

South Haven Steelheaders 2019 Pro-Am Official Rules

I. DATES & HOURS

- A. Tournament dates are Saturday, May 18th and Sunday, May 19st, 2019
- B. Official Tournament START is 6:00 A.M. of Day One
- C. Fishing Period start time is 6:30 A.M. each day unless delayed/postponed by the Tournament Committee
- D. Official Tournament END is the end of the fishing period on Day Two
- E. The Tournament schedule will be as follows:
 - 1. **Friday, May 17th, 2019:**
 - 4:00 p.m. to 6:45 p.m. – Registration at the South Haven Moose Lodge located at 1025 East Wells Street, South Haven, Michigan
 - 7:00 p.m. - **MANDATORY Captains Meeting** at the South Haven Moose Lodge located at 1025 East Wells Street, South Haven, Michigan
 - ALL CAPTAINS and OBSERVERS MUST ATTEND**
 - 2. **Saturday, May 18th 2019:**
 - 6:30 a.m. - Begin fishing period (**no run-time**). All boats must remain within 500 yards of the breakwater prior to 6:30 a.m.
 - 1:30 p.m. - End of fishing period; boats must be inside pier heads.
 - 3. **Sunday, May 19th 2019:**
 - 6:30 a.m. - Begin fishing period (**no run-time**). All boats must remain within 500 yards of the breakwater prior to 6:30 a.m.
 - 1:30 p.m. - End of fishing period; boats must be inside pier heads.
 - 3:00 p.m. - Awards Ceremony for Pro/Am Divisions and Big Fish Contest at the Southside City Marina.
- F. The Tournament will be considered official if a total of three (3) hours are fished either on Saturday or Sunday. Prizes will be awarded based on the point accumulation during the fishing time that was available.
- G. **If a fishing day is cancelled before three (3) hours have elapsed, the catch is not weighable for that day.**
- H. No fishing on either day of the Tournament by any boat or any participant in the Tournament except during specified Tournament fishing periods, unless declared otherwise by the Tournament Committee.
- I. No Tournament boat may leave the harbor except during Tournament hours once the Tournament has officially started on Day 1.
- J. Tournament Control will start and end each Tournament period by radio communication on **VHF Channel 78** and physical location will be at the Southside City Marina.
- K. All boats must be inside the pier heads at 1:30 p.m. and report to Tournament Control upon reaching pier heads to avoid penalties.
- L. Boats must proceed directly to the weigh-in station.
- M. Alternate fishing times may be established according to circumstances and Tournament Control will give participants due and timely notice thereof.
- N. **Closed communication across all divisions including captain, crew and observers aboard the vessel.** All cell phones, smart phones and portable electronic devices with the ability to communicate must be powered down and placed in the observer's quarantine bag during official tournament fishing periods that is provided in the Captain's bag. The vessel's radio must stay tuned to Ch. 78 at all times and used for official tournament business only. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from the tournament. The tournament chair is exempt from this restriction for the purpose of emergencies or weather decisions. In this case, all communication will be made in the presence of the observer.

II. ELIGIBILITY

- A. The Tournament is open to any boat whose captain is a member of the Michigan Salmon and Steelhead Fishermen's Association (MSSFA).
- B. Boats must be 17 feet or longer (length as listed on the boat title).
- C. Boats must be equipped with VHF marine radio in working order.
- D. There will be two separate divisions – Pro and Amateur.
 - 1. **Pro Division:** 2-day event; any boat with a captain or crewmember who has a license and currently conducts fishing charters OR has a license and has conducted fishing charters within the last two years must fish the Pro Division.

