

Interested in giving the club tournaments a try but not sure how they work? It is actually easier than you think to join the fun! To enter, on the morning of the tournament, simply hail the committee boat on VHF channel 68 and tell them you want to enter. That's it; you are in! The entry fee of \$50 per boat for each tournament is collected at the weigh-in.

While each tournament is a stand-alone event with its own guaranteed prizes, there is also a tournament series for "Boat of the Year". All boats entering any club tournament(s) are automatically entered into this "best 4 out of 5" competition at no additional cost.

Boats moored at North Point Marina, Waukegan Harbor or Prairie Harbor Yacht Club are eligible to participate, as well as all trailered boats. All trailered boats must launch at North Point Marina. Boats fishing out of Waukegan Harbor or Prairie Harbor Yacht Club must return to the same harbor they started at and drive their catch to the weigh-in by car.

The weigh-ins are held at the SU Pavilion, adjacent to the cleaning station at North Point Marina. All coolers are required to be in line for the scale at the SU Pavilion 45 minutes after the end of the fishing period.

At the weigh-in, you will fill out a weigh slip, available at the scorer's table, with your boat name, captain and crew. Please remember: everyone on the team must be an SU member and sign a waiver of liability. The entry fee & weigh slip are handed in at the scorer's table when you weigh your catch. At the weigh-in, enjoy the BBQ, learn from your fellow club members and build your network. And most importantly, HAVE FUN!

Membership Applications, Waiver of Liability forms and Complete Rules can be found on the SU Club Tournaments page.

Club Tournament FAQs

These FAQs are intended as a brief summary. Please refer to the complete rules for the final word on any of these topics.

- Who is the "Tournament Committee"?

Throughout this document, there are numerous references to the Tournament Committee. The tournament committee for 2026 consists of:

Steve Ruggiero - Chairman

Chris Jensen

Andy Knapp

Jack Olles

Jim Parquette

Any questions or concerns regarding the club tournaments should be directed to the committee members.

- Who can participate in the SU club tournaments and Boat of the Year Series?
These tournaments are open to all current club members. Everyone taking part in the event MUST be an SU member and sign a waiver of liability form BEFORE fishing. Waiver forms are available on our website. Spouses and minor children of members are considered club members, but each person must sign a separate waiver form. While minor children are welcome to participate in the club tournaments as team members, the operator of any vessel entered in any club tournament must be at least 18 years old.
- Who do I give my signed Waiver form to?
You can submit your signed waiver form in several ways. You can scan and email it to:

salmonunlimitednews@yahoo.com

Alternatively, you can take a photo of your signed form with your phone and email it to the above address or text it to Chris Jensen of the tournament committee at 630-254-8319. We can also accept waiver forms at our monthly meetings. Please be sure your form is submitted BEFORE the tournament begins. Failure to have a signed waiver on file before the tournament starts may result in disqualification. One signed form is valid for the entire season; there is no need to sign a separate form for each tournament date.

- How do I enter a club tournament?
Entering a club tournament is as easy as making a radio call. Starting 30 minutes prior to the start of the tournament, hail the SU committee boat on VHF channel 68 and tell them your boat is in. That's it; you are ready to fish! There is no registration form. At the weigh-in, you will fill out a weigh slip at the scorer's table and turn it in with your entry fee when you arrive at the scale.
- Is there a Captain's Meeting?
There will be an OPTIONAL captain's meeting on Saturday, May 9, 2026 at 7:00pm. The meeting will be held at the SU Pavilion at North Point Marina and via Facebook Live on Salmon Unlimited Inc's Facebook page.
- How much do the club tournaments cost?
The entry fee for each club tournament is \$50 per boat. This entry fee includes the tournament and lunch for all participants. Entry fees are collected at the weigh-in. The "Boat of the Year" Series is automatically included at no extra cost.
- What is the Boat of the Year Series?
The Boat of the Year Series is simply the best 4 out of 5 club tournament scores for each team to determine the overall club champion for the year. Each team will accumulate Series points based on their finish in each club tournament. See How does the scoring work? FAQ topic below. The Series has its own prizes, separate from each club tournament, which will be awarded at the end of the season.

- What if I decide to skip the weigh-in?
If you decide to skip the weigh-in because you did not catch any fish, a family emergency came up or any other reason, you are still responsible for paying the entry fee. You will not be allowed to enter subsequent tournaments until this amount is paid. In addition, it is MANDATORY you notify the host boat or the tournament committee that you are leaving early. Otherwise, if you fail to check in at the end of the contest, we will assume you are in distress and we will notify the U.S. Coast Guard to initiate a search and rescue mission. Any costs associated with a search and rescue operation will be your responsibility.

If you do not attend the weigh-in, you will receive 0 points for that tournament.

