

BIG DAWG CRAPPIE SHOOTOUT

OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

2027 TOURNAMENT

PARTICIPANTS

Big Dawg Crappie Shootout is open to individuals or teams. During official tournament hours, a competitor's boat may only contain registered contestants and authorized tournament officials or Marshalls. All boats and occupants must comply with applicable state and federal laws.

INFORMATIONAL MEETING

A mandatory pre-tournament meeting will be held on the evening prior to competition. Tournament officials will review the tournament format, fishing procedures, rules, and any final instructions or announcements.

At least one registered team member from each entry must attend the meeting. Required release forms and the Economic Impact Statement must be completed and signed at this time. Any exception to this must concern abnormal circumstances or emergency and have to be approved by Tournament Director.

All tournament waters will be off-limits beginning sundown on Tuesday, March 2, 2027. All anglers and boats must be off the tournament waters by this time. No fishing, scouting, or other tournament-related activity will be permitted after the off-limits time.

The meeting location and time will be announced prior to the tournament.

Each angler is responsible for knowing and understanding the official tournament rules. Failure to attend the meeting does not excuse an angler or team from complying with any tournament rule.

WEATHER & EMERGENCY CONDITIONS

In the event of severe weather, unsafe water conditions, or a declared national emergency that could affect the safety or operation of the tournament, **Ol' Steve Fishing Productions, LLC reserves the right to postpone, reschedule, or cancel the tournament.**

If the tournament is canceled, **entry fees will be refunded** to the registered anglers. Refunds will be issued by mail or by the original payment method, as determined by Big Dawg Fishing Productions.

Tournament officials will make the final determination regarding postponement or cancellation based on safety and conditions affecting the event.

RULES & ELIGIBILITY FOR PRIZES

By registering for and participating in the Big Dawg Crappie Shootout, each angler agrees to comply with all tournament rules and procedures.

Big Dawg Fishing Productions reserves the right, at the discretion of the Tournament Director, to require any registered angler to submit to a **polygraph examination or other comparable truth-verification test** when deemed necessary to determine eligibility for tournament prizes.

An angler required to take such a test must successfully complete the examination before any prize or award is released.

Failure to submit to or satisfactorily complete a required examination may result in disqualification and forfeiture of any prize.

ENTRY FEES, REGISTRATION & REFUNDS

Registration for the Big Dawg Crappie Shootout will open **October 1, 2026**. Entries may be submitted online. If any team positions in the established field remain available, additional entries may be registered at the Informational Meeting.

The tournament field is established at 64 teams. Ol Steve Fishing Productions reserves the right to increase the field by up to four additional teams, if necessary, for a maximum field of 68 teams.

Once the field reaches the established 64 teams, additional registrations will be placed on a waiting list in the order they are received.

. The total entry fee is **\$1,000 per team**. A **\$500 deposit is required within 21 days of registration** to secure the team's position in the tournament field. Teams that fail to submit the deposit within 21 days will forfeit their position and may be moved to the waiting list.

The **remaining \$500 balance is due no later than February 1, 2027**. Failure to pay the remaining balance by the deadline may result in forfeiture of the team's position, which may then be offered to a team on the waiting list.

The **\$500 deposit is non-refundable**, except when a refund is requested because of a qualifying **personal, family, or work-related emergency** as described below.

A team requesting a refund for one of these circumstances must submit the request **in writing or by electronic mail before the final payment deadline** and state the reason for the request. Refund requests are subject to approval by the Tournament Directors.

If an approved refund is granted, a **\$75 administrative fee** will be deducted from the amount refunded.

Once the field reaches 64 teams, additional registrations will be placed on a waiting list in the order they are received.

STATE & BOATING LAWS

All teams and anglers are responsible for complying with all applicable **state fishing laws, boating regulations, and licensing requirements** throughout the tournament.

All required safety equipment must be properly used, including **personal flotation devices (PFDs)** and engine emergency shut-off switches (kill switches) as required by law.

The boat operator must wear the engine emergency shut-off switch (kill switch) whenever the boat is on plane.

Each angler is responsible for maintaining the licenses, permits, and other documentation required for their participation.

