



## 2021 American Crappie Trail Team 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. Your fishing partner must be declared prior to practice starting.
- 2. FISHING HOURS:** Fishing hours will be posted on the Tournament Information Page and are subject to change.
- 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. The big fish must be alive. Only one (1) big fish can be weighed in on each tournament day. 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 Individual Membership fee is: **\$50.00** and Family Membership is: \$75.00. A family membership is for two (2) Contestants that share a family name or residence. 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 at the Captain's Meeting.
- 7. PRIZES:** Prizes will be handed out at the conclusion of the Day 2 weigh in. Teams must be present at the official weigh-in to be eligible for prizes.
- 8. ENTRY FEE:** Team entry fee is **\$600** per team. Entry fee for the ACT events must be paid by 9:00 PM (CST) **PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF OFFICIAL PRACTICE.** Entry fee can be paid online, by mail, or phone. **Late fee** (\$25.00) will apply if entry fee is paid once the thirty (30) 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 of practice.
- 9. OFFICIAL PRACTICE:** All ACT qualifying events will have **2-1/2 days of official practice.** Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday\*\* will be the designated official practice period for all qualifying events. On Official Practice Days Contestants boat may not be launched until 30

minutes prior to posted sunrise. If you are in a slip your boat must stay in the slip until 30 minutes prior to posted sunrise. **You must be off the water by 6:00PM, (T, W) and Thursday you must be off the water by 2:00PM.** During OFFICIAL PRACTICE days anglers are allowed to fish with a family member **IF ACT STAFF/TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR** has been notified prior to practice. Anglers are also allowed to take out sponsors out on Practice Days.

- 10. OFF LIMITS:** TOURNAMENT WATERS WILL BE OFF LIMITS THE 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST DAY OF OFFICIAL PRACTICE (Tuesday). **EXAMPLE:** Tournament is April 24<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>. Official practice is April 21, 22, & 23. OFF LIMIT PERIOD ON TOURNAMENT WATER March 21<sup>st</sup>-April 20<sup>th</sup>.
- 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 30 day off limit period starts, 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. If you have fished a tournament with a guide and they choose to not compete in a tournament on their home lake, then you may not gather information from your partner as well.
- 14. BOATS/MOTORS: ONLY ONE (1) BOAT MAY BE USED BY A TEAM AT ONE TIME DURING PRACTICE.** For the safety of all contestants, all boats must be a minimum of 16 feet in length, propeller driven and equipped with an operable ignition kill switch. All boats must have a **50 HP** or larger motor. 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.
- 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. Foul hooked fish outside of the mouth must be released immediately.
- 20. SCALES:** Scales will be set up and open two hours before the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> flights check in time for all tournaments.
- 21. WEIGH IN:** Teams are allowed one (1) weigh in on tournament day.
- 22. FISH:** Teams may weigh in seven (7), crappie each day of the tournament. Once you enter the weigh in line your fish will be counted and checked by a tournament official. **Dead fish will result in a .25 lb penalty per dead fish with a maximum of 1 dead fish allowed. During fishing/tournament hours you can have the maximum amount of fish the state law allows. At conclusion of your fishing day before you turn in your buoy at check in, you may only have 7 fish in the boat. Teams presenting more than 7 fish at the weigh in will result in the 8<sup>th</sup> fish taken away, a 2 pound penalty and the loss of your largest fish selected by the tournament director.**
- 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 will be posted on website under Lake Information pages and announced at the Captain's Meeting.
- 24. LENGTH:** All crappie brought to the scales for weigh-in must be 10" in length unless the State length requirements is greater. Any team bringing in illegal crappie to the weigh-in line will be disqualified. The official measuring device for length is a B'n'M Fish Checker.
- 25. FINAL WEIGHT:** Combined weight of the days of competition will determine winner on all tournaments.
- 26. TIES:** In the case of a tie for first place, largest one day total catch will determine the winner. Second place and on down, all ties split the combined purse of that prize level.
- 27. QUALIFYING:** The top 100 in the B'n'M Angler Team of the Year Points Standing will qualify for the Championship. A team member fishing alone can qualify for the championship, points, and placement in the overall tournament.
- 28. ANGLER OF THE YEAR:** **B'n'M Angler Team of the Year will be determined by the highest points earned in the four qualifying events. The Championship will be calculated into the total points race.** In the event of a tie for ATOY the tie breaker will be the team with the highest total weight at the conclusion of the Championship.
- 29. DISQUALIFICATION:** If there is a rule violation and a team is disqualified they will lose that

day's weight. However, they are allowed to fish the following day of the tournament for points towards AOY. It is the team's responsibility to make sure both anglers are abiding by all ACT rules along with state fish & game laws.

