

OKUMA 2008 SOUTHWEST MICHIGAN STEELHEADERS SUMMER CHALLENGE OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

1. Dates and Times

- a. Tournament dates are Friday, May 9 and Saturday, May 10.
- b. Registration will be held at Pier 33 Showroom (Anchors Way) on May 8 from 5:00 PM – 7:00 PM. The Captain's Meeting will immediately follow at 7:00 PM – ALL CAPTAINS AND PRO OBSERVERS MUST ATTEND.
- c. The awards ceremony will commence immediately following the weigh-in on Saturday, May 10 at the Pier 33 showroom on Anchors Way.
- d. Time limits are as follows for both days: Lines in 6:45 AM - lines out 1:00 PM (NO RUN TIME ALLOWED).
- e. The contest is considered official if a minimum of three (3) hours are fished between Friday and Saturday. Prizes will be awarded based on points accumulated during the official fishing periods.
- f. There shall be no fishing by tournament contestants except during tournament hours either day of the tournament. Nor shall a boat registered in the tournament leave the harbor for any reason on Friday and Saturday except during the official fishing periods.

2. Eligibility

- a. Licensed charter captains must fish in the Pro Division even when participating as crew. All non-charter captains and crews may register in either division.
- b. All captains must be a member of a Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fisherman's Association affiliated club. Proof of membership is required at registration on May 8. All non-members may join the Southwest Michigan Steelheaders club for \$35 annual dues.
- c. All boats must be equipped with a VHF marine radio in working order.

3. Entry Fees

- a. Entry fee is \$450 per Pro boat or \$200 per Amateur boat before May 1; add \$50 thereafter.
- b. All entries for the Main Tournament must be received NO LATER than 7:00 PM on Thursday, May 8.
- c. There are no provisions for the return of entry fees, unless a written request for such a fee is received by the Tournament Director at least 7 days prior to the kick off of the tournament. If tournament is cancelled due to weather conditions all entries minus 10% will be refunded.

4. Scoring

- a. Winners will be determined by a total accumulation of points based on:
 - i. Ten (10) points per legal fish weighed, plus
 - ii. One (1) point per pound (nearest hundredth pound) total weight
 - iii. Ten (10) bonus points will be given for each Trout weighed up to a maximum of 30 bonus points per day.
- b. The team accumulating the highest number of points will be the winner, followed by the team with the next highest accumulation, and so on.

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- c. The following species shall be eligible: Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Atlantic Salmon, Pink Salmon, Lake Trout, Brown Trout and Steelhead Trout.

5. Prizes

- a. 1st place Pro pays at least \$15,000 based on 60 Pro boats participating. The Pro division will pay down to at least 5th place.
- b. 1st place Amateur pays at least \$4000 based on 60 Amateur boats participating. The Amateur division will pay down to at least 10th place.
- c. The Tournament Committee will finalize and post the payout schedule prior to start of the tournament. Additional prizes may be awarded.
- d. Approximately 90% of the tournament entry fees will be awarded. The remainder of the entry fees will be used to defray the costs of the tournament. Any proceeds will go to the Southwest Michigan Steelheaders Club.

6. Second Chance Tournament

Entry fee is \$100 pro and \$50 amateur. All entries must be received by 3:00 PM on May 9th. The pay out will be 70% of the pot to 1st place and 30% of the pot to 2nd place for each division. The winner will be determined based on total points for day two. The top three boats after day one are ineligible and 2nd chance entry fees for those boats will be refunded if necessary.

7. Big Fish Contest

Entry is \$20. All entries must be received by 7:00 PM on May 8th. There will be a separate big fish contest for the pro and amateur divisions. One fish may be weighed in each day. Two zip ties will be provided (one for each day) and fish must be marked with a zip tie through the mouth to be entered ... no exceptions will be made. Unmarked fish will not be weighed. First place will receive 70% of the pot and 2nd place 30% of the pot for each division.

8. Big Boys Pot

Pro Division only. Entry fee is \$300. The winner will be awarded based on total points over the entire tournament. First place will receive 70% of the pot and 2nd place 30% of the pot for each division.

9. Fishing Rules

- a. All boats must depart and return to the Port of St. Joseph, MI.
- b. All Michigan DNR rules apply.
- c. Maximum number of rods fishing at any time is nine (9). Fishing means "line in the water". One slider per rod will be allowed; however, sliders may not exceed 72 inches. Maximum 2 baits per rod.
- d. Pro Division: Weigh the best 12 of the first 15 legal sized fish boated (no cull).
- e. Amateur Division: Weigh the best 9 of the first 12 legal sized fish boated (no cull).
- f. Once you have attained your limit per Section 9(d) or 9(e), you shall cease fishing, retrieve all equipment and return immediately to the weigh-in station. No further fishing will be allowed during the day's fishing period.