2. **Amateur Division:** 2-day event; all non-Pro boats may fish in this Division. An Amateur can opt to fish the Pro Division (with appropriate entry fee) but is not eligible to participate in both the Amateur and Pro Divisions simultaneously.
 3. There will be additional contests that participants may also choose to enter such as:
 - a. **Big Fish Contest:** Open to all boats fishing in the Pro or Amateur Division. All species contest: Salmon, Lake Trout, Steelhead and Brown Trout. All entries must be received by 7:00 PM on Friday, the day of the Captain's meeting. Four fish may be weighed on each day. Four (4) zip ties will be provided for each day and fish must be marked with a zip tie through the mouth to be entered ... no exceptions will be made. Unmarked fish will not be weighed.
 - b. **Second Chance Tournaments:** The winner will be determined based on total points for day two. The top three boats after day one are ineligible. You may sign up for the second chance at the time of registration or prior to the start of the fishing period the second day by calling into tournament control on Ch. 78. If you paid the fee at registration and are in the top 3, the start of the second day then the fee will be refunded to you at the end of the tournament.
- E. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decline entry or terminate the entry of any person or team due to unsportsmanlike conduct detrimental to the tournament, sponsors, participants and supporting groups.

III. ENTRY FEES

Pro Division:

- The basic entry fee is \$500; on or after May 11, 2019, the fee is \$550.

Amateur Division:

- The basic entry fee is \$250; on or after May 11, 2019, the fee is \$300.

Big Fish Contest:

- Entry fee is \$50 per boat for each division and includes both days.

Second Chance:

- Pro Division \$100 and Am Division \$50

- A. In case of a last minute emergency that prevents an entrant from participating in the Tournament, entrant may apply to the Tournament Committee for a refund of the entry fee. The decision to refund shall be made by the Tournament Committee and its decision shall be final. Request must be made no later than 3 days after the Official End of the Tournament.
- B. In the event of the cancellation of the Tournament due to weather or other reasons beyond the control of the Tournament Committee, said Committee reserves the right to retain up to 10% of the entry fees paid in order to cover costs incurred. All entry fees not retained will be returned to the entrants. The decision of the Tournament Committee shall be final in this regard.

IV. PRIZES

Pro Division:

- Prize money is based on 20 boats. Approximately 90% of entry fees will be awarded.
- 1st Place - \$6000; additional prizes may be awarded

Amateur Division:

- Prize money is based on 25 boats. Approximately 90% of entry fees will be awarded.
- 1st Place - \$3000; additional prizes may be awarded

Big Fish Contest:

- Prize money will be awarded to the biggest fish by weight for each specie (Salmon, Lake Trout, Steelhead, and Brown Trout) from each division along with a prize awarded for the biggest fish by weight across all species, days and divisions. The award is based on 45 boats and subject to change based on the number of entries. \$225 will be awarded to each 1st place species in each division and \$500 will be awarded to the biggest fish for the entire tournament weekend from both divisions.

Second Chance Contest:

- The pay-out will be 70% of the pot to 1st place and 30% of the pot to 2nd place for each division. The winner will be determined based on total points for day two. The top three boats after day one are ineligible.

- A. In case of ties, the prize money will be divided equally between the tied contestants.

- B. The SHS Traveling Trophy will be awarded to the winning team with the highest overall points for the tournament. Both Am and Pro divisions are eligible. Trophy will only be used for photographs and returned to the South Haven Steelheaders.
- C. Remaining entry fees will be retained by the Tournament Committee to help defray the costs incurred in running the Tournament.
- D. Completed IRS Form W-9 must be received by the tournament committee prior to the disbursement of any prize equal or greater to \$600 in value. Only one check will be cut to the captain of each winning boat or designated legal entity.

V. SCORING TWO DAY TOURNAMENT

- A. All winners will be determined by the Tournament Committee and its decision shall be final.
- B. Winners will be determined on the total accumulation of points based on the following:
 - 1. Ten (10) points per legal fish weighed.
 - 2. One (1) point per pound of total weight, rounded to the nearest hundredth.
- C. There will be a maximum of twelve (12) fish weighed per boat each official day of the two day tournament, of the maximum numbers of fish weighed, **no more than six (6) may be Lake Trout.**
- D. The contestant with the highest number of points accumulated over all of the hours of the Tournament shall be the winner of their Division; the contestant with the second highest accumulation of points shall be second; and so on.
 - E. The following species shall be eligible for 10 points each: Coho Salmom, Chinook Salmon, Lake Trout, Brown Trout, Atlantic Salmon, Steelhead or Rainbow Trout

