

MID-ATLANTIC ROCKFISH SHOOTOUT

RULES 2021

The intention of this tournament is to promote overall good fellowship, to promote fishing in Virginia Beach, and to also benefit our local community and food shelters of Southeastern Virginia.

1) This is a team tournament and there is no limit to the number of anglers/team members per entry, however, there must be at least 2 team members per entry. All anglers/team members must be registered in writing with the tournament prior to 10:00pm on December 8, 2021, unless the tournament chooses to extend the time. Each team shall designate in writing a team captain, and only the team captain or designee shall be authorized to sign the entry registration form and score sheets. In addition, only one team member will be allowed at the cashier's table to make payment for registration...i.e., multiple credit cards may not be used to pay for one team's entry at the cashier's table.

Each paid entry chooses 1 of the 3 eligible days to fish. However, you may fish 3 days if you pay 3 entry fees. This is a team tournament format—not a boat tournament—and each team shall submit a team name with their entry and, should you choose to fish more than one day, pay for each day as a separate registration.

Tournament entry fee is \$500.00 if paid prior to midnight on December 3, 2021 or \$550.00 after midnight on December 3, 2021. If fewer than 10 teams enter, the tournament reserves the right to cancel the tournament altogether, and all monies paid will be refunded in full.

All entry fees and additional skill level entries must be received/paid no later than 10:00pm, December 8, 2021 to be eligible for prizes and awards (unless the time is extended by the tournament).

2) Each team is eligible to weigh-in their three (3) largest Striped Bass/Rockfish (*Morone saxatilis*) which must each be a minimum length, and no more than maximum length, as defined by [Virginia state measurements for Striped Bass](#); each fish shall be awarded 1 point per pound. No altering of fish is permitted to achieve legal sizes. All boats must display a tournament issued flag as high as possible on the starboard side of the vessel. Any boat not displaying a tournament issued flag will be automatically disqualified. In addition, per a VMRC regulation as of August 1, 2020, any person fishing striped bass recreationally shall use non-offset, corrodible, non-stainless steel circle hooks when fishing with bait, live or chunk. For more information about circle hooks please visit the Circle Hook Information Page (<https://www.mrc.virginia.gov/regulations/fr252.shtm>).

3) The tournament reserves the right to refuse entry to any person or team.

4) Checkout and Check-In: Boats may depart from any Virginia port, but must return for weigh-in at The Oyster Farm at King's Creek in Cape Charles, between the hours of 1pm and 5pm on your fishing day. It is permissible to drive your fish to the weigh station. However, your boat's GPS unit must still be available for verification if weighing in fish.

5) Fishing Hours & Boundaries: Lines in at 8:00am and lines out at 2:00pm. Only fish caught between 8:00am and 2:00pm will be eligible for weigh-in. You may not be in illegal waters after the tournament begins or on your way to the scales. The Northern Ocean boundary is Wachapreague sea buoy, and the Southern boundary is the sea buoy at Oregon Inlet, as well as the Virginia portion of the Chesapeake Bay. The Virginia Marine Resources Commission defines [two areas](#) for Striped Bass regulation - the "Coastal area" and the "Chesapeake area," as outlined below:

"Coastal area" means the area that includes Virginia's portion of the Territorial Sea, plus all of the creeks, bays, inlets, and tributaries on the seaside of Accomack County, Northampton County (including areas east of the causeway from Fisherman Island to the mainland), and the City of Virginia Beach (including federal areas and state parks, fronting on the Atlantic Ocean and east and south of the point where the shoreward boundary of the Territorial Sea joins the mainland at Cape Henry).

"Chesapeake area" means the area that includes the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries and the Potomac River tributaries. "Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries" means all tidal waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries within Virginia, westward of the shoreward boundary of the Territorial Sea, excluding the Coastal area and the Potomac River tributaries.

