

2026 Michigan Walleye Tour Official Rules and Regulations

1. ESTABLISHMENT OF OFFICIAL RULES & SAFETY REGULATIONS:

The following rules and safety regulations will remain unchanged for the year indicated above, except for special tournaments. Any incidents observed during the tournament event should be reported to Tournament Officials for investigation immediately (see Section 22). Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to Tournament Officials.

2. TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS:

Tournament Officials shall be comprised of the designated MWT Tournament Director and Tournament Committee members only. In the event of a rule violation or protest, only Tournament Officials may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate including, without limitation, fines, forfeiture of prizes, disqualification and prohibition from participation in future events. Official's decisions shall be final in all matters and will not be subject to appeal. For further information regarding rules violations and protest, refer to Section 22.

3. SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONDUCT:

Any violation of the basic principles addressed in this document may be deemed cause for disqualification, penalties and/or further sanctions. Participants in any MWT event will conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike, courteous, safe, and ethical manner while always maintaining a professional demeanor towards the general public, fellow competitors and in all interaction or communication with Tournament Officials and Staff.

Maximum courtesy and sportsmanship must be always practiced. Any efforts that do not promote sportsmanship, clean waters and conservation in any manner are grounds for immediate disqualification and may include further sanctions.

Any unfavorable conduct or speech during public interaction, text, messaging, phone calls, or on any media formats (including social media), etc. by a MWT participant that reflects unfavorably on the MWT, its participants, tournament officials and sponsors at any time will be cause for immediate disqualification and may include further sanctions. Tournament Officials will have final say in all rulings regarding sportsmanship violations and consequences.

4. USE AND/OR POSSESSION OF ALCOHOL, CANNABIS OR ILLEGAL SUBSTANCES

Use and/or possession of illegal substances by any participant during the tournament event & hours will not be tolerated. Tournament hours are defined as from the 3:00 PM mandatory off the water time before the Captains meeting till the end of awards ceremony on last official day of tournament. Any evidence of use or possession of illegal substances during this time will result in immediate disqualification.

No usage or possession of alcoholic beverages is permitted on tournament boats at any time during tournament competition. Participants are not permitted to have alcohol in their possession until they have weighed their daily catch, retrieved their official weigh slip, and returned their boat to the trailer or boat slip. If a tournament venue has further restrictions regarding alcohol use, the MWT will abide by whichever rule is more restrictive. Violation of this rule will result in loss of days weigh in and/or disqualification as deemed necessary by Tournament Officials.

Use of cannabis, in any form (including medicinal), is not permitted during tournament hours or at any tournament event, including, but not limited to, the Captains meeting, tournament days, weigh in area or any other area deemed to be a tournament venue. Any evidence of use of cannabis during this time will result in immediate disqualification.

5. PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY:

All Michigan Walleye Tour (MWT) participants must be active members in good standing of The Saginaw Bay Walleye Club (SBWC) during or prior to registration for your first event entry of the year. All SBWC memberships expire on 3/31 each calendar year, are non-transferable and non-refundable. If a team member/participant is *not* a current SBWC member, upon registration, membership dues will be collected as part of the first event registration they participate in that calendar year (see Section 6).

The Saginaw Bay Walleye Club (SBWC) Board and MWT Tournament Committee reserve the right to refuse participation, (including championship/special events), to anyone for any reason including, but not limited to, suspension, disqualification or banning from this or other events, criminal behavior, violation of game laws, or any unsportsmanlike or *unfavorable* behavior at any time (see Section 3 & 29) that would reflect dishonorably on our sport *and events*.

Any person under the age of 18 must have a parent or legal guardian present during all tournament events. No persons under age 12 may participate without explicit MWT Tournament Director approval.

6. REGISTRATION & ENTRY:

Upon tournament registration, all participants acknowledge and are responsible for knowing and abiding by all MWT rules which include any State, Provincial *and* Local boating, and fishing regulations for all the designated tournament waters. Any change, exception, or addition to the MWT rules as determined necessary by the Tournament Director and/or Committee, will be communicated as soon as possible (via email to team captain, text and/or newsletter, etc.) and be covered during the Captains meeting prior to the 1st competition day of the tournament.

When registration opens online, teams may enter as many events as desired and full payment is due at time of registration. Each event entry deadline is close of business (5:00 PM EST) on MONDAY prior to the event. Each team must complete, sign, and submit an official entry form (which includes rules agreement) with payment online by the due dates.

