

# 2024 SCHU'S SUMMER CHALLENGE

## OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES – AMATEUR DIVISION

### 1. Dates and Times

- a. The Amateur Division is a one-day event on Saturday May 11.
- b. No Captain's Meeting requirement for the AM Division.
- c. Awards Ceremony will follow the weigh-in (3:30 PM estimated) on Saturday, May 11 at West Basin Marina. Access a live stream at [www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders](http://www.facebook.com/southwestmichigansteelheaders) or on YouTube Channel SWMI STEELHEADERS.
- d. Time limits of the fishing periods are as follows:
  - i. Saturday, May 11 – Shotgun start 6:45:00 AM / Stop 1:30:00 PM
- e. All times are GPS Eastern Daylight Time. NO RUN TIME ALLOWED.
- f. The contest is considered official if a minimum of three (3) hours are fished. Three (3) hours of fishing will constitute a completed day and the points will count toward the final score. Prizes will be awarded based on points accumulated during the official fishing periods.
- g. There shall be no fishing by tournament contestants except during tournament hours.

### 2. Eligibility

- a. Teams designated as "pro" must fish in the Open Division. If one crew member is designated as "pro" then the entire team shall be designated as "pro." "Pro" shall be defined as follows: All licensed charter fishing captains or anyone who has worked as a charter fishing captain in the two (2) years prior to the event.

It is your responsibility to comply with the eligibility rules. The tournament committee reserves the right to review the eligibility of all entries at any time. Failure to disclose all pertinent information may result in disqualification with no refund and no prizes awarded. If you have a question regarding your eligibility, please contact the tournament director prior to registration.

- b. If you are an Amateur team and you register for the Open Division, then you cannot enter the Amateur Division.
- c. All boats must be equipped with a VHF marine radio in working order with channel FM-78.
- d. The Tournament Committee has the right to decline entry or terminate the entry of any person or team due to unsportsmanlike conduct detrimental to the tournament, sponsors, participants and supporting groups.

### 3. Entry Fees

- a. Entry fee is \$100 per boat in the Amateur Division. Entries must be received by 7:00 PM on Friday, May 10. Payment of entry fee constitutes agreement of all tournament rules and waiver of liability on entry form.

### 4. How to Enter the Tournament

- a. Mail your entry to PO Box 575, St. Joseph, MI 49085 by Monday, May 6.
- b. Deliver your entry form and payment to Tackle Haven or Fishin Hole by 7 PM on Fri. May 10.
- c. Come to the OPTIONAL registration (5-7 PM) on Thursday May 9 at Schu's Grill & Bar and register and pay there.

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5. 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
- 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. All ties will be split evenly.
- c. The following species shall be eligible: Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Atlantic Salmon, Pink Salmon, Lake Trout, Brown Trout and Steelhead Trout.

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### 6. Prizes

- a. The Tournament Committee will finalize and announce the payout schedule prior to start of the tournament. Any proceeds will go to the Southwest Michigan Steelheaders Club.
- b. All checks will be mailed to the address on the entry form within one week of the end of the event.
- c. A completed IRS Form W-9 must be received by the tournament committee prior to the disbursement of any prize equal or greater to \$600 in value. Only one check will be cut to the captain of each winning boat or designated legal entity.

### 7. Big Fish Contest Rules

- a. Participation is optional. Entry fee is \$25. First place will receive 70% and 2<sup>nd</sup> place 30% of the pot.

### 8. Fishing Rules

- a. All boats must depart and return to the Port of St. Joseph, MI.
- b. You must fish within and not pass beyond the boundary limits set forth in Section 10 at any time during the fishing periods.
- c. All Michigan DNR rules apply.
- d. 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.
- e. Weigh a one-man DNR 5 fish limit. Culling is allowed per DNR rules. Bag limit is determined by DNR rules and the number of licensed fishermen.
- f. No fishing inside a line between the North and South pier heads.
- g. Participants may compete in the 333 on Friday and Saturday if this same rule set is followed on both days.

