

Erie, Pennsylvania Sport Fishing Association

2008 Pro-Am Walleye & Steelhead Team Tournament Rules

- Entry Fee:** Total of \$400 per boat for the Pro Division, \$275 for the Am Division. There will be no refunds. Each team entry includes a contribution for the new Erie, PA Sport Fishing Association. **Eligibility:** Any person 18 years or older may enter the tournament. Team members under the age of 18 may enter provided they are accompanied by a parent or guardian of legal age who is also entered in the tournament and they are on the same team. All teams, upon registration agree to abide by all tournament rules.
- Entry Deadline:** Entries must be received (post marked) no later than 6:30 pm Friday, July 25th, 2008. Entries should be sent to: Erie, PA Sport Fishing Association P.O. Box 7245; Erie, PA 16510. Checks payable to: E.P.S.F.A. Entries received after July 25th will be \$500/Pro and \$ 375/Am. **EARLY Bird Entry:** Entries received (post marked) by July 1st will be eligible for a \$100 early bird prize drawing.
- Dates and Times:** Tournament dates are Saturday August 2nd and Sunday August 3rd, 2008. The tournament's intent is to fish two days. Hours of competition for the tournament will be 6:30 am to 2:00 pm each day. In the event of foul weather, all accumulated fishing time for one or both days will count. A mandatory Captain (or competent team member) and observer meeting will be held on Friday, August 1st at 6:00 pm (location to be determined and will be listed on confirmations emailed out to the Captain's the week before the tournament. **Weigh-Ins** will be at Shades Beach Park, RT 5, Harborcreek, PA.
- Bad Weather Rule:** In the event of bad weather on the first day of the tournament, the tournament start time may be extended to a maximum start time of 12 pm. Fishing can also extend to 4 pm (maximum), with weigh in at 5:00-6:30 pm (or an announced time). In the event of bad weather on Day 2, fishing will still cease at 2 pm. However, boats can be released to fish as late as 10:30 am (start fishing at 11 am) in an effort to fish part of Day 2. All time fished will count. There is no minimum requirement for fishing time to constitute the tournament. In the event of questionable weather or rough water conditions, the Captain will ultimately be responsible for making the Team's decision whether to fish or not even if the field of Teams has been released to fish that day. If both days are cancelled due to bad weather, entry fees will be refunded within 14 days. However, a percentage may be kept to cover administrative costs.
- Location:** The 3rd Annual Walleye and Steelhead Pro Am Team Tournament is being held at Shades Beach Park, RT 5 Harborcreek, PA (814-602-8436). Captains meeting will be held at a location to be determined.
- Boundaries:** Teams may fish any waters within Pennsylvania waters of Lake Erie. Canadian, Ohio and New York waters are off limits. Observers have the right to ask a Captain to view his loran or GPS for the purpose of determining location - if the observer feels that the boat has ventured outside of PA waters. An observer can write coordinates down which can be later checked by the tournament rules committee for verification. Any incidental fish caught outside of PA waters must be released back into the water. The intent of this rule is to keep all teams fishing Pennsylvania waters only. Crossing over in to Ohio, NY or Canadian waters will not disqualify a team; however, NO fish caught outside of tournament boundaries will be permitted to be kept. Observers cannot ask to see navigation instruments unless there is a good cause to believe the boat is near or outside of PA waters.
- Team Structure:** Participating teams are not limited to a maximum number of members in either the Pro or Amateur Divisions. However, each professional division team will be based on four anglers relative to the number of allowable rods; three anglers for the amateur division. In other words, you can have more than four anglers on a pro team, but the rod limit will remain at eight. (maximum) Amateur will be six. (maximum) If you fish less than four members, you can only fish the number of rods allowable by state law. Observers can be rotated or replaced on a daily basis. Observers do not count toward rod limits. The same fishermen do not have to fish both days; however, the Captain must be the same for both days.