Online entry registration at www.michiganwalleyetour.com is the **only allowable way to enter an MWT event.** During entry of first event, the SBWC membership will be verified and if participants are not members, it will be collected (see Section 5) Entries will be accepted based on a first-come, first-served basis until the tournament is deemed full (based on date and time stamp when received at MWT website/office). Once you have entered the tournament you will receive an email confirmation, and it is the participants' responsibility to confirm and retain receipt of entry.

Teams must enter a minimum of two participants per event and may enter up to three participants per team. No "TBD" or "unknown" partner names are allowed on entry forms. Any use of TBD or other unknown will be considered a blank entry and may affect team points to qualify for the championship (see Section 21).

All MWT qualifying tournament events are limited to a field of 150 teams (boats). In the occurrence of more than 150 full season teams registering for participation, the field will be reduced to the maximum field size based on the recorded time stamp of payment during registration and if required, previous season(s) participation.

All entries must submit payment in full for all tournament fees at the time of registration. NO REFUNDS will be made, nor will credit be extended for any non-emergency cancellations, team member availability or loss of qualified boat for tournament usage. Disqualification from a tournament for any reason will result in forfeiture of entry fee. No refunds or credits are extended to teams that *choose* not to fish due to unforeseen circumstances.

After registration, a team is only permitted one (1) team member change per tournament, and the request must be submitted online more than 48 hours before check-in begins at the Captains meeting. This includes the addition of a team member to an open position not previously filled. *The only allowable method to request a change using the official online form found under the applicable registered tournament on the MWT website and select "Change Team Member".* Any change requests submitted after this 48-hour deadline will only be considered on an emergency basis and must be approved by the Tournament Director. Note, any changes in team member will affect season point totals used to qualify for Championship if made after first event of the year (see Section 21).

If a tournament event is cancelled in its entirety for any reason due to circumstances out of the MWT control, refunds will be issued for entry into that tournament event only, less processing fees and/or costs.

7. SAFETY:

Safe boating practices must always be conducted and observed by all tournament participants. Participants must always abide by all state, provincial and local boating and navigation laws including avoiding restricted areas on all designated tournament waters.

All participants are required and agree to wear a Coast Guard-approved type III or greater CHEST TYPE personal flotation device whenever the boat is above trolling speed.

During any "official" tournament day, no participant or team may use a boat unless they have documented proof of boating liability coverage in reasonable amounts on that boat. Proof of insurance must always be with the boat and available for verification at anytime upon request by the Tournament Director. Random checks may be conducted at events as necessary.

All teams are required to have two (2) participants on a boat to compete. In the event of an emergency, unforeseen circumstance, or Committee decision that only one registered participant is available for a boat, the tour Committee will try to assist in designating a spotter for the boat provided there is sufficient time to do so. It is the team participants' responsibility to avoid this circumstance to best of their ability. Media personnel will not be utilized as a spotter for any reason. If a spotter is designated, this is only for safety reasons and the spotter cannot fish or help in any fishing activity. If a spotter cannot be located, the team will not be permitted to participate in the event. The tournament participant will be limited to three (3) rods or indicated State, Provincial and Local fishing regulations, whichever is more restrictive. No refunds for any event will be considered if a team is unable to find suitable substitutions or the Committee find a spotter.

In the event of lightning, severe weather or any unsafe condition participants should remove themselves from competition and seek safety or shelter until it is safe to continue.

All MWT qualifying tournaments will have published days of competition, unless delayed, or shortened due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. Tournament Officials may restrict tournament waters and reserve the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of inclement weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the participants. In the event of a delayed start, additional time may or may not be added to extend the day of competition. Any decision to extend day or add an additional day of competition (E.g. blow day) will be the sole discretion of the Tournament Director and/or Officials. If a day cannot be added or conditions dictate final competition day cannot be finished, the tournament results will be based on days completed.

Participants may not leave their boats during tournament hours except in case of emergency. In case of any emergency, please contact authorities first (e.g., U.S. Coast Guard, Emergency Medical, etc.) and then contact the MWT Tournament Director at (810) 288-8145 when it is safe to do so.

In the case of a non-emergency boating situation (E.g., engine/boat malfunction, etc.) that requires you to return early or moor boat in a location other than the designated tournament location, contact the Tournament Director at (810) 288-8145 for direction. Refer to Section 17 for breakdown procedures.