6) Weigh-In Procedure: The procedure for weigh-in is critical – please read carefully! The official weigh station will be at King's Creek Marina (located in Cape Charles, VA) – and will be open at 1:00 pm on December 9-11, 2021, and will remain open until all eligible teams have weighed in. An eligible team is described as a team in line at the scales by 5:00pm. We will only weigh your fish one time. Only the designated team captain will be permitted to accompany the team's fish to the official scale, and must sign the scorecard. Fish will be checked for freshness and subject to inspection of stomach contents.

*If, on one of your fishing days you are fishing another tournament, you must adhere to all rules, regulations, boundaries and time parameters of the Rockfish Shootout, however, we will make accommodations to give you your fish back after the Rockfish Shootout official weigh in, so that you may take it to a secondary weigh in.

King' Creek Weigh Station Procedure: You may dock your vessel in the two slips closest to the ship's store on the North side of the fixed "c" dock. Efficiency is very important!

7) Inlet Protocol: To enable prudent and safe passage for all boats within the boundaries of all inlets, all tournament boats shall abide by the posted speed/no wake regulations and Rules of the Road. Any boat observed violating this rule and operating in a reckless or unsportsmanlike manner may be penalized ten (10) points from *their total score, or all points, if deemed appropriate by the rules committee.*

8) After the tournament begins, two or more boats congregating (close enough to pass fish) or touching land or a dock other than a weigh-in dock, will be disqualified. The only exception is in the case of a life-threatening emergency.

9) Scoring: One (1) point per pound. In the case of a tie, the fish that are weighed first shall be deemed the winner.

10) This is a rod and reel tournament only. No more than 12 rods may be fished at the same time. Power driven reels of any kind are prohibited. This includes motor, hydraulic, or electrically driven reels, and any device that gives the angler an unfair advantage. The tackle is unlimited, and live bait may be used. This also includes the act of tethering fish overboard. Any fish weighed in the tournament may not be tethered to the boat at any time. Once a fish is boated, it may not leave the plane of the boat at any time unless it is being released or being removed from the boat at the dock at the conclusion of your elected day of fishing.

11) Mutilated/Injured Fish: IGFA rules shall apply. The decision of the tournament rules committee shall be final.

12) Registration and Captain's Meeting: Registration will be between 5:00 and 8:00 pm on Wednesday, December 8, 2021 and will be held at Oyster Farm at King's Creek Marina on the Eastern Shore {500 Marina Village Circle | Cape Charles, VA 23310}. Please arrive early to beat the crowds. We recommend stopping by registration right at 5 pm and coming back for the Captain's Meeting. The Captain's Meeting will be held at 7:30pm. Changes may

occur at the Captain's Meeting, therefore, attendance is strongly recommended. Any changes made at the Captain's Meeting will override the written rules.

13) Mechanical Breakdown: Your boat's condition, electronics and efficiency are equally as important as your fishing skills. All boats/teams are responsible for getting their fish to the weigh station aboard their own boat, even if it is towed.

14) Weather: The tournament does not provide a weather committee and it is a Captain's choice tournament. However, the tournament reserves the right to cancel one or all days of the tournament due to unfishable weather conditions. If all days are cancelled, the tournament director reserves the right to hold the tournament on Sunday, December 12, 2021. For updated messages, please call 757.778.5468. If one of the three eligible days of fishing are declared fishable, it shall constitute a tournament. In the event that two of the three days are cancelled and the same boat has entered more than one day, and can find another boat to use, the team can split up and use two boats. They must let the tournament know which team is fishing on what boat. You must call the tournament phone for specific instructions.

All team captains, members, boat owners and all other participants are responsible to determine that their craft is sea-worthy, and are advised and encouraged to be familiar with the current local weather conditions and forecasts to determine if conditions permit the safety of the boat, crew, anglers and guests to proceed to depart to sea and return in a safe and prudent manner.

15) Additional Skill Levels: There will be six optional daily skill levels, three of which are based on a progressive method—you must enter Level 1 to be eligible for Level 2, Level 2 to be eligible for Level 3, and so on. It is not mandatory to enter Levels 1, 2 and 3 to be able to enter the \$100 Winner Take All (pays 100%), the \$100 Daily (pays 33.33% on each of the three days) and the \$200 Single Biggest Fish (pays 50%/30%/20%).

