

2026 WWA Rules and Regulations

Binder

Teams competing in a World Walleye, NFP (WWA) event are bound by the rules and regulations herein unless otherwise announced by Tournament Directors.

Liability

Teams understand that this is a professional sporting event governed by rules and regulations which have been disclosed to them by team organizers. Teams acknowledge that they have received a copy of these rules and regulations and that these rules and regulations relate to the safety of all participants as well as the fair and sporting conduct of these events. The Tournament Directors shall act as the referee in all disputes and their decisions based on those officials interpretations of the rules and regulations will be final and without legal appeal.

As a participant in the WWA tournament(s), teams understand and agree that photographs or video(s) of them may be taken during the course of their participation in the tournament by the tournament organizers, sponsors, or media. As a voluntary participant in the WWA, teams agree that all photographs, film or video taken of them, names, boats and or vehicles taken in connection with the WWA event is the property of the WWA and may be used by the WWA, its sponsors, organizers, and the media without prior consent or royalties.

Teams acknowledge that they are voluntarily participating in the WWA tournament(s). They are aware that their participation in any of the five qualifier tournaments or the Championship (should they qualify) creates risk of serious personal injury, including the potential for permanent paralysis or death and destruction. Team's participation could also lead to loss or damage to their personal property. Teams will agree to assume all risk of injury and death and loss or damage to personal property which may result from their participation in these fishing tournaments. In exchange for being permitted to participate in the WWA tournaments, teams shall release and discharge the World Walleye Association (WWA), it's parenting company World Walleye Association inc., their officers, employees, sponsors, agents and legal representatives (the Released Parties) from any and all liabilities, costs, claims, damages, injuries, and demands related to or incurred while competing in a WWA event. Including, but not limited, any claim an individual, a team or heirs may have for loss, personal injury or casualty or any kind, injuries, damages or any loss sustained by them caused by the negligence or strict liability of the released parties. Teams further agree not to sue or hold responsible the WWA for any damages, liabilities, injuries, or deaths incurred due to acts of nature, or negligence on the part of themselves, other contestants, or the general public. Teams will warrant that they are in good physical and mental health and am physically capable of withstanding the rigors and requirements of tournament fishing competitions.

Teams will be required to read and agree to the participation agreement, photo and video release and Release of Liability carefully and understand all of its terms and conditions. Individuals will be required to check these boxes when signing up and paying for the annual WWA membership each year.

Tournament Fees

All anglers pay annual membership fees for the WWA and The Walleye Federation (TWF) of \$40 and \$40, respectively (plus CC processing fees). Anglers under the age of 16 are exempt from TWF portion. Entry fees are \$200 per team (does not include FishDonkey processing fees), which includes big fish award. Ten (\$10) dollars per Angler, per Qualifier will be set aside for a special Championship Bonus. Payouts are eighty-five (85%) percent with ten (10%) percent of every entry fee withheld for the championship. Entrees will be accepted on a first come first serve basis until the event is full (60) boats. The WWA may accept up to ten (10%) percent overbooking for any tournament with the exception of special events. No refunds or credit will be extended to teams that choose not to fish due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances except as approved by tournament officials.

TWF Sidepots

Sidepots are a voluntary option in each Qualifier Tournament, providing an opportunity for a team to win a paid entry to Cabela's and Bass Pro Shops NTC. There must be at least ten (10) teams registered for a sidepot to be eligible. A fifty (\$50) dollar entry per boat is required and boats must notify officials and pay fee by cutoff to qualify. If there are not ten (10) entries for a particular tournament, the entry money can be rolled to the next tournament or refunded by the TWF.

Registration

Payments made through the Fish Donkey app must be received no later than four (4) days prior to an event (i.e. 9 pm on Wednesday prior to a Sunday Qualifier) to avoid late fees. Late registrations may be made up to the night prior to an event; teams will incur a forty (\$40) dollar late payment fee with no exceptions made (unless agreed upon by tournament directors). However, as the TWF membership fees have to be processed online by the WWA, it is important to pay for these at the beginning of the season, or at least four (4) days prior to an event.

Participation

The WWA reserves the right to refuse entry or participation to any team or team member. Reasons include but not limited to suspension, disqualification or a ban from another tournament series, violation of a game, local, federal or state regulations and laws and unsportsmanlike or criminal behavior. Participants will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike manner at all times; any unfavorable conduct by a participant may result in disqualification (DQ) or rejection of entry. Any acts of violence towards another participant or threats of

violence against another participant will automatically result in an immediate ban from the WWA with no refunds given. All boats are required and agree to carry minimum of \$100,000 liability insurance on any boat operated during a WWA event. Any person under the age of 18 must be teamed with a parent or guardian.