State and federal laws, boating regulations, and applicable lake regulations take precedence over tournament rules.

Any violation of applicable fishing, boating, or lake regulations may result in **disqualification from the tournament and forfeiture of any prize money.**

BOAT LIABILITY INSURANCE

All boats participating in the Big Dawg Crappie Shootout must carry current boat liability insurance with a minimum liability coverage of \$100,000. Proof of insurance may be required by tournament officials before a team is permitted to participate. The insurance policy must be valid for the duration of the tournament.

MINORS

Anglers under the age of **18** are permitted to participate only with the written consent of a parent or legal guardian. The required parent/guardian consent and release must be completed and signed **prior to the tournament.**

The parent or legal guardian must also acknowledge and consent to the minor's participation and to a **polygraph examination or other truth-verification test** if required under the tournament rules.

Any minor participating in the tournament must have a registered team member who is at least 18 years of age in the boat with them at all times during official tournament hours.

No person under the age of 18 will be permitted to participate without the required signed parent or guardian consent and release.

OFF-LIMITS

Registered anglers may pre-fish tournament waters from Sunday, February 28 through Tuesday sundown, March 2, 2027, subject to all applicable state and local laws.

Wednesday, March 3, 2027 — Tournament Waters Off-Limits

No fishing, practice, scanning, or scouting of tournament waters is permitted on Wednesday, March 3, 2027.

Wednesday will be designated as **equipment repair, calibration, or testing day only**. This applies only to **replaced or repaired equipment** and must be **requested and approved in advance by the Tournament Director**. Approved equipment repair, calibration, or testing may only be performed in an area designated by the Tournament Director.

No casting, trolling, fishing, or placing bait in the water is permitted. No electronics scanning of tournament waters is permitted.

Tournament competition begins Thursday, March 4, 2027.

BAITS:

A maximum of two baits per pole may be used during tournament hours, provided they are permitted by applicable local and state laws.

Live bait may be used during the Thursday and Friday competition rounds. Live bait is prohibited during the Saturday Championship Round.

Artificial baits may be used throughout the tournament.

Any additional bait restrictions announced on the Tournament Information Page or at the Informational Meeting will also apply.

FISHABLE WATERS

Fishing is prohibited within **50 feet of any marina fuel pump**.

Anglers must maintain a minimum distance of **50 feet from another competitor's boat once that boat has established an anchored position**. A boat will be considered anchored when the trolling motor is raised and the anchor line is visible, or when a shallow-water anchoring system has been deployed.

When another competitor is actively fishing with the trolling motor in use, all anglers are expected to maintain a **safe and courteous distance** and avoid interfering with another team's fishing.

Fishable waters are those areas that can be reasonably accessed by tournament officials using a **johnboat equipped with a gasoline-powered tiller motor and lower unit**.

Teams may fish anywhere within the designated tournament waters except areas identified as **off-limits or no-fishing areas** by local, state, or federal authorities, or areas specifically designated by Big Dawg Fishing Productions through the Tournament Information page or at the informational meeting.

Fishing in any prohibited or off-limits area will result in disqualification.

Teams may not leave their boat or use their boat to gain access to otherwise inaccessible fishing areas.

Registered teams may enter the designated tournament waters from **any public or private boat ramp located within the fishable tournament waters**. **Trailing of boats is permitted.**

You will not be allowed to leave the Live Well Check area until your assigned 4-boat pod is called for Blast-Off. Boats will Blast Off in 4-boat pods, with pod assignments determined by random selection at the Informational Meeting.

FISHING INFORMATION & COMMUNICATION

Beginning at first light on Sunday, February 28, 2027, and continuing through the conclusion of the tournament, registered anglers and teams may not solicit, share, exchange, or receive fishing information from any person, including other registered anglers

or teams, locals, guides, or any other outside person, that could provide a competitive advantage. This includes information concerning fish locations, productive areas, fishing patterns, bait or lure selection, techniques, or other information intended to assist another competitor in locating or catching fish. Communication of fishing information is permitted only between members of the same registered team.