8. BOAT, MOTOR & SAFETY EQUIPMENT:

All participants must utilize a boat that is a minimum 16ft in length and utilizes at least one engine for propulsion. No cumbersome non-fishing vessel/craft will be permitted. All boats must be equipped with wheel or tiller steering; no other steering device will be permitted. Any boat deemed unsafe and not capable of safe use on tournament waters will not be permitted as determined by Tournament Officials.

Each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer if required. The horsepower rating of the outboard engine must not exceed the rating specified on this plate. Changing or altering standard factory motor parts to increase horsepower over factory rated horsepower is forbidden. Any modifications made to the boat and or equipment that violates U.S. Coast Guard regulations for that vessel will result in event disqualification.

All tournament boats are required to have in their possession all Coast Guard-required safety equipment, including but not limited to approved type III or greater CHEST TYPE personal flotation devices, a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher,

distress horn/flag/whistle. Some Great Lakes, Canadian and other waters tournaments require other emergency signal equipment (i.e. flares, beacon, etc.) and it is the participants responsibility to understand acceptable types for waters being used.

Any auxiliary fuel tanks on board must be a Coast Guard approved and marine approved but cannot be used as the main fuel supply. (E.g. spare tank for auxiliary trolling motor is permitted)

All boats are required to have an engine cut-off switch (ECOS) that IMMEDIATELY shuts off the main engine when pulled. This ECOS MUST have engine cut-off switch link (ECOSL) and be attached to the driver anytime the main engine is in operation. A ECOSL is typically a coiled lanyard but may also be an electronic fob serving the same purpose.

A fully functional marine band radio, fixed mount or portable, *will* be utilized to facilitate launch/check in process. The marine radio is the only source of communication during the morning send off with the tournament director and with the official spotter for launch for “check in” times on tournament days. Ability to communicate with the tournament director and/or official spotter is the sole responsibility of the registered anglers and team.

Tournament boats are required to have a functioning bilge pump. All tournament boats must be CLEAN, DRAINED and DRY prior to entering the water and upon departure to prevent the spread of harmful exotic species in accordance with all state, provincial and local requirements for specific waters being utilized.

All angling must be done from the boat. Participants are not permitted to leave the boat for any reason regarding the act of fishing, even if to just complete the actions necessary to land or retrieve a fish successfully.

The use of binoculars or any other “sight enhancing” device is prohibited. This includes any remote-controlled monitoring devices (E.g. remote camera, drone equipment).

9. TACKLE, EQUIPMENT & ANGLING REGULATIONS:

Participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses and commit to following all State, Provincial *and* Local fishing regulations. Any additional regulations (E.g., reduced possession limit, bait usage, etc.) deemed necessary by the MWT to promote fair competition will be communicated as soon as possible further specified at the Captains meeting.

The MWT will follow all State/Provincial/Local laws regarding the number, limit and size of rods/lines/hooks that can be used, abiding by whichever is more restrictive. HOWEVER, NO sliders, clips, or other removable or detachable “type” lines are permitted to be used. All lines and baits must originate from and be permanently tied to the one main line coming off of one (1) main reel, per each rod. No lines may be unfastened or able to be unfastened, unclipped, or unsnapped from the one main line to facilitate landing a fish or aiding in landing a fish, all lines must be permanently tied or attached to the one main line coming off of one (1) main reel, per rod. The only exceptions herein are traditional walleye hand line set ups which are allowed. The intent of this rule is clearly to limit detachable lines, sliders, “curtain rings” or other such similar devices, which may result in too many lines in the water at one time per state laws. If ANY set up is in question, the more restrictive interpretation will always be used following all State/Provincial/Local laws. Any questionable homemade multiline sets up should be reviewed by Tournament Officials prior to start of 1st tournament day and the most restrictive interpretation will always be used.

Teams are limited to using six (6) rods per boat regardless of regulations that allow more due to number of participants present unless a more restrictive State/Provincial/Local law exists that restricts even further. All equipment designated as a fishing and/or trolling rod is presumed to be in the act of fishing (lure presented to pursue a fish) when deployed/in use from the boat.

Only fish caught on hook and line in a normal and usual manner will be accepted. Usage of live or prepared (dead) bait and artificial lures are permissible in MWT events, except where prohibited by any State, Provincial and/or Local laws in which those regulations would be deemed more restrictive for their waters. Tournament Director and Officials may provide additional guidance on usage of bait on a per event basis.