### 9. Start and Finish

- a. The tournament committee will use FM-78 to start and end each fishing period. No lines may enter the water until the start is announced. You must stay inside a ½ mile radius from the pier heads until the announcement of the start of the fishing period.
- b. Your boat must pass between the Committee Boat and the pier heads by the end of the fishing period (see Section 1(d)) or you will be disqualified for that particular day ... NO EXCEPTIONS! The committee boat shall be stationed approximately ½ mile due west of the pier head.
- c. 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.

### 10. Boundaries

- a. The northern boundary will be the latitude line 42° 25' 0" or 42.4166667 in decimal format. This latitude line is just north of the South Haven pier heads.
- b. The southern boundary will be the latitude line 41° 46' 0" or 41.7666667 in decimal format. This latitude line is just south of the New Buffalo pier heads and just north of the Michigan state line with Indiana.

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- c. The western boundary will be the Michigan state line with Illinois.
- d. It is highly recommended that you record a continuous track line on your plotter from the start of the fishing period to the finish for each day of the tournament. If a protest is made for a violation of rule 8(b), this track line will be requested as evidence.

### **11. Weigh-in**

- a. At the close of the fishing period go directly to West Basin Marina for weigh-in. No stops may be made prior to dropping off at the weigh-in unless you are slipped at West Basin in which case you may dock and then proceed directly to weigh-in. Failure to comply will result in disqualification from the tournament.
- b. You can only weigh 5 fish and your cooler must only have 5 fish at the weigh-in station. If you have more than 5 fish Amateur in your cooler at the weigh-in station, you will be disqualified ... NO EXCEPTIONS!
- c. No water or loose ice will be allowed in the coolers at weigh-in.
- d. All fish may be tested for time in possession. The tournament committee may retain any fish for any reason.
- e. Fish donation is optional if there are agencies or individuals available at weigh-in to receive your fish. Fish may not be left at the weigh-in station if no one is available to receive them. Disposition of fish must be in compliance with state and local laws. Failure to do so will result in disqualification.

### **12. Communications**

- a. Open communication is allowed with no restrictions.
- b. 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. Boat Identification**

- a. No boat number or flag for identification is required in the Amateur Division.

### **14. Protests**

- a. A five (5) person Rules Committee appointed by the Tournament Committee prior to the start of the tournament will resolve disputes. Their decision will be final and binding. A sixth member will be appointed as an alternate in the case of a conflict of interest by another member.
- b. Protests must be presented to the Tournament Committee by the protesting captain in writing within one (1) hour of the end of the official fishing period with \$100. If the protest is upheld, you will get \$100 back, otherwise the tournament will retain the \$100.

### **15. 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.

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- 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. Once the fishing period is terminated, you will have 1 hour to enter the pier heads or your catch for that day will be disqualified.
- c. If a fishing period is shortened, all boats must proceed as described in Sections 9.
- d. Cancellations for the Amateur Division can be made independently from the Open Division.

### **16. Polygraph Testing**

- a. 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 that fails or refuses to take this examination, by so doing, may disqualify his/her team from winning any division or event in this tournament and forfeiture of any and all cash prizes. 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.

### **17. Disqualification and Penalties**

- a. Disqualification for any reason will result in the forfeiture of all entry fees for the tournament and official side pots.
- b. Failure to comply with any of the rules listed in Section 8 will result in disqualification from the tournament.
- c. Failure to pass between the committee boat and the pier heads by the end of the fishing period will result in disqualification for that day.
- d. Failure to proceed directly to weigh-in will result in disqualification.
- e. If you arrive at the weigh-in point with more than 5 fish in your cooler you will be disqualified.
- f. Any fish taken in violation of DNR regulations will result in disqualification.
- g. 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.
- h. 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.
- i. Failure to submit to a polygraph examination will result in disqualification from the tournament.

### **18. 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 contestant's property.

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- b. Participants understand and agree to hold harmless the aforementioned groups and individuals from liability or damage that may be incurred from participation in the Tournament.

19. Rule Changes

- a. 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.

20. Discrepancies

- a. These rules shall supersede any prior rules for this event.