

# Hardeeville Catfish Festival

## 2017 Catfish Tournament Rules



1. **Registration:** All boats should be registered with the tournament director in writing by 9 PM on Friday, April 7, 2017. The entry fee must be paid by this time as well. Any boat that waits until Saturday morning to register at the landing must do so **by 6:30 AM** and will pay an **additional \$25 late registration**. **Each boat will designate a Captain who will take responsibility of his/her team. The tournament committee reserves the right to extend the deadline. The committee also reserves the right to refuse entry of any person, group, or boat.**
  
2. **Format:** Teams must compete from a boat and remain in the boat during the competition.
  - a. Each boat will have the opportunity to participate in the Big Fish division for an additional \$10 fee.
  - b. This is a rod and reel tournament only. A maximum of four rods per boat may be used.
    - i. No catfish may be taken from trot, jug or limb lines.
    - ii. No fishing of intentionally baited holes.
  - c. All tournament boats must maintain a distance of 50 yards between each other during the tournament unless in front of Millstone Landing for launch or weigh in. No fishing will be allowed within the boundaries of Millstone Landing grounds.

**\*The only exception** is in the case of an emergency. Mechanical breakdown – your boat's condition and efficiency is equally as important as your fishing skills. All teams / boats are responsible for getting fish to the weigh-in station aboard their own boat.

3. **Sportsmanship:** All anglers are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to the Hardeeville Catfish Festival, the sport of fishing and our sponsors.
  
4. **Tournament Start:** The tournament will begin at 7a.m. The tournament committee reserves the right to amend the start and finish times of the tournament and will use good faith and judgment to ensure a safe and successful tournament for all participants.
  
5. **Scoring:**
  - The pounds and ounces of each angler's catch will determine scoring during the tournament.
  - Blue Cat, Channel Cat, Bullhead or Flat Head Cat may be weighed. The limit will be five unless the state or lake limit is less than five; in which case the state limit will prevail. Teams possessing more than the tournament limit will have his/her catch for that day disqualified. Boat checks may be possible at any time during the course of the tournament.
  - Each angler's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag and verified by the signature of his/her partner.
  - The official scale and measuring board will be a Golden Rule.
  - Each angler must cull after the fifth fish is caught ON THE WATER. If an angler is caught with six fish in his live well that belongs to him, during tournament hours, that angler will be disqualified. Again, random checks will be possible during the tournament.

6. **Weigh-Ins:** Scales will be positioned at Millstone Landing and will officially open at 3 pm on Saturday. Live wells will be checked at weigh-in for a maximum of five fish.
  - a. All fish **MUST** be live fish and if released, returned to the Savannah River as such. Every effort must be made to keep fish alive through use of a properly aerated live well.  
**There will be two options on what to do with caught fish.**
    - i. Live fish may be released into the Savannah River.
    - ii. Boaters may keep fish after weigh in.
  - b. All fish will be measured for regulation length before being weighed.
  - c. “No – peak” style weigh-ins will be used.
  - d. Only the Captain will be allowed at the scale.
  - e. The line to the check in for scales will officially close at 3:15 pm for the tournament. All anglers checked in by 3:00 pm will be weighed.
  - f. Team arriving to Millstone Landing for weigh-in after the 3:00 pm deadline will receive penalties. One pound per minute will be deducted from the total weight including any weight to be counted toward a big catfish award. Any team more than 15 minutes late will be disqualified.
  
7. **Weather:** The tournament does not provide a weather committee and it is a Captain’s choice tournament. All team Captains, members, boat owners, and all other participants are responsible to determine that their craft is safe and are advised and encouraged to be familiar with the current weather conditions and forecasts to determine if the conditions permit the safety of the boat, crew, anglers, and guests to proceed to departure and return in a safe manner. The tournament reserves the right to postpone the tournament and use a back-up date as determined by the tournament committee.

8. **Safety:** Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each angler is required to wear a fastened, U.S. Coast Guard approved, personal floatation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from boat check to weigh-in. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation. At the discretion of the tournament committee, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or canceled due to unsafe weather or water conditions.
  
9. **Federal and State Regulations:** The weight and/or length of the eligible fish submitted for weigh-in is subject to State of South Carolina, Georgia and Federal laws. All tournament participants must possess a valid fishing license. Any team, angler or boat without the required valid permits, registrations and/or licensing are in violation of state and/or federal law and may have their fish disqualified at time of weigh-in. Boaters are responsible for insurance of the watercraft.
  
10. **Protest:** Any protest must surface verbally at the time of the incident, at the weigh-in station.
  
11. **Participants:** Any and all participants entering the tournament agree that all decisions made by the tournament committee shall be final and binding in any manner requiring their action.
  
12. **Polygraph:** Each angler agrees to submit, by his or her signature on the official tournament entry form, to a polygraph examination and abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification. Polygraphs will be used at tournament committee's sole discretion and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by the tournament committee.

**2017 Hardeeville Catfish Festival**  
**Catfish Tournament:**

**Waiver Disclaimer:** It is expressly understood that participants in this tournament enter at their own risk and the Hardeeville Catfish Festival Committee, The City of Hardeeville, representatives, volunteers and all other persons connected directly or indirectly with the operation of said tournament, shall be exempt from any liability what so ever for liable, slander, loss, damage, negligence, harm, injury, or death suffered by a participant, entrant, vessel, and equipment, companions, and guests which may occur during or in conjunction with this tournament. By signing this waiver you also agree to be responsible for any loss or damage to property or personal injury during the festival event.

By signing this official tournament receipt of rules form, the boat owner, captain, anglers and guests consent that the tournament may use without payment or restriction and photographs, video footage, in which he or she may appear for any purpose whatsoever, including but not limited to resale, advertising, commercial or promotional material.

Boat Captain: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent signature for participants under the age of 18: \_\_\_\_\_