

Competition Rules

2024

\*Updated 6/1~~29~~/24~~2~~

Metro Hawg Hunters requires adherence to all competition rules by all members.

# I. Interpretation & Enforcement

The Board shall have sole responsibility for interpretation and enforcement of Club rules. Decisions of the Board are final and are not subject to appeal. A violation of a tournament rule may result in disqualification, loss of all (or partial) event points or weight, loss of big fish weight, or membership revocation. Members reporting a rule violation shall do so, verbally or in writing, within ½ hour of completion of final weigh-in.

**II. Eligibility**

Regular and Associate Members in good standing are eligible to compete in regular season and Tournament of Champions (TOC) Club tournaments.

# III. Code of Conduct and Sportsmanship

Teams/competitors shall maintain high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation, which includes strict adherence to competition rules, state laws and fish/game regulations, abstaining from consumption of alcohol or non-prescribed controlled substances during competition hours. Violation(s) of established rules, state laws and fish/game regulations shall result in disqualification. Any team/competitor receiving a ticket from state DNR or Police enforcement officer during a tournament will be disqualified from that event. In a team event, one individual on a team receiving a ticket will disqualify the combined team. Examples of disqualifying tickets might be speeding, expired license(s), improper fish care, not wearing a kill switch when a boat is under power, etc…

# IV. Off-limits, Practice, and Competition

Regular season and Club TOC Tournament waters shall be off-limits at sunset the night before the tournament. Additionally, during the clubs regular season two-day event, tournament, competitive water shall be off-limit immediately at the conclusion of the weigh in on day one.

All regular season tournaments begin at 6:00 a.m. and conclude at 2:00 p.m., weather permitting. The Club TOC shall begin at 6:30 a.m. and conclude at 2:30 p.m,, weather permitting. A member of the Board shall serve as Tournament Director to assist teams with boat positions, clock coordination, ease-off time and order, and verification of timely check-in. Any member late for ease-off shall not fish until s/he has contacted a member of the Board.

Ease off order will be determined by inverse regular season points scorings. The team/competitor with the lowest score will ease off first, followed by the second lowest score, etc. The same ease off order process will be used for the Club TOC whereas the inverse of the top 6 teams of the regular season points scorings shall be eligible. All YTD point totals will be available to competitor for review via the clubs website www.metrohawghunters.com.

The Tournament Director will ensure all teams/competitors are within visual sight of the weigh site and have ceased fishing by the end of tournament hours. At the discretion of the Tournament Director based upon observation of tournament anglers and consultation with the Board, he/she may impose late penalties according to section IX.

# V. Check-in, Weigh Site and Weigh-in Scoring

There shall be just one site for check-in at the ease-off in the morning and one site for weigh-in in the afternoon. Failure to check-in prior to ease off or weigh-in may result in disqualification.

The tournament weigh site will be determined by the Board and communicated to all club tournament anglers by the Tournament Director prior to ease off for that event.

Scoring ~~shall be determined by the pounds and ounces of each team’s/competitor’s catch during the tournament~~ of fish will be weighed in decimal formal with two numbers behind the decimal. For example: 14.84 pounds. Only largemouth or smallmouth bass will be weighed for scoring purposes. No regurgitated matter or other foreign matter may be placed in a bass. Altering any bass by adding weight or trimming fins or any other means is grounds for immediate disqualification.

The daily tournament limit shall be five (5) bass unless a state regulation is less than 5, in which case the state regulation limit will prevail. The minimum length of bass shall be 12 inches unless a state regulation requires a longer minimum, in which case the state regulation will prevail. Bass presented for weigh-in failing to measure above the prescribed minimum length determined by the Tournament Director shall result in a penalty deduction of one pound from the team’s/competitor’s catch for each short bass.

Teams/competitors shall not have more than a daily tournament limit in their possession during tournament hours. A team/competitor possessing more than a tournament limit of 5 bass shall be assessed a penalty deduction of 2 pounds per bass over the limit.

Every effort shall be made to ensure the care and healthy release of fish after weigh-in. Teams/competitors are required to safely house and transport bass in a livewell. The livewell must have sufficient capacity to safely hold a tournament daily limit. The livewell must be capable of pumping and circulating fresh water or aeration through use of electric pumps. Team/competitors shall utilize non-puncturing culling tags.

Teams/competitors shall not cull dead fish. Any dead bass in a team’s/competitor’s possession must be included in the daily tournament limit. A dead bass presented for weigh-in shall be assessed a penalty deduction of 4 ounces per dead bass presented for weigh-in.

# VI. Ties

In the case of a tie in weight scoring during a regular season tournament or the Club TOC, the biggest bass will be used to determine the higher score. If a tie remains, a coin toss will determine the higher score.

In the case of a tie in points scoring at the end of the regular season, the biggest daily tournament catch will be used to determine the higher score. If a tie remains, the biggest bass will be used. If a tie continues to remain, a coin toss will determine the higher score.

In the case of a tie in the weight of the biggest bass during a regular season club tournament or the Club TOC, the biggest weight scoring (bag) at that tournament will be used to determine the higher score. If a tie remains, a coin toss will determine the higher score.

