



2017 American Crappie Trail Rules

- 1. TEAMS:** You may enter alone or with a partner of your choice. No more than two (2) persons will be allowed in a participating boat during tournament hours.
- 2. FISHING HOURS:** Fishing hours will be posted on the Tournament Information Page
- 3. MINORS:** Any minor (under 18) who participates, must make arrangements to have a parent or guardian present at the seminar to sign a release form or have the release form signed prior to the tournament, to allow a polygraph examination if required by the tournament director.
- 4. BIG FISH:** Only one (1) Big Fish entry per team. Only one (1) big fish will be weighed in. Teams will have that fish marked and designated as their big fish at weigh-in. **EACH TEAM WILL AUTOMATICALLY BE ENTERED INTO THE BIG FISH OPTION.**
- 5. MEMBERSHIP:** ACT membership is required to fish all ACT events. Failure to have an active/paid membership is grounds for disqualification. ACT reserves the right to refuse and/or revoke memberships without cause, reason and/or explanation and without recourse at our own discretion. Membership does not guarantee the ability to enter a tournament. ACT may deny tournament entry to a member without cause, reason, explanation or recourse.
- 6. WAIVER AND RELEASE:** As a condition of participation in each tournament, each contestant must execute a waiver and release of liability and a name and likeness release.
- 7. PRIZES:** Prizes will be given after the tournament. Teams must be present at the official weigh-in to be eligible for prizes. A team member fishing alone can qualify for the championship, points, and placement in the overall tournament.
- 8. ENTRY FEE:** Entry fee for the ACT events must be paid **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF OFFICIAL PRACTICE.** Entry fee can be paid online, by mail, or phone. Late fee (\$25.00) will apply entry fee is paid after the ten (10) day off limit period is in effect. ACT will not refund or move entry for water or fishing conditions. Teams must have a valid personal, family or work emergency for consideration of refund and tournament director must be notified of the situation prior to start the event.
- 9. OFFICIAL PRACTICE:** All ACT events will have 4 days of official practice. Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday will be the designated official practice period. Practice day official hours will be 30 minutes before official posted sunrise until 30 minutes past official posted sunset.

10. OFF LIMITS: TOURNAMENT WATERS WILL BE OFF LIMITS THE 10 DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF OFFICIAL PRACTICE (Monday). **EXAMPLE:** Tournament is March 10TH & 11TH. Official practice is March 6TH, 7TH, 8TH AND 9TH. OFF LIMIT PERIOD ON TOURNAMENT WATER IS FEBRUARY 24TH-MARCH 5TH. Tournament waters are off limits at 4:00 pm the day prior to the start of the competition unless otherwise stated on the Tournament Information page. Anglers must stop fishing at 4:00 pm the day prior to the start of competition, then exit the water and be off the water by 4:30 pm.

11. FISHABLE WATERS: Fishing within 50 feet of a Marina gas pump or within 50 feet of a competitor's boat, which is first anchored, is prohibited (Trolling motors must be in up position and anchor rope visible to be considered anchored). A safe and courteous distance (50 feet) should be maintained when trolling motors are in use. Fishable waters are areas that tournament officials can access the fishing team via a John boat with a gasoline propelled tiller handle with lower unit. Boats may fish anywhere except areas designated as "off limits" or "no fishing" by Local, State or Federal officials or as posted on the Tournament Information page or announced at the Seminar. Any violation of off-limits water will result in disqualification. Tournament officials reserve the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on conversations with local authorities.

12. COMPENSATION: No one can be hired or compensated in any way to fish with you or mark fishing spots for you 60 days prior to any tournament.

13. INFORMATION SHARING/GATHERING: ACT tournaments will operate under a NO INFORMATION RULE. Once the 10 day off limit period starts through the completion of competition days, contestants cannot purchase, barter, solicit, or receive information from any person who entered official tournament waters during the established off-limits period for all ACT events. Passing of GPS coordinates is not allowed. Talking with Game and Fish officials during off limits or practice to obtain information is not allowed. Asking bait and tackle stores or guides is not allowed. Any information that is available to the public is fair game in "scouting" a tournament water. Using the internet and or social media is considered public information and is permitted. Contestants that are confirmed for the tournament are permitted to talk and share information with each other.

14. BOATS/MOTORS: ONLY ONE (1) BOAT MAY BE USED BY A TEAM AT ONE TIME DURING PRACTICE. You must fish from a boat. Rubber Rafts, Canoes and Go-Devils are not allowed in practice or during official competition. Two-person teams (one boat per team) must stay within 25 feet of each other while fishing. All boats must have a 9.9 HP motor or larger.