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- g. You must make every attempt to reel every fish hooked to the net and into the boat. No intentional dragging or shaking will be permitted. Any fish lost by accidentally burning the line with a cigarette will count toward the day's limit per Section 9(d) or 9(e).
- h. A fish may be released only under one of the following conditions:
 - i. The fish did not meet the minimum size requirements per DNR regulations PLUS one-half (1/2) inch. Minimum size for Lake Trout is 20 inches and all other species listed in Section 4(c) is 10 inches. Teams must keep any fish that is one-half inch (1/2") over the minimum length. Certified boards will be used at the weigh-in station and these boards will be present at the Captain's Meeting for calibration.
 - ii. The team has reached their DNR limit for that species which is no more than 3 of any species per licensed fisherman including observers. Under these circumstances, the fish must be counted toward the tournament limits per Section 9(d) or 9(e). Eligible species are listed in Section 4(c).
 - iii. The fish was not caught in accordance with DNR regulations.

10. Start and Finish

- a. The tournament committee will use FM-78 to start and end each fishing period. No lines in the water until the start is announced.
- b. You must not depart a ½ mile radius from the pier heads until the announcement of the start of the fishing period.
- c. Your boat must pass between the St. Joseph US Coast Guard boat and the pier heads by 1:00 PM or you will be disqualified for that particular day ... NO EXCEPTIONS! No fishing is allowed on tournament days other than during the specified times.
- d. All boats must radio-in to tournament control on FM-78 upon return to the pier heads at the end of each fishing period.
- e. Once a fishing period is declared closed by the Tournament Committee no more fish may be boated. All boats must proceed directly to the weigh-in station.

11. Weigh-in

- a. At the close of each fishing period or once the fish limit per Section 9(d) or 9(e) has been attained, the boat must go directly to the Pier 33 designated docks (just above 1st drawbridge) for weigh-in. No stops may be made prior to dropping off at the weigh-in. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from the tournament.
- b. At least 1 crewmember, the observer (if applicable) and the catch and signed log sheet must disembark. The crew member and the observer must stay with the catch until it is officially scored.
- c. You can only weigh 12 fish pro / 9 fish am and your cooler must only have 12 fish pro / 9 fish am at the weigh-in station. If you have more than 12 fish pro / 9 fish am in your cooler at the weigh-in station, you will be disqualified for that days catch ... NO EXCEPTIONS!
- d. No water or loose ice will be allowed in the coolers at weigh-in. Bagged ice only may be used in the coolers at all times.
- e. All fish may be tested for time in possession. The tournament committee may retain any fish for any reason.

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- f. Fish may not be left at the weigh-in station. Disposition of fish must be in compliance with state and local laws.

12. Communications

- a. This is a radio silence tournament for the Pro Division only. Communication of any kind, including but not limited to marine radios, CB radios, and cell phones during a fishing period will result in disqualification. The only exception will be required communication with the Tournament Committee.
- b. There are no communication restrictions for contestants in the Amateur division.
- c. All participants should monitor FM-78 at all times. Important tournament information will be broadcast on FM-78. Please restrict communication on FM-78 to vital tournament communication only, no idle chatter will be allowed on FM-78. Participants who miss these announcements for any reason will still be held accountable.

13. Observer System (Pro Division)

- a. Each team must provide an observer to serve on another boat. Observers must be at least 16 years of age. Observers can be used for a legal fish limit provided the Captain verifies that the observer has a valid Michigan license.
- b. It will be the observer's responsibility to see that all tournament rules and DNR regulations are honored on his/her assigned boat. He/she shall report infractions to the tournament committee.
- c. The observer from the winning team (not the observer assigned to the winning boat) will win \$500.
- d. An "Official Observer Log Sheet" will be provided for each fishing period. Only the observer shall enter data into the log sheet. The observer shall enter the time of each "hook-up" and the corresponding result. For each fish landed, the observer shall record the species and approximate weight. For each fish lost, the observer shall record the manner in which the fish was lost. At the conclusion of each fishing period, the log sheet must be signed by both the observer and the Captain prior to presenting the log sheet and the day's catch at the official weigh-in station. Failure to submit a log sheet with all signatures will result in a penalty of ten (10) points taken away from the score for that fishing period.
- e. The observer will accompany the catch of his/her assigned boat until it has been officially weighed and scored.
- f. The Captain of each team shall be responsible to insure that his observer is on board the assigned boat at least 45 minutes prior to the start of each fishing period. Failure to comply without just cause, as determined by the tournament committee, will result in disqualification of the team supplying the observer. In the event that an observer does not report, it is the responsibility of the providing team to supply another crew member as a replacement.
- g. Observer assignments will be made by lottery. As much as possible, local boats will be paired with out-of-town boats of comparable length. Observer assignments will be posted at the Captain's Meeting. Each Captain must report the location of his boat to the assigned observer at the Captain's Meeting. Observers may be reassigned at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.