VI. OBSERVER SYSTEM

- A. **Only Pro Division boats will be required to furnish observers.**
- B. **Only Pro Division boats will be required to have an observer aboard, HOWEVER,** observers may be assigned to any boat, in any Division, at any time, as determined by the Tournament Committee.
- C. Observer must be at least 18 years of age.
- D. Observer must attend Captain's Meeting the Friday before the event.
- E. Observer/boat assignments will be made by the Tournament Committee and will be announced following the close of registration at the Captains meeting. Each Captain must report the location of their boat to their assigned observer immediately following the assignment announcement. Observer re-assignment may be exercised at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.
- F. Team Captains are **required** to have their observers onboard their assigned boats no later than 1 hour prior to the start of each fishing period. Failure to comply without just cause as ruled by the Tournament Committee may result in the disqualification of the team supplying the observer.
- G. It will be the observer's responsibility to see that all Tournament rules and DNR regulations are obeyed on the assigned boat. **Observer shall report infractions to the Tournament Committee.**
- H. An "Official Tournament Log & Score Sheet" will be provided for each fishing period. At the conclusion of the day's fishing, the log sheet must be signed by both the observer and the Captain.
- I. The observer shall accompany each day's catch of their assigned vessel until it has been officially weighed and scored by the Tournament Weigh-Master.
- J. Observers may not physically assist their assigned team in the act of fishing.
- K. **Observers are required to view the measurement of all landed fish prior to release.** The Captain will furnish the measuring device to be used to the observer for inspection prior to the participating vessel leaving its mooring each day.
- L. Observer has right to observe any and all functions on the boat.
- M. Observers are not allowed to use any electronic devices with the ability to communicate including but not limited to a GPS, cell phone, and smart phone during the official fishing period. All devices must be powered down and placed in the quarantine bag provided. Violation will result in disqualification of the team that the observer represents.
- N. **If an observer is not on board by 5:45 AM, please contact the Tournament Committee at (269-214-6934 or VHF channel 78 as a last resort).**
- O. Film Crews are considered to be unofficial observers and are bound by the following rules of this section: C, F & J unless:
 - 1. They are approved by the Tournament Committee to also act as an Official Tournament Observer at which point all Observer rules would apply or they are a regular crew member.

VII. BOAT IDENTIFICATION

- A. The Tournament Committee will furnish to each contestant a colored flag and a boat identification number.
- B. **The flag** must be flown from a place in full view from all directions at all times - from the official start until the official end time of the Tournament.
- C. **The boat number** must be prominently shown on the starboard side of the participant's boat at all times from the official start until the official end time of the Tournament.

VIII. FISHING RULES

- A. **Tournament Area:** There is no distance limit set on where a tournament boat can fish. All boats must leave and return to the port of South Haven, the trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited.
- B. **Rods:** There will be a maximum of nine (9) lines in the water at any one time, with no more than two (2) lures per line in use. Dodgers, attractors or other similar hookless devices do not count as lures. Sliders or Add-A-Lines shall not exceed 6' length.
- C. **Fair Hooked:** All fish must be fairly caught on hook and line in accordance with the conservation laws. No meat lines or similar devices may be attached to any part of a boat or downrigger. Meat Lines may be defined as any baited line placed in the water that is not affixed to a fishing rod and reel. The use of strip/plug-cut/whole bait is allowed and is not a meat line.
- D. **Handling of Fish. NO CULLING OF FISH IS PERMITTED.**
 - 1. **Teams must make every reasonable effort to immediately land every fish that is "hooked-up" in a timely manner.**
 - 2. All fish brought to the boat must be immediately landed by net and allowed to be viewed by the Observer. Landing fish by lifting them into the boat by hand, line, rod and reel or gaff is prohibited.
 - 3. **Observers must be allowed to verify the exact length and species of all "potential" undersized fish prior to releasing them.**
 - 4. Any intentional act to cull fish such as, but not limited to shaking off, over aggressive reeling, breaking/slicing off, knocking off with the net, burning off or leaving a fish drag (allowing the pole of a hooked fish to sit in a rod holder intentionally) is prohibited. **Dragging of fish is cause for immediate disqualification.**
 - 5. Teams found in violation of these rules for Handling Fish after thorough investigation by the Tournament Officials will be disqualified.
- E. **Fish Count:** Catch 15, Weigh 12 and 6 Lake Trout Maximum. There will be a limit of fifteen (15) fish caught per boat in all divisions each official day of the Tournament.
 - 1. There will be a maximum of twelve (12) fish weighed per boat each official day of the two-day Tournament, of the maximum numbers of fish weighed, **no more than six (6) may be Lake Trout.** The number of fish caught and the number of fish weighed may not exceed the DNR legal limit for the number of licensed fishermen on board.
 - 2. **Note: The first 9 Legal Lake Trout caught must be kept and count towards your daily catch limit and any additional Lake Trout caught must be released and do not count towards your daily catch limit (no sorting).**
- F. **Handling your Limit:**
 - 1. When the fish count limit for the division is reached, the boat must cease fishing immediately and proceed to the weigh-in station.
 - 2. The moment a team has boated all but the last tournament legal fish, the next fish "hooked up" will constitute possession of your "limit".
 - 3. While a team is in "possession" (fighting/landing) of their last fish to fill their limit, any additional fish "hooked-up" must be brought to the boat, and at the discretion of the Captain, may be secured in the net but not lifted from the water or boated.
 - 4. When the last fish to fill your limit is netted, boated and determined to be Tournament legal and boxed, your team will be "limited-out" and must immediately release any additional fish at the boat.
 - 5. Teams found in violation of these rules for Handling your Limit after thorough investigation by the Tournament Officials will be disqualified.
- G. After close of fishing period, no further fishing is allowed.
- H. From the start of a fishing period until the catch is deposited at the weigh-in station, no boat entered in the Tournament may run gunwale to gunwale with any other boat nor may any objects of any kind be passed between any participants in the Tournament and any other person. Violation of this rule is automatic disqualification.

