

# 2009 Western Reserve Walleye Association

## Official Rules

### 1. PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY

- A. Each team must complete, sign and submit an official WRWA entry form along with payment for fees by the published due dates. Late fees apply within 14 days of the tournament date. See item 2 - E below.
- B. This is a team circuit with two anglers fishing from the same boat. No spectators or passengers permitted with fishing teams during tournament hours. Any person under 18 years of age must present a signed permission slip from a parent or legal guardian (unless fishing with a parent/ legal guardian).
- C. WRWA participants must pay for a current WRWA at or before registration of their first tournament of the year. Memberships expire Dec. 31<sup>st</sup> of the current year. Memberships are non-transferrable.
- D. To be eligible to fish the WRWA Championship a team must compete in three qualifying events.
- E. Substitutes may be used in any tournament. A substitute must be a current WRWA member. A substitute may be from another team but must prove he/she will not be causing a split up of another team or has left in good standing. Any one substitute may fish for multiple teams. The substitute will not receive credit toward season points or count for a qualifying tournament. All teams are limited to two (2) substitutions per year. Tournament officials reserve the right to disallow any substitution without reason.
- F. WRWA does not discriminate based on race, creed, color, or gender. WRWA is not required to accept all applications and retains sole discretion on acceptance or rejection of any application.

### 2. ENTRY

- A. The entry fee (without late fees) for each tournament is as follows: Qualifiers: \$100, Championship: \$150, Big Fish: \$10 Special Events: as listed on tournament application.
- B. Membership is \$30 per person per year.
- C. There will be a special 50% entry, 50% membership, 50% event payout for new participants. This will be deemed a "Rookie" entry. This is a onetime /single tournament option for new participants, after which standard entry and membership fees will apply. "Rookie" entries must complete all other WRWA requirements for Championship and Point Payout eligibility. "Rookie" entries are not available for special events.
- D. Payment must accompany each entry. Money order, check, or Pay Pal (if applicable) is acceptable payments. Mailing address is WRWA 11344 Homestead, Alliance, OH 44601
- E. Entries will be accepted based on a first come, first served basis until the tournament is full (based on when received at WRWA office, not regarding any postmark). An additional \$25 late charge applies to entries received after 14 days prior to the tournament date. Late entries will be accepted any time after the deadline and from 5:30 am to 6:30 am the morning of the tournament. These late entries will be deemed as non pre-registered participants. See item 7-F.

### 3. REFUNDS & CREDIT

- A. No refunds apply at any time. At the discretion of the director, a credit may extend in the case of a serious emergency or tragedy that has caused a team to miss a tournament. Credit must carry over to the same team during the current year or the following year if at season end.
- B. Disqualification from any tournament for any reason will result in forfeiture of entry fee and no credit will be extended.

### 4. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE, REGISTRATION & CHAMPIONSHIP MEETING

- A. All WRWA participants are not allowed on tournament waters within 8 hours of the event. There are no restrictions on how early a team can pre-fish as long as state law is followed.
- B. At least one team participant must sign in at the registration table prior to each tournament.
- C. At sign in each team will receive a boat number for the specific event. That number is to remain in their possession throughout the event and be made visible to other competitors and tournament officials if requested.
- D. Each team must present their vessel pre-launch for a boat and live well inspection.
- E. At least one team participant must be present at a pre-championship registration meeting prior to the year's championship event. In the case of an emergency or unforeseen situation, arrangements must be made with the WRWA President prior to the start of the rules meeting if you are unable to attend (Cell: 330-704-0393). Failure to check-in with WRWA officials before each tournament or the championship meeting will result in disqualification for that event.

### 5. TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY & SAFETY

- A. Each contestant must observe safe boating conduct at all times.
- B. All boats must be gasoline powered and at least 13 feet in length, ABSOLUTELY NO CANOES.
- C. All tournament boats must have all the Coast Guard required safety equipment, including a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher and distress horn, flag or whistle. Great Lakes and border water tournaments require flares. All tournament boats are recommended to have a fully functional marine band radio. In the case that a radio is not available or functional, the team must take a cellular phone and leave the phone number with the Director. Tournament boats will also be inspected for functioning and empty live wells. Lake Erie tournaments will be exempt from the live well requirement.
- D. All boats will be inspected prior to launch. All contestants must start from and return to their launch sites. All fishing must be done from a tournament inspected boat.
- E. All teams are subject to inspection during the tournament; patrol boats may come alongside and conduct inspections 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 hours by anyone in any fashion. Cell phones are allowed for safety purposes only. No contact between competitors is allowed during tournament hours. No internet access is allowed, no text messaging, paging, or walk-talkie to another person during tournament hours. WRWA may request cell phone records in the course of investigating an incident report; and all contestants agree to provide such records if requested of them.
- F. Each contestant, under penalty of disqualification for that day, must wear a Coast Guard approved flotation device and have the engine kill switch (console and tiller boats) attached to the boat operator at all times when the combustion engine is operating above idle.
- G. 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.
- H. 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 the official weigh-in station or if severe weather forces them ashore.
- I. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs may be possessed or consumed during tournament hours.
- J. Any contact other than rescue between boats during official tournament hours is strictly prohibited.