14. Observer System (Amateur Division)

- a. The five leading teams after Friday's fishing period will be assigned an observer for Saturday's fishing period. Observers will be provided by the tournament committee. Observers on amateur boats will follow all procedures outlined in Section 13 above.

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- b. Unless an observer is provided, the captain of each amateur boat will act as the official observer for their boat. The requirements outlined in Section 13(c) regarding log sheets must be completed by the captain of each amateur boat in the event that an observer is not provided.
- c. In addition to Section 14(a) an observer may be assigned to any amateur boat at any time for any reason at the discretion of the tournament committee.

15. Boat Identification

The tournament committee will furnish a colored flag and boat identification number at registration. The flag shall be flown on the tournament boat's radio antenna in full view from all directions and the ID number shall be prominently displayed on the starboard side from the start of the fishing period Friday and through the conclusion of weigh-in on Saturday.

16. Boat Inspections

The Tournament Committee may board any vessel prior to the fishing period to search for any uncleaned fish. The presence of any uncleaned fish on a tournament boat prior to the fishing period will result in disqualification.

17. Protests

- a. A five (5) person Rules Committee will resolve disputes. Their decision will be final and binding.
- b. Protests must be presented to the Tournament Committee in writing on the day of infraction by 3:00 PM with \$100. If the protest is upheld, you will get \$200 back, otherwise the tournament will retain the \$100.

18. Cancellations

- a. The Tournament Committee may cancel the tournament, when in their opinion conditions could be dangerous to persons or property. The Committee will announce their determination of a delayed start or cancellation 45 minutes before each fishing period.
- b. After a fishing period has begun, an announcement will be made on FM-78 if cancellation or postponement is imminent. A minimum of 15 minutes notice will be given prior to the early termination of a fishing period.
- c. If a fishing period is shortened, all boats must proceed as described in Sections 10 and 11.

19. Polygraph Testing

By entering this tournament, all captains, crew and observers agree to subject themselves to a polygraph examination performed by an examiner provided by the tournament committee. All participants may be tested for any reason at any time (up to 30 days after the tournament is completed) at the sole discretion of the tournament committee. In addition, all participants agree to abide by the results of the polygraph examination. Any participant fails or refuses to take this examination, by so doing, may disqualify his/her team from winning any division or event in this tournament. The official results, including the distribution of all prize money, may be delayed up to 30 days after the tournament pending the results of a polygraph examination.

20. Disqualification and Penalties

- a. Disqualification for any reason will result in the forfeiture of all entry fees for the tournament and official side pots.

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- b. Failure to comply with any of the rules listed in Section 9 will result in disqualification.
- c. Failure to proceed directly to weigh-in will result in disqualification.
- d. If you arrive at the weigh-in point with more than 12 fish pro / 9 fish am in your cooler you will be disqualified for that day's catch.
- e. Any fish taken in violation of DNR regulations will disqualify that day's catch.
- f. Failure to dispose of fish per state and local laws will result in disqualification.
- g. Violation of the communication rules by contestants in the Pro Division will result in disqualification.
- h. Running gunnel to gunnel or passing any item from boat to boat will result in disqualification. However, a tournament boat may stop to assist a vessel in distress if the tournament committee gives prior authorization via marine radio on FM-78.
- i. If a tournament boat breaks down after the start of the fishing period and requires assistance from another vessel, that boat will be disqualified for that day's fishing.
- j. Failure to provide an observer at the assigned boat without just cause, as determined by the tournament committee, 45 minutes prior to the start of the fishing period will result in disqualification.
- k. Failure to submit to a polygraph examination will result in disqualification.
- l. Failure to submit an Official Observer Log Sheet with the signature of the Captain and the Official Observer (where applicable) will result in a penalty of ten (10) points taken away from the score for that fishing period.

21. Liability

- a. All reasonable precautions will be taken by the Tournament Committee to protect persons and property during the tournament. Neither the Tournament Committee, Rules Committee, officers and directors of the Southwest Michigan Steelheaders, or sponsors can or will be responsible for the safety of persons, for accident, theft, damage by fire, vandalism, or any other cause for loss to a contestants property.
- b. Participants understand and agree to hold harmless the aforementioned groups and individuals from liability or damage as may be incurred from participation in the Tournament.

22. Rule Changes

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to change any of these rules and post changes up to 45 minutes prior to the start of the tournament.

23. Tournament Committee and Rules Committee

The Tournament Committee and the Rules Committee will be appointed prior to the Captain's Meeting. These committees shall act as prescribed in accordance with these Official Rules.