

34th Annual CHAMPIONSHIP ON THE CHESAPEAKE

RULES & REGULATIONS

TOURNAMENT DATES: May 5-7, 2017 (Friday, Saturday, & Sunday). You may fish any or all three days of the tournament. All times listed are Eastern Standard Time (EST).

ENTRY FEE & REGISTRATION: Amateur Division: Entry fees are per boat. January & February: Members \$225; Non-Members \$275; March & April: Members \$250; Non-Members \$300. **Professional Division:** \$125 One Day, \$325 Two Days, \$325 Three Days. Applications paid with a dishonored check or credit card shall automatically void tournament registration and any prizes won. You may register at any of the Captain's Meetings; by phone 410-255-5535; or online at www.mssa.net/thechampionship.

FISHING LOCATIONS: Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay as allowed by Maryland Department of Natural Resources (DNR), INCLUDING THE POTOMAC RIVER up to the 301 bridge. See Tournament Map(s) **ELIGIBLE FISH & FISHING METHODS:** Striped bass only, 35" and over. All fish must be caught by hook and line as described by DNR recreational standards. Wire line is allowed as line or leader; dummy lines are permitted; chumming and live-lining will be permitted.

FISHING HOURS: Lines in at 6:00 AM. You may have your planar boards in, but NO fishing lines may be in the water before 6:00 AM. If weighing fish: Must be in line, fish in hand, and/or recognized by the Weigh Master by 4:30 PM at any of the official Weigh Stations. No fishing after 4:30 PM even if you are not weighing in fish for that day. All lines must be in the boat by 4:30 PM.

WEATHER: There is no Weather Committee. Captains and crews enter and participate in this tournament at their own risk. Captains and their crews must make their own judgments whether to fish under the prevailing weather conditions based on the size and seaworthiness of their boat, their seamanship skills and any other factors.

REFUNDS: Only one boat fishing is necessary to make the tournament official, as deemed by the MSSA Tournament Committee. In the event that there are no available days or boats fishing due to an Act of God or natural disaster, 40% of all entry fees and TWT fees will be refunded. In the event that you are unable to participate, a written request stating the reasons for a refund must be received at MSSA's main office 7 days prior to the start of the tournament.

WEIGH-STATION HOURS: Friday, Saturday, & Sunday: 12:00 PM – 4:30 PM. Captains may weigh-in at any of the Weigh Stations during operational hours. No fish will be weighed in after 4:30 PM unless the Captain or crew member(s) is in line with fish, and/or has been recognized by the Weigh-Master.

MEASURE: Striped bass will be measured by WEIGHT ONLY. However, they must be 35" or greater in length to be entered into the tournament (tip of the nose to the squeezed tip of tail). Ties in weight will be determined by earliest time recorded on weigh ticket.

SELECTION OF FISH FOR WEIGH-IN: Captains are allowed to weigh-in two (2) striped bass per day for the main tournament (amateur & professional); and anglers entered in the Youth or Ladies division may weigh in 1 fish per person, per day to be eligible for Youth or Ladies prizes. Youth and Ladies division anglers must pre-register before the start of the tournament. You can weigh fish any or all three (3) days of the tournament. It is prohibited to sort, cull, high grade, or replace any fish already in possession. Any fish taken into possession shall be deemed as part of the daily creel limit. Once the daily creel limit is reached, fishing is NO LONGER permitted. The Captain must choose which fish to be weighed. Captains may not use an official Weigh-Station scale to determine which fish to weigh-in.

WEIGH-IN: Fish must be brought to an official Weigh Station by the boat the fish was landed, by way of water (Refer to Disabled Vessel Rule if needed). Captains or their designee must be present during weigh-in and must have tear-off portion of Captain Number in hand. All fish weighed in will be issued an official weigh ticket bearing the catch weight, length, captain name, time, & date. Upon receipt of the weigh ticket, the catch weight shall be deemed accurate, final and agreed upon by the Captain and Weigh Master. You cannot alter the length or weight of any fish brought to the scales for entry into the tournament. All fish are subject to examination, internally and externally, as the Weigh-Master deems necessary. All fish weighed in will be prominently marked by the Weigh-Master. Weigh-Masters may confiscate or report suspect fish to the Tournament Committee without protest. Weigh-Masters are authorized to require Proof of Tournament registration and a photo identification at time of weigh-in. The MSSA reserves the right to mark the weigh ticket of any suspect fish, or require the tournament Captain to sign a weigh ticket. YOU MAY RELEASE YOUR FISH AFTER WEIGH IN.

PROTESTS: Protests must be placed immediately upon knowledge of a Rules infraction. Protests must be in writing and delivered to the MSSA within two (2) days from the close of the tournament with a \$500.00 protest fee to be eligible for consideration by the Tournament Committee. Protest fees will be refunded in the event a protest is upheld. MSSA reserves the right to withhold payment of tournament prizes until the protest is investigated and/or resolved. Disqualifications are not dependent upon valid protests.

