2026 STRIPER MAFIA TOURNAMENT SERIES RULES

1. This is a “Catch-Photo-Release” tournament, all members of the general public are eligible to participate. The maximum number of adult team members in a team is 4. A team may have more than 4 members if the additional are participating youth. Teams must obey Coast Guard passenger limits per boat.
2. ***Professional Guides (those who take clients for pay) on Smith Mountain Lake may participate in the general competition as long as they are not running a guided trip during the event.***
3. Teams may not hire the services of a Fishing Guide for the day of the tournament.
4. Applications, along with the tournament entry fee of $100.00, and optional Big Fish fee of $25.00 must be submitted no later than the close of the Captains Meeting to be held at a pre-announced time and location the evening before the tournament. The Tournament Fee and Optional Big Fish fee is for the event on the specified date only. At least one member of each team must be present at the Captain’s Meeting. NO EXCEPTIONS.
5. All members of the team must be listed on the application.
6. The tournament will begin (“lines in”) at “Safe Light”, to be announced at the Captain’s Meeting of each tournament.
7. All State Fish & Game laws apply. All contestants must have a valid Virginia fishing license.
8. If fishing from a boat, only contestants are allowed in the boat used to fish the tournament. If fishing from a dock or bank, only contestants are allowed to fish together or support each other in any manner while fishing (i.e. tending to rods, landing a fish). For clarity a team is required to fish together - that is they may not be in multiple boats, or some fishing from land while others from the boat. Non-contestants are NOT allowed to fish or ride with contestants.
9. Only striped bass caught from Smith Mountain Lake, by a contestant during tournament hours, may be entered in this tournament. No fish caught prior to the start of the tournament may be entered. Fish caught by one team may not be entered by another team as its own. No fish may be caught/captured prior to the tournament event and held and then submitted or “caught” and submitted.
10. Fish must be caught on a rod and reel. There is no limit as to the number of rods used. The use of live-bait or artificial lures is allowed as long as it is permitted by Virginia State Game laws.
11. All State Game Laws apply. Any team member cited for a game violation during the tournament will be cause for team disqualification.
12. Check-in Location :
    - 12.1. The official headquarters for each event may vary - refer to information published on the Striper Mafia website (www.SMLStriperMafia.com) for specific details of that event.
    - 12.2. Refer to information published on the Striper Mafia website for specific information on the location of the Post Tournament Check-In & Awards Ceremony for each event .
    - 12.3. Check-in will open at at least one hour before Last-Call and remain open until all teams are checked in. However, contestants must be present, in line with photos available upon request at the check-in location no later than the specified Last Call time. Any photos that must be e-mailed (vs presented via SD card), must be received to the e-mail address to be designated at the Captain’s Meeting prior to the Last Call cut-off or have team representative checked-in and working with Tournament Directors to download the pictures.
13. Check-in / Fish Submission Rules:

13.1. Each team may submit photos for up to two (2) eligible fish. As this is a “Catch & Release” tournament, “virtual culling” is allowed - in that photos of multiple fish may be taken, but only two pictures may be submitted at Check-in.

13.2. Photos are to be submitted electronically by e-mailing to an e-mail address to be provided at the Captain’s Meeting or by presenting a “SD” memory card. If alternate arrangements are needed for delivery of the picture, you must discuss with the Tournament Director(s) at the Captain’s Meeting.

13.3. No team will be allowed to present photos for check-in after “last call” as made by the tournament director.

13.4. Photos of all fish must be taken with the Tournament Token Card, clearly visible in the picture. The full fish must be visible in the picture, along with clearly visible measurements, and the token card, on the approved, provided measuring device. No hands or other item in fish mouth.

13.5. The provided Tournament Token Card must clearly show the Team Name & the Token Code which will be published approximately 10-15 minutes before “Lines In” - via e-mail / text-message & posted to Facebook & Website.

13.6. Use of a tournament approved and provided measuring device MUST be used. The approved measuring devices will be distributed at the pre-Tournament Captan’s Meeting and must be returned at Check-In. Failure to return the measuring device will result in a $50 fee and/or restriction from participating in future events.

13.7. Photos of all fish must be in obvious, fresh condition: clear eyes, red gills, clear tail without fading - there should be no question that the fish was immediately photographed upon catch. Any fish that was obviously sick, injured or dead when caught or any fish deemed questionable by the Tournament Director(s) will be disqualified.

13.8. Fish should be placed on the measuring device with the mouth against the “bump board” portion, top of the fish oriented to the top of the board (board oriented with “bump-board” placed to the left), It is recommended to pinch the tail if possible - but be sure not to obscure the mouth of the fish against the “bump-board” nor the tail of the fish in the photo. There is no specific requirement regarding open/closed mouth of the fish. NO instrument (hand or other) can be used to hold the mouth to the bump board. If a picture is submitted with the fish “upside down” it will only be considered if it is at least 2 inches shorter/longer than any additional fish submitted by that team.

