

Orleans County Open -- Official PRO Rules 2023

NOTE: Violation of ANY of these rules MAY result in disqualification for the day or the Tournament.

1. PRO ENTRY FEE - \$550 **paid in cash during registration at the captains' meeting.**
 - a. \$500 – Entry Fee with 100% payback
 - b. \$50 – To cover expenses (ex. Polygraph testing)
 - i. Any remaining money from this pool will go back into the prize structure.
2. CAPTAINS MEETING - There will be a **MANDATORY** Captains meeting on Friday June 9th. One team member is **required to attend**. The team representative will be required to register and pay at the registration table. ANY exceptions to this rule **MUST** be reported to and pre-approved by the tournament director. **The captains' meeting will take place around 4pm Friday June 9th after weigh in concludes for the King of the Oak event.**
3. COMPETITION PERAMETERS - The Tournaments intent is to fish two days. Hours of the competition are defined below and shall apply to each day of each event unless altered by the Tournament Director based on inclement weather.
 - a. Teams should be prepared to adjust their schedules to allow for fishing up to 5 PM Saturday, 4 PM Sunday if weather conditions are a factor
 - b. All team members and all Registered Tournament Boats are prohibited from returning to the waters of Lake Ontario:
 - i. Once the Captain's meeting starts on Friday June 9th until the designated departure time day 1.
 - ii. From the time they cross the pier head day 1 until the designated departure time day 2. Any exceptions to this rule **MUST** be pre-approved by the Tournament Director.
 - c. Hours of Competition
 - i. Disclaimers need to be turned in between 5am and 5:15am.
 - ii. Upon turning in disclaimers, boats may leave their dock and assemble at the point designated at the captain's meeting.
 - iii. 5:30 AM shotgun start.
 - iv. You **MUST** be in line for pre-check by 3:30PM. There are **NO** exceptions to this rule. Please manage your time carefully.
4. TOURNAMENT LIMITS - All team members and registered Tournament boats must enter and exit from Oak Orchard or Bald Eagle Marina.
 - a. Tournament fishing is limited to US waters **ONLY**.
 - b. Fishing tributaries is prohibited. The Niagara River will be considered a tributary.
 - c. It is the responsibility of the team Captain to remain within the Tournament boundaries. Straying outside of Tournament boundaries at any time for any reason is prohibited and will result in disqualification for the day.
 - d. Tournament boats are prohibited from all open water boat to boat contact unless it involves law enforcement or an emergency. Any exception must be pre-approved by the tournament director or will result in disqualification for the day.
5. TEAM STRUCTURE - Teams are not limited to a maximum number of anglers. All Teams are limited to 3 fishing rods per person but no more than 9 fishing rods in the water at any time. Team Captains are responsible for insuring that the appropriate number of NYS fishing licenses are present on the boat to accommodate Tournament fish and rod limits.
6. CLOSED COMMUNICATION - **will be in effect throughout the event**. No communication of ANY kind may take place between teams from the start of the day's fishing until boats are inside the pier heads.
7. WEIGH-IN
 - a. Upon returning to port the cooler containing the days catch must be immediately drained of any water and transported to the weigh-in site.

- b. As soon as the cooler leaves the boat it will be considered “sealed”. The handling of your fish by anyone other than a Tournament Official is prohibited.
- c. At least one team member must remain with the days catch until surrendered to the Weigh-in Official. Any exception to this rule must be pre-approved by a tournament official.
- d. Failure to abide by these rules results in disqualification for the day.

8. COOLERS

- a. To qualify for scoring, all coolers must return to the harbor in your designated boat.
- b. All coolers must arrive at the weigh-in free of loose ice and water. ONLY blocks, bagged cubes, and frozen plastic containers are approved.
- c. Failure to abide by these rules will result in removal to the back of the pre-check line for correction.

9. SCORING

- a. A "limit catch" in this tournament is 10 fish. Of the 10 only 5 may be salmon. The other 5 must be trout, but may not include more than THREE lake trout.
- b. Each Tournament legal Salmon, Brown Trout, or Lake Trout will score 10 points. Rainbow/Steelhead Trout will score 20 points.
- c. 1 point will be scored per pound of fish weighed.