Level 1: \$250.00, Pays: 50%-1st place / 30%-2nd place / 20%-3rd place; Level 2: \$500.00, Pays: 50%-1st place / 30%-2nd place / 20%-3rd place; Level 3: \$1,000, Pays: 50%-1st place / 30%-2nd place / 20%-3rd place. *The tournament will retain 12% of additional skill levels to be applied to tournament expenses. If only 2 teams qualify in Levels 1, 2 & 3, then the split is 60%/40% and if only one team qualifies, then the winner takes all (100%).

In the event of a natural disaster, or act of God, or no eligible fish are weighed in, or the tournament cancels all eligible days of fishing due to adverse weather conditions, each additional skill level(s) will be drawn at the rate that the skill level would pay as if fish were caught. Daily levels are paid on the largest combined weight each day, however if not all days catch fish, then the money will be split between the day or days that fish are caught.

16) Cash Awards: Prize money awards checks will only be paid out to the team captain. A W-9 form must be completed with a social security number or EIN number and given to a tournament staff member at the awards banquet and checks will be issued within one week of the conclusion of the tournament. A 1099 form will be issued for all prize money to the person or company to whom the check is made payable. The payout will be paid at the rate of \$450 out of every registration fee paid. The cash payout will go as follows: 1st Place: 50%, 2nd Place: 20%, 3rd Place: 12%, 4th Place: 8%, 5th Place: 6%, 6th Place: 3%, 7th Place: 1%. In the event that 7 teams do not catch fish, the money in the places that did not score will be split and paid equally to the places that caught fish; i.e. if places 1 and 2 catch fish, 15% will be added to place one and 15% to place two.

In the event of a natural disaster, or act of God, or no eligible fish are weighed in, or the tournament cancels all eligible days of fishing due to adverse weather conditions, the tournament will have a drawing from the registered tournament team numbers to award the Guaranteed Tournament Money at the rate of \$450 per team entered, at a payout the same as the tournament (1st Place: 50%, 2nd Place: 20%, 3rd Place: 12%, 4th Place: 8%, 5th Place: 6%, 6th Place: 3%, 7th Place: 1%). Additional skill levels will also be drawn and paid at the same rate that they would be as if fish were caught.

17) Amateur/Recreational Division: A non-cash prize will be awarded to the First Place Amateur Team. Teams competing as amateur must identify as amateur on the entry form. Amateurs compete for the cash awards as well as the non-cash amateur prize. An amateur shall be defined as any individual who has NOT within the previous five years of the start of the first day of the Mid-Atlantic Rockfish Shootout, derive income from and/or actively engages in the act of sportfishing on a regular basis for profit whether full or part-time and whether such income comes from the ownership entity of the vessel or not, such as a captain, mate, deckhand, boat owner or charter operator who continuously runs and operates a sportfishing vessel. The tournament reserves the right to disqualify any team from the tournament should any of the information shown on the entry form be determined untrue.

18) Cancellation Policy: There is no refund on paid entries.

19) LAY DAY: You must declare what day your team chooses to fish at the Captain's Meeting. If you change the day that you have selected to fish, you must submit your lay day (lay day is defined as your day that you choose not to fish) via text message by 8:00am on the day that you declared that you were going to fish. The tournament phone to text is 757.778.5468. You must text your lay day information (Boat Name, Boat Number, Day of the Lay) by 8:00am on the day that you are registered to fish.

20) Polygraph Tests: All registered participants (team captain, boat captain, mate, anglers and guests) of any eligible tournament prize monies or awards agree to submit to a polygraph examination if requested to do so by the Tournament, Tournament Rules Committee or Official Weigh Masters. Failure to submit to a polygraph test by any member aforementioned will result in disqualification of any or all awards to the team or team member. You must have a valid phone number for us to contact you between 2pm and 6pm on Saturday, December 11, 2021 to let you know if you must submit to a polygraph. If we request that you be polygraphed and you are unavailable, you must, at your own expense and by December 18, 2021, submit to a professional polygraph in order to receive the prize money. You may not drink alcohol before the polygraph. The results of the tests will be final.