TOURNAMENT COMMUNICATIONS: MSSA will use several types of communication and update anglers throughout the tournament: www.mssa.net; facebook.com/joinmssa; tidalfish.com; and text messaging. If you wish to receive text alerts please put your cell number on the tournament application. By providing your cell phone number you will agree to allow the MSSA to send text updates to your phone.

BOARDING AND OFFICIATING: The Tournament Committee reserves the right to: [1] board any boat at any time for inspection; [2] place an "Onboard Observer" on any boat. Refusals will result in an automatic disqualification of Captain, Alternate Captain and crew.

FISH ONBOARD: No unclaimed tournament fish can be on the boat before the start of the day, unless marked by Weigh-Master. Transient boats must keep with them at all times, captain number, marina receipt, and any other documentation explaining their situation to avoid law enforcement violations. The MSSA shall not be responsible for any citations or other law enforcement violations during tournament hours.

SEPARATION OF VESSELS: At no time during tournament fishing hours is a vessel permitted to approach another boat or structure unless authorized by the MSSA Tournament Director or in emergency situations. Participants may not return with fish for weigh-in after landing or leaving their vessels without Tournament Director approval. Refusal or error may result in disqualification.

DISABLED VESSEL: In the event a vessel becomes disabled during the Tournament (during tournament hours or at port), the Captain must notify the Tournament Director as soon as possible and await further instruction.

KAYAK DIVISION (Catch-Photo-Release): Kayak anglers are allowed to fish any or all three days. Winners will be determined by aggregate length (2 longest fish combined). Kayak anglers must use the official MSSA ruler to measure their fish, and must be visible in picture. There will be three places (1st, 2nd, 3rd). Fish Entry: Anglers must submit photos via email to fish@mssa.net at the end of each day before 6:00PM. Email must include Name, Captain Number, and photo(s). The MSSA will determine the "Identifier" the night before the tournament. This "Identifier" will need to be visible in each photo submitted in order to qualify. Kayak anglers do NOT have to return to a weigh station with their catch or at the end of the day. No 'Mother Shipping'. All other main tournament rules apply.

AMATEUR & PROFESSIONAL/FOR-HIRE DIVISION ELIGIBILITY: No Captain registered to fish in the Amateur Division may have on board during tournament hours as: captain, crew, angler, consultant or observer - ("Professionals"). Professionals include, but are not limited to: persons who are or have been (either bay, ocean, freshwater) professional or paid fishing captains, charter boat captains, mates on a charter boat, current holders of a commercial fin-fishing license issued by any governmental entity, professional anglers, persons who get paid to fish, persons holding a license as a fishing guide, any captain or crew of a "For-Hire Fishing Boat", self-professed professionals, and/or, persons whom are publicly known as professionals, within the past two (2) years. All such persons are encouraged to enter the Professional Division. Call the MSSA main office for further instruction and clarification 410-255-5535.

RULES and RULE CHANGES: Tournament rule changes may be made by the Tournament Committee at any time.

It is the responsibility of all participants to know all the rules and regulations of this Tournament and to abide by these rules and regulations. Please visit www.mssa.net before the start of the tournament for any last minute rule changes or updates.

DISQUALIFICATION: The Tournament Committee reserves the sole and absolute discretion to disqualify any angler, crew, captain, registrant or vessel at any time. Persons may be disqualified from the tournament because of a rule violation, regardless of the severity of the violation. All participants agree to abide by tournament rules and decisions of the Tournament Committee. Decisions as to the disqualification or eligibility of any vessel, crew, or fish weighed in shall be made solely by the Tournament Committee and its decisions shall be final and incontestable. The Tournament Committee reserves the right to disqualify any Captain and crew at any time for misrepresentation made on any application or registration. Any disqualification will include the Captains and his crew for the entire tournament, and shall result in the forfeiture of all tournament fees and prize money even if the disqualification was made after the prize money was awarded. At no time shall any captain or crew make verbal or written contracts that in anyway involve the splitting of prize money with another vessel.

RISKS and WAIVERS: Tournament participants accept the risks and dangers involved in such activity, and they acknowledge that unanticipated or unexpected dangers may occur. Participants agree to indemnify and hold harmless: the MSSA, its officers, directors, members, committee members, its assigns, sponsors, lessees, agents, and employees from any and all liability for any: claim, loss, injury, damage, demands, actions, choses in action, costs, accidents, libel, slander, negligence and/or death suffered by any member, family, crew boat and/or other persons which may occur during their term of membership or participation in a Tournament or MSSA Sponsored activity.

PICTURES & FUTURE PROMOTION: Tournament participants consent to the MSSA's use without payment or restrictions, any photographs taken during the tournament; the angler's name, boat name, crew's names, or vessel for any purpose whatsoever.