10. NYS & TOURNAMENT LEGAL FISH DEFINITIONS

- a. **Steelhead** - NYS legal length is 21 inches. **Attempting to weigh-in a Steelhead less than 21 inches will result in disqualification for the day.**
- b. **Atlantic Salmon** – NYS legal length is 25 inches. **Attempting to weigh-in an Atlantic less than 25 inches will result in disqualification for the day.**
- c. **All Other Trout and Salmon** – Minimum length is 19 inches. **Attempting to weigh a fish less than 19 inches will result in the loss of the fish from your box.**
- d. This is a CULL tournament; however, teams are encouraged to take care in releasing fish. Leaving a bunch of dead fish floating is not good for the fishery or the image of the tournament and will not be tolerated. Please make every effort to revive fish before releasing them.
- e. Certified measuring boards will be used at the weigh-in site. These boards will be present at the captains meeting for teams to compare their own measuring devices to. This board will be the “OFFICIAL” measuring boards of the Tournament will used to determine whether or not a fish is Tournament legal.

11. PROTESTS, RULINGS, & LITIGATIONS

- a. Any contestant witnessing a violation of the rules is **required** to IMMEDIATELY report the alleged violation to Tournament Control.
- b. Any suspected violations will be turned over to the Competition Committee for review. This committee will report all the information to the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will attempt to facilitate a resolution of the issue before an Official Protest is filed.
- c. Any Team member has the right to file an Official. The written protest must be presented to the Tournament Director before weigh-in concludes. Upon receiving the Official Protest form the Tournament Director will present the protested team with 15-minute opportunity to resolve the protest. Any unresolved protests will be forwarded to the appropriate Law Enforcement Agency for investigation.
- d. A \$50.00 (fifty dollar) non-refundable protest fee (cash only) must accompany any filed protest form.
- e. The Tournament scores of protested teams will not be considered official, and any awards won by a protested team will be withheld until a complete investigation is finalized.
- f. Failure of any team to cooperate with the Competition Committee or the Tournament Director will result in immediate self-induced disqualification from the event.
- g. THE “SPIRIT” OF THE RULES WILL BE ENFORCED AT ALL TIMES. ALL DECISIONS OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTORS WILL BE FINAL.

12. INSPECTIONS

- a. All teams must at any time allow Tournament Officials to board their boat for inspection. All Tournament boats must be available for inspection for the duration of the event. Inspections shall include, but not be limited to, GPS units, fishing tackle and coolers. Failure to comply with an Official's request for inspection will result in immediate disqualification.
 - b. **Captains of the top 5 teams on Sunday need to be present for random polygraph testing. First place and two other teams will be randomly picked through a number generator app.**
13. MISCONDUCT - Any inappropriate, improper or abusive conduct by any participant towards any Tournament Official, volunteer, or fellow participant shall be deemed a violation of the rules and may subject the violator to penalties or disqualification as determined by the Tournament Committee. Any person or team that has been disqualified by any other Tournament or Derby for an overt act to deceive or defraud may be barred from entry into any future events.
14. LIABILITY - Every reasonable precaution will be taken by the Tournament Committee to protect persons and property during the event. However, the Committee, its judges, sponsors, officers, directors, and volunteers or employees of the same will not be held responsible for the safety of persons or property participating in the tournament. All participants further understand and agree to hold harmless members of the groups from any liability or claim of damages.
- a. All Tournament boats should carry liability insurance.
 - b. Each Contestant will be required to sign a liability disclaimer each morning before the Tournament begins.
 - c. We will not leave the harbor under a small craft advisory. If one is put in place during tournament hours each team is at their own discretion.
15. GENERAL
- a. All fish will remain the property of the Tournament until released to the teams.
 - b. All fish may be tested for legality.
 - c. Disposition of all fish is the team's responsibility and must follow state and local laws.
16. ACKNOWLEDGMENT OF UNDERSTANDING - All entrants agree that their purchase of a registration or participation in any of these events shall constitute an acknowledgement of the rules and they further acknowledge that they understand their obligations and responsibilities outlined within and they agree by these rules and the decisions of the Tournament Officials.

NOTE: Violations of ANY of these rules MAY result in disqualification for the day or the event. See specific rules for exact penalties.