- 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, protest concerning pre-fishing violations must be submitted in the same manner.
- 33. POLYGRAPH:** By signature on the ACT Waiver/Release 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. CAPTAIN'S MEETING:** Each contestant must check-in in person with official ACT staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Check-In will be from 3:30-4:30 and meeting will immediately follow. Any contestant who has not contacted the ACT Tournament Director by the closing of Check-In 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. WEATHER:** Tournament Director reserves the right to change fishing hours and/or Tournament Days in the event of severe weather (for example: from Fri-Sat to Sat-Sun). It is the Tournament Director's decision to change blast off start due to inclement weather and reserves the right to allow trailering for safety.
- 37. ADVISORY BOARD:** An Advisory Board will be established by ACT, which shall be comprised of a minimum of 6 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.

- 38. BLAST-OFF/LAUNCH:** There will be a blast-off start utilized on all ACT events. There will be flights assigned to groups of anglers and you will be given check in times. The computer randomly assigns boat numbers to teams and that will be your boat number both days of the tournament. EX: Day 1- We will blast off from number 1 to 100. On Day 2 we will invert the field and blast off from boat number 100 down to 1. **Day 1 Example:** Flight 1 - Boat Numbers 1-25- Blast off 7:00-Check-In Time 3:00PM, Flight 2- Boat Numbers 26-50- Check-In Time 3:15PM, Flight 3- Boat Numbers 51-75 Check-In Time: 3:30PM, etc). This will be explained at Captain's Meeting.
- 39. LIVWELL CHECKS:** Livewells will be checked at blast-off. Coolers and Livewell lids must be open as you idle by blast-off boat. Tournament staff will give you the ok to lock down lids then once you are beyond the idle zone you may put boat on plane. Failure to have lids open and ready might send you to the end of your flight for blast off.
- 40. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:** There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning and check-in at the conclusion of your fishing day. This location will be designated by the Tournament Director at the meeting. Failure to check-out (go through blast-off) or check in (return buoy) will result in disqualification.
- 41. BUOYS:** All teams must return the buoy they received at blast off to the designated tournament official at the official checkpoint. All buoys must be returned to a tournament official even if you are not going to weigh in any fish. We have to make sure all anglers are accounted for.
- 42. RULE OF TIME KEEPING:** The official time is kept by the Tournament Director at all times once open practice has begun. Time checks will be provided during tournament briefings and announced again at blast-off. For the rule of time keeping until the official clock reads the following minute contestants are not considered late for that minute in question, i.e., 3:00:59 is not considered late. 3:01 is considered one minute late. It is the angler's responsibility to keep track of time and safely return to the checkpoint.
- 43. LATE PENALTY:** Contestants who are not checked in (returned buoy) at the official checkpoint by the end of his/her tournament hours shall be penalized .50 lbs. per minute late. This penalty will be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch of that day. Any contestant more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch.
- 44. 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 tournament hours. Contestants must leave from and return to official checkpoint by boat.
- 45. REPORT EMERGENCY OR BREAKDOWN:** To report an emergency or breakdown contact the Tournament Director or Official by phone. At this point contestants must cease fishing 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. There are then two permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both paired anglers remaining in their

boat and being towed by water, or (2) by one or both paired anglers entering the boat of another tournament contestant. Boats must be properly secured and stationary. Contestants must notify the tournament director as soon as possible. Under these two conditions both contestants' catches may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules) provided that the broke down team's fish kept separate so as to provide clear distinction of the two pairs catch to the Tournament Director.

- 46. RESTROOM BREAK:** In the event of a needed restroom break anglers are allowed to leave the boat. At that point all fishing must cease until both anglers are back together in the boat.
- 47. INSURANCE:** Liability insurance with a minimum coverage of \$300,000 per occurrence is required of all Pros covering the boat being used for the tournament and practice. Proof of insurance must be in the boat being used and cover all passengers in the boat.
- 48. TOP 10 MANDATORY MEETING:** At conclusion of day 1 weigh-in all Top 10 teams **MUST BE** present. Any teams not present for the mandatory meeting will be disqualified.
- 49. EXITING WATER DURING TOURNAMENT:** In the event of an emergency situation, if you need to exit tournament waters during tournament hours you need to contact the Tournament Director.
- 50. CHAMPIONSHIP EVENT:** The 2021 Championship event will be a 3-day event held in the Spring of 2022. Day one the full field will fish; at the end of Day 1 the field will be cut in half. Day 2 at the end of weigh in the field will be cut to the Top 20. On Day 3 the top 20 will fish on Championship Saturday. Once you have been eliminated from the Championship you are encouraged to be on the water to observe/take sponsors out, etc. however you are not allowed to fish during competition hours. **Both team members must fish one qualifying event to be eligible participate in the 2021 National Championship together. If only one team member fished and qualified, they can fish the Championship alone.**