Teams

Each team may consist of up to three team members (two per event). Teams do not need to declare a third team member until needed. However, as the TWF membership fees have to be processed on-line by the WWA, it is important to pay for these at the beginning of the season or at least 4 days prior to an event. No member may fish on more than one team; any request for partner substitutions other than the three-person team is at the discretion of the tournament officials. Should a team member split off and form a new team, the new team will start with zero points and the accumulated points will stay with the original team. The original team will then be a two-person team for the balance of the season without the ability to add a substitute. Should the original team decide to split and form new teams, the new team will start with zero points or should they split and become part of existing teams, those teams' points will zero out. The first person listed on the entry form will be declared the team leader and main contact for the WWA

Points

Teams earn points, which are awarded from each qualifier tournament fished. Teams' top four (4) scores will be used to determine points and standings. The team with the highest point total will be awarded "Team of the Year" (TOTY) prizes. Points are distributed to teams and may not be transferred in the event of partner changes. Points are awarded as follows: four-hundred (400) points to the 1st place team. Points decrease in two-point increments by place of finish for teams weighing fish. Five (5) points will also be added for each fish weighed. Entered teams that do not weight fish are awarded one-hundred (100) show points. Should a team get a DQ, they will lose all points for the event. All FishDonkey submissions will be entered into the app by length and then automatically converted to weight. Tournaments will be scored by aggregate weight of each team's total bag. Teams will be ranked by heaviest to lightest bag by weight.

Championship

The Championship will be a two (2) day event with the cumulative weights being scored. If you win a Qualifier and fish at least four (4) events, you will earn an automatic berth into the Championship. The field will consist of the top twenty (20) teams in the standings, plus any teams that won a Qualifier that fall outside the top twenty (20). It is possible to have a twenty-five (25) boat field if no teams inside the top twenty (20) win a Qualifier. No cut. Teams 11 thru 20x will lose their entry fee to the Championship purse.

Ties

In case of a tie, positions will be determined as follows:

1. Most number of legal fish weighed at event.
2. Most legal fish weighed to date.
3. Heaviest cumulative total weighed of all events to date of that season.
4. Heaviest bag weighed to date
5. Any other means selected by tournament officials.

Boat Inspection, Motor and Safety Equipment

Inspections will take place at the launch area beginning one (1) hour prior to take off. All teams must have their compartments open and are responsible for making sure they are inspected and have received a boat number card. All teams fishing the tournament are required to have an identifying ribbon attached to the front of the boat. Any boat entering into competition without first being inspected may be disqualified. Any boat not inspected and checked in prior to 6:45 am, will have to be inspected after the 7:00 am take off is complete. All tournament boats are required by law to have in their possession all Coast guard and state/local/federal required safety equipment and be in proper working order. In addition, a functional bilge pump or bailing device is required. Contestants must wear a coast guard approved PFD and use the engine safety stop switch at all times while the main engine is operated above trolling speed. Tournament boats may be inspected at any time for compliance.

Take Off and Return

Send-off begins at 7:00 am. Boats must line up prior to take off and will be sent out in order starting with boat #1 with each boat showing their boat card when their number is called. Any boat leaving before being called may result in a DQ. Any boat cannot be on plane until they pass the release boat and the bouy placed by the release boat. Any boat that does take off early is subject to a one (1) pound penalty from their total weight for the day. FishDonkey app will not allow any submissions after 3:00 pm. All lines are to be out of the water at 3:00 pm. Teams should head towards the launch, but there is no timed check-in, no need to race back in.

Breakdowns

In the event of a breakdown, teams must notify tournament officials via phone call to one of the designated phone numbers. If you are not able to reach an official, you must leave a voicemail or text to document the time, circumstances and safety conditions. We no longer have live fish in livewells to deal with so this is all about safety.

Boat Check In

Check In will be located within site of the takeoff location. Boats must check in and return their boat number card to tournament officials regardless of whether they have fish to weigh or not. Boats not returning their boat number card prior to the end of the weigh in may result in the forfeit of show points and/or placement points.

Boundaries

Tournament boundaries for the Fox Chain of Lakes are from the IL/WI Border in the North Fox River to the Algonquin Dam in the South Fox River and includes all navigable water in-between. Any restricted fishing areas will be announced prior to take off on the morning of the tournament. Boats must remain in tournament waters at all times during tournament days.

Contestant Regulations

Contestants may use up to three (3) rods per angler, with a combination of no more than four (4) baits or lures in total per angler unless further restricted by state and local regulations. All contestants must possess a valid fishing license for the state/states fished along with a valid WWA membership. WWA memberships are not required for the Youth/Family days. Any team violating a state or federal regulation may be disqualified. Consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages, marijuana or illegal drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a physician) is strictly prohibited during tournament hours. In the day prior to the start of any tournament, WWA participants may no longer be fishing and must be off the water or within site of the boat launch by 5:00 pm local time. Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times except in case of dire emergency if they wish their fish to be counted for the day. In the case of an emergency or break down – See “breakdowns” paragraph outlining procedure. Sharing of fishing information with other contestants during tournament hours is strictly prohibited.

