

BIG RED CLASSIC SPORTFISHING TOURNAMENT OFFICIAL RULES HOLLAND, MICHIGAN

RULES

Rule Changes:

- A. Official Start time for the tournament will be 6:15 am for both days.**
- B. Tournament control reserves the right to add observers to any boat at any time.**
- C. Observers will be provided by the tournament committee. Observers will be assigned to both Pro and Amateur Division boats at the discretion of the tournament committee.**
- D. All foul hooked fish must be returned to the lake. The catch count of the foul hooked fish does not go against your catch count.**
- E. Once the legal amount of Lake Trout have been caught (per Michigan DNR rules), all future Lake Trout must be returned to the lake. The Lake Trout that are returned to the lake must still be counted against the boats catch count.**
- F. Sealed coolers. Only 2 people per boat will be allowed on stage at the final sealed cooler weigh-in on Day 2 for the top 5 Pro and the top 5 Am boats.**
- G. Day 1 of the tournament the top 5 participating boats from the Amateur division from last year could have an observer assigned to their boat by the tournament committee.**
- H. Day 2 of the tournament the current top 5 Amateur boats could have an observer assigned to their boat by the tournament committee.**

Attendance of the Captain's Meeting is at the discretion of the captain. It is each captain's responsibility to know the rules.

Eligibility:

- A. Open to any fishing team willing to participate and abide by official tournament rules and Michigan DNRE regulations.**
- B. Division 1B Professional is open to any fishing team with a boat 24' and above; however, Division 2B Amateur is restricted to non-charter boats and captains. There is no boat length restriction in the Amateur Division. Individuals that are holders of Coast Guard issued captains license, and that have chartered for sport fishing on the Great Lakes within the last five (5) years at the time of tournament dates, are not eligible to participate in the Amateur Division.**
- C. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decline entry or participation by any person, team or boat, as deemed necessary, to ensure such things as integrity, image, reputation, financial performance and community relationships with sponsors, participants and supporting groups.**

Entry Fees:

- A. Division 1B - Professional:**
 - \$690.00 for the Division 1B - Professional + Big Fish Contest.
 - Big Fish Contest
- B. Division 2B - Amateur:**
 - \$430.00 for the Division 2B - Amateur + Big Fish Contest.
 - Big Fish Contest
- C. Division 3B – Big Fish Only**
 - \$80.00 for the Big Fish Only
 - Big Fish Contest
- D. In case of a last-minute emergency, which prevents an entrant from participating in the tournament, said entrant may apply to tournament control for a refund of his entry fee.**
- E. In the event of the cancellation of the tournament due to weather or other reasons, tournament control reserves the right to retain some portion of the entry fees paid, in order to cover costs incurred. All entry fees not retained will be returned to the entrants.**

Scoring:

- A. Winners will be determined by the tournament control and will be determined on the total accumulation of points based on the following:**
 - 1. Ten (10) points per legal fish boated.**

2. One (1) point per pound total weight.

B. The contestant accumulating the highest number of points over all hours of the tournament shall be the winner; the contestant with the second highest accumulation shall be second, and so on.

C. The following species shall be eligible: Steelhead, Brown Trout, Lake Trout, and all species of Salmon.

D. In the event that two or more teams tie for the most points, the largest fish will determine the final standings. In the event two or more teams tie for the largest fish, the time that fish was boated will determine the final standings. The earliest logged fish shall be declared the winner of that category.

Division Prize Money:

A. Prize money will be determined by the number of participating boats in the tournament and will be fully calculated after all entrants have registered.

B. Division 1B - Professional Prize money will be based on participation.

C. Division 2B - Amateur Prize money will be based on participation.

D. Division 3B – Big Fish Only Prize money will be based on participation.

E. Divisions 1B, 2B and 3B indicate the team has signed up for the Big Fish Contest. The biggest fish for the entire event per team will be eligible for the Big Fish Contest. The Big Fish Contest money will be based on participation. The Big Fish Contest will pay down a minimum of 10 places.

F. At the completion of the tournament, \$200 will be awarded to the largest Salmon, Steelhead, Lake Trout, and Brown Trout.

G. There will be a potential first to weigh in bonus (First In). Meaning the first team to weigh in on each day for the Pro and the Am divisions will receive a prize from one of our great sponsors.

Observer System and Log Sheets:

A. Observers will be provided by the tournament committee. Observer assignments will be announced at the captain's meeting.

B. If an observer fails to arrive to their assigned boat on time, this should be immediately reported to the tournament committee. Observers should arrive at their assigned boats by 0530.