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## **6. TOURNAMENT FORMAT & FISHING**

- A. WRWA reserves sole discretion to assign boat numbers in any manner.
- B. All WRWA tournaments will have one day of competition excluding the 2 day WRWA Championship and any special events. Tournament boundaries and restricted fishing zones will be announced prior to the tournament and may be further restricted in the event of severe weather or for other reasons. Contestants must abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas at all times.
- C. On tournament days, WRWA contestants are prohibited from fishing except during designated fishing hours. Contestants must stay off tournament waters before and after tournament hours except to navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities.
- D. WRWA participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses. All state rules regarding fishing will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified. These details will be clearly communicated prior to the tournament. Only fish caught on rod and reel in a normal and usual manner will be accepted. Live bait and artificial lures are permissible.
- E. All fish must be caught during event hours by the members of the team presenting them for weigh-in.
- F. With the exclusion of Lake Erie Tournaments, all fish must be kept and carried in aerated live wells to keep fish alive and as fresh as possible for release. Any fish mauled, mashed, frozen, stringer, injected with water or other fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight or showing white gills, soft flesh or eyes, will result in disqualification at the discretion of the Director.
- G. Teams must be in line at the weigh-in site by the announced time given at send-off the day of the event or the team will be disqualified.
- H. At least one team member must accompany the catch to the scale, turn in their boat number, sign the official weigh-in slip and receive a copy for their records. WRWA reserves the right to correct any errors written on the weigh slip.
- I. Teams not weighing fish must report to the scales, report no fish, and turn in their boat number.
- J. A .20 lb. deduction will be made for each fish determined to be dead in a live weight tournament.
- K. Walleye, Sauger and Saugeye will be weighed where permissible by state law. The minimum length of eligible fish will be set for each tournament and will be announced at each event. Teams will be allowed to weigh a maximum of five eligible fish at each tournament unless contrary to respective state limitations. Any changes to this will be announced prior to the tournament.
- L. The official ruler will be "The Golden Rule". Fish will be measured by an official with the fish's mouth closed and tail pinched (based on Tournament regulations, but not violating local laws).
- M. If a "short" fish is presented for weigh-in, the biggest eligible fish weighed for that day will be disqualified for each non-acceptable length fish presented. If a state or local violation occurs by presenting a non-acceptable fish, the team will be automatically disqualified from that WRWA tournament.

## **7. SPORTSMANSHIP & PROTEST**

- A. Contestants will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner at all times. Any unfavorable conduct or action by a contestant, which could negatively reflect on the tournament or circuit, will be grounds for disqualification or rejection of entry application.
- B. The Director or any WRWA participating angler has the right to protest another team. An official written protest with \$75 fee must be made with the Director within 30 minutes of completion of weigh-in. The fee will be returned if the protest is found valid. Following interviews with the concerned parties, a ruling will be made. In the event rules infractions are brought to the Directors attention and investigation indicates a violation occurred, a penalty of daily/tournament weight may be applied, and cash, prizes and awards must be returned if so requested. A polygraph or CVS Voice Stress Analyzer may be utilized if so decided by the Director. The Director will interpret rules according to the spirit and intent of the rule and his/her decision in all disputes is final. If the protest is valid the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs. If the protest is invalid, the fee will not be returned and the protesting team must pay all investigative costs.
- C. Every competitor is expected to participate in the marshalling of the field in order to maintain the highest integrity to the competition. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported to the Director on an Incident Report for further investigation.

## **8. SCORING, POINTS, PAYOUT & SPECIAL AWARDS**

- 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 finishers will be added together and divided equally to each team. Prizes will be awarded at the conclusion of the tournament.
- B. There will be 6 points qualifying events for the WRWA 2009 season: 4 points qualifiers and each day of the two day championship. The first place team at each points qualifying event will receive 200 points, second will receive 199, third will receive 198 and so on, for the remainder of the tournament field. In addition to the points scoring system, teams will receive 1 bonus point for each eligible fish brought to scale (maximum of five) during each qualifying event. There will not be a point throw out during the 2009 season.
- C. Points are awarded to a designated team pre-determined when memberships are approved and are not transferrable to another team in the event of partner changes etc.
- D. Points scoring will determine placement for the end of season point payout and to determine the Cabela's NTC qualifiers.
- E. In the event of a conflict between the WRWA schedule and the Cabela's NTC schedule, NTC qualifiers will be awarded their averaged points from the previous season for the WRWA event that may be missed due to the schedule conflict. The averaged points will be determined by the same points system as used for the previous season's point's placement.
- F. The WRWA tournament payout will be based on the number of pre-registered teams entered in each tournament. Non pre-registered entries and their associated fees (see item 2-E) will not be included in the payout field. This non pre-registered payout exclusion is waived for prior 2008 WRWA members.
- G. Tournament payouts will be based on the following:

Qualifiers: 80% payback to 20% of the field. Championship: 60% payback to 20% of the field. Point Payout: based on available budget to 100% of the Championship field. Special Events: As noted on event application. Big Fish: 100% payback of entry fee. \*One big fish payout per team per event. \*Only one big fish entry per team per event with the single most heaviest fish determining the winner. \*Big fish pot is not mandatory.

## **9. ANGLER'S WAIVER AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

- A. Participation Agreement: I understand that this is a sporting event governed by the rules that have been established by tournament officials. I acknowledge that I have received 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 Official (s) shall act as the referee and their decision based on their interpretation of the rules will be final and without legal appeal.
- B. Release of Liability: I acknowledge that I am participating voluntarily in the WRWA. I agree to assume all risk of injury, death, damages, theft and loss to personal property which may result from my participation in WRWA 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 warrant that I am in good physical and mental health and am physically capable of withstanding the rigors and requirements of a fishing tournament 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 royalty fees.
- D. Failure to abide by any rules may result in disqualification by tournament officials.