# VII. Permitted Fishing Methods

All bass must be caught alive and in a conventional sporting manner. Only artificial, man-made baits/lures may be used, with the exception of pork trailers. Only one fishing rod may be used at a time. Trolling (including using the combustion engine to extend a cast or lengthen a retrieve) is prohibited. All bass caught while sight fishing must be hooked inside the mouth.

# VIII. Permitted Fishing Locations

Teams/competitors may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas posted or designated as “off limits,” “no boats,” “keep out,” “restricted area,” etc. or within 50 yards of a team’s/competitor’s anchored boat. An anchored boat is a boat held in a stable position by a rope/anchor or shallow water anchor (e.g., Power Pole, Talon).

All fishing must be conducted from the boat. A team/competitor may not leave the boat to land a fish or make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Teams/competitors may leave the boat to use a restroom, retrieve a lure, or for safety purposes. Teams/competitors must leave and return to the designated check-in by boat. The boat must remain in the tournament waters during competition hours.

# IX. Late Penalty

Members arriving late for weigh-in, as determined by the Tournament Director’s timepiece, shall be assessed a penalty per minute late via section V. After five (5) minutes, the team/competitor shall be disqualified.

A team/competitor experiencing mechanical problem(s) must report the problem(s) to the Tournament Director or any other member of the Board prior to weigh site check-in time and must stop fishing at the designated weigh site check-in time, 2:00 p.m. The

Tournament Director (or designee) will retrieve the broke down team’s fish and assist in getting the boat to the weigh site. Note: Lack of fuel, oil, or battery power are not considered a mechanical problem.

# X. Regular Season Points Scoring

Regular Season points will be awarded at the conclusion of each regular season Club tournament. The team/competitor accumulating the highest points score after all regular season tournaments have been conducted shall be declared the Angler/team of the year Champion.

Points shall be awarded per event based on final weight ranking as follows:

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1. – 2. – 3. – 4. – 5. – 6. – 7. – 8. – | 20 points  18 points  17 points  16 points  15 points  14 points  13 points  12 points | 9- 11 points  10- 10 points  11- 9 points  12 – 8 points  13 – 7 points  DNF- 5 points  BIG BASS- 1 point |  |  |  |
|  |  | |

A team/competitor that does not compete in an event or Did Not Finish (DNF) shall receive 5 points.

Eligibility for competition in the State Tournament of Champions (TOC) shall be determined by total accumulated regular season points during the year upon conclusion of the Regular Season.

The club will conduct a Tournament of Champions (TOC) upon conclusion of the regular season. The top 6 teams based upon points earned in the regular season will be allowed to fish the TOC. The TOC is a club designated “FUN” tournament, with cash prizes and a plaque awarded to the top finishers. All applicable regular season club rules apply to this tournament.

# XI. Boat Equipment/Requirements and Safety

All competition boats shall have not less than $300,000 of liability insurance. Boat operators may be required to produce proof of insurance to a member of the Board. Failure to maintain appropriate insurance minimums will result in disqualification and forfeiture of accumulated points.

Safe boating must be observed at all times. Teams/competitors are required to wear a fastened US Coast Guard -approved personal floatation device anytime the combustion engine is running. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition cutoff switch (kill switch), which must be securely attached to the operator/driver whenever the combustion engine is running.

Teams/competitors may leave the boat to seek shelter during bad weather or when danger is imminent. The Tournament director may ask all competitors to stop fishing if weather becomes dangerous. In this case. ALL competitors must cease fishing immediately and seek shelter.

All boats must be propeller driven and a minimum of sixteen (16) feet in length. Each boat is required to have all US Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a livewell satisfying the provisions outlined in Article V.

All boats shall have a “Maximum Capacities” (or similarly titled) placard affixed to the boat by the manufacturer. There are no minimum or maximum horse power requirements for competition, except no boat shall exceed the horsepower capacity set forth on the “Maximum Capacities” placard.

# XII. Tournament Jersey

Teams/competitors, excluding one-time substitutes, are required to wear the Club’s current tournament jersey during ease off, weigh-in, and photographs to ensure display of sponsorship logos. As well, all members are asked to use best efforts to display their jersey outside of official club events where possible and to patron sponsors when appropriate. The club’s goal is to recognize and appreciate our sponsors as much as possible.

## XIII. Substitutions

If a Club member is unable to fish a tournament, a substitute angler may compete in the Club member’s absence. Each team is only allowed one substitute per fishing year. If a member is absent more than one tournament, the other teammate must fish solo, unless special circumstances arise and it’s approved by the 3 member board (President, Secretary, Tournament Director). Substitute competitors are allowed for The Club TOC, provided the team has not used a substitute competitor in any prior competition.

## XIIV. Number of Tournaments

The club fishes five (5) regular season tournaments each season not including the Club TOC. The Club TOC invites the top 6 teams as determined via points obtained during the regular season to fish in a separate tournament deemed “Tournament of Champions”. All five regular season tournaments count toward the year-end weight/point total in determining the club’s Angler/Team of the Year.