

25th Annual MSSA Fall Classic-RULES & REGULATIONS

ENTRY FEE: \$250-\$300 per captain (no limit on crew or anglers). Non Member rates are listed on the application. Tournaments Within Tournament (TWT) entry fees are additional. Applications paid with a dishonored check or credit card shall automatically void the registration.

CAPTAINS and MEMBERSHIP: The MSSA strongly encourages all participants and crew to be members of the MSSA. Only captains age 18 years or older may Captain or be an Alternate Captain of a tournament vessel. By registering as a member of the MSSA or participant in a MSSA Tournament, the individual agrees to abide by MSSA's Tournament Rules & Regulations. The Tournament Committee in its sole discretion may refuse entry of any registrant.

NEW - 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.

NEW - TOURNAMENT DATES and LOCATION: Friday, Saturday, and Sunday; November 17,18,&19, 2017.

Maryland waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries as allowed by MD Department of Natural Resources including the Potomac River.

REGISTRATION: You may register at any of the Captains' Meetings; by phone 410-255-5535; at the main MSSA office: 8461 Ft. Smallwood Rd, Pasadena, MD 21122; or online at www.mssa.net

BOAT/CAPTAIN NUMBER: Captains participating in the tournament should attend one of the Captains' Meetings to secure their Boat/Captain number as it is required at time of weigh in. Crew is also encouraged to attend. Any additional rules or regulations shall be clarified at these meetings. If you are unable to attend you can elect to have it sent via USPS for a \$20 fee.

ELIGIBLE FISH & FISHING METHODS: Striped bass only 28 inches or more – All fish must be caught by hook and line as described by MD DNR recreational regulations. Wire line is allowed as line or leader; dummy lines are permitted; chumming and live-lining will be permitted.

FISHING HOURS: Tournament participants may begin fishing at 6:30 A.M. Planar boards may be deployed but no fishing lines may be in the water before 6:30 A.M.

NEW - FISHING DAYS (LAY DAY RULE): You may only fish two (2) of three (3) days. No fishing on lay-days. You MUST declare your 'Lay-Day' by 5:00 AM on each day OR the day before. Any day not specifically declared a lay day will count as a fishing day whether your

boat leaves port or not. If an entrant doesn't make any declarations then the first two days will be their fishing days. **Text 410-709-8774 (Name, Capt. Number, and Lay Day). DO NOT CALL THE MSSA OR TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR TO DECLARE YOUR LAY-DAY**

WEIGH-STATION HOURS: Saturday and Sunday – 11:00 AM – 4:30 PM. No fish will be weighed in after 4:30 PM unless the Captain is in line and has been recognized by the Weigh Master at time of closing.

WEIGH IN: FISH MUST BE BROUGHT TO AN OFFICIAL MSSA WEIGH STATION BY BOAT DIRECTLY FROM FISHING BY WATER. Fish must be brought to an official MSSA Weigh-Station by water in the same boat that they were landed (unless authorized otherwise by an MSSA Weigh Master under the Disabled Vessel Rule). Captains or their designee must be present during weigh in and must have the 'tear-off' portion of their Boat Number in hand. All fish weighed in will be issued an official *Weigh-in Ticket* bearing the catch weight. Captains must object to the noted catch weight before a *Weigh-in Ticket* is issued. Upon receipt of the *Weigh-in Ticket*, the catch weight shall be deemed accurate, final and agreed upon by the Captain. Captains may weigh in at any time the official MSSA Weigh Stations are open. All fish are subject to examination, internally and externally, as the Weigh Masters deems necessary. All fish weighed in will be prominently marked by the Weigh Masters. 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/or photo identification at time of weigh in. The MSSA reserves the right to mark the *Weigh-in Ticket* of any suspect fish, or to require the Tournament Captain to sign a *Weigh-in Ticket*.

WEATHER AND RISK OF LOSS: 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 relevant factors. Only one day of fishing, by one boat is necessary to qualify as a 'fishing day'.

REFUNDS: Only one day of fishing is necessary to make the tournament official. In the event that there are no available days for fishing the tournament due to an Act of God or natural disaster, 50% of all entry fees and skill level fees will be refunded. In the event that you are unable to participate, a written request stating the reasons therefore for a tournament refund must be received at MSSA's main office no later than 5:00 PM on November 14th, 2015 (no exceptions). All requests must be in writing and may be delivered via mail, email, hand, or facsimile transmission to the Tournament Committee for its consideration.

SELECTION OF FISH FOR WEIGH-IN: Captains are limited to weigh in two (2) rockfish per captain, per day. Striped bass must be at least 28 inches to qualify for weigh in. Fish will be measured from tip of nose to squeezed tip of tail to qualify for weigh in. You can weigh fish on any or all day(s) of the tournament. It is prohibited to sort, cull, high grade, or replace any fish already in possession. Any fish taken into possession by holding in a live well or on a stringer or in any other fish holding devices shall be deemed as part of the daily bag limit. Once the daily bag

limit is reached, fishing is NO LONGER permitted. The Captain must choose which fish he wants to be weighed. Captains may NOT use an official Weigh-Station scale to determine which fish to weigh in.