- I. There will be a Committee boat on the lake observing and spot-checking boats at random throughout the Tournament. Any rules infractions observed by the Committee boat may result in disqualification from the Tournament.
- J. Random cooler checks will be made.

IX. WEIGH-IN

- A. At the close of each Tournament period or once a limit catch has been reached, each captain must proceed immediately to the weigh-in station.
- B. Failure of a boat to proceed directly to the weigh-in station (whether or not any fish have been caught) will result in disqualification.
- C. The assigned boat number placard must be returned at final weigh-in. Failure to return boat number placard at Sunday weigh-in will result in a penalty of 10 points and ineligibility for door prizes.
- D. Weigh-In Procedure, as simple as P-A-D-L-S (Paddles)**
 - 1. **PREPARE** – Prepare your 12 fish maximum Tournament legal fish box. Box must be clearly marked with the name of the participating boat.
 - 2. **ANNOUNCE** – Participating boat will announce its assigned tournament number once inside pier heads on VHF Ch. 78.
 - 3. **DROP** - Captain will deposit a minimum of **one crewmember, the boxed fish and the Score Sheet(s)** at the weigh-in station pre-check line. Also boat number placard at final weigh-in.
 - 4. **LEAVE** - After making the drop-off, the boat must leave the area immediately. No vessel loitering at the weigh-station dock allowed.
 - 5. **SCORE** - Crewmember must remain with the catch until it has been officially weighed and scored. If fishing with an observer, **the observer shall also accompany** each day's catch until it has been officially weighed and scored.
 - a. All coolers must arrive at the weigh-in free of loose ice and water. Only block, bagged cubes and frozen plastic containers are allowed. Failure to abide by this rule will result in removal to the back of the pre-check line for correction.
 - b. Any attempt to alter the weight of tournament fish will result in a DQ for the tournament.
- E. Fish Count**
 - 1. If the number of fish brought for weigh-in exceeds the twelve (12) fish limit, the catch is disqualified for the day.
 - 2. **If any boat brings more than six (6) Lake trout to the weigh-in, that catch will also be disqualified for the day.**
 - 3. If the catch exceeds the DNR species limit for licenses on board, the fish out of species plus the largest fish shall be removed from the catch prior to weighing.
 - 4. If non-legal fish are part of the twelve (12) fish limit brought for weigh-in, each non-legal fish will not count towards scoring and an additional penalty of ten (10) points will be deducted for each non-legal fish from the overall score.
- F. All fish weighed become the property of the Tournament Committee who may, at their discretion, return fish to the entrant.
- G. After weigh-in, no fishing by tournament boats or tournament participants will be allowed until the start of next fishing period.
- H. Note: The MDNR and/or other fisheries personnel may also be present at weigh-in conducting inspections, taking samples and gathering other fisheries related data.

