



2023 MFN Fishing Spring Walleye Tournament - RULES



Tournament Format and Eligibility

1. Tournaments sanctioned by The Northern Ontario Walleye Trail (NOWT) follow a two (2) day – two (2) person team format.
2. ANGLER REPLACEMENT PROVISIONS - If, after the competition has started and a team member is unable to compete because of medical, family, or other justified reasons, the remaining team member will be given the option to replace the leaving team member with another angler or finish the tournament alone. If the angler chooses to continue to fish alone, they must abide by Ontario fishing regulations (they can only retain a maximum of one fish over 46cm and three under 46cm). If the angler chooses to replace the missing angler, the replacement angler must not have been on tournament waters during the competition. The Tournament Director must approve all angler replacements.
3. Entry fee – \$400 per team
4. Winners are determined by the largest combined two (2) day weight.
5. Fishing hours – **DAY 1 Friday 7:00 am to 4 pm / DAY 2 Saturday 7:00 am to 3 pm**
6. Host communities must have an official registration form signed by each team member showing payment details. The Tournament Director can refuse registrations at their discretion.
7. Disqualification from the tournament for any reason will result in forfeiture of the entry fee. No refunds or credits are extended to teams that choose not to fish due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances.
8. No tournament boat is allowed pre-fishing effective at 5:00 pm on the Thursday before the tournament. No fishing will be allowed after the posted tournament hours between Thursday and Saturday. Please advise an Official if you must go on the lake for any reason.
9. The Tournament Directors retain the right to change and/or amend these rules at their discretion without prior notification. **The final approved tournament rules will be reviewed at the Thursday night rules meeting.**

Orientation / Rules meeting

10. At least one team member MUST be present at the rules meeting on June 1st at the Mattagami Odamino Centre & Rink. In the event either can't make it on time... please advise a board member ASAP. Any teams missing the rule meeting without planning with an official will not be allowed to leave Friday morning until the rules are read. That can result in having to leave after morning departure. *NOTE Just picking up your package does not count as being present at the rule meeting. **The boat # will be given after the rule meeting.**
11. MFN Fishing will take any new registrations to its tournaments and sign waivers from 5 pm to 6:45 pm Thursday, June 1, 2023.
12. BOTH TEAM MEMBERS MUST SIGN THE ENTRY AND THE WAIVER FORM, RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT. **If any member fails to sign the waiver, that team will not be allowed to fish.**

Live Release of Fish

13. Every effort must be made to keep the walleye alive using built-in or securely fastened, properly aerated, or circulating livewells.
14. Fish, which are brought to the weight scale, must be alive to be weighed in as part of the team's daily limit. A fish is deemed alive & weighable if the gills are moving in and out (breathing). Dead fish count towards the (6) six-fish limit however the weight of the fish will not be added to the total weight for that team. Fish that cannot be released or dead fish will be returned to the angler.
15. Under no circumstances can fish be purposely altered. Any fish mauled, strung, injected with water or other fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight, or showing white gill or soft flesh that causes suspicious that it is being fraudulently entered into the Tournament will result in that team(s) immediate disqualification. **Any participant found violating this rule, may be disqualified. The case will be reviewed by the NOWT board.**
16. All fish must be released back into the Lake by tournament officials.

Morning Equipment Inspections

17. Boat inspections will take place each morning at the main dock. Boat inspections will start at 5:30 am.
18. Teams must open all coolers, hatches, and live wells for easy inspection.
19. Upon completion of the daily inspection, tournament officials will give the boat proof of inspection. Failure to show up for the morning inspection will result in disqualification for that day.
20. Following check-in, boats will stage inside the designated area on the lake.
21. Once a team's boat is inspected and the official starts, under no circumstances will a competitor's boat pull alongside another competitor's boat at anytime

Starting Procedure

22. The Official Starter will release the teams one at a time using a trickle start, beginning at 6:55 AM.
23. The Official Starter will raise the boat number ready to leave. **One boat member must raise their hand and get the announcer's attention.** Boat numbers MUST BE affixed to both sides of the motor or console.

First Day Start (Friday, June 2nd)

- ✓ 5-minute head start winner takes off at 6:55 AM and is first to leave bothdays.
- ✓ **FISHING HOURS 7:00 AM - 4:00 PM**
- ✓ Boats will start one at a time. Starting order will be determined by their team number.

Day Two Start (Saturday, June 3rd)

- ✓ 5-minute head start winner takes off at 6:55 AM
- ✓ **FISHING HOURS 7:00 AM - 3:00 PM**
- ✓ Boats will again start one at a time. The boat lineup will be determined according to **DAY ONE RANKING**.

Ties will be broken by the earlier registration/lower team number. Boat ranking papers will be given at the morning inspection.

