

2025 SHOEDER'S RV & MARINE HODAG MUSKY CHALLENGE Tournament Rules and Regulations

**Tournament Participants Are Responsible For Reading
All Rules of the HMC Tournament.**

Participants and Eligibility

1. Entries accepted for one or two person teams only. Team members must be 18 years of age or older. Members under 18 years of age will be accepted if accompanied by a parent or legal guardian as the other team member, or they may fish with another person who is over the age of 18 if they have written consent from their parent or legal guardian.
2. The entry fee is \$300 per team.
3. No refund of entry fee will be issued after September 1, 2025. Before September 1, 2025, a 20% fee will be withheld from the refund.
4. The Tournament field is limited to 200 teams.
5. Each team member must have a valid Wisconsin fishing license.
6. If you'd like to request a change to your lake group (if Lake Group is available), a \$25 administration fee will be charged per change.
7. **Tournament Headquarters Rhinelander Ice Arena, located at 2021 E Timber Drive, Rhinelander, Wisconsin. Tournament Cell: 715-202-3344**

Required Activities

1. All teams **must** appear in person on Friday, September 26, 2025 at Rhinelander Ice Arena. You may register for the event (assuming space is available) in person from 5:00-7:30PM on September 26, 2025.
2. **Each team member must attend the Rules Meeting on Friday, September 26, 2025 at 8:00 pm at the Rhinelander Ice Arena.**
3. All team members must wear their 2025 Hodag Musky Challenge hats on their heads at all times during Tournament fishing hours.

Boats & Equipment

1. Safe boating conduct and all safety precautions must be observed at all times. All boats must meet U.S. Coast Guard and State of Wisconsin Boating Rules and Safety Standards, and must be registered in accordance with regulations of the home state of the contestant owning the boat.
2. Absolutely no fishing from bridges, piers, docks or shore.
3. No boats shall be over-powered, i.e., having a motor of higher horsepower than a designated maximum on U.S. Coast Guard Capacity Plate. If the boat is entered in the Tournament without such a plate, the NMMA ratings formula should be employed and the maximum horsepower designation should be determined.
4. **Forward facing sonar/cameras such as LiveScope and competitive products are not allowed to be used during tournament fishing hours. Any devices used for FFS that are removable must be removed from the boat. If the device is permanent, it must be unplugged at all times.**
5. **Each boat shall have a *HARD* bump board. This bump board **MUST** be certified at the rules meeting on Friday evening.**
6. **Each boat must have a cell phone capable of taking a clear digital picture and transmitting that picture to the Tournament Official via text message.**
7. **HMC will provide a deck of playing cards that you must carry with you in your boat.**

Fishing Rules

1. Only Musky will be scored – 34 inch minimum.
2. Only Musky caught legally on hook and line will be allowed.
3. Motor trolling is not allowed. Row trolling is not allowed.
4. Each team member is allowed only one line with one lure in the water at any time.
5. No live or frozen bait allowed.
6. No more than two contestants per boat.
7. Only fish caught on Saturday and Sunday during Tournament hours on approved waters will be allowed.
8. **All fish caught must be measured, photographed, and released.**
9. Measurements must be taken using your certified bump board that was approved at the rules meeting. The fish may be flipped. The longest side will be counted to the nearest full one-quarter (1/4) inch. The HMC rounds down – Example: If the fish measures 40 1/8 inches, the official measurement will be 40 inches. The Tournament Official will have the final determination on length of the fish.
10. **This is a catch and release tournament.** An unsuccessful release of any fish will result in a 20 point penalty assessed to the team. You must report this to the Tournament Official immediately. The team member may not continue fishing in the event of an unsuccessful release of any fish. Your partner may continue to fish.
Unsuccessful releases of sub-legal fish must be immediately reported to the WI DNR – DO NOT take possession of the fish. If your team has two unsuccessful releases of any fish, then 20 point penalties will be assessed for each fish and both teammates must stop fishing for the day. **If a legal musky of 40 inches or larger is VOLUNTARILY kept, the team is automatically disqualified from the tournament.**
11. Only team members are allowed in the boat during Tournament hours, except for Lake or Tournament Officials.
12. All State of Wisconsin fishing rules shall be followed.

Transport laws for boaters and anglers

- INSPECT your boat, trailer and equipment
- REMOVE any attached aquatic plants or animals (before launching, after loading and before transporting on a public highway).
- DRAIN all water from boats, motors and all equipment.
- NEVER MOVE live fish away from a waterbody.
- DISPOSE of unwanted bait in the trash.

Fishing Waters

Each team may only fish one group of water listed below. Groups are selected on a first-come, first-serve basis with pre-set quotas for each group based upon the DNR's lake limits:

Boom Lake / Wisconsin River - Maximum 35 boