

OHIO WALLEYE FEDERATION 2020 OFFICIAL RULES

1. RULES CHANGES

A. These rules will remain unchanged during 2020. The Tournament Committee will interpret these rules according to the spirit and intent of the rule and their decision in any dispute is final.

2. PARTICIPATION & ENTRY

A. Each team must fully complete, sign and submit an official OWF entry form along with payment by the published entry deadline dates. Payment of entry fee acknowledges that all team members understand and agree to these rules. Incomplete forms will result in a team not being registered and their entry fee will be refunded accordingly.

B. ILC Events will be capped at a 40-boat field. Teams will be registered for the specific event on a “first come, first served basis”. Receipt (date/time) of payment in full of the entry fee for that specific event determines the field participants.

D. The use of approved alternates will be permitted. The use of an alternate must be submitted to the tournament committee for approval no later than 7 p.m. the day prior to the tournament. OWF Membership fee must be paid for the approved alternate for the ILC event only.

E. OWF does not discriminate based on race, creed or gender. OWF is not required to accept all applications and retains sole discretion on acceptance or rejection of any application.

3. PAYMENT OPTIONS

A. Inland Lake Circuit (ILC)

- Qualifiers \$150 Entry Fee/Team-Includes Big Fish
- Championship \$200 Entry Fee/Team-Includes Big Fish
 - Must have fished at least one qualifier to fish the championship
- “ILC Big Fish Bonanza” \$250 payout to the team weighing in the heaviest Walleye.
 - Team must fish ILC 5 of 6 tournaments (Each day of the Championship is counted as a “Tournament Event”..
 - Core Team rules apply
 - Payout is in addition to traditional individual tournament Big Fish Awards
 - Applies only to the Inland Lake Circuit
 - If a tie occurs, the prize money will be split among the “tied” teams
 - Only 1 weigh fish per team

B. Payment in full must accompany each entry.

- Money order and check are acceptable payments and should be made out to OWF.
 - Mailed entry fees must be postmarked no later than 10 days prior to the event. See OWF website or Official Entry Form for entry deadline dates.
 - Payments should be mailed to OWF, 8376 State Route 14 Streetsboro, Ohio 44241.
- Payment via PayPal available at www.fishowf.com

- Payments via PayPal must be received no later than 6-days prior to the event. See OWF website or Official Entry Form for entry deadline dates.

4. PAYOUT

100% OF THE TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEE WILL BE PAID BACK

- A. 100% of the Tournament entry fee will be paid back to the tournament field per event.
- B. Sponsorship donations and membership dues will supplement the ILC point's payout, the ILC Championship payout, and the ILC "Big Fish Bonanza" payout.
 - Points payout to the top three ILC teams.

5. POINTS (ILC Championships)

- A. Each event's point earnings total will be based on 100pts: Points will be awarded as follows: 1st place, 100 points; 2nd place, 99 points; 3rd place, 98 points; descending down 1 point per place to the last team with a weight.
- B. All teams with no weight will receive 10 points less than the team with the lowest weight.
- C. Registered teams who do not show up for an event nor notify OWF committee members that they will not show prior to the event will receive 0 points. Disqualified teams will also receive 0 points.
- D. Registered teams who notify an OWF committee member that they will not be able to make an event prior to the tournament will receive the same points as a team who did not catch a fish (10 points less than the team with the lowest weight)
- E. The two-day ILC Championship will have points awarded for each day of competition.
- F. Substitute restrictions for points
 - a. ILC -One of the core team members must be present at each tournament. The team may not have used a substitute for more than two points qualifying days of competition to be eligible for points.
- G. Point's winners for the ILC circuit will be determined by the accumulation of points of the best 5 of 6 ILC events of competition from each qualifier and each day of the championship.
- H. If a tie occurs, the team with the highest accumulation of points of the 6 ILC days of competition will determine the winner. If the result continues in a tie the highest placing team in the championship will determine the winner. If the result continues in a tie, any cash awards will be added together and divided equally to each team.
- I. Prize money as well as sweatshirts (banquet) will be awarded to the top 3 teams.