13.9. The Tournament Director(s) will disqualify any photo that exhibits signs of altering by any means. Do not crop, filter, adjust the color / contrast or other settings of the photo. Prior to releasing the fish, ensure that the picture taken conforms to the above rules and that the measurement is clearly legible. The decision of the Tournament Director(s) on a disputed measurement is final.

13.10. Fish will be measured to the nearest 1/4” - rounding down. For clarity, if the measurement is deemed ON the measurement line, that will be the measurement recored - if there is ANY visible space between the fish and the next line the measurement will be rounded down.

13.11. The length of a team’s largest fish will decide ties, with earliest time of team check-in serving as the secondary tie-breaker.

13.12. Anyone who presents a fish that was not caught by their team, as his own, or was caught outside tournament waters or hours will be disqualified.

13.13. ANY PROTESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED IN WRITING WITHIN 15 MINUTES AFTER CLOSE OF CHECK-IN AND BE ACCOMPANIED BY A $200 CASH DEPOSIT - DEPOSIT WILL BE REFUNDED IF THE PROTEST IS FOUND VALID AND UPHELD.

13.14. The Striper Mafia Tournament Director(s) reserves the right to require a polygraph test of any member of any money winner team. Participants agree to submit themselves for a polygraph if requested by the Tournament Director(s). If an individual fails the first test, a second will be administered. If the individual fails the second test the team of which that individual is a part will be disqualified from the event. Tournament Director may elect to alter this as deemed appropriate. Polygraphs will be conducted after the results presentation - team members requested to present to a polygraph

must make theirselves available immediately after the awards at the Awards Ceremony location.

14. Prizes or prize money for any place not claimed at the Awards Ceremony, which will immediately follow the Check-In, will be retained for use in future events at the Tournament Director(s)' discretion.
15. The Tournament Director(s) are empowered to impose additional restrictions, alter rules or reschedule the tournament due to dangerous weather. Tournament entrants are entitled to fish the new date if on is set. Entry fees are non-refundable.
16. All State Safety Laws apply. The Striper Mafia Tournament Series strongly recommends wearing an approved personal floatation device at all times when participating in the tournament.
17. All contestants and spectators participate at their own risk. The Striper Mafia Tournament Series, will serve as the tournament and check-in host. The organizers of the event, the Tournament Director(s) and any sponsors of the tournament will not be liable for any accident or injury to contestants, spectators or by-standers for any damage to property, or bodily harm. A contestant's entry into this tournament constitutes a release of liability to the organizers of the event, any other event sponsor, their successors and/or assignees for any such accident, injury, or property damage the contestants may be involved in. Each Member of a team must complete, sign & date the Tournament Application form in order to be eligible to participate.
18. The use of alcohol or drugs is prohibited during tournament hours. Contestants which are in contention for placing "in the money must refrain from drinking during the Awards Ceremony for purposes of the polygraph test. Contestants appearing to be under the influence of drugs or alcohol will be cause for his or her team to be disqualified.
19. Any contestant who willfully violates any rule will be cause for his or her team to be disqualified along with any contestant who witnesses and fails to report a violation. Any disqualified individual is subject to disqualification from Striper Mafia Tournament Series events for life, as determined by the organizers of the Tournament Series.
20. The decision of the Tournament Director(s) will be final in ALL tournament matters.
21. For any questions, contact Tournament Organizers - Michael Ward at (336) 437-4114. Alternatively an e-mail may be sent to stripermafia@gmail.com.
22. Distribution of Entry Fees:
    - 22.1. Prize monies and the Raffle Prize Pot will be awarded at the Awards Ceremony to follow the Check-In on the day of the tournament. All non-money placing teams will be eligible for the Cash Raffle Prize(s).
    - 22.2. Prize money payouts for the 2023 Season will be determined by the number of teams entered into a given event. The Tournament Director reserves the right to add "Kicker Cash" to the pot of any given tournament, at a ratio to be determined by the Tournament Director's discretion to increase the payouts, but the payouts will be no less than the percentages as shown:
        - 1 - 10 Teams: 1st Place - 50%, 2nd Place - 30%
        - 11-20 Teams: 1st Place - 40%; 2nd Place - 25%; 3rd Place - 15%
        - 21-30 Teams: 1st Place - 35%; 2nd Place - 25%; 3rd Place - 15%; 4th Place - 5%
        - 31-40 Teams: 1st Place - 35%; 2nd Place - 22.5%; 3rd Place - 10%; 4th Place - 7.5%; 5th Place - 5%
        - 41-50 Teams: 1st Place - 25%; 2nd Place - 20%; 3rd Place - 12.5%; 4th Place - 10%; 5th Place - 7.5%; 6th Place - 5%
        - 50+ Teams: 1st Place - 25%; 2nd Place - 17.5%; 3rd Place - 12.5%; 4th Place - 10%; 5th Place - 7.5%; 6th Place - 5%; 7th Place - 2.5%
        - 10% of Entry Fees will be paid out as Cash Raffle Prize(s) to non-money placing teams - approximately 1 per 10 teams will be returned.
        - 10% of Entry Fees will be retained for tournament expenses.
    - 22.3. Optional Big Fish Pot will be a 100% payout. Longest single fish per team as determined by submitted photographs will be used to determine winner. In the event of a tie (closest 1/4", rounding down), earliest time of submission will be used.
23. ***Youth Category Competition - Any youth age 15 or under, on a registered team, shall be eligible for the Youth Competition. Each Youth may submit one photo as their entry. This photo/ fish must comply with all the rules stated above. The Youth may submit a photo of one of the fish which his or her team has submitted as their entries. In the event of a tie (closest 1/4", rounding down), earliest time of team check-in will be used. Should multiple youth be fishing on the same team, each must submit a unique entry. A prize and award will be given for 1st and awards to the 2nd through 5th place the Youth Category.***
    1. ***There is no cost for the youth category. Should a team wish to fish only in the youth category, there will be no entry fee due - but that team is not eligible for the cash payouts (nor the Entry Fee Return raffles, or season-long competitions other than Youth of the Year).***
    2. ***Guides with youth (child, grandchild, relative, or other fishing with them) may participate an adult with the youth.***
24. Ladies Competition - The lady (age 16 or older) who catches the longest fish caught by ladies entered in the overall tournament series will win a prize donated by one of our sponsors. They do NOT have to be entered in the Big Fish competition. In addition to the picture of the fish on the measuring device with token card, a picture of the lady holding the fish, and token card should also be submitted.
25. Other Prizes & Competitions - The Tournament Director reserves the right to offer additional competitions from time to time as a part of the tournament (TWIT, Smallest Fish, etc) - should this be done, information will be provided no later than the Captain's
26. Striper Mafia Tournament Series "Team of the Year" & "Big Fish of the Series" competitions will be held through the course of the four events (Charity event not included). Participation in the these competitions is automatic and does not incur any additional cost. Entry in the optional Big Fish pots is NOT required to be eligible for this competition.
    - 26.1. The "Captain" and Team Name as designed on the tournament registration designate a team. Team members may change throughout the events, but the Captain and team name must remain the same.
    - 26.2. Team of the Year Points will be awarded to a team at each event based on their ranking in overall placement of that event.
        - 26.2.1. All four events will be used to score for ToY - no dropping of lowest scored event
        - ***26.2.2. Points will be awarded to all teams submitting at least one fish in a given event. 1st Place will get 1000 points and decrement by 10 points for each place***
        - 26.2.3. In the event of a points tie, the tie breaker will be the team with the largest total inches of fish throughout their tournament entries (up to four events), followed by the team with the most 1st places, followed by the most 2nd places, followed by the most 3rd places, followed by the most 4th places, followed by the most 5th places, followed by the team that fished the most events.
        - 26.2.4. Big Fish of the Series will be determined by the largest fish caught throughout the series. A tie will be broken by the 1st fish to be caught during the series.
    - 26.3. A minimum of one team member must be present at the November Awards Ceremony in order to be eligible for "Team of the Year" of "Big Fish of the Series" awards. If not present the award(s) will go to the next highest placing team.