Boundaries

24. See the map for the tournament boundaries.

WEIGHING FISH/Scoring

25. All teams, which are not in the designated finishing area on time at the end of the fishing day, will be disqualified. That means the team will not be allowed to weigh in on their catch for that day.
26. At the end of the day, you must stop at the pontoon (or boat) to get your weigh-in ticket number.
27. At the end of the day, there will be no cutting in line. Make sure you go through all the buoys (will be explained at the rules meeting). NO EXCEPTIONS!!
28. Only walleye qualify for weigh-in.
29. Both members of the team must remain in their boat until a tournament official comes to the boat with a weigh-in bag. *Please double-check your bags for possible holes
30. Team's fish must be presented to the Weigh Master or his/her Assistants in the bag supplied by the Tournament Organizers.
31. *The team is then responsible for placing their own fish in the weigh-in bag and carrying them to the weigh scale. *Dock hands can come to aid if permission is given by the captain of the team and a witness is present. Dock's hands are never responsible for the walleye.
32. The officials are allowed at any time to refuse a walleye in a bad condition. A dead walleye will be refused to be weighed in, but no penalty will be given (this dead walleye will count towards your daily limit of 8)
33. Teams checking out for the day can proceed to the designated area with 8 walleyes.
34. If a team who has weighed in during the day their fish counts towards their daily limit of 6.
35. A daily limit of SIX (6) Walleye per team will be weighed, only two (2) of which can be greater than (46 cm) in length. If a fishtail, while being pinched, touches the 46 cm line, the fish will be deemed an "over". The tournament official measuring the fish will have the final say.
36. At the end of the day, once you leave your boat with your fish bag you are not allowed to return to collect more fish.
37. The Daily Ministry of Natural Resources limit may be kept while angling.
38. Every walleye close to 46cm will be measured before weighing them.
39. All the fish brought to the station counts in the daily total weight. The Officials will not measure or weigh any fish just to verify with our equipment. **The official tournament measuring device will be available Friday evening prior to the event for teams to check their measuring device against the tournament measuring device for accuracy/consistency.**
40. The weight master must confirm the walleyes are alive and fill out the weigh-in form appropriately.
41. The members of the team are responsible to make sure that the weighing scale and the official form are the same. One team member must witness the weigh-in form recording the weight of the catch.
42. THE DECISION OF THE WEIGHT MASTER IS FINAL.
43. Only walleye is allowed in the boat unless a foul hook issue or the health of fish is in question. All necessary action should be taken to release all fish. Any other species kept besides walleye must be declared at weigh-in station with an explanation, failure to do so could result in a penalty or disqualification once reviewed by the tournament director and committee.

Sportsmanship and Courtesy

44. Using cell phones during fishing hours to contact other anglers on the water to share information is prohibited... It is prohibited for any competitor to give, offer, accept, or suggest the exchange of any item including weighable fish to, from, or with any competitor or non-competitor.
45. Maximum courtesy must be always practiced, particularly about boating and fishing in the vicinity of a non-competitor.
46. There is a Zero tolerance policy for unsportsmanlike conduct and an automatic disqualification will result without refund (unsportsmanlike conduct must not be confused with ethics). All Competitors are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that is recognized to themselves, MFN Fishing, NOWT, MFN Fishing & NOWT sponsors, and the sport of fishing.
47. All competitors must remain twenty (20) feet from another competitor's boat. The key is communication with other anglers.

Rules(s) Violations, Protests, and Appeals

48. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported to tournament officials on an Incident Report for further investigation. Incident reports carry no fee and are appropriate for communicating issues that would require warnings but not necessarily lead to disqualification. If a team feels an incident has progressed to the point of needing protest they should move to that level of official reporting.
49. Participants have the right to enter a protest against another team. A protest form will be available from the Tournament Director (TD) and must be completed and presented to the TD within 1 hour of the weigh-in.
50. \$150.00 protest fee must accompany the form. The fee will be returned if the protest is found to be valid.
51. An infraction witnessed by a competitor can be reported to the Tournament Protest and Appeal Committee at the weigh-in site. If an infraction is reported, or a protest is entered, a three-person Protest Committee, appointed prior to the Tournament, shall convene.
52. Where a team is charged with a rule infraction by an authorized Tournament Official which could result in disqualification of the daily catch or tournament disqualification, the team has the right to appeal the decision to the Tournament Protest and Appeals Committee. Appeals must be submitted to Tournament Director within 10 minutes after notification of the rule's infraction.
53. Witness (es) may be called to appear before the Protest Committee to provide evidence relating to the alleged rule infraction.
54. The Protest and Appeals Committee will interpret the rules according to their spirit and intent. The decision of the Protest Committee is final and not subject to review

of any kind. An official letter from the Appeal Committee will be sent to the team explaining the rule infraction.

55. "SPIRIT OF THE RULE" All rules have "loopholes". It is the intention of the MFN Fishing Fall Walleye Classic & NOWT to provide an honest, sportsman-like tournament. In the interest of good sportsmanship, contestants are reminded that the "spirit of the rule" will prevail in all judgment cases.

56. General Penalties: Teams may be disqualified from the tournament for frequent or major infractions of the rules and will not receive a refund of their entry fee. Examples of major infractions include unsafe boating practices, gross angling ethics violations, and violations that clearly give the competitor an unfair or illegal advantage over other competitors, such as movement of fish, fishing out of bounds, caged fish, violation of provincial and federal fishing and boating regulations, exchanging fish between teams and unauthorized use of underwater cameras, drug and alcohol violations, harassment, verbal or physical intimidation.

57. The official announcement of the results will take place at the Main Tent.

58. Protest your team's total weight: Friday before 8 pm & Saturday before 6:00 pm

Safety

59. The Tournament Directors have the right to delay or shorten the Tournament, subject to weather and/or safety considerations or due to reasons deemed necessary.

60. All competitors must always practice safe boating during practice and tournament fishing.

61. Your tether kill switch strap must be worn on plane.

62. Proof of boat insurance.

63. ALL TEAMS, whether weighing fish in or not, must check in with a tournament official at the end of the day.

64. Every competitor must wear a fully secured Coast Guard-approved life jacket or chest-type floating device on plane. If caught without by an official, you will be disqualified.

65. No alcoholic beverages may be consumed by competitors during the tournament fishing hours. In case of intoxication, the Officials have the right to refuse the team to go until they are safe to leave. **NO DRINKING & DRIVING!**

66. In the event of a thunderstorm, lightning, or severe weather, teams may pull onto the nearest shoreline until it is safe to continue fishing.

67. Competitors may not leave their boats during the tournament except at the Official weigh-in site or if severe weather forces them ashore. Failure to comply will result in disqualification.

68. Only tournament official boats are allowed to tow a competitor's boat during fishing hours if the team wishes to weigh in their catch. However, those boats requiring to be towed by tournament officials are still required to check their catch prior to end-of-day fishing time. **The tournament official is not responsible to get the towed boat back in time.**

69. A team that has a mechanical problem may use a different boat to finish the day's fishing. The switch must be made at the weigh in station and must have an official with them

70. Teams must notify a tournament official if an emergency or breakdown has occurred by calling or sending a text message to **Jessica 705-221-4248 / Crystel 705-363-7024**

Tackle and Equipment

71. Live bait and artificial lures, manufactured baits, pork rind, and commercially available liquid attractants may be used.

72. Landing nets may be used.

73. No fishing information may be given to participants during tournament fishing hours by anyone in any fashion.

74. The use, in live wells, of commercially available fish care chemicals is permitted.

75. The use of underwater cameras or any similar device is **prohibited** during fishing hours and cannot be present in the boat during tournament fishing hours.

Tie Breakers

76. The winner of a tie for the grand prize will be determined by the team with the heaviest weight on day 1.

Tournament Cancellation and Carry Overs

77. No more Carryover registrations. There is a \$25 processing fee for those teams that withdraw from the event.

78. There is no refund for teams who withdraw with less than one week's notice prior to the event.

TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY POLICY & SAFETY:

Participants will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe, and ethical manner at all times maintaining a professional demeanor in public and in communication with tournament officials. Any unfavorable conduct, speech, or action by a contestant could be grounds for disqualification or rejection of entry application. Every participant is expected to participate in the marshaling of the field to maintain the highest integrity in the competition.

The Sanction NOWT tournaments, its promoters, employees, sponsors, organizers, hosts, Directors, Officers and affiliated organizations assisting the operations of any of the Tournament, their agents and/or agents and assigns are not responsible for any death, injury, damage, liability, fire, theft or loss that may result prior to, during or after the Tournament howsoever caused

Levels of DQ

Level 1 (DQ for 1 day – any fish in possession will not be weighed)

- ✓ not in the designated finishing area on time at the end of the fishing day (The team's weight for the day of the infraction is disqualified)
- ✓ did not complete morning inspection.
- ✓ Caught (by an official) not wearing a fully secured Coast Guard approved life jacket or chest type floating device on plane
- ✓ Proceeding to shore without Official present
- ✓ fishing out of bounds

Level 2 (DQ of the tournament)

- ✓ Un-sportsmanship behavior
- ✓ Sharing information using cell phones or radios with other anglers during fishing hours of the tournament
- ✓ Drug and alcohol violations (ex. Caught drinking in your boat)
- ✓ unauthorized use of underwater cameras
- ✓ unsafe boating practices (violation of provincial and federal fishing and boating regulations)
- ✓ violations that clearly give the competitor an unfair or illegal advantage over other competitors
- ✓ Comes to weigh-in station with more than two (2) walleyes greater than 46 cm in length.
- ✓ Comes to weigh-in station with more than 8 walleyes.
- ✓ Fishing after posted tournament hours between Thursday and Saturday

Suspension & punishment (Discussed with the NOWT Board level)

- ✓ Cheating
- ✓ Fish was purposely altered. Any fish mauled, stringed, injected with water or other fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight or showing white gill or soft flesh that causes suspicious that it is being fraudulently entered into the Tournament
- ✓ caged fish
- ✓ exchanging fish between teams
- ✓ gross angling ethics violations
- ✓ Harassment, intimidation