Meetings

At least one person from each team must be present for one mandatory rules and safety meeting prior to fishing in an event. There will be one meeting scheduled well before the start of the season and we may elect to have rules meetings scheduled the evening prior to an event at 5:00 pm. These meetings will be held at C. Haling & Sons Marine unless otherwise communicated on the WWA Facebook or Web page. In the case that you are unable to attend, other arrangements or communications must be made with tournament officials.

Fish Regulations

Walleye, sauger and saugeye are permitted where allowed by state or local laws unless otherwise stated. Teams will weigh their six (6) best fish with a minimum scoring length of 14 inches. There may not be any fish in a contestants live well at any time. The Fox Chain of Lakes

has a protected slot limit of 18 inches to 24 inches. These fish are eligible for entry under CPR format. All fish over 14 inches are now legal for entry.

Catch-Photo-Release (Fish Entry Procedures)

Every scorable fish will require three (3) elements:

1. **Bump** – “belly to belly”. Belly towards the angler bumping the fish, mouth open or closed, no fingers around the mouth or in the gills, nose touching bump board, one or two hands may be used to hold the fish, choose the end of the tail that is the longest, no more pinching the tail, and line up with the measurement increments visible on your board. A fish that touches an increment line, but does not cross over that line should be entered as it is measured. If the tail crossed the increment line, enter to the next $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Example: A fish measuring 14.125 inches should be entered as 14.25 inches. A fish measuring 14 inches exactly should be entered at 14 inches.
2. **Hero Shot** – pickup the fish exactly how it lays and show the camera the other side of the fish. This is the side of the fish that was touching the bump board.
3. **Release Video** – Release video is required after a picture of the fish on the bump board and a hero shot.

Penalty Weights

If an entry cannot be verified by tournament directors, the team will lose that fish from their creel. Example: Six (6) fish bag becomes a five (5) fish bag for score. We will not be adding back a fish from your day to make it a 6 fish bag. Any fish that cannot be verified or is in question, will be viewed by three Board members and either verified or unverified based on a majority vote. If any fish that cannot be verified or is in question that involves a Board member – a random draw of three boat numbers will be selected to verify or unverify those fish in question by majority vote. All decision will be final and not subject to protest. If a team accidentally enters a fish incorrectly (e.g., fat fingers the length of the fish), they must immediately contact a tournament official by phone call or text and let them know what happened in order to time stamp the mistake so that fish is not disqualified during verification.

Disqualification

Teams disqualified (DQ) from an event will lose all their points for the event, including participation points. Tournament Officials can DQ a team for any violation of the regulations, such as (but not limited to): Unfavorable conduct in a tournament, having a line in the water after the end of tournament hours, leaving the takeoff early or prior to your boat number being released, having fish in their livewell, intentional deception of fish scoring equipment, refusal to submit to or pass a polygraph test, illegal use of

communication devices, or being given a ticket or citation from any law enforcement agency during tournament hours.

Protests

Protest policy relates to infractions that occur on the water during tournament hours. Any tournament official or participant has the right to protest another team. An official written protest must accompany a \$200 fee and be made with a tournament official within 10 minutes of completion of weigh-in. A protest committee will be formed and will consist of a random draw of three boat numbers. Following interviews with concerned parties, a ruling will be made and the fee will be returned if the protest is found valid. All participants agree to a polygraph test if they are requested and interpretation of any truth verification test shall be at the sole discretion of the tournament officials. Refusal to submit to or failure to pass will result in a DQ. Tournament Official's shall act as the referee in all disputes and decide based on their interpretation of the rules will be final and without legal appeal. Not all violations are subject to the protest rule. The board reserves the right to review any situation on a case by case basis even after weigh-in has been closed with the best interests in maintaining the integrity of the WWA.

Communication Devices

The use of any communication device to communicate with other anglers or surrogates during tournament hours other than in emergency situations is prohibited. Marine Band radios are encouraged; boats with marine band radios will tune to channel 72 for announcements and the National Anthem. After take-off, only emergency channel 16 may be monitored. Cell phones may not be used for any purpose other than Radar, Trolling Apps, GPS or an emergency. Text messaging and any other form of mobile device communication is also prohibited without prior approval from the Director. Any variation from this rule may result in a disqualification.

Weather

Contestants may not leave their boat during tournament hours except with approval of the tournament director or during severe or unsafe weather. In the event of a thunder storm, lightning and severe weather or unsafe conditions, contestants may pull into the nearest shoreline and seek shelter until it is safe to continue fishing. Tournament fishing hours may be shortened or canceled due to weather or unforeseen circumstances at the Tournament Officials discretion.

Awards

The awards ceremony will take place approximately one-half hour after the weigh-in. Tournament Officials will interpret rules and regulation according to the spirit and intent of the rule and the decision in all disputes is final. All other rules or regulations will revert to the stand policy of the WWA.

Integrity

Any team(s) participating in any WWA events may be subject to an independent polygraph test or voice stress analysis at the discretion of the Board of Directors. Failure of this test will result in disqualification, as well as a possible lifetime ban from any future WWA events.