6. PA vs Ohio Shootout

- A. \$25 extra entry for qualifier #4 at Pymatuning, June 28th.**
- B. Team will be determined by the state of residence of one of the team members and must be determined before sendoff of qualifier #4 at Pymatuning June 28th.**
- C. Payout will be 100% of all entries as well as a \$200 in bonus money provided by the OWF. Winner takes all.**

7. TEAM WALLEYE WARS

- A. The OWF Team Walleye Wars (TWW) will be a head to head challenge held in conjunction with the 2020 OWF inland circuit.**
- B. To enter the TWW a team must register and pay entry fee by April 10, 2020.**
- C. TWW will be open to any team that enters and pays the entry fee prior to April 10th.**
- D. Entries will be capped at 32 teams. First 32 teams to enter and pay will be awarded spots in TWW**
- E. First round matchups will be drawn by a random drawing conducted via Facebook live on the Ohio Walleye Federation Facebook page; prior to the 1st tournament and matchups will be posted on Facebook as well as included in emailed tournament information email.**
- F. After 1st round drawing all future round drawings will take place upon completion of weigh-in of the completed round. Drawing will be done by 1 member of the winning team drawing a random playing card. Matchup's will be determined by the team that has the same number card as you (2vs2, 3vs3, 4vs4...).**
- G. Byes may need to be utilized in certain rounds; depending on the number of entries for the TWW. If a bye is needed, the team that draws the JOKER from the deck of cards will be awarded the bye in the next round. You CANNOT receive the bye more than ONE time for the season. If byes are utilized any teams that have previously been awarded a bye will make their draw card selection prior to the JOKER being included in the deck. Upon completion of that draw all teams that were not awarded byes will then be able to draw.**
- H. At each event you will be competing head to head against the team that you are matched up against. Highest weight wins and moves onto the next round.**
- I. Cost is \$100 per team, and entries are paid back at 100% to the top 4 teams as follows: (based on a full field of 32 teams; if less than 32 payouts will be paid out in proportion to number of teams registered)**

4th place – \$200

3rd place – \$500

2nd Place – \$1000

1st place – \$1500

- J. An NTC spot will be awarded to the 1st place team in TWW as long as both core team members are TWF members prior to the start of the 1st tournament.**

K. Ties: If there are 1 or more match-up that is tied a single coin toss will be made to determine which team moves on to the next round from each bracket.

L. Facebook live drawing for 1st round matchups and exact format of matchups along with finalization of payout will be completed by Wednesday April 15, 2020.

8. SCORING

- a. Scoring shall be determined by the pound weight of each team's catch during the tournament. Each team's total weight will determine the final tournament standings. If a tie occurs, any cash awards of the two or more finishers will be added together and divided equally to each team.
- b. Walleye, sauger and saugeye will be weighed where permissible by state law. The weigh-in limit will be five fish per boat unless the state or lake limit is less than five, in which case the state or lake limit will prevail. **Contestants presenting more than the weigh-in limit at the official scales will have their team's catch disqualified for that day of competition.**
- c. .20 lb. deduction will be made for each fish determined to be dead in an ILC tournament. N/A to CBC.
- d. The minimum length limit at all lakes will be 15 inches.
- e. The official ruler will be "The Golden Rule." Fish will be measured by a tournament official with fish's mouth closed and tail squeezed (based on Tournament regulations, but not violating state or local laws).
- f. If a "short" fish is presented for weigh-in, the biggest eligible fish weighed that day will be disqualified for each non-acceptable length fish presented. If a state or local violation occurs by bringing a "short" fish to the scale, the team will be disqualified from that day's event.

9. REFUNDS & CREDIT

- A. Refunds will be distributed at the discretion of the OWF committee. No refunds will be distributed within 24hrs of a tournament start
- B. Disqualification from a tournament for any reason will result in forfeiture of entry fee.
- C. No refunds or credits are extended to teams that choose not to fish due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstance
- D. In the event that a tournament must be cancelled and cannot be rescheduled or relocated entry fee for that tournament/event will be refunded.

10. NTC Spots

- A. Both members of the core team must be registered TWF members prior to the first tournament in order to qualify for a NTC spot.

B. The first NTC spot will be awarded to the highest placing team in the ILC points race in which both core team members are active TWF members.

C. The second NTC spot will be awarded to the highest placing team in the Team Walleye Wars in which both core team members are active TWF members.

D. Any additional NTC spots will be awarded to teams in which both core team members are active TWF members based on overall point standings for 2020.

E. NTC spots will be awarded to the “Team Captain” as defined on the “2020 Official Entry Form”.

F. If all NTC spots are not allocated upon completion of the above allocation process. Any additional NTC spots will be allocated to eligible TWF members on an individual basis as long as the individual was a TWF member prior to the start of the first tournament. This allocation process will be based on the overall point standings for 2020.

11. TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY, POLICY & SAFETY

A. Contestants will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner at all times. Any unfavorable conduct, speech or action by a contestant could be grounds for disqualification or rejection of entry application. Every competitor is expected to participate in the marshaling of the field in order to maintain the highest integrity to the competition. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported to tournament officials for further investigation.