All participants are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various locations they fish in defined tournament locations. Any fines, citations or other penalties issued at the discretion of law enforcement may or may not result in tournament penalties (e.g. disqualification, loss of weight for day, etc.) regardless of any future court ruling or decision. Any penalty assessed or not is the sole discretion of the Tournament Director and Officials.

10. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE, CAPTAINS MEETING REGISTRATION & COMPETITION:

There are no restrictions on how early a team can pre-fish, unless prohibited by State, Provincial and Local boating and fishing regulations. There are no “official” practice days or off-limits days unless otherwise announced in advance for a specific\special event. On the day of onsite registration and mandatory rules

meeting (referred to as “Captains meeting”), you must be “off the water” by 3:00 p.m. “Off the water” is defined as boat is at launching location and in process of being loaded/moored or present on trailer. Any adjustments to the “off the water” time or process is the sole discretion of the Tournament Director and will be communicated prior to the day of the Captains meeting.

At least one participant from each team must sign in and register in person with official MWT staff at the appointed time/place prescribed for onsite registration and fully attend the mandatory Captains meeting for rules and safety information related to each event. If no participant from the team is available to attend due to unforeseen circumstances, then contact the MWT Tournament Director at (810) 288-8145. Not attending the Captains meeting or arrival more than 15 minutes late after the meeting begins will result in disqualification from the event.

Once the Captains meeting is completed, participants must stay off all tournament waters before and after tournament hours except to navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities. Participants are prohibited from fishing on tournament waters except during designated tournament fishing hours including days cancelled due to inclement weather. Tournament waters are defined as primary event waters and any connecting tributaries.

In the event boat/equipment repairs require a “on or in water” evaluation/test during tournament hours (defined as from the official mandatory off the water time before the Captains meeting till the end of awards ceremony on last official day of tournament) an MWT Tournament Official or Board member must attend launch and retrieval during the evaluation period. In the unlikely event a boat/equipment requires this, contact with the Tournament Director must be made prior to evaluation at (810) 288-8145.

During competition, no tournament participant may leave their boat or stop at a location for any reason unless stated allowable in another section of these rules (E.g., emergency). Participants **MUST** stay in their boat, within indicated tournament waters, always, beginning with when their boat is launched post pre-tournament inspection until it has been safely moored at the weigh-in location.

The exchanging or sharing of any equipment once boat is launched post daily inspection will result in loss of weight for the day and/or tournament disqualification per the discretion of the Tournament Director. In the case of emergency equipment considered to be a lifesaving device or medical assistance, do so first, contact local authorities to initiate support and then contact the Tournament Director at (810) 288-8145.

Once tournament launch has begun (i.e. typically 7:00 AM), stopping at any location to purchase or be provided bait, food, or conduct any other activity not specifically permitted within these rules (Section 15) during tournament hours, whether participants leave the boat or not, is strictly prohibited and cause for immediate disqualification from the event.

11. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:

Tournament waters and boundaries will be established by the opening of registration and defined on the registration information. Any necessary adjustments (E.g., weather, regulation change, etc.) to tournament waters and boundaries will be reviewed by the Tournament Officials before each event. Any changes will be communicated as early as possible and announced at the Captains meeting. Each team/participant must obtain this information from the MWT Tournament Officials only.

Only water open to all public fishing will be considered tournament waters and any water closed to public fishing will be closed to tournament participants. Fishing on tournament waters is only permitted within the boundaries defined by the Tournament Officials that are available to the public and accessible by boat except: Any water within tournament boundaries posted "off- limits or no fishing" established by any State, Provincial and/or Local laws will be off limits. The removal of any official State, Provincial and/or Local law property or barricades at any time to make an area more accessible by boat is prohibited.

Participants must not depart the boat to conduct fishing, land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in designated tournament waters during tournament hours.

Also, any live fish release area established by the Tournament Officials will always be off-limits for fishing and designated area will be announced at the Captains meeting.

12. FISH AND LIMIT INFORMATION:

Walleye, sauger, and saugeye caught on hook and line in a conventional sporting manner (see Section 9) will be accepted at all MWT tournaments.

Only eight (8) fish can be kept per boat on each tournament day and only five (5) fish with a minimum 15" size limit will be utilized for weigh in. Exceeding the tournament catch limit will result in loss of all credit for that day's catch. Any fish presented for weigh-in that fails to meet the official length limit shall result in disqualification from the event. (see Section 18)

Culling of dead fish is strictly prohibited.

