

WINTER HAVEN LUNKER LOVERS TOURNAMENT RULES

1. All local and state rules and regulations must be adhered to. Trolling is prohibited. Trolling is defined as fishing while the combustion engine is in gear and running.
2. Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only one casting, spincasting or spinning rod and reel may be used at any one time. All other types prohibited. No rods over 8 feet in length may be used.
3. Contestants will fish two men per boat unless there are not enough co-anglers to pair with boaters. Boaters who are drawn after all co-anglers have been paired will have the option of fishing alone or pairing with another consenting boater. Partners will be determined by draw except as indicated above or in the tournament procedures. Any member who, by medical necessity, needs to have someone fish in the boat with him/her will either be paired with another contestant or, if this is not possible, be allowed to fish with an observer. Contestants will not fish three per boat except as indicated in the following. In a case where the contestants are gathering at the tournament site on the morning of the tournament, a boater paired with a co-angler does not appear and there is no unpaired boater with whom the missing boater's co-angler partner may fish, the missing boater's co-angler partner may fish as third contestant in a boat with a consenting boater provided the consenting boater's original co-angler partner also consents. The third contestant in the boat will be considered to have competed in the tournament and his/her weight will count.
4. No contestant shall fish within 50 yards of another contestant's boat that has been secured by an anchor or similar device and has the trolling motor out of the water. This provision does not apply if the contestants are already within 50 yards of each other when the anchor or similar device is lowered or when the trolling motor is taken out of the water. No contestant shall fish within 50 yards of any gas pump that is operable and used to sell fuel to the public. These distance restrictions shall apply to the placement of the boat and lures.
5. An exemption from the state size limit will be secured for each tournament. Only 5 bass per person may be weighed in. If state regulations place the creel limit lower than 5 fish, the state regulations will apply. Fish must be at least 12 inches in length. Fish will be measured from closed mouth to the tip of the straightened (pinched) tail on a flat board (golden rule). The Tournament Committee measuring board is official and final. Mutilated, stretched or squashed fish (in an attempt to alter length) are not permitted. Violation of this rule will result in disqualification. All fish will be released live.
6. Contestants may request a courtesy check of the length of their fish prior to presenting the fish to the weighmaster. Fish judged short during a courtesy check will not result in disqualification unless they are obviously in violation of rule 5. Fish judged by the Tournament Committee to be at least 1/4 inch short (or long) will be considered obviously in violation.

7. Each contestant must remain with his partner from start of tournament to completion of the weigh-in. No getting out of boat to retrieve lures, land fish, or any other reason except hazardous or emergency conditions. Boats shall be left in the water for weigh-in except that boats may be trailered when neither of the contestants has a fish to weigh. During non-hazardous inclement weather, contestants may leave their boats only at the weigh-in site and only with the permission of a majority of the Tournament Committee present at the site. Contestants who leave their boat during non-hazardous inclement weather may not later resume fishing. The boat owner is authorized limited access to gas docks to pump gas and to find an attendant to pay for gas, oil, or other items related to boat repair or maintenance.
8. Coast guard approved chest type personal flotation devices must be furnished by each contestant and, during the time from takeoff until weigh-in, must be worn and fastened while the boat is on plane. The boat operator must be attached to the kill switch while the boat is on plane. Each boater contestant will provide a seat in his/her boat for the co-angler partner or potential co-angler partner. This must be a regular seat with a back and cannot be what is commonly referred to as a "butt seat." This seat will be provided by boaters who are not paired in order that a seat is available in situations where repairing is necessary on tournament day. Failure to comply with this rule shall result in a warning for the first offence, a two (2) pound penalty for the second offence within a club year and disqualification for the third offence within a club year.
9. A one pound per minute penalty will be imposed on contestants who are late at check in time. After 15 minutes, both contestants will be disqualified. A contestant who has prepaid the entry fee and who arrives late for a tournament may begin fishing after he has contacted a member of the Tournament Committee or an officer. The takeoff will not be delayed for late contestants. A late contestant who has not prepaid the entry fee cannot compete. Late contestants will have livewell and kill switch checked by an officer or Tournament Committee member prior to fishing, at the Tournament Director's discretion.
10. Asking, offering, or accepting fish from partner or any other source will mean immediate suspension from the Club. If you don't catch it, don't weigh it in.
11. Canal regulations on speed will be observed at all times. Courtesy and respect to fellow fishermen is mandatory.
12. Co-anglers are encouraged to pay a minimum of \$40 per day of fishing to the boater for fuel and oil. This will include days the co-angler practices with the boater. Common sense would dictate more than \$40 if the boater burns a large amount of gas and the co-angler rides to a distant tournament site with the boater.
13. Actual weights will be recorded in pounds and hundredths of a pound. One additional pound will be awarded per day to each contestant for participation. Participation is defined as actually competing in the tournament on the day for which the participation weight is awarded. Members who compete only one day of a two-day tournament will be awarded one pound for participation. Members who compete in a tournament and who are disqualified will be awarded the one pound per day for participation. A 0.25-pound penalty will be assessed for each dead fish. The Tournament Director will determine the live fish count. The 0.25-pound penalty will not apply to a contestant's big bass should the big bass be dead.
14. Club tournaments are to be set by the Tournament Committee and that decision will be final.