15. POLES: Limit of eight (8) poles per team during tournament applies except where a state limit is set at a lesser number. Teams may use rod and reel combos, hand-held pole and reel combos or hand-held poles.

16. BAITS: A maximum of two baits per pole may be used during tournament hours if in accordance with Local and State laws. Live and artificial bait may be used. STINGER HOOKS are PROHIBITED. TRAILER HOOKS are PROHIBITED. Crankbaits with treble hooks are allowed.

17. OTHER EQUIPMENT: Binoculars and other magnifying devices are not allowed during pre-fishing or tournament at any time. Under water cameras during competition are not allowed. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CB'S, etc. to communicate fishing information during tournament hours is prohibited.

18. SPOTTING: During tournament hours no one may spot fish for you or mark fishing spots for you.

19. LANDING FISH: Crappie must be hooked and landed with a rod or pole by team member(s). Crappie must be hooked through the lip or in the mouth. Landing nets may be used.

20. SCALES: Scales will be set up and open two hours before the end of the official fishing hours for all tournaments.

21. WEIGH IN: Teams are allowed one (1) weigh in on tournament day. Teams Scales will open two hours before the end of the official fishing hours for teams to weigh in early if needed.

22. FISH: Teams may weigh in seven (7), live crappie each day of the tournament. All seven crappie must be alive when entering the weigh in line. Once you enter the weigh in line your fish will be counted and checked by a tournament official. Dead fish will be removed then you may weigh in your remaining fish. Teams presenting more than seven fish will be disqualified.

23. TOURNAMENT HOURS: All crappie brought to the scales for weigh-in must have been caught during the tournament hours from tournament waters by the team bringing them to the scales. Tournament hours are posted on the Lake Information page and announced at the Seminar. Example: Fishing hours 7am-3pm; begin fishing at 7:00:00am and your baits must be out of the tournament waters at 3:00:00pm. If your baits are in the tournament waters at 3:00:01pm you will be disqualified.

24. LENGTH: All crappie brought to the scales for weigh-in must meet State length requirements for the State in which they are being weighed and may not have any weight enhancements. Any team bringing in illegal crappie to the weigh-in line will be disqualified.

25. FINAL WEIGHT: Combined weight of the days of competition will determine winner on all two-day tournaments.

26. TIES: In the case of a tie for first place, big fish of each team will determine the winner. Second place and on down, all ties split the combined purse of that prize level.

27. QUALIFYING: A team can qualify for the National Championship by placing in the top 5 spots (including bump downs) at a TWO DAY National Qualifier Tournament, through a Club Affiliation Program, or by bump down in the annual points race. The top 100 teams will qualify for CHAMPIONSHIP. After the bump downs, to fill the field of 100 BOATS teams must qualify on points.

28. BUMP DOWN: Bump downs will be done during awards to teams that are present at the weigh in. There are no bump downs from individual tournaments after the weigh in. Please have your Championship entry fee paid within 30 days of qualifying.

29. TEAM CHANGE: If a qualified team member has sickness, loss or death or other reasonable personal tragedy, he may fish the Championship with another Championship qualified ACT member. This must be approved by the Tournament Director.

- 30. SPOTTERS/OBSERVERS:** ACT shall have the right to place a spotter boat and or an observer in the boat with any team at any time during the tournament, from the check-out to the check-in. Any team refusing to comply will be an automatic disqualification.
- 31. VIOLATIONS:** Each contestant agrees to report any violation or infraction of any tournament rules immediately to the tournament director.
- 32. PROTEST AND REPORTING PROCEDURE:** All protests must be submitted in writing within (30) minutes of the final weigh-in to the tournament director or designated tournament official. The protestor also agrees that if there is a question with regards to verifying the protest, they may be subject to a polygraph exam and agree to testify in a court of law if necessary,
- 33. POLYGRAPH:** By signature on the ACT Series participation agreement or the official entry form, each contestant agrees to submit to a polygraph examination and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The ACT Tournament Director or rules committee or such person designated by the Tournament Director shall have the discretion to determine the need for a polygraph examination. The ACT Tournament Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for selecting an independent expert to administer and interpret the results and establishing, in consultation with the expert administrator, the scope of the questions which may be asked during the polygraph examination.
- 34. REGISTRATION:** Each contestant must register in person with official ACT staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Contestants failing to register in person during the prescribed hours WILL RESULT IN BEING DISQUALIFIED. Any contestant who has not contacted the ACT Tournament Director 15 minutes after the closing of the posted on site registration, may be disqualified from participating in the tournament. It shall be each contestant's responsibility to check the schedule of events for registration time and location or obtain times from the ACT tournament department.
- 35. SAFETY:** Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by contestants. During competition each boat passenger must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is operating. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification. Boaters are encouraged to carry two Coast Guard approved chest type life preservers per boat. Manufacturer's lanyard must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat.
- 36. ADVISORY BOARD:** An Advisory Board will be established by ACT, which shall be comprised of a minimum of 8 anglers. ACT will look to this board for their input on various items regarding tournaments and the contestants. This Advisory Board may be asked to help resolve appeals/protests with regard to rules violations

ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP

Code of Conduct - Contestants participating in any ACT event shall abide by this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the event in which they are participating. Contestants shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a professional that will not reflect unfavorably on ACT, its members, events or representatives. The favorable public reputation of ACT as an organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets and tangible benefits for ACT. It is an obligation of contestants to refrain from comments to the media that unreasonably attacks or disparages the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow contestants or the ACT organization. Responsible expressions of disagreement with ACT policies are acceptable; however, attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials are not tolerated. Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of ACT, ACT officials or sponsors shall be considered unacceptable conduct and may result in disciplinary action. Contestants shall demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler who violates any portion of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject sanctions up to disqualification

SPORTSMANSHIP

Contestants in ACT tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any contestant during the open practice or during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future ACT tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the open practice or competition days or when in the weigh-in area. Any contestant(s) deemed under the influence by the tournament director may be disqualified. The use of any tobacco products or smoking prior/during takeoff, from check-in through weigh-in while cameras are present is prohibited. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-contestants who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a contestant which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. All contestants are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. Contestants are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or crimes involving moral turpitude or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. Any disqualification suspension from or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in an ACT tournament and/or disqualification from an ACT tournament after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. A written statement may be accepted by the tournament director from any contestant in question.

CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT

During the competition days, contestants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during

method of trailering. In the event of a needed restroom break contestants are allowed to leave the boat. If a contestant violates any of the above conditions, contact a tournament official by phone or other means to report an emergency or breakdown, contestants must cease fishing at this point and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament. If after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials and enough time is left for the contestants to resume fishing, a RESTART may be allowed and the contestants will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to emergency situations as determined by the Tournament Director or his designee.

OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT/LIVEWELL CHECKS

There shall be only one official check point for boat check/check-out in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon which will be designated at the tournament briefing. Failure to go through boat check and check-out in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point in the afternoon may result in disqualification. At the time of check-out, all contestants and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area.

MEDIA

All official contestants of an event are required to cooperate with the media personnel that cover the event. Contestants do not have the option of not being filmed or interviewed during the official event days. Any act deemed by ACT officials to have the intention of preventing media coverage will result in disqualification from the event.

PUBLIC CONDUCT, SPORTSMANSHIP AND COMPETITIVE INTEGRITY

Contestant agrees that the integrity and competitive honesty of fishing contests is paramount to any crappie fishing tournament circuit's continued existence and success. Contestants compete in ACT contests at the sole discretion of ACT. The ACT reserves the right to refuse service to any potential contestant and enforce its tournament rules at its discretion. Contestants are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of morality, honesty, fair play and sportsmanship. Contestants will not do anything which shall be detrimental to ACT, its sponsors or competitive fishing in general. Contestants agree to conduct themselves, at all times, with regard to public conventions and morals. Contestants agree not to engage in any conduct that will reasonably tend to degrade him/her or bring ACT into public hatred, contempt or ridicule or tend to offend the fishing community or integrity of competitive angling. Contestant agrees that this provision is necessary to protect ACT's goodwill in the community in which the contestant represents it and to protect the profitability and competitive integrity of ACT's business. ACT may ban any member from any contests for a serious or intentional violation of any law, rule, regulation, constitutional provision, bylaw, or any act of dishonesty, theft or misappropriation of ACT property, moral turpitude, insubordination, or any act injuring, abusing, or endangering others. ACT does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, or national origin.

PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE

Contestants are encouraged to wear their own clothing which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the angler's sponsors. ACT may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. which are, in ACT's sole judgment, in poor taste. ACT will provide as much advance notice as possible to the contestants in such instances. Contestants are also encouraged to wear ACT's logo on their tournament