C. Observers will be at least eighteen (18) years of age and shall be responsible to see that all tournament rules and DNRE regulations are fully adhered to on their assigned boat. Observers shall report any and all infractions to tournament control.

D. The observer shall stay with the catch from their assigned boat until it has been officially weighed and scored.

E. Observer assignments will be made by tournament control and will be announced during the captain's meeting.

F. Each boat captain must be prepared to report the location of their boat to their assigned observer at registration.

G. A log sheet will be provided for each fishing period and must be completed by each team in each division, replacement sheets will not be provided.

1. **For boats with observers**, the observer shall enter each fish boated on this log sheet as soon as the fish is on board, the log sheet shall be completed in full prior to entering the weigh station, signed by the observer and the boat captain and turned in at the weigh station by the observers to verify that day's catch prior to scoring.

2. **For boats without observers**, this log sheet shall be completed in full prior to entering the weigh station, signed by the boat captain and turned in at the weigh station by the captain or a crew member to verify that day's catch prior to scoring and at least one member of the team must stay with the fish at all times until the weigh-in is completed.

3. **In the case of a tie breaker, a non-or incorrectly completed log sheet will lose the tie breaker to a team with a properly completed log sheet if the tie breaker requires the use of this log sheet to break the tie. If log sheet is not turned in, disqualification will occur for that fishing period.**

H. Members of the Michigan DNRE will be on hand at each day's weigh-in to inspect fish weighed in. If they determine that one or more fish were not legally caught, the suspect fish may not be eligible for weigh-in and may result in disqualification for that fishing team.

I. Any disrespect shown to observers will result in immediate disqualification from the tournament. You will be excluded from future tournaments. NO EXCEPTIONS!

J. There will be no cell phones in use by the Observer while observing, unless there is an emergency. The cell phone will be put in a safe place for all to see, until the fishing period has ended.

Boat Identification:

A. Tournament control will furnish to each contestant a flag and a boat identification number. You must make sure your boat number is on your log sheet at the weigh-in. You do not need to return the number.

B. The flag shall be always flown in full view, from all directions, during the tournament. The boat number shall be prominently shown on the starboard side of the participant's boat at all times.

Dates and Hours:

A. The tournament will be held on the designated dates approved by the tournament committee. The captains meeting will be held on Friday night, and the fishing periods will be held on Saturday and Sunday. Attendance of the captains meeting is at the discretion of the captain. It is each captain's responsibility to know the rules. Pro Division teams must have a crew member present for the observer swap.

B. The tournament schedule will be as follows:

1. Friday:

Registration: 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Sponsor Dinner: 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Captain's Meeting/Observer assignment: 7:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.

2. Saturday & Sunday:

5:30 a.m. -All observers not on board their assigned boats must be reported to tournament control.

5:30 a.m. – Boats may begin to proceed through the Holland channel.

6:15 a.m. –Fishing period begins (no run time). The start time will be announced on Channel 06, Tournament boats may depart from the pier heads in an orderly manner.

1:30 p.m. – All boat MUST be in the pier heads. This is the official end of the fishing period. Failure to be in the pier head by 1:30 p.m. and you will be disqualified for that days fishing period. There will be two tournament committee boats staged outside the channel watching for late boats coming in. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.

3:00 p.m. –The latest time each fishing team must be in the weigh-in line (see weigh-in instructions below). You must be in line before 3:00PM with your fish container and completed log sheet or you will be disqualified for that days fishing period. THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.

3. Sunday:

30 minutes after last boat is weighed in.- Awards Ceremony.

C. The contest will be considered official if a total of three (3) hours are fished in either or both fishing periods (6:15AM – 1:30PM) between Saturday and Sunday and prizes will be awarded based on the point accumulation during the fishing time that was available.

D. There shall be no fishing on either day of the tournament by any boat or any participant in the tournament except during official tournament hours.

Start and Finish:

A. Contestants must fish out of, and return to, Holland harbor.

B. Tournament control will start and end each tournament period by radio communication on channel 06. Fishing may not begin until the start is announced – there will be no run time.

C. Tournament control may establish alternate fishing times as circumstances dictate.

D. Lines can be pulled at any time, understanding that the entrant must be in the pier head at or before the official end of the fishing period. There will be tournament control boats at the pier heads at the end of the fishing period to monitor boats coming in late. If you come in late you will be disqualified for the day.

Weather Call:

A. The tournament committee will use all available systems to determine if the weather conditions warrant a cancelation or delay of that days scheduled fishing times. The Tournament Committee may cancel or delay the tournament, when in their opinion, conditions could be dangerous to persons or property. All weather announcements will be transmitted on channel 06 and online where appropriate.