X. RADIO PROCEDURE

- A. Every boat must be equipped with an operating VHF Marine Radio. This radio must include Channels 09 and 78.
- B. After the start of the Tournament, all boats must monitor Channel 78.
- C. Be aware, important Tournament announcements can and will be made on Channel 78. Participants who miss these announcements will still be held accountable.

XI. DISQUALIFICATION OR PENALTY

- A. **The Tournament Committee reserves the right to utilize polygraph technology as it deems appropriate and necessary.**

- B. Any participant who violates any of the rules of the Tournament or acts in an **uncooperative, disorderly or unsportsmanlike manner** shall be disqualified or penalized at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. The Committee may also at their discretion deduct any number of earned points from any contestant for a violation of the Tournament rules or improper conduct.
- C. Automatic disqualification shall result from the following:
 - 1. Running gunwale to gunwale with any other boat or passing objects of any kind between a participant in the Tournament and any other person at any time between the start of the Tournament and the time the catch is dropped off at the weigh-in station.
 - 2. Failure to report directly to the weigh-in station after the 15 fish limit is reached or at the close of each fishing period.
 - 3. Possession of fish during Tournament hours other than fish fairly caught while participating in the Tournament.
 - 4. Any participants who are disqualified may not be invited back to future Tournaments.
- D. All boats must be within the pier heads and checked off by Tournament Control at the end of the fishing period. A PENALTY OF 10 POINTS PER MINUTE will be assessed after that time. **NO EXCEPTIONS**
- E. All Tournament participants shall be duty bound to report any and all violations of the rules they observe on any boat.
- F. In the event boat is coming into port for engine trouble boat must notify tournament control on Ch. 78 and report directly to the head wall at tournament control at the Southside Marina. Returning to any other location will result in a disqualification.

XII. CANCELLATIONS/POSTPONEMENTS

- A. The Tournament Committee may cancel the Tournament at any time when, in their opinion, it feels that fishing conditions could be dangerous to persons or property. **EACH CAPTAIN IS ULTIMATELY RESPONSIBLE FOR THE SAFETY OF HIS CREW AND VESSEL.** The Committee will announce by radio before each Tournament period their decision as to whether or not the Tournament shall be run. Announcements will be made on VHF-78.
- B. The Tournament Committee may also decide to delay the start of any fishing period or to shorten any period due to deteriorating weather conditions. A delay in the starting time will be announced on VHF-78. The shortening of a fishing period will be announced by radio and there will be at least a 15-minute warning by Tournament Control before the shortened period is announced.
- C. Weather boats will be used in each division at the discretion of the Tournament Committee. If a fishing period is shortened, all boats at the end of said period must proceed to and be within the pier heads within one (1) hour.
- D. The decision of the Tournament Committee to cancel, delay or shorten the Tournament shall be final.

XII. PROTESTS

- A. Any and all protests must be made in writing to the Tournament Committee before 2:30 p.m. on the day of the alleged infraction that is being reported. There is a \$150 fee to register an official protest. The fee is refundable at the discretion of the judges' panel.
- B. A panel of five (5) judges appointed by the Tournament Committee will resolve all disputes. Their decision shall be final and binding.

XIII. RULE CHANGES

The Committee may change or modify any of these rules, but changes will be made in writing and posted forty-five (45) minutes prior to the start of the Tournament at Tournament Control.

XIV. LIABILITY

- A. Every reasonable precaution will be taken by the South Haven Steelheaders Fishing Chapter to protect persons and property during the Tournament; however, neither the Tournament Committee, nor sponsors, nor judges, nor any officers, directors or employees of the same are responsible for the safety of persons or property of participants as regards accident, theft, damage by fire, vandalism or any other cause.
- B. All participants further understand and agree to hold harmless the aforementioned groups and individuals from damages incurred as a result of participation in the Tournament in whatever form or manner said liabilities or damages might be incurred.