2024 Official Tournament Rules & Regulations

1.) Main Event Hours will be from 7:00am to 3:30pm June 1st, 2023 (Foul Weather date will be June 2nd, 2023

2.) New York State waters of Lake Erie and Upper Niagara River only. If found fishing outside New York waters, you will be disqualified.

3.) Each boat will utilize a maximum of up to nine (9) rod/reels per boat - total. All other New York laws apply.

4.) Boats may have from two (2) to (5) anglers per boat. This includes boat captain.

5.) 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.

6.) Each Team will present up to six (6) walleyes in their box. The largest walleye 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. All ice bagged or blocked should be contained in a bag, or container.

7.) 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. 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. Any fish smaller than 20” will be removed and result in a ½ lbs. deduction per fish smaller than 20”.

8.) 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).

9.) The team “tag” will be issued at the captains meeting. If you depart without your tag, you will not be able to weigh your fish.

10.) The team “tag” is returned to the cooler check in station at the Dunkirk City Pier when you drop off your fish cooler with tournament officials. It would be appreciated if you would please return you tag regardless if you are presenting a cooler for weigh in or not to help with the accountability that the entire fleet has returned safely.

11.) Tournament boats cannot make contact with each other at any point or time once your boat has departed. 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 departed. This includes at the dock, leaving Dunkirk Harbor, on the lake during traveling or fishing, or returning back to Dunkirk Harbor. Any noted or witnessed contact between boats will result in an immediate disqualification for any/all boats involved. For Big Fish Friday, you may drop off an angler to drive a vehicle back, but the boat must return by water to the Dunkirk City Pier.

12.) Your cooler must be turned in to the check in station located at Dunkirk City Pier by 3:30 PM Sharp! (NO EXCEPTIONS). 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.

13.) Fish will be weighed in at the main stage on the city pier. Weigh-In will begin at 5pm.

14.) 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.

15.) All slip fees, launch fees, lodging fees and all other associated fees are the responsibility of each team.

16.) 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.

17.) The tournament is an OPEN communication event.

18.) All boats must depart and return under their own power. Jumping boats or transferring coolers is a violation of rule #11 and therefore not allowed.

19.) As the event will have a professional weigh in, it is mandatory that each team will be properly dressed and in matching jerseys/shirts 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.

20.) 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 Thursday, May 30th, 2023. Registration and captain’s meeting will be at Demetri’s. Teams not registered by 7:00pm 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).

21.) 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.

22.) 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.

23.) All fish being weighed will now be tournament property until the tournament weigh ins are complete. Coolers will be held in a staging area behind stage. Any team that finishes in a paid position will be subject to having fish cut. This rule has been added to ensure transparency, and adding one more measure to ensure a fair tournament.

24.) 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.

25.) 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.

26.) The Primitive Patriot Outdoors WNY Walleye Classic maintains zero tolerance of cheating or misconduct within ANY tournament venue anywhere throughout the USA or Canada. The Primitive Patriot Outdoors WNY Walleye Classic will prohibit participation of any captain or team member(s) found/documented as cheating or misconduct within ANY tournament event.

27.) 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.

28.) Teams/boats cannot go ashore once they have departed. All boats must leave the harbor by water and return by water.

29.) The WNY Walleye Classic allows its scores to be utilized for various series formats. Our rules are specific to the WNY Walleye Classic only. Some rules are copied from tournaments in our area. The WNY Walleye Classic is not responsible for any/all decisions made within final judgments of any series or other events.

30.) All Cash payouts are based on a full fleet of 50 teams. Any/All New York and Federal income taxes forthcoming of payouts and prizes received from the WNY Walleye Classic are the sole responsibility of the recipient team and teammates. WNY Walleye Classic and its personnel are not responsible or liable for any taxes due for any groups, persons, or teams receiving income for our event.

31.) Tie/Tie Breakers in the event of a tie, the following procedure will take place.

Big Fish Friday- The length of the fish will determine the winner, if that is a tie, then prize will be equally split.

Main Event- Should there be an exact tie for overall box weight, largest walleye will be used to break the tie, if that fish should be equal, then Big Fish Friday score will be used to break the tie.

32.) Weather call- All procedures for bad weather will be referenced in our weather call page.

33. Any abuse or misuse of the facilities/properties of the Dunkirk City Pier, Barts Cove, Chadwick Bay or any of the tournament/festival properties will result in disqualification. This includes boat ramps, docks, bathrooms, grounds and pier. We are the best anglers in the area. We want to show case our professionalism to the public. This event will be filmed for tv shows and other various media outlets. Let’s keep the area clean so that we can continue this event for years to come.