B. If weather conditions deteriorate during the fishing period; tournament control will contact as many weather boats as possible to determine if the tournament should be canceled or otherwise modified. Tournament control will make the final decision. Prior to the start of each days run time, tournament control will determine if the weather conditions warrant a cancellation or modification of that days fishing period.

C. The ultimate responsibility of the captain of every vessel is to the well being of his or her crew and it may be that some boats will decide to withdraw even though the tournament continues.

Fishing Rules:

A. There are no distance limits set on where tournament boats may fish; however, they must understand the requirement to hear any possible tournament announcements broadcast on channel 06.

B. All fish entered must be fairly caught on hook and line in accordance with DNRE regulations.

C. There will be a maximum of nine (9) lines in the water at any one time with a maximum of two (2) lures per line. Dodgers, attracters, or other similar hook-less devices are not regarded as lures.

D. Fish Limits –

Pro Division – Catch 15 / Weigh 10 in accordance with DNRE limits. The **first 15** legally boated fish must be kept. **No more than 6 lake trout may be weighed for the PRO division.**

Amateur Division – Catch 15 / Weigh 5 in accordance with DNRE limits. The **first 15** legally boated fish must be kept.

Violation of bringing more than 15 fish to the weigh-in station is grounds for automatic disqualification. (See weigh-in Section H for further clarification on weigh station limits and scale limits)

Big Fish Division – Catch 15/ Weigh 1 in accordance with DNRE limits. The **first 15** legally boated fish must be kept.

E. Intentional culling is prohibited and will result in disqualification. All efforts must be made to get the fish in the boat.

Observers must verify the exact length of all undersized fish returned to the lake. Returning fish without measuring is cheating and

you will be disqualified from the entire tournament with no refund. Any intentional act such as, but not limited to, shaking off, breaking off, burning off, cutting, or excessively hitting a fish with the net, will be subject to disqualification from the entire tournament. Any reported violations must be reported to the committee by close of legal weigh-in time.

*** Every fish should be treated the same; all efforts must be made to get it in the boat.**

F. A fish may be released only under one of the following conditions:

1. The fish did not meet the minimum size requirements per DNRE regulations.
2. The team including a licensed observer has reached their DNRE limit for that species. Under these circumstances, the fish must be counted toward the tournament limits. Eligible species are listed in the Scoring (C) section above.
3. The fish was not caught in accordance with DNRE regulations.

G. Each boat that reaches the fish limit of their division shall immediately cease fishing, bring in all fishing gear and return to check-in. After check-in, no further fishing will be allowed during that fishing period.

H. From the start of a fishing period until the catch is deposited at the weigh-in station, no boat entered in the contest may run gunwale to gunwale with any other boat, nor may objects of any kind be passed between participating boats and any other boat. Violation of this rule is automatic disqualification.

I. Cut baits will be allowed.

J. Tournament control may change or modify any of these rules; however, changes must be in writing and posted 45 minutes prior to the start of the tournament.

Weigh-in:

A. The weigh-in line will be a roped area that teams will stand in and wait to weigh their fish. Any team not in line, in-between the ropes on or before 3:00PM (unless a shorted fishing period is announced) will be disqualified from that days fishing period. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**

B. For boats with observers must have in the weigh-in line at least one crewmember, the observer, the completed and signed observer's log sheet and the fish container. The observer and crewmembers must remain with the catch until it has been officially scored.

C. Boats without observers must have in the weigh-in line at least one crewmember with the completed and signed log sheet and the fish container.

D. Fish can be brought to the weigh-in station via automobile. All observer and crew rules as well as all other tournament rules still apply. Observer must stay with fish container at all times.

E. Failure of a team to be in the weigh-in line by the designated time as described in these rules will result in disqualification for that fishing period.

F. All fish caught become the property of tournament control who may decide to return the fish to the entrants.

G. Please drain coolers before entering the weigh in line. Excess water or loose ice may result in a 10lb deduction for overall weight.

Bagged ice is acceptable.

H. There will be an area to donate any fish above your weigh in limit before you get to the weigh in scales. **If a team brings more than the allotted amount of fish (10 fish for Pro and 5 fish for AM) to the scale that team will be disqualified for that days of fishing.**

I. You will be able to weigh in smaller fish for the large species that you do not have to weigh in for your tournament box. You will be given two zip ties that you will use to tag your small fish. You will bring the small fish with you to the weigh in, you will tell the weigh in crew that you intend to weigh in the small fish for species big fish but not as part of your tournament box. You will not be penalized for bringing too many fish to the scale. This is intended to allow brown trout to be weighed if caught.