- How does the club handle weather decisions?
If NOAA has issued a Small Craft Advisory, the tournament will automatically be cancelled and re-scheduled for the designated make-up date. In the event the weather is less than favorable but no SCA has been issued, the tournament committee and the designated host boat will make a go/no-go decision approximately 30-45 minutes prior to the scheduled start time. All captains are ultimately responsible for the safety of their vessel and crew, so if you are not comfortable with the conditions, please don't go!
- What if my boat is not located at North Point Marina?
If your boat resides in a slip at Waukegan Harbor or Prairie Harbor Yacht Club, you can still fish the club tournaments without having to move your boat to Winthrop Harbor. Simply leave from & return to your home port within the same time constraints as the rest of the contestants (the tournaments are all "on your honor"). Once you return to port, simply bring the cooler to the weigh-in by car. As long as you are in line at the scale within 45 minutes of the end of the tournament, you are good. This option is available to boats kept in a slip only. Trailered boats must launch from and return to North Point.
- What are the tournament start & end times?
The fishing period for all club tournaments runs from 5:00am until 12:00pm. All boats must remain within 1000 yards of their harbor entrance until the tournament start time. There is no "run time"; participants may begin fishing as soon as the fishing period start time. All boats must be back inside their harbor of origin by the end of the fishing period.
- Where can I fish?
Fishing is not allowed inside any harbor or marina. Otherwise, there are no restrictions on where you may fish. You may travel any distance as long as all travel is on the water and you are back by the end of the fishing period.
- Where is the weigh-in held?

The weigh-in and BBQ for all club tournaments will be held at the Salmon Unlimited Pavilion at North Point Marina. The pavilion is located directly across from the fish cleaning station, adjacent to the launch ramps.

- What can I win?

For each club tournament, the following prizes will be awarded:

1st place will receive \$500.

2nd place will receive \$400.

3rd place will receive \$300.

4th place will receive \$200.

5th place will receive \$100.

The highest scoring "small boat" (22' or under) will receive \$100.

The boat weighing in the heaviest "Fish of the Day" will receive \$100. See What is the "Fish of the Day"? FAQ topic below.

The boat weighing in the highest scoring "Big 3" will receive a \$150 gift card to Lake Michigan Angler. See What is the "Big 3" and how does it work? FAQ topic below.

At the end of the season, the boat with the highest combined total of Series points in 4 out of 5 events will be awarded the coveted title of Boat of the Year.

For the Series:

1st place will receive \$1000 & plaques.

2nd place will receive \$750 & plaques.

3rd place will receive \$500 & plaques.

The angler who weighed in the heaviest fish of the year will receive \$500.

The Rookie of the Year award will go to the team with the most points who is competing in their first season of the club tournaments. Please note that prizes will only be awarded upon receipt of a properly completed IRS Form W-9.

- Can I use my VHF radio and/or cell phone during the tournament?

YES! In fact, it is encouraged. These tournaments are for club members to help each other catch more fish and have fun. We hope everyone will take advantage of the opportunity to network with other members and share information.

- How many rods can I run?

The maximum number of lines in the water at any time is nine (9), regardless of the number of anglers on the boat. Of course, a crew of 2 persons is limited to six (6) lines by DNR regulations.

- How many fish can I catch and weigh?

Each boat may keep as many fish as they are legally allowed to possess, per Illinois DNR regulations. From this, the team will select their best five (5) fish to be weighed. Of the 5 fish selected, no more than two (2) can be lake trout.

In addition, each team may weigh one (1) fish of the species designated as the "Fish of the Day" that is NOT included in their 5-fish tournament box. See [What is the "Fish of the Day"? FAQ](#) topic below.

- [How does the scoring work?](#)

Individual club tournament results are determined based on points. Points are scored on the following basis:

10 points per fish weighed

1 point per pound of weight (to the nearest 0.1 lb.)

The total of these points will be a team's score for that tournament. In the event of a tie, the tie-breaker will be the weight of the heaviest fish for each of the tied teams. If there is still a tie after that, then the 2nd tie-breaker will be the weight of each team's "Big 3". See [What is the "Big 3" and how does it work?](#) FAQ topic below. If the tied teams have no fish to weigh, they will split the points for the places they are tied for equally.

In the Boat of the Year Series, the points scored for the club tournament (as described above) will be used to rank all of the boats entered in that event. Each boat will receive Series points based on their order of finish in the tournament. The top finishing team will receive 100 Series points. The 2nd highest finishing team will receive 99 Series points and so on. The overall Series standings will be the total of a team's best 4 out of 5 Series point scores. If 4 or fewer tournaments are held due to weather cancellations, all scores will be counted. If there is a tie after all tournaments have been completed, the tie-breaker will be the weight of each team's heaviest fish of the year.

- [What is a "Fish of the Day"?](#)

For each club tournament, there will be a designated "Fish of the Day" species. These will be published with the tournament schedule at the beginning of the season. For a given tournament, the heaviest fish weighed of the designated species will win \$100. Note that this fish does NOT have to be part of the 5-fish tournament box, but it can be. If no fish of the designated species are weighed in, the prize money will roll over to the next tournament.

- [What is the "Big 3" and how does it work?](#)

The "Big 3" is an extra competition within each tournament. All boats participating in the tournament are automatically entered at no additional cost. For the Big 3, each boat will choose 3 eligible fish from the 5 they are weighing in. Eligible fish include king salmon, coho salmon, steelhead, lake trout and brown trout ONLY. Other species such as pink salmon and Atlantic salmon are NOT eligible for the Big 3. Also, the fish used for the Big 3 must be part of the 5 fish weighed for the tournament. The Big 3 score will be 20 points per species and 1 point per pound. The boat who weighs in the highest scoring 3 fish will win the Big 3 and will receive a \$150 gift card to Lake Michigan Angler.

- Is food served at the weigh-in?
YES! Part of the entry fee goes to providing a BBQ lunch at the weigh-in for all participants. Typical menus include bratwurst, grilled chicken, pulled pork or burgers, along with a side or salad. Soft drinks are provided, but if you'd prefer something else, it is BYOB. Lunch is usually served after the weigh-in is concluded.