B. Any tournament official or OWF contestant may protest another team. If an incident has progressed to the point of needing protest, an official written protest must be made with a tournament official within 30 minutes of completion of daily weigh-in. Following interviews with concerned parties, a ruling will be made. Penalties up to and including disqualification may be applied. A polygraph or CVS Voice Stress Analyzer may be utilized. If the protest is valid the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs.

C. All OWF tournaments will be conducted as catch and release events unless specified otherwise by state law. If state law prohibits release, the tournament will be designated a “harvest” tournament. Unless prohibited by state law, contestants are encouraged to release all fish following the weigh-in. However, at their discretion, contestants may elect to harvest fish as allowed by state law.

D. The OWF reserves the right to issue random polygraph tests

E. OWF reserves sole discretion to assign boat numbers in any manner. (random draw, entry order, etc.)

- F. All OWF participants must be off of tournament waters by 7 p.m. the day prior to the tournament.
- G. All fishing must be conducted from a boat. All boats must be propeller-driven and a minimum of 13 feet in length. Canoes are not permitted. All tournament boats must have all the Coast Guard required safety equipment, including a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher, a distress horn/flag/whistle, and display tournament credentials. Great Lakes tournaments require flares. All tournament boats are recommended to have a marine band radio. Boat owners must have property damage \watercraft liability insurance coverage from a reputable insurer with reasonable amounts of coverage. Insurance must cover injury and/or damage incurred in connection with the above tournaments. Proof of insurance may be asked for at any time.

All teams are subject to official inspection during the tournament and agree to an inspection at any time. No other boats may come in contact with contestants' boats with the exception of a TV camera/media boat. No fishing information or schedule information may be given to contestants during tournament fishing hours by anyone in any fashion. Cell phones are allowed for emergencies only including safety, family and work matters. Cell phone use between competitors is strictly prohibited. **Absolutely NO FISHING INFORMATION may be received, given or shared by ANYONE during tournament hours, in ANY fashion. This will include but not limited to: Calls, texts, phone apps, websites, VHF radios, paging, walkie-talkie, signals of any kind, person-to-person talking. Cell phone use between competitors is strictly prohibited.**

Cell phones are permitted for the following, if and only if the information is not communicated to anyone:

- 1. Equipment Control – Fishing equipment that can be controlled by your phone such as shallow water anchor, trolling motor, stereo, etc.**
- 2. Apps that are used for fishing – Subscription based apps such as precision trolling, navionics, etc.**
- 3. Emergencies – Medical, safety, family and work matters.**

If a competitor is required to talk on use a cell phone during tournament hours, they must report the use avia text to at least two (2) official committee members. A quick text explaining the use of the cell phone and with whom is required. If this contestant(s) does not report use prior to leaving the water, If the team will be disqualified for that day of competition. A team can also report anticipated possible use prior to the start of the tournament at the morning check in. OWF may request cell phone records in the course of investigation and all contestants agree to provide such records if requested of them.

H.

- I. In the event of equipment failure or emergency, there will be only two permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both partners remaining in their boat and being towed by water, or (2) by one, or both, of the partners entering the boat of another tournament

contestant. Under these two conditions the contestants' catch may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Contestants who elect to return to the check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day's catch to that point in time of the tournament day.

- J. Contestants agree to wear a Coast Guard approved personal floatation device when on plane.
- K. Each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower rating of the outboard engine must not exceed the rating specified on this plate. Changing or altering standard factory parts of your motor to increase horsepower over factory rated horsepower is forbidden and will result in disqualification.
- L. All applicable Federal, State and local boating and fishing laws and regulations must be followed. Any citation for violation of these laws or regulations will result in disqualification. This includes following all applicable laws during pre-fishing.
- M. In the event of a thunderstorm, lightning and/or severe weather; contestants may pull into the nearest shoreline until it is safe to continue fishing. Contestants may not leave their boats during tournament hours except at a commercial gas dock, the official weigh-in site or if severe weather forces them ashore.
- N. Participants can access shore for bathroom emergencies. An OWF committee must be called via cell phone, texted and or a voicemail must be left by the participant prior to official end time of the tournament. If no communication is made prior to the official end time of the time and the participant is reported on shore, the team will be automatically disqualified from the event and will not be eligible for any awards or points for that day.
- O. Tournament participants cannot access shore to retrieve fishing equipment that may have been forgotten in their vehicles. Livebait cannot be purchased during tournament hours and contestants may not share/give live bait or artificial lures during the actual tournament hours. If a team is reported as doing such, that team will be automatically disqualified from the event and will not be eligible for any awards or points for the day.
- P. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs may be possessed or consumed during tournament hours.
- Q. All OWF qualifying tournaments will have published days of competition, unless delayed or shortened due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. Tournament boundaries or restricted fishing zones will be announced prior to the event and may be further restricted if needed. Contestants must always abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas. Tournaments at Pymatuning Lake will allow the use of three (3) rods and reels per angler.**
- R. All participants must check-in each morning before take-off and check-in each afternoon with the official timekeepers. All fishing must cease upon check-in. There will be only one checkpoint for boat check in the morning and one check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to