J. Zip ties will be used to mark fish for the Big Fish Contest as well. Please denote your largest fish with a zip tie to streamline the weigh in process.

Radio Procedure:

A. Every boat must be equipped with an operating marine radio. This radio must include channel 06. Boats shall monitor or scan channel 06 during the tournament. If any participant does not or cannot hear any and all announcements that may be made and this causes their fishing team to violate any tournament rule(s), any and all resulting penalties will be assessed. **THERE WILL BE NO EXCEPTIONS TO THIS RULE.**

B. Radio chatter should be kept to a minimum and be limited to procedural and weather issues. Boats wishing to contact tournament control shall do so on channel 06.

Disqualification or Penalty:

A. Any participant who violates any of the rules of the contest or acts in an uncooperative or disorderly manner shall be disqualified or penalized at the discretion of tournament control that may also deduct any number of earned points from any contestant for a violation of the tournament rules.

B. Automatic disqualification shall result from the following actions:

1. Running gunwales to gunwales with any other boat or passing objects of any kind between boats between the start of the fishing period and the time the catch is dropped off at the weigh-in station. Ex. A boat may not be towed, passed fuel by another boat, or assisted in any other way by another boat or person then the one of the crew members.

2. Possession of fish during tournament hours other than those fairly caught while participating in this tournament.

4. Any participants that are disqualified may be banned from future tournaments.

C. All Tournament participants shall be duty bound to report any and all violations of the rules that they observe.

D. Any incomplete log sheets may be cause for disqualification or point reduction.

E. The same boat must be fished on both days. It is not allowed for a team to change boats in the tournament, or the team will be disqualified.

F. The Tournament Committee may board any vessel prior to the fishing period to search for any un-cleaned fish. The presence of any un-cleaned fish on a tournament boat prior to the fishing period will result in disqualification. Inspections may be held as early as completion of the Captains meeting on Friday evening. Teams will have 3 hours from the time of weigh in is complete on Saturday to clean or dispos of their fish before being in violation of having uncleaned fish on their vessel.

G. If a team brings more than the allotted amount of fish (10 fish for Pro and 5 fish for AM) to the scale that team will be disqualified for that days of fishing.

Cancellations:

A. Weather

B. Tournament control may cancel the tournament at any time when, if in their opinion, they feel that fishing conditions could be dangerous to persons or property. Tournament control will announce, by radio and online where appropriate, before the start of the run time, their decision as to whether or not the contest shall run. Starting times may also be delayed.

C. After a fishing period has begun, if conditions should deteriorate, all boats will be informed on channel 06 of any cancellation decisions. If this decision is made, tournament control will broadcast the information on channel 06 and online where appropriate. **If the call is made, there will be 60 minutes to be in the pier heads. Once in the pier heads, there will be 90 minutes to be in the weigh in line.**

D. If a fishing period is shortened, Tournament Control cannot police when each team actually stops fishing, but it is recommended that lines be removed from the water as soon as possible. However, the rule for awarding points is determined by being in the weigh-in line by the announced time. The ultimate responsibility of the captain of every vessel is to the well being of his or her crew and it may be that some boats will decide to withdraw even though the tournament continues.

E. To make a complete tournament there must be at least **THREE (3)** total hours of fishing time in the two fishing periods (6:00AM – 1:30PM). If there is not at least three hours of fishing the tournament will be considered canceled and 90% of entry fees will be paid back.

Protests:

A. Any and all protests must be made in writing to tournament control before 4:00 p.m. on the day of the alleged infraction. Each protest must be accompanied by \$100.00 in cash. If the protest is upheld, the BRC will award the protester \$250.00 however if the protest is not upheld the BRC will keep the \$100.00.

B. A panel of judges appointed by tournament control will resolve all disputes. Their decision shall be final and binding.

C. The Big Red Foundation (BRF) is a member of the Lake Michigan Tournament Trail. The BRF may report any team that is disqualified from the Big Red Classic Sport Fishing Tournament to fellow tournament boards. The team and the infraction may be reported to the Lake Michigan Tournament Trail for review and possible disqualification from other tournaments.

Liability:

A. By participating in this event, you agree that tournament control, officers and directors of the Big Red Foundation, marina personnel and all other individuals sponsoring, organizing or otherwise participating in the running of this tournament are not responsible for the injury to persons or property of participants, guests, marina patrons or visitors regarding accident, theft, damage, 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.