4:00 PM. Order will be reversed on Sunday.
- 10) **FISH:** Contestants are to use live wells or coolers to keep fish as fresh as possible during the tournament. If any fish are questionable (white gills, soft flesh, sunken eyes, etc.) due to poor handling by a team, these fish will not be counted, and team disqualification may result. **No stringers or baskets will be permitted!**
- 11) **LATE PENALTY:** Contestants who return later than the prescribed time will be penalized five percent per minute for the day. Over 15 minutes will result in disqualification for the day. If a team fails to report in after either day of fishing, they may be disqualified from the tournament.
- 12) **SCORING:** Prizes will be awarded for the most weight for a weigh-in limit of **5 walleyes**. **You cannot have more than 6 walleyes in your boat. Only walleyes 14 inches or over will be counted, and only 1 walleye 20 inches or more per person. Other species of fish may be kept, with only walleyes being weighed.**

- 13) TIES:** Ties will be resolved by awarding the team returning with the earliest combined time for both days.
- 14) REFUSAL:** Tournament officials reserve the right to refuse entry to any person.
- 15) PRIZES:** Prizes will be awarded to teams. Prizes will be announced at the completion of the tournament after officials make final checks. All payoffs will be based on 80% payoff of the total entries received. There will be door prizes given at the rules meeting.
- 16) INSPECTIONS:** Boats will be inspected before and during tournament.
- 17) NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES IN BOAT:** No alcohol to participants until after weigh-in. No alcohol or open container on stage or in photos.
- 18) HEADQUARTERS:** Check in and check out: The designated marked area at the State Ramp on the northeast side of Lake Thompson or the State Recreation area will be tournament headquarters. Each team MUST be checked in and out each day with officials at this location. Weather conditions may change headquarters location. Will inform where headquarters will be at the rules meeting.
- 19) WEIGHING FISH:** The scale for weighing in of fish will be open throughout the day. **All rigs must drive through the weigh station line as soon as you leave the water! No parking your boat then carrying your catch over in a bag to be weighed!** Under no circumstances shall anyone other than contestant handle or touch the catch until after it has been presented to the officials at the scale. One team member shall stay with the catch until the weight is verified and scale ticket signed.
- 20) RULES MEETING:** All contestants are urged to attend; however, one team member is all that is required to attend.
- 21) PROTEST:** Any contestant has the right to protest the rules and violations of another contestant during the tournament. Such protest must be in writing to the tournament officials by 5:00 p.m. each day of the tournament. A \$50 protest fee must accompany the complaint. The fee will be returned if protest is upheld by the tournament officials. The tournament officials' decision is final in all cases. Protester must be available during protest.
- 22) MISCELLANEOUS:** All questions or problems concerning rules of this tournament are to be referred to the tournament officials. If one of the two team members drops out before the tournament, he or she can be replaced by choice of the other team member; however, if entire team drops out, the spot will be replaced by the officials and not by the team that withdraws. Entry fees will not be refunded after **MAY 15th**, unless the officials fill the vacated spot. No exceptions!
- 23) GENERAL:** It is the intention of the tournament officials to provide an honest, sportsmanlike tournament. Interpretation of these rules is left exclusively to the officials, and their decisions shall be final in all matters.
- 24) TWO-DAY TOURNAMENT:** This is a two-day tournament; however, the tournament officials reserve the right to cancel one or both days of the tournament due to weather/wind conditions that would endanger the lives of contestants and tourney workers.