21) Federal and State Regulations: Participants are assumed to have all necessary permits, licenses and/or registrations required by law. However, it is not the responsibility of the tournament officials or directors to verify that all required permits, licenses and/or registrations are acquired by anglers participating in the tournament. Failure of a winning angler to have obtained any or all required permits, licenses and or registrations shall not be the basis for a protest to be filed under the General Tournament Rules, or for a fish to be disqualified.

22) Protests: Protests must be submitted in writing and presented to the Tournament Rules Committee (contact the tournament at 757.778.5468) accompanied with a fee of \$400.00 (refundable if protest is upheld), prior to 6:00pm of that day's fishing. The Tournament Rules Committee (to be announced at the Captain's Meeting) at their discretion may utilize polygraph tests. By virtue of signing the Tournament entry form, all participants agree to the final decision of the Tournament Rules Committee. It is understood that the spirit intended of the tournament is to be enjoyable and in good fellowship for all participants.

23) Waiver/Disclaimer: It is expressly understood that participants in this tournament enter at their own risk, and that the Mid-Atlantic Rockfish Shootout, Tournament Directors, Officers, Tournament Sponsors, Committees and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of said tournament, shall be exempt from any liability whatsoever for libel, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury or death suffered by any participant, entrant, vessel and equipment, companions and guests, boat captains, mates, crew members, which may occur during or in conjunction with this tournament. By signing the official tournament registration form, the boat owner, captain and mate(s), anglers and guests, consent that the tournament may use without payment or restriction, any photographs or video footage in which he or she may appear, for any purpose whatsoever including but not limited to resale, advertising, commercial or promotional material.

24) Venue: It is expressly understood that all participants consent and agree that the City of Virginia Beach General District Courts shall be the sole venue for litigation arising out of participation in the Tournament.

25) Garmin GPS Tracking:

The tournament reserves the right to designate a Garmin Handheld GPS observer on each boat, or rely on each vessel's approved GPS Chart Plotter. The tournament believes that we have enough GPS observers for each boat, but if we run short, an approved GPS chart plotter that records the vessels tracks, will be used by the tournament to verify that a vessel has fished in legal waters. The priority order in which GPS observers will be distributed is as follows: 1. Vessels without a GPS; 2. Randomly chosen vessels. If we do not have enough GPS units available at the Captain's Meeting, you must make arrangements the day prior to your declared fishing day to go to the weigh-in station at The Oyster Farm at King's Creek between the hours of 2pm and 5pm to collect your GPS unit. For example: if you do not receive your GPS on Wednesday night at the Captain's Meeting and you have declared your day of fishing to be Saturday, you must go to The Oyster Farm at King's Creek between the hours of 2pm and 5pm on Friday to collect your GPS. You will sign a form stating that you will be responsible for the handheld unit on your boat.

Please note: You must change the GPS batteries each day (fresh batteries will be provided) and you must check the battery level each day prior to leaving and throughout the day. If your battery level is low, change the batteries and restart the GPS in less than one minute. The GPS must be in an open area to acquire satellite.

The GPS must be turned on prior to your departure from the inlet and may not be turned off until after it is reviewed at the weigh station. All track lines must be erased prior to leaving the dock and your track line must NEVER show an interruption and must be continuous from start to finish.

RETURNING THE GPS UNITS: GPS units must be returned prior to the conclusion of the tournament at the weigh station on Saturday, December 11, 2021. Units may be returned to the following locations: to the Oyster Farm at King's Creek Marina weigh station each day during weigh-in hours of 1pm-5pm, or to The Beach Nut Gift Shop inside Waterman's Surfside Grille between the hours of 11am and 9pm daily. In the case that the unit is not returned or is returned in a damaged or unworking condition, you will be charged the full retail cost of the unit (\$250).

If there is a problem, you must immediately contact the tournament at 757.778.5468.