TOURNAMENT COMMUNICATIONS: TEXT MESSAGE alerts will also be used during tournament hours and will be the main source of information for our tournament anglers. Tournament updates will be broadcast throughout the tournament. If you wish to receive text alerts, please list your cell phone number on the tournament application. By listing your cell number on the tournament application, you agree to allow the MSSA to send text updates to that phone number.

PROTEST: Protests are strongly encouraged to be placed immediately upon knowledge of a rule infraction. Initial Protests may be made verbally to any MSSA Weigh Master. Verbal protests must be followed-up in writing. Written protests must be received within 24 hours from the close of a tournament with the \$150.00 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 a protest is resolved. Disqualifications are not dependent upon protest process.

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 the vessel, captain and crew.

FISH ONBOARD: No un-cleaned tournament fish can be on the boat before the start of the day, unless marked by a Weigh Master. Transient boats must keep with them at all times: captain/boat number, marina receipt, and any other documentation explaining their situation to avoid law enforcement violations.

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

DISABLED VESSEL: At no time during Tournament Fishing Hours is a vessel permitted to approach another boat or structure unless permitted by MSSA Weigh Master or in emergency situations. In the event a vessel becomes disabled during the Tournament, the Captain must notify a Tournament Weigh-Master as soon as possible that their vessel is disabled. Boats being towed into port must notify a MSSA Tournament Weigh-Master that their vessel is under tow to remain registered. Only registered tournament participants may be on board a disabled vessel under tow. Upon returning to port, the Captain must first check-in with the Weigh-Master to affirm to the Weigh-Master that their vessel was towed to port and that no one boarded their vessel during the tow. Captain must notify an official MSSA Weigh-Master prior to transferring to another vessel or call 410-255-5535 and leave your name, captain#, time, date and reason.

RULES & REGULATIONS CHANGES: Tournament rule changes may be made by the Tournament Committee at any time up to the first Captain's Meeting. It is the

responsibility of all participants to familiarize themselves with all the rules and regulations of this Tournament and to abide by these rules and regulations.

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 boat at any time for misrepresentation made on any application or registration form by any member of the boat, any suspicious activity or unsportsmanlike conduct. Any boat disqualified shall be 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.

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. The member further releases the MSSA, its officers, directors, committee members and sponsors from any liability for libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, injury and / or death suffered by any member, family, crew, boat and/or other person which may occur during any term of membership.

FUTURE PROMOTION: MSSA members consent to the MSSA's use without payment or restrictions of any photographs taken during an MSSA event, the angler's name, boat name, crews' names, or vessel name for any purpose whatsoever. All photographs submitted to the MSSA via email, facebook page, text, or by any other means, shall be the sole property of the MSSA after submission and maybe used without compensation.

CAPTAIN/BOAT NUMBER: Each Captain MUST have in their possession and display at all times, the Boat Number issued by the MSSA. This Boat Number should be included in your Captain's Packet and the tear off portion must be presented to the Weigh Master before weighing in fish.

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.

SPORTSMANSHIP: The MSSA may disqualify any Vessel, Captain, crew, participant, angler or member who is involved in unsportsmanlike conduct; a knowing violation of the Rules & Regulations, or for any reason that the MSSA believes the acts warrant disqualification. Members are also subject to termination of their membership for similar violations. At no time shall any boat captain or crew make verbal or written contracts that in anyway involve the splitting of prize money with another vessel. Any team caught culling or discarding fish immediately following weigh in will be automatically disqualified.

KIDS DIVISION: Eligibility in the Kids Division is any child 17 years of age or under as of November 1st, 2015. Only one prize per individual in the Kids Division. **FISH ENTERED IN THE KIDS DIVISION WILL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR CONSIDERATION IN THE MAIN**

TOURNAMENT OR TWT's.

ALL MSSA CREW BONUS: All Captains may enter the All MSSA Crew Bonus. To be eligible, each captain must fill out the MSSA Crew Bonus form and submit before the start of the tournament. All people on the tournament vessel, during fishing hours must be members of the MSSA. It is up to the tournament Captain to ensure all his members are current. Captains who have an all MSSA Crew according to the stated rules and weighing in the heaviest fish each day will be awarded \$500. Captains may win this prize any or all days of the tournament.

PRIZE CATEGORIES: (Same for both Divisions – Money will be awarded separately)

Main Tournament

Captains may only place once in the main tournament

First.....50%

Second 30%

Third 20%

Tournaments Within Tournament (TWTs)

Captains may place in multiple TWT's, but only once in each.

TWT's \$50, \$100, \$150, and \$300 are single heaviest fish; \$200 is a two fish stringer (combined weight of up to two fish)

Prize money: \$50, \$100, \$150 and \$200 skill level payouts.

Except \$300- One Winner

First..... 50%

Second 30%

Third 20%