CAPTAIN NUMBER: Each Captain MUST have in their possession and display at all times, the captain number issued by the MSSA. Failure to do so may result in disqualification. This captain number should be included in your Captain's Package and the tear-off portion must be presented to the Weigh-Master before weighing fish (do not forget your ticket on the boat or at the weigh station). All Captains/Kayakers must have a "Captain/Boat Number". You may pick your number up at any of the Captains Meetings or have it mailed to you. We encourage all to attend at least one meeting Kayakers must have the official MSSA standard ruler (pickup or mail)

POLYGRAPH: In consideration for the MSSA's acceptance of an entry form for a Tournament, each registered Captain and angler specifically agrees and consents to voluntarily submit to a polygraph examination or examinations. The MSSA reserves the right to polygraph tournament winners as well as random tournament participants in any tournament. Each registered Captain or angler agrees to obtain the agreement and consent of each and every occupant of the boat from which he or she fishes during the tournament (including but not limited to the captain and crew) to submit to a polygraph examination or examinations as described above. The method and conduct of all polygraph examinations, and the interpretation of the results thereof, shall be in the sole judgment of the polygraph examiner appointed by the MSSA, whose opinion shall be final. If any registered captain, angler or occupant of a vessel refuses to submit to a polygraph examination, or if any registered Captain, occupant, or angler gives a response which, in the sole opinion of the polygraph examiner, is untruthful, then all registered persons on the boat shall be immediately disqualified without further notice from the MSSA. Any registered Vessel, Captain or angler so disqualified shall not be entitled to any prize, award, or entry fee refund. Polygraphs will be given on the Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday following the tournament. Refusal to submit will result in disqualification.

NEW LADY'S DIVISION: Pre-registration required. \$100 entry fee. 1st-3rd places and prizes based on 60 lady anglers (1st - \$3,000, 2nd - \$1,500, 3rd - \$500). Eligibility in the Lady's Division is any female 17 years and older. Ladies must pre-register to be eligible for Ladies prizes. Only one prize per individual in the Lady's Division. Fish entered in the Lady's Division WILL NOT be eligible for any other prizes. Captains may have onboard multiple lady anglers

KIDS DIVISION: Pre-registration required. FREE to enter. Eligibility in the Kids Division is any child 16 years of age or under before the start of the tournament. Kids must pre-register to be eligible for Kids prizes. Only one prize per individual in the Kid's Division. Fish entered in the Kid's Division will not be eligible for any other prizes. Captains may have onboard multiple youth anglers.

TOURNAMENT WITHIN TOURNAMENT (TWT'S): TWT's are optional. Captain must be registered in main tournament before eligible to register for TWT's. TWT payouts are 50% of monies received. \$50, \$75, \$100, \$200, \$250(up to two fish), \$300,\$400(up to four fish) are paid out 50%,30%,20%. \$50 Pro-Am Challenge and \$500 TWT both one winner TWT's. All TWT's are single heaviest fish determined, except for the \$250 & \$400.

ALL MSSA CREW BONUS (Amateur): Captains weighing in the heaviest fish on each day and has an ALL MSSA crew will be eligible for a \$1,000 Bonus. Crew registration forms must be submitted prior to the start of the tournament. NO EXCEPTIONS

PRIZE ELIGIBILITY: ONE FISH CAN ONLY WIN ONE PRIZE (EXCLUDING TWT'S & ALL MSSA CREW BONUSES). NO CAPTAIN SHALL WIN MORE THAN TWO (2) PRIZES (EXCLUDING THE TWT'S, ALL MSSA CREW BONUS, special sponsor prizes). EACH FISH WILL BE AWARDED THE HIGHEST PRIZE VALUE. ALL PRIZES ARE BASED UPON A FULL FIELD OF 500 BOATS, EXCEPT 1ST PLACE OVERALL PRIZE IN THE AMATEUR DIVISION WHICH WILL BE \$10,000 GUARANTEED PRIZE.

AMATEUR DIV. PRIZES: Main tournament prizes are based on a full field of 500 boats. 1st Place Guaranteed \$10,000; 2nd-\$5,000; 3rd-\$4,000; 4th-\$3,000; 5th-\$2,000. Refer to prize page online for additional prizes and payouts)

PROFESSIONAL/CHARTERBOAT DIVISION & PRIZES: Main tournament prizes are based on a full field of 50 boats. Daily tournaments: 1st – 3rd places (60/20/10). Daily TWT's: 1st – 3rd places (60/20/10). Weigh 2 fish per day, per boat (no exceptions). Boats may have multiple trips per day pursuant to MD law regulating charter boat trips. Prizes paid daily for both main tournament and TWTs. CAPTAINS WILL HAVE TO DETERMINE WHICH DAYS THEY ARE FISHING PRIOR TO THE TOURNAMENT (FRIDAY, MAY 5) IF THEY ARE FISHING LESS THAN THREE DAYS. YOU MAY CALL THE MSSA OFFICE TO DECALRE YOUR FISHING DAY(S) AT 410-255-5535 OR TEXT YOUR FISHING DAYS TO 410-793-7004

TOURNAMENT PARTY & AWARDS CEREMONY: May 18th 7:00 P.M. to 10:00 P.M. Captains (tournament applicant) shall receive FREE entry into Tournament Party & Awards Ceremony. Crew and additional family, friends, and guests will be charged \$20.00 per person. Register prior to the start of the tournament via online or call the office at 410-255-5535. \$2,000 total cash drawings for attendees, All you can eat and drink, door prizes, vendors, music, and more! All winners of cash/check prizes must fill out a W9 in order to receive payment for their award.