The Tournament Officials holds the right to announce and enforce additional and/or more stringent regulations for any event. Any additional specific tournament restrictions, size limits, creel limits and other information will be announced at the Captains meeting.

All fish must be kept in an *aerated* live-well or cooler. Use of stringers, wire fish baskets, boat bags etc. is prohibited.

Any fish mauled, frozen, on a stringer, injected with water or other material to add weight, showing white gills, soft flesh, sunken eyes, or gills that will not bleed may result in disqualification from the tournament and future MWT events at the discretion of the MWT Tournament Officials.

If an external weight is utilized for the purpose of which is to keep fish alive/upright in the live-well, it should be removed before arriving at the bump tank for weigh in (see Section 18). Failure to do so will result in disqualification from the event.

13. TOURNAMENT DAY BOAT INSPECTION & IDENTIFICATION:

A Tournament Official may approach or board your boat at any time for any reason and at any time during the event. Refusal to allow an approved official on board or an effort to impede their work will result in disqualification and further sanctions as deemed necessary.

Each boat MUST ATTEND and will participate in, prior to each tournament day's start, a live-well, compartment and safety inspection check by a Tournament Official and/or deemed Official MWT staff member. During inspection, a boat marker will be provided and MUST remain in or on the boat during tournament hours. The boat marker (E.g. fob w/ number tag) must be turned in during check-in at the bump tanks during the weigh in process.

Failure to return boat marker during weigh in will result in a \$50 cash fine that must be paid before the days catch weigh in will be allowed. Failure to render the fine payment before the final weigh in is completed for the day will result in loss of all weight for that day.

On the water (drive up) inspections are not permitted unless specifically discussed with the Tournament Director and must be arranged a minimum of 72 hours before the start of the Captains Meeting. This will be a case-by-case basis and will not be considered for easily trailered vessels regardless of boat storage and participants lodging location.

Boat numbers will be provided during registration at the Captains meeting or prior and must be placed on the upper cowling on each side of the outboard (or an easily visible location near rear of I/O vessels) prior to arriving for morning inspection. MWT reserves sole discretion to assign boat numbers in any manner and numbers must always remain on during the entire tournament event. Numbers not placed in an easily visible location and/or blocked from view (E.g. auxiliary engine obstructs view) must be corrected prior to launching and no time concessions will be made for teams that have to reposition boat numbers.

The Tournament Director or designated official will launch (sendoff) the boats in a manner and time that will be communicated at the Captains Meeting. Failure to be present when your number is announced will result in being moved to the back of line or held until the last boat is released. No additional time nor accommodation will be considered for not being present and ready when boat is called. Leaving, taking off before your boat number is announced and/or proceeding out of order numerically will result in being advised to return to launch location to check in with tournament director (with no additional time provided) and restart *or* loss of all weight that tournament day.

In the event of a shortened tournament event due to inclement weather or other circumstances outside the MWT control, the MWT reserves the right to release boats in any manner the Tournament Director and Officials deem appropriate.

If a MWT fish species (walleye, sauger, saugeye) is found in a boat live-well, cooler, or any other compartment during the pre-launch inspection it will result in disqualification for that day of tournament competition.

14. OFFICIAL CHECK POINT(S):

There shall be one official checkpoint for sendoff in the morning and check-in in the afternoon at the team's designated flight return time. These points and times will be designated and communicated at the Captains meeting. At the time of check-out/check-in all competitors and their boats shall be and remain in full compliance with all rules set forth by Tournament Officials and referenced in this document.

At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves to the check-in official and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. It is each team's responsibility to know what time they are due in, arriving early enough and close enough to make 100% sure the timekeeper can verify your arrival on time. All fishing must cease upon check-in.

Participants who are not at the official check-in point as described above at the appointed return time shall lose all credit for that day's catch. This return time will be noted by the check-in official (timekeeper) at the established area. Obtaining

acknowledgement by the check-in official for the purpose of timekeeping is solely the responsibility of the participants. *There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case will a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time". Return time shall be defined as off-plane, past the check-in official & point and/or acknowledgement by check-in official.*

You must check-in with a Tournament Director or designated MWT Staff member at the weigh in and return your boat marker even if you don't have any scorable fish. Failure to check in at the end of the day could result in a prohibition from future participation in MWT events.

15. REFUELING:

Boats are permitted to refuel at state certified marina/harbor fuel stations during competition hours. Participants are not allowed to leave the boat for any reason other than to complete fuel payment transaction (only one participant should conduct payment). Purchasing 2 cycle oil when necessary for engine operation during a re-fuel event is permitted. No other product(s) shall be purchased during a fuel stop, see Section 10 as required.