15. Sportsmanlike conduct will be adhered to at all times, by all members, at all functions.
16. Any protest must be made to the Tournament Committee or to a Club officer within 30 minutes of completion of the weigh-in. The Tournament Committee, along with an officer of the Club other than the Tournament Director, will judge any infraction of the Club rules. The Tournament Committee will inform the person(s) named in the protest as soon as possible. No decision will be made on the protest until those named in the protest have a chance to respond. Additionally, those accused in the protest shall have the right to file additional protests at any time during the proceedings without regard to the time limit above.
17. All boats are required to have kill switches and live wells suitable for keeping alive two limits of fish. Boat checks will be held randomly.
18. No alcoholic beverages will be on a boat or consumed during tournament hours until you have weighed in.
19. No prearranged fishing assistance from persons who are not contestants in the tournament will be asked nor received during the tournament hours.
20. Contestants must cull fish in their boat immediately after the fish is caught. Once a contestant presents fish to the weighmaster, he cannot bring additional fish or substitute fish. (Note: State law prohibits discarding dead fish! Thus, dead fish cannot be culled.)
21. Should a contestant render more than a tournament limit of fish to the weigh-master, he/she shall be disqualified. Note that state law prohibits any contestant from having more than 5 fish in possession at any time.
22. Tournament hours for all tournament days in the months of June, July, August and September will be safe daylight until 2:00 pm. Tournament hours for all tournament days in other months will be safe daylight until 3:00 pm. These hours will apply to both days of a two-day tournament.
23. Members are encouraged to carry cellular phones or two-way radios during tournaments for safety reasons. However, the use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, or similar devices to communicate fishing location or information during tournament hours is strictly prohibited.
24. The use of tobacco products by co-anglers while in the boats of their boater partners is prohibited unless explicitly permitted by the boater partner.
25. Each contestant will bring their fish to the scales in water-filled bags. The contestant is responsible for removing all culling ropes/tags, etc. prior to bringing their fish to the scales. Fish will be returned to the water in water-filled bags as directed by the tournament director. Violation of this rule will result in a one-pound penalty.
26. The tournament director may elect to issue specific instructions for each tournament for the manner and place of take-off, manner and place of weigh-in, the required location of contestants at weigh-in time, weigh-in procedures, etc. Violation of these instructions will result in a one-pound penalty for the boater and/or co-angler.

27. Any violations to tournament rules (except those with specific penalties) will result in disqualification of the violator and/or the partner if he fails to report any infraction.