- Observers (Professional Division Only):** Each competing team is required to provide an observer 18 years of age or older. Observers do not need a PA fishing license or permits. Observers can differ each day but it is their Team Captain's responsibility to educate them on the rules and their responsibilities. Observers will be exchanged via drawing, between competing teams on an assigned basis based on boat size and head accommodations. Observers may not operate boats or assist the team in any manner. Observers shall log each fish caught including time, estimated weight, species and lure used, and team member that caught a "potential" Big Fish Award. AM Teams **are required** to complete the logs also even though there are no observers on the boat. Again, only the team member that caught a "potential" big fish should be written on the form. Observers may not leave assigned team's fish until catch is weighed and registered at weigh in site each day, along with the observer log signed by the observer and the team captain. If a team fails to have their observer at the assigned boat, they are either obligated to forfeit another member to fill in as the observer, or the entire catch for that day will be disqualified. It is the responsibility of each team to provide an observer for both days of the tournament. Observers can differ from day to day but it is the Captain's responsibility to ensure that their observer is familiar with the rules and requirements. The tournament committee is NOT responsible for providing observers even though we may assist with providing them. Observers will be matched according to boat size and enclosed head availability. However, a random drawing method may be used to determine the final observer pairings after they have been categorized.
- Boat size and Identification:** All boats must be at least 18 ft. L.O.A. (length over all) in the Professional Division and Amateur Division, be accompanied by a working marine radio and have all the necessary US Coast Guard approved safety devices on board. Identification: The tournament committee will furnish each team a colored flag. Pro teams will have different colored flags than Am teams. Flags must be permanently affixed to the antenna or another visible high point of the boat for the purpose of tournament team identification.
- Rod and line Restrictions:** Contestants, excluding observers, must have in their possession a valid PA Angling License and a combination Lake Erie-Trout Permit, in accordance with the state of PA Fishing regulations. No more than two rods per person may be in use at any time. Rod limits are Pro: 8 and Amateur: 6. No more than two lures are permitted per line. All fishing methods must be in accordance with the rules and regulations of PA's Fish & Boat Commission.
- Pre-Fishing:** Unlimited pre-tournament fishing is allowed. However, all team participants entering the tournament must cease fishing by 5 pm the Friday before the tournament.
- Radio Use and Restriction:** All participating boats must be equipped with an operational VHF radio. Radio silence will be in effect throughout the tournament for both divisions. Tournament control will operate on Channel 16 VHF. All boats will be directed to Channel 88 for communication. Use of cellular phones, electronic pagers and scanners is prohibited. All radios are required to remain on Channel 16 until directed to channel 88 by the tournament committee. Teams are required to monitor channel 16 during the fishing hours unless instructed to go to Channel 88. Radio use for other than emergency reasons will result in disqualification. (Note: The objective of this rule is to preclude communication between boats during tournament hours) Any form of communication, i.e., conversing from boat to boat, sign boards, hand signals, etc. are a violation of the intent of this rule and may result in disqualification.
- Emergency Notification, Disabled Boat and Cellular Phone Procedure:** A telephone number for emergency contact of tournament participants will be (Candie- "tournament director" 814-602-8436) this will be confirmed at the Captains' Meeting. Upon receipt of an emergency call, tournament officials will contact the person via radio. Cellular phones may be present on the boat under the following rules: The phone must be surrendered into the possession of the observer or other secure location by 6:00 am each day of fishing, and must be turned off until the stop fishing time of 2:00PM or later if the tournament has been extended. The phone is to be returned by the observer to the team participant after 2:00 pm each day. In the event of an emergency call made to the tournament emergency number, tournament officials will contact the team participant by radio. At that time, the participant shall be authorized to obtain the phone from the observer, turn it on, and respond to those who made the emergency call. Following the necessary call(s), the phone shall be returned to the observer until 2:00 pm, unless the team participant leaves the boat due to the emergency, in which case the phone shall be returned at the time of docking. If a tow is required, the day's catch, one team member and the observer can be transferred to another team's boat in an effort to make the weigh in deadline. However, the tournament committee must be notified by cell phone or

- Channel 16, in advance prior to ship to ship contact. Failure to abide by this requirement may result in disqualification. A towed Team boat still must make the tournament weigh in deadline, there will be no exceptions.