16. PURCHASING AND/OR BARTERING FISH INFORMATION:

The purchasing of, or bartering for, information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the hiring of fishing guide services is strictly prohibited during tournament days and 14 days prior to the first tournament event.

17. TOURNAMENT BOAT BREAKDOWN INSTRUCTIONS:

All participants must remain together, leaving and returning to the official checkpoint by boat. All competitors must always remain in boat except in case of dire emergency if they wish their fish to be counted for the day.

In case of non-emergency event or breakdown (does not include running out of fuel), in which a team is not able to travel back to the weigh-in site under power, participants should contact the Tournament Director at (810) 288-8145 before taking any action.

The only permitted way to return for weigh-in without your own power is:

1.) By being towed in by a boat operated by another tournament competitor in the event or a designated rescue boat. Both boats must arrive by whichever teams is the earliest designated return time.

2.) By one team member transferring their clearly marked fish to another tournament boat and proceeding directly to the weigh in. This process should include at minimum:

- Recorded or live video footage of entire marking and transfer process

- Both teams' individual fish clearly marked (E.g. in a separate weigh in bag or container, separate live-well with clearly identifiable cull tags)
- Both teams/individuals must arrive by whichever team is the earliest designated return time.

Neither tournament boat/team is permitted to fish after assisting another, must proceed directly to weigh in site once boat is moored/trailerred. Both parties (the team needing and team lending assistance) should immediately report to the Tournament Director upon arrival at weigh in site. Any team involved in a break down procedure that involves transferring fish between boats, may be polygraphed as necessary (Section 23) at the Tournament Officials sole discretion.

If the Tournament Director cannot be reached in the event of a breakdown, teams should take appropriate action to return boat and team safely to nearest port or the weigh in location. In event the above process cannot be followed, it will result in loss of days catch weight.

18. WEIGH IN, SCORING AND FISH INSPECTION:

Only eligible fish will be utilized for the purpose of scoring (see Section 12). Scoring shall be determined by the pound\ounce weight of each team's catch during the tournament. Each team's total weight will determine the final standings.

Teams must provide their own tournament-style weigh-in bag to transport fish to the bump tanks. Coolers, hand carrying, waste bags, etc. are not permitted to be used.

The weigh in process will begin with transportation of the fish from the boat utilizing a tournament style weigh in bag to the bump tanks near the weigh in. The bump tanks and process officially begins with a team once they remove their weigh in bag/fish and step away from the tournament boat. Once a team initiates the bump tank/weigh in process, that team may not alter, add, nor reduce their tournament bag and catch or return to their boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded.

If a team is in possession of more than five (5) fish in their tournament bag at any point of the official weigh in process, all weight will be lost for that competition day. This is regardless of where in the process the extra fish are discovered.

The official ruler will be "The Judge." Fish will be measured by a Tournament Official with fish's mouth closed and longest straight line. Only fish which measure the official length(s) shall be weighed. Any modification made to fish (clipping) to achieve a certain length will result in disqualification from the tournament/event. Teams may present up to five (5) fish of 15" minimum length to the bump tanks (number of fish and minimum length and/or other restrictions may be used and will

be announced at the rules meeting per Section 12). Any fish presented for weigh-in which fails to measure the official length limits shall result in loss disqualification from tournament/event.

Teams will be allowed to weigh the five (5) fish presented and inspected at the bump tank and then may select one "Big Fish" from those five (5) to be weighed for the Big Fish Pot prizes. A team member must choose the fish to be weighed for the big fish prize with no input from the emcee, audience, or Tournament Officials/Volunteers. The decision to weigh or enter a big fish during the weigh in process is the sole responsibility of the participants. Once fish are weighed, there will be no re-weighing of fish and the weight on the scales stands.

The MWT will conduct a post weigh in inspection of all a team's fish that qualifies (moves) them into the top three spots on each tournament day and/or qualifies them as the days big fish leader. A designated tournament official staff member will complete this inspection, and fish will be checked for any signs of irregularity which will include opening portions of the fishes' body to inspect presence of any internal tampering or foreign objects. Any findings will result in immediate disqualification from the tournament which may include further sanctions towards future MWT and SBWC events, are final and not subject to appeal. Changes to this process are permitted by the Tournament Director and Officials prior to any start of the tournament event and will be communicated at the Captains Meeting.