Communication between competitors concerning safety is permitted. Information regarding lake hazards, dangerous water conditions, weather-related hazards, navigation concerns, or other conditions that may affect the safety of anglers or boats may be shared at any time.

COMPENSATION & OUTSIDE ASSISTANCE

No person may be **hired, paid, compensated, or offered compensation of any kind** to provide a registered angler or team with an unfair competitive advantage during the tournament.

Any arrangement intended to provide a competitive advantage through outside assistance may result in **disqualification**.

ALCOHOL & PROHIBITED SUBSTANCES

The consumption or possession of **alcoholic beverages is prohibited during official tournament hours and throughout the weigh-in period.**

The use or possession of **non-prescribed drugs or controlled substances** during official tournament hours is strictly prohibited.

Any angler found violating this rule will be subject to **immediate disqualification and forfeiture of any tournament prize money.**

POLES & FISHING RODS

Each registered angler may use a maximum of **eight (8) fishing poles or rod-and-reel combinations** during tournament hours, unless applicable state regulations establish a lower limit.

Permitted equipment includes **rod-and-reel combinations, hand-held poles with reels, and hand-held poles**, provided the total number of poles in use does not exceed the applicable limit.

Where state regulations impose a limit of fewer than eight (8) poles, **the state limit will apply.**

OTHER EQUIPMENT

The use of **binoculars, spotting scopes, or other magnifying devices** to locate fish or identify fishing locations is prohibited during official tournament hours.

The use of **underwater cameras or underwater viewing equipment** during competition is prohibited.

Electronic communication devices, including **cell phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CB radios, and similar devices**, may not be used during tournament hours to obtain or share fishing information, except for official tournament communications and safety-related communications.

SPOTTING & FISH LOCATION

No person who is not a registered member of the fishing team may **locate, identify, spot, mark, or communicate the location of fish or fishing spots** for a competing team during official tournament hours.

LANDING FISH

All crappie must be **hooked and landed by a registered angler using a rod or pole**.

A legally caught crappie must be hooked **in the mouth or through the lip**. **Landing nets are permitted**.

HOLE-SITTING

A competitor or non-competitor boat may not **occupy, reserve, or “sit on” a fishing location** for the purpose of holding that location for another competitor.

LIVE WELL CHECKS

All teams must have their live wells inspected and approved at the designated **Live Well Check location before entering tournament waters to begin fishing**.

The Live Well Check location and procedures will be announced at the **Informational Meeting**.

After successfully completing the Live Well Check, each team will receive a **weigh-in voucher**. The team is responsible for keeping the voucher and **presenting it at the official weigh-in**.

TOURNAMENT HOURS

All fish presented for weigh-in must have been **caught during the official tournament hours, within designated tournament waters, by a registered angler participating in the tournament**.

Fishing may not begin before the official tournament start time. Anglers must cease fishing at the designated tournament ending time.

Official tournament start and ending times will be announced at the Informational Meeting and posted on the Ol' Steve Fishing Productions "Big Dawg Crappie Shootout" Tournament Information page.

Any fish determined to have been caught outside of the official tournament hours or outside designated tournament waters will be **ineligible for weigh-in and may result in disqualification.**

FISH HANDLING & WEIGH-IN

All fish must be transported to the official weigh-in line in a **minimum 25-quart cooler**, preferably equipped with an aerator. Failure to bring fish to the weigh-in line in an appropriate cooler will result in **disqualification.**

All crappie presented for competition must be **alive when the team enters the official weigh-in line.** A tournament official will inspect and verify each fish as **alive or dead.** Any fish determined to be dead before entering the weigh-in line will be removed and will not be eligible for weighing.

Once a fish has been inspected, verified alive, and recorded on the team's weigh-in voucher, it may be weighed even if it subsequently dies before reaching the scales.

The Tournament Official conducting the inspection has sole authority to determine whether a fish is alive or dead at the time of entry into the weigh-in line.

No **mutilated or intentionally damaged fish** may be weighed. For purposes of this tournament, mutilation means damage that materially impairs the fish's ability to fight or swim normally. Tournament officials will make the final determination regarding whether a fish is considered mutilated.