14. **Start:** Observers must be on assigned boats no later than 5:15 am (unless prior arrangement has been made). Teams who fail to have their observers at the assigned boat by 5:30 am will be obligated to forfeit a team member to fill in as observer on the assigned boat, or that day's catch will not be allowed to weigh in. No boat may hand in their disclaimer form prior to 5:30am. Teams may depart from port after their team member has returned from turning in their disclaimer. The disclaimer must be turned in by an assigned team member or observer no later than 7:00 am each day. **NOTE: Each team must have a team member drop off "their" disclaimer form. Teams cannot give their disclaimer form to another Team's member to drop off for them.** The drop off areas will be identified at the Captain's meeting. A Tournament Official will begin collecting disclaimers at 5:30 am. Any team that fails to deliver their disclaimer by 7:00 am each day will have their day's catch disqualified.
 15. Fishing will not commence prior to 6:30 am. Fish locator equipment, planner boards and all electronics may be used prior to 6:30 am. However, no lines may enter the water prior to 6:30am. Captain and observer will coordinate start and end times. If there is a delay announced at 6:00 am, the next announcement will take place at 7:00 am, and so on until the Teams are released or the Tournament is cancelled. There will be no announcement made to commence or cease fishing. Tournament time will be satellite time taken from cell phone/GPS.
 16. **Tournament Boat Points of Origin:** All teams must exit and enter any of the marinas located within Presque Isle Bay (including Presque-Isle Marinas and launches), Lampe Marina, Walnut Creek Marina, Shades Beach launch, and North East Marina. There will be no exceptions to this rule. No other launches or marinas outside of these locations can be used at any point during this event.
 17. **Weigh In:** Weigh In will be held from 3:00-4:30 pm at **Shades Beach Park**, RT 5, Harborcreek, PA. Fish brought to the weigh in line after 4:30 pm will not be accepted. All teams must check in at the official weigh in station or they will be given a "0" score for that day. All fishing must cease at or before 2:00 pm. Any fish landed (lifted, brought over the gunnel or stern or netted) after 2:00 pm does not count. The day's catch must not leave the boat under any circumstances until the day's fishing is over (exception: **Rule 13**) and the boat is docked. At least one team member and the observer must remain with the day's catch until the day's catch have been weighed in. No participants entered in the tournament may fish between closing time of Day one and start of Day two or after 5:00 pm of the Friday before the Tournament. Any team entering fish that have been altered in any manner as to increase the weight of the fish will be disqualified from the tournament. Gaffing fish is not allowed.
 18. **Scoring:** The maximum number of fish may be kept according to PA Fish and Boat Commission regulations for the amount of anglers on your team (excluding observer). (Pro Team is 4 and Am Team is 3 maximum team members). However, only your best 2 limits of Walleyes (12 fish) and best single limit of Steelhead (5 fish) can be brought for weigh in. The minimum size limit for both species will be 17". **There will be a ½" buffer allowed when measuring fish. It will be the Captain's decision to keep a fish that measures between 17" and 17.5"**. Fish over 17.5" MUST be kept and will count toward your teams catch. This is a **no cull** tournament: If you were successful enough to catch and keep the legal Team boat limit, no more fish of that specie can be kept-you are done fishing for that particular species. (You may still keep fishing for the other specie if you have not caught that specie boat limit already) Additional fish caught of that species that you have a boat limit of **MUST** be returned to the water. The tournament 17" size limit exceeds those established by the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Teams can choose to release fish under 17" or keep smaller size fish (for their own use) as long as it is a legal fish as determined by the PA Fish and Boat Commission. However, only 17" fish or larger can be weighed in. 17" fish or larger must be kept and will count toward your Team's limit. **Do not bring more fish to the weigh in other than those eligible for weigh in (17 fish Maximum)**. The weigh master and tournament committee will not wait for teams to filter their catch out at the weigh in.