MWT does not require the live release of tournament fish, and they may be kept for consumption or donation. If a "live" release process is created (on a per tournament basis), directions regarding that process will be provided at the Captains meeting.

19. VERIFICATION OF SCALES:

Prior to each day's weigh in, the following will be performed by the Tournament Director AND witnessed by a second Tournament Official.

The process for verification will be:

1. All tournament scales are certified and calibrated prior to the beginning of the tournament season.
2. Weigh-in table will be verified for level in all directions. Adjustments made to have a level weigh in table.
3. EACH official weigh-in basket will be verified on the scale to record a tare weight of zero (0) lbs./oz.
4. ONE of the official weigh-in baskets will be designated as "Big Fish" basket for that tournament day.

20. TIES:

If a tie occurs at a single event, Tie breakers are as follows:

1. Highest number of legal fish weighed
2. Heaviest single days catch
3. Second heaviest single days catch
4. Tournament Officials discretion

For Team of the Year standings, MWT point standings (for Championship) or other qualifying season positions, tie breakers are as follows:

1. Highest number of legal fish weighed toward current season points
2. Heaviest total of all fish weighed for current season
3. Prior season TOY points standings
 - a. If one of the teams did not participate in previous year, the win would go to team that did.
4. Next closest previous yearly standings in which there is no tie.
5. Tournament Officials discretion

21. SEASON, TEAM OF THE YEAR (TOY) & CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS:

As defined below, MWT teams will receive points from qualifiers accumulated throughout the year based on:

1. Performance-based points
 - a. Performance points: 150 points for first place, 149 for second place, etc. with each place reduced by one point down to the last team to weigh-in a fish.
2. No points will be awarded to teams for zero weights or DNF

The Team of the Year (TOY) will be determined as the team with the most points accumulated from the 4 qualifying events *and* the MWT Championship.

A total of 40 teams will be selected as MWT Championship Qualifiers on the following criteria:

1. Top 40 teams in the point standings at the end of the 4 qualifiers qualify for the Championship.
2. Additional boats may be added at the Tournament Committee's discretion.

To gather points throughout the year, the participants of the team that registered and/or fished together in the first event of the year (up to three (3) participants), must fish together in subsequent events with zero substitutions. If a substitution is made for any subsequent event after the first, that team points will be tallied as a "separate or new" team starting with that event and not count towards the cumulative total of the original team. It is highly recommended to include three (3) participants in the initial registration to reduce risks of substitution.

In the event of a full event cancellation due to circumstances outside of the MWT control (i.e. weather), all teams registered for the event *and* confirmed check-in at the Captains Meeting for that event will receive 50 points towards TOY and the MWT Championship.

Upon qualifying for the MWT Championship and being invited, no change to the team is allowed to facilitate participation in the event and a minimum of two members from the qualifying team must attend to participate.

Any disqualification from an entire event will result in the loss of all Championship points for that event. Disqualifications do NOT entitle the team and/or participants to a refund.

22. PROTESTS AND PROCESS:

Tournament Officials, in their sole discretion, reserve the right to consider rule violations discovered, reported or not, at any time for any reason, by any persons, before or after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for any past or future event including denying entry to compete or participate in future events.

It is the discretion of the Tournament Director whether to use the listed procedure *and* require the team reporting the infraction to file an official protest per the MWT rules. In some cases, rules may be enforced with no formal written protest if adequate information is available.

Any team participant has a right to protest another team. To protest, the following process must be initiated within 30 minutes of the last flight check in time OR within 10 minutes of the last fish being weighed that day, whichever is latest. No protests will be accepted or considered after that time.

- a. An official written protest with a \$100 fee must be made with the Tournament Director.
 - I. (Note: the fee will be returned if the protest is found valid and a ruling is enforced.)
- b. All evidence supporting the protest is provided to the Tournament Director (e.g., photos).
- c. A meeting of the Tournament Committee will be held as soon as possible (may be AFTER completion days weigh-in) to review.
- d. Details of the infraction are presented and discussed.

- e. Interviews with concerned parties or if required, truth verification testing may be conducted (if necessary) by the Tournament Committee before a final ruling is made.
- f. Tournament Committee votes and makes a recommendation to the Tournament Director.
- g. Tournament Director reviews recommendation, decides and enforces final decision.

In the event rules infractions occurred a penalty of daily and/or tournament weight may be applied, and any cash, prizes and awards must be returned if requested. If a protest is found valid, the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs if necessary.

