

2026



# Jim Bellman Memorial Pro / Am Official Tournament Rules

## Dates and Times

- Tournament dates are Saturday April 25 and Sunday April 26, 2026.
- Registration will be held at the MCYC Pavilion from 5:00 to 5:30 a.m. CDT, April 25. The Captain's Meeting will be at 5:30 a.m. CDT, April 25. **CAPTAIN OR DESIGNATED CREW MEMBER FROM EACH TEAM MUST ATTEND.**
- The awards ceremony will follow the weigh-in on Sunday April 26 at the Michigan City Yacht Club Pavilion.
- The start time is 6:30 a.m. CDT each day (NO RUN TIME). There is no stop time. A crewmember with the fish to be weighed must be in line at the weigh in station by 2 p.m. each day or one hour after the tournament committee declares the end of the fishing period.
- The contest is considered official if a minimum of three (3) hours are fished between Saturday and Sunday. Prizes will be awarded based on points accumulated during the official fishing periods.

## Eligibility

- All captains must be a member of the Hoosier Coho Club and be a minimum of 18 years of age. Proof of membership is required at registration. All non-members may join the club for \$25 annual dues.
- All boats must be equipped with a VHF marine radio in working order.
- Teams designated as "pro" must fish in the Pro Division. If one crew member is designated as "pro" then the entire team shall be designated as "pro." "Pro" shall be defined as follows: All licensed charter captains or anyone who has worked as a licensed charter captain in the two (2) years prior to the event.
- The Tournament Committee reserves the right to decline entry or participation by any person, team or boat, as deemed necessary, to ensure such things as integrity, image, reputation, financial performance and community relationships with sponsors, participants and supporting groups.

## Entry Fees

- Entry Fee is \$350 per Pro boat and \$150 per Amateur boat. Entry into Big Fish Contest is included.

## Scoring

- Winners will be determined by a total accumulation of points based on ten (10) points per legal fish weighed, plus one point per pound (nearest hundredth pound) total weight.
- A maximum of 5 Salmon / Trout may be weighed, 3 of which may be Lake Trout, each day. Both days will be added to determine total points.
- In the event of a tie score, placement will be determined by each boat's largest big fish weight.

## **Prizes—100% Payout**

- a. Pro Division pays out 3 places
- b. Am Division pays out 5 places
- c. Additional places may be paid out depending on participation.
- d. All prizes will be issued to winners at the tournament.

## **Big Fish Contest**

- a. One fish may be weighed in each day. The captain designates the first fish to be weighed as the big fish. **No test weighing. No exceptions will be made.**
- b. Payout will be 5 places—all one division. Additional places may be paid out depending on participation.
- c. In the event of a tie score, placement will be determined by the largest single day main event score.

## **Fishing Rules**

- a. All boats must depart and return to the port of Michigan City, IN.
- b. All DNR state laws and regulations apply while fishing within that state's jurisdiction.
- c. DNR rules will apply for the waters being fished. Fish may be released in accordance with DNR rules. This means that you can release a fish when it is first caught and cannot exchange a fish from your cooler for a larger fish, as returning a dead fish to the water would be on violation of the DNR rules.
- d. Once a boat brings aboard the maximum number of fish per DNR Rules (5 per person) fishing stops. If you net the fish and bring over the gunnel—it's your fish and cannot be released. To be released, you must release it without bringing it into the boat.
- e. Maximum number of rods fishing at any time is nine (9). Fishing means "line in the water". One slider per rod will be allowed. Maximum 2 baits per rod. Maximum of 6-foot slider.
- f. All fish **MUST** be caught on the day they are weighed.
- g. Minimum size for Trout / Salmon is 14 inches. Certified boards will be used at the weigh-in station. **Indiana DNR rules will apply.**

## **Start and Finish**

- a. The tournament committee will use Channel 78 to start and end each fishing period. No lines in the water until the start is announced. All participants should monitor Channel 78 at all times.
- b. You must not depart a one-half mile radius from the pier heads until the announcement of the start of the fishing period.
- c. A crewmember with the fish to be weighed must be in line at the weigh in station by 2 p.m. or one hour after the tournament committee declares the end of the fishing period. Only 5 fish can be brought to the weigh-in station.

## **Protests**

- a. Tournament judges will resolve disputes. Their decision will be final.

## **Cancellations**

- a. The Tournament Committee may cancel the tournament, when in their opinion, conditions could be dangerous to persons or property. The committee will announce their determination of a delayed start or cancellation 45 minutes before each fishing period.
- b. After a fishing period has begun, an announcement will be made on Channel 78 if cancellation or postponement is imminent. A minimum of 15 minutes notice will be given prior to the early termination of a fishing period.
- c. If a fishing period is shortened, all boats must proceed as described in **Start and Finish**.

## **Disqualifications**

- a. Disqualification for any reason will result in the forfeiture of all entry fees.
- b. Failure to comply with any of the rules listed in **Fishing Rules** will result in disqualification.
- c. Failure to proceed directly to the weigh-in station will result in disqualification.
- d. Failure to be in line at the weigh-in station by 2 p.m. will result in disqualification.
- e. If you arrive at the weigh-in station area with more than 5 fish in your cooler or more than 3 Lake Trout, you will be disqualified for that day's catch.
- f. Water or loose ice in the cooler at the weigh station will result in disqualification for that day's catch.
- g. Any fish taken in violation of DNR regulations will disqualify that day's catch.
- h. Failure to dispose of fish per state and local laws will result in disqualification.
- i. Running gunnel to gunnel or passing any item from boat to boat will result in disqualification. However, a tournament boat may stop to assist a vessel in distress. If assistance is needed, it must be called in to the tournament committee over the radio on channel 78 to notify them that you are assisting a vessel in distress.

## **Liability**

- a. All reasonable precautions will be taken by the Tournament Committee to protect persons and property during the tournament. Neither the Tournament Committee, Rules Committee, officers and directors of the Hoosier Coho Club, or sponsors can or will be responsible for the safety of persons for accident, theft, damage by fire, vandalism, or any other cause for loss to a contestant's property.
- b. Participants understand and agree to hold harmless the aforementioned groups and individuals from liability or damage as may be incurred from participation in the tournament.

## **Rule Changes**

The Tournament Committee reserves the right to modify any rules and announce changes up to 45 minutes prior to the start of the tournament.