After weighing, **all fish will be returned to the team for release**, unless tournament officials determine otherwise for an approved tournament purpose.

TIES

If two or more teams are tied for any **paying position**, the tie will be broken by the **weight of the team's largest individual fish.**

The team with the **heaviest single fish** will be awarded the higher finishing position.

If the largest individual fish is also tied, the team with the **second-heaviest individual fish** will be awarded the higher finishing position.

SPORTSMANSHIP

All anglers are expected to conduct themselves with **honesty, courtesy, safety, respect for other competitors, and respect for the sport of fishing**. Every participant is expected to represent Big Dawg Fishing Productions, its sponsors, and the communities supporting the tournament in a positive manner.

Examples of conduct that may violate these standards include, but are not limited to:

- Failure to comply with any official tournament rule or procedure.
- Use of alcohol or prohibited substances during official tournament activities or tournament hours.
- Cheating, attempting to gain an unfair competitive advantage, or providing false information to tournament officials.
- Refusing to comply with a required polygraph or other truth-verification examination.
- Threatening, abusive, or intentionally disruptive behavior toward another angler, tournament official, sponsor, volunteer, or member of the public.
- Any conduct, whether in person or through social media, internet forums, or other public communications, that seriously damages the integrity of the tournament or the principles of fair competition.

CONDUCT & DISCIPLINARY ACTION

Big Dawg Fishing Productions and its Tournament Directors reserve the right to **deny participation, revoke a team's registration, or disqualify an angler or team** for serious violations of tournament rules or unacceptable conduct.

Depending upon the circumstances, disciplinary action may include **loss of eligibility for prizes, disqualification, or removal from the tournament**.

The Tournament Director will have final authority in determining whether conduct violates these standards and what disciplinary action is appropriate.

POLYGRAPH & TRUTH-VERIFICATION TESTING

Big Dawg Fishing Productions reserves the right to require any registered angler to submit to a **polygraph examination or comparable truth-verification test** at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

An angler selected for testing must cooperate fully and successfully complete the examination in order to remain eligible for any tournament prize.

Failure or refusal to submit to a required examination, or failure to satisfactorily complete the examination, may result in **disqualification and forfeiture of any prize money**.

An angler whose physical condition or impairment prevents the administration of a required examination may also be deemed ineligible for tournament prizes.

The use of **alcohol or non-prescribed drugs during official tournament hours is prohibited**. An angler whose condition prevents the administration of a required examination because of alcohol or drug use may be disqualified.

The Tournament Director's determination regarding eligibility for prizes under this section shall be final.

PROTESTS & COMPLAINTS

Any protest or complaint concerning the tournament must be submitted **in writing to the Tournament Director within 30 minutes following the conclusion of the official weigh-in**.

The protest or complaint must clearly state the issue and, when applicable, identify the specific tournament rule alleged to have been violated.

The Tournament Director will determine whether the matter warrants further review and may require the parties involved to provide additional information or submit to a **polygraph or other truth-verification test**.

All protests, complaints, grievances, and related information will be handled **confidentially by Big Dawg Fishing Productions and its Tournament Directors**.

The Tournament Director's decision is final in all tournament matters.

RELEASE & TOURNAMENT AUTHORITY

All registered anglers, participants, and media personnel must complete and sign the required **release of liability** before entering tournament waters or participating in tournament activities.

By participating in the Big Dawg Crappie Shootout, participants acknowledge and agree to release **Big Dawg Fishing Productions, its Tournament Directors, officials, staff, volunteers, sponsors, and representatives** from liability to the extent provided in the signed release forms, including matters related to tournament administration, required testing, and decisions made under these tournament rules.

The Tournament Director has the authority to **interpret and enforce these rules** and, when circumstances require, may establish additional reasonable procedures or requirements necessary for the safe and fair operation of the tournament.

Any rule changes or additional instructions announced at the Informational Meeting will become part of the tournament requirements. **All registered anglers are responsible for complying with those changes whether or not they attend the meeting.**

Decisions of the Tournament Director regarding the interpretation and enforcement of tournament rules are final and are not subject to appeal.