 19. **Measurement and Point System:** The tournament weigh officials will squeeze the tail forks to achieve the longest possible measurement when determining overall length of your fish. Certified boards will be used at the weigh in sites to standardize measuring. **These boards will be present at the Captain's Meeting for teams to compare their own measuring devices to**. These will be the official measuring boards of the tournament, and will determine whether or not a fish is legal for the event. Short fish will be disqualified and your team will be assessed a 10 point penalty... Each fish weighed in will score 10 points and one point will be scored per pound of fish weighed. (EX: 3 fish weighing 6 pounds each will provide a score of 48 points) Fish under 17" will be penalized 10 points from the Team's total score. However, in no case shall a team's score be made less than zero. **All point leaders must be willing to submit to polygraph examination**. All winning fish may be tested for time in possession. All fish weighed in must remain in the specified area until the completion of weigh in. (Note: the care and security of all fish will be the responsibility of the team Captains and observers. All fish shall be brought to weigh in stations in coolers clearly marked with the name of the participating boat or team number). Any fish taken in violation of state law may disqualify the day's catch. In the event of a tie, the victory will go to the team who caught the largest fish by weight (Walleye or Steelhead). The losing team will move into 2nd place.
 20. **Prize Money:** First Place: **Pro Team - \$7,500** (cash & merchandise); **Amateur Team - \$4,500** (cash & merchandise). If more than 35 boats register for either division, the prize money (excluding first place) for that division will be increased on a pro-rated basis. Prize payouts will be to 10 places for Pro Division and 10 places for Amateur Division. Big fish awards will be given out on a daily basis.
 21. **Largest Fish:** There will be largest fish prizes awarded at this event. It is the responsibility of the participating team to notify the weigh master that they may have an eligible fish. Once a team has weighed their catch, they forfeit the right to single out a particular fish.
 22. **Protests:** Any team may protest the conduct or score of another team. All protests must be made in writing. All protests must be filed within one hour of the closing of daily weigh in. All protests will cost \$100 refundable fee.
 23. **Rulings and Limitations:** The Tournament Committee's decision is final in all matters pertaining to the interpretation and conduct of these rules. It is the intention of the supporters to provide an honest, sportsmanlike event. In the interest of good sportsmanship, contestants are reminded that the "spirit of the rule" will prevail in all judgment cases. (Note: falsifying any of the rules or any perpetration of fraud can be considered a felony and subject violator to prosecution.) Competitors may be disqualified for any violation of the tournament rules, with no refund of entry fee. Decision of tournament officials is Final.
 24. **Misconduct:** Any inappropriate, improper, or abusive conduct by any participant towards any tournament official, volunteer, observer or fellow participant shall be deemed a violation of the rules and may be subject to disqualification as determined by the Tournament Committee.
 25. **Liability:** Every reasonable precaution will be taken by the Tournament Committee to protect persons and property during the contest. However, neither the sponsors mentioned, nor tournament committee, judges, officers, directors, volunteers or employees of the same are responsible for the safety of persons or property of participants in regards to accidents, theft, fire, vandalism, drowning or any other cause. The Tournament Committee is not responsible for emergency assistance. All participants further understand and agree to hold harmless members and aforementioned groups and individuals by signing the liability disclaimer each morning before the tournament begins.
 26. **Pro Division Definition:** Any Captain or team member, excluding an observer, who is a licensed fishing charter boat captain or ex-fishing charter boat captain, fishing guide, commercial fisherman, currently represents a major fishing related product or who currently promotes a major fishing product whose sales may be increased by fishing this tournament will be required to enter the Pro Division only. All others may enter the Amateur Division. Individuals, who possess a Coast Guard license but never used that for fishing related purposes, may enter the Am Division. Amateurs **may enter** the Pro Division if they choose. If there are questions regarding your status, please email one of the tournament committee members for clarification. It is your responsibility to comply with this rule
 27. **Questions:** check list of common questions posted on the website at www.eriepasportfishing assoc.com or email Candie Gilson at candie@epsfa.com.
 28. **Fish Disposal and Drop Off:** Any teams that do not want all or part of their catch can deposit their fish at a drop off location located at the weigh in area. These fish will be given to a local charity. Any fish found deposited into dumpsters, marinas or other areas where they will be deemed as unsightly or as trash may lead to prosecution. Those individuals will be excluded from future tournaments being held by the E.P.S.F.A. 2/27/08, REV 07/21/08