go through boat check in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point will result in disqualification. Teams running late due to unforeseen circumstances must call an active Tournament Committee member for notification of a late check in. If a Tournament Committee member can check this team in prior to launching, disqualification will not result. If a member of the Tournament Committee cannot check-in this participant for any reason, disqualification will result.

- S. Boat check will be conducted the morning of the tournament. Walleye found in the livewell of a participant may result in immediate disqualification. The participant's entry fee/memberships will not be refunded if disqualified. The OWF Committee will assess and discuss the situation, and either allow the participants to fish the event or disqualify the participants from the event.
- T. Contestants who return 1 to 15 minutes later than the assigned check in time will forfeit one-half of their fish weight for that day. Contestants who return 16 or more minutes later than the assigned check in time will forfeit their total fish weight for that day. Contestants who are late, no matter how late, are not eligible to participate in the Big Fish Award. If a contestant decides not to check in, whether leaving early or coming in after the designated check in times above, contestant must call or text an OWF member. Official "check in" will be defined as the contestant being one boat length (15 feet) past the official designated check in boat. If check in time is defined as 2:45 to 3:00 pm, boats arriving at 3:00.01 will be ruled as one minute late. The "official check in boat" will report either written or verbal those teams that are deemed late and their reporting is final.
- U. On tournament days, contestants are prohibited from fishing except during designated fishing hours. Contestants should stay off tournament waters before and after tournament hours except to navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities. If repairs and/or test-run are needed an OWF staff member or designated representative should ride along.
- V. OWF participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses and commit to following regulations. All state rules regarding fishing will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified. Only fish caught on hook and line in a normal and usual manner will be accepted. Live bait and artificial lures are permissible. Contestants are limited to one lure per rod. No three-way rigs or sliders are allowed.
- W. All fish weighed must be kept in aerated live wells to keep fish alive and as fresh as possible. Any fish mauled, mashed, frozen, stringered, injected with water or other fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight or showing white gills, soft flesh or eyes (as per a tournament official) will result in disqualification.
- X. **OWF Weigh-ins will officially begin at 3:20. Competitors can stand in line, but the scale will not be opened for official weigh in until 3:20. NO EXCEPTIONS The official weigh master has to have time to weigh their fish before any competitor can be weighed in. Please manage your fish and time accordingly.**

12. CONTESTANT'S WAIVER & ACKNOWLEDGMENT

- A. Participation Agreement: I understand that this is a professional sporting event governed by the rules that have been established by tournament officials. I acknowledge that I have received/read a copy of these rules and that these rules relate to the safety of all participants as well as the fair sporting conduct of this event. The Tournament Committee shall act as the referee in all disputes and their decision based on their interpretation of the rules will be final and without legal appeal. I have read, understand and agree to the OWF refund policy.
- B. Release of Liability: I acknowledge that I am participating voluntarily in the Ohio Walleye Federation. I agree to assume all risk of injury, death, damages, theft and loss to personal property, which may result from my participation in the OWF tournaments. I recognize that loss of property, injury or death could arise from the fishing and boating activities contemplated by the tournament and the risks normally encountered in open-water fishing from a boat may be enhanced by exposure to the elements and other risks inherent in outdoor competition. I retain the right to not compete if I feel the risks are too great on any given day, however, I realize in so doing that I forfeit any claim to my entry fee. I warrant that I am in good physical and mental health and am physically capable of withstanding the rigors and requirements of a professional fishing competition.
- C. Photo & Video Release: I understand and agree that any and all photographs, videos or films taken during the course of my participation in the tournament which includes me, my name and/or my boat may be used by the tournament organizers, sponsors or media without my prior consent and without royalties.

Visit us at www.fishowf.com / e mail fishowf@gmail.com for inquiries / or visit us on Facebook