(End of Striper Mafia Tournament Series Rules)

STRIPER MAFIA TOURAMENT REGISTRATION FORM

March 21, 2026 / April 18, 2026 / October 24, 2026 / November 21, 2026

All team members which will be participating in the event must complete & sign the form below.

One representative from Team must be present at the Captains Meeting to collect measuring device & token card

Registration Fee: $100/Team/Event **/ Optional Big Fish Pot:** $25/Team/Event **/ Optional Big Bass Pot:** $10/Team/Event

Team Name: _____

Youth Only Team Entry : *Y / N*

Team Captain	**Name**	**Mailing Address**	**Cell-Phone**	**E-Mail**
1				
Team Member(s)	**Name**	**Youth (15 & Under) or Lady?**	**Cell-Phone**	**E-Mail**
2				
3				
4				

By signing below, each team participant acknowledges that they have read and understand the "STRIPER MAFIA TOURNAMENT SERIES RULES" document. Each team member participates at their own risk. The organizers of the Striper Mafia Tournament Series and any sponsors of the tournament series will not be liable for any accident or injury to contestants , spectators or by-standers for any damage to property, or bodily harm. A team member's entry into this tournament constitutes a release of liability to the organizers of the Striper Mafia Tournament Series, any other event sponsor, their successors and/or assignees for any such accident, injury, or property damage the contestants may be involved in. Youth participants (under the age of 18) must have a parent or guardian sign this document on their behalf.

_____

Team Captain - Name **Signature** **Date**

_____

Team Member 2 - Name **Signature** **Date**

_____

Team Member 3 - Name **Signature** **Date**

_____

Team Member 4 - Name **Signature** **Date**

Entry Fee Received: Y / N Big Fish Pot: Y / N Board #:_____