23. POLYGRAPH AND TRUTH VERIFICATION TESTING

Each participant agrees with submission of their entry form and by their participation in the MWT event, to submit to a polygraph or voice stress analyzer test or truth verification test, should they be asked to for any reason. Polygraph/truth verification may be conducted randomly throughout the season as Tournament Officials deem necessary regardless of protests being filed or not. Tournament Officials shall have sole discretion to select scope, when, where and who shall administer such an exam. Any MWT participant will make themselves available when requested at their own expense for testing as scheduled and will abide by its outcome/determination. Refusal to submit to exam or failure to pass a truth verification exam will result in disqualification from event in question and based on Tournament Officials sole discretion on a case-by-case basis, all future MWT events.

24. AWARDS

No cash/physical awards will be given to any zero weights and/or non-finishes (DNF).

All payments from the MWT will be only provided to the single team member (typically team captain) indicated at the time of registration. It is that team's responsibility to handle all disbursement to individual members.

Participants are responsible for all applicable taxes and execution of all tax forms on all cash and prizes. All requests for information necessary to support that process and regarding such information will be provided to MWT Treasurer upon request. Failure to do so will result in loss of ability to participate in future MWT events.

Teams choosing to participate in any contingency programs that reward anglers based on predefined criteria are solely responsible for all registration and filing of

required forms to collect rewards. The MWT will attempt to facilitate teams as suitable with information to collect rewards, but has no responsibility for the ability to register, file or collect contingency rewards.

25. OFFICIAL MEDIA PERSONNEL/FILMING:

Participants are required to comply with all requests (including but not limited to video, still camera, access to boat and access to fishing area) made by official MWT media personnel for the purpose of gathering promotional coverage throughout events. Failure to accommodate the official MWT media personnel will result in disqualification of that event.

The MWT holds the content rights to all the media and photos captured at the tournaments it owns and operates. The MWT will grant the following exceptions, including the content rights, to tournament participants to use video or still images, shot by the angler during a tournament, for promotional or marketing purposes on the Angler's website and in social media. Anglers may also send photos, videos and updates to their social media and tag Michigan Walleye Tour to connect with our followers.

The MWT does reserve the right to revoke these exceptions/rights and designate tournament related content the angler **must** remove if it is deemed to be inappropriate or in any way violates other MWT rules. Refusal to remove designated content will result in disqualification at all future MWT events.

26. CROSS TOURNAMENT OR OTHER FISHING ORGANIZATION RULINGS

Any suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by any tournament or fishing organization during a non-MWT event may result in a removal and refusal of participation in an MWT tournament. Equally, any MWT disciplinary action rendered will be shared with other tournaments and or fishing organization upon their request.

27. GOVERNING LAW, VENUE AND JURISDICTION

This Agreement shall be governed by and interpreted in all respects in accordance with the substantive laws of the state of Michigan, without regard to its choice of law and/or conflicts of law principles. Participants irrevocably agree that any disputes directly or indirectly arising out of or relating to this agreement shall be resolved exclusively in the state or federal courts located in Bay County, Michigan, and consent to such venue and to the exclusive jurisdiction of any such court over any such dispute.

28. RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND INDEMNIFICATION

Participants expressly acknowledge and accept all risks, including the potential for death, serious injury, illness, or property damage, arising from factors such as water conditions, weather, equipment, and the actions of others. Participants and all

associated parties hereby waive, release, and discharge the Michigan Walleye Tour, Saginaw Bay Walleye Club, their employees, owners, affiliates, hosts, sponsors, and tournament officials from all losses, liabilities, claims, damages, and expenses (including attorney's fees) connected with participation. Furthermore, participants agree to indemnify, defend, hold harmless and promise not to sue these same parties against any claims arising from participation, particularly those resulting from breach of these rules and agreement, gross negligence, willful misconduct, or violation of any applicable law or rule, intending this release to be as broad as legally permissible.

29. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT OF RULES:

All rules have “loopholes”. It is the intention of the SBWC Board, MWT Tournament Committee and the MWT Tournament Director to provide a tournament and atmosphere with the utmost integrity and sportsmanship.

All questions or problems are to be referred directly to the Tournament Director and the Tournament Committee. They have sole jurisdiction in determining the application of the rules (see Section 2). Tournament Official's decisions shall be final in all matters, not be subject to appeal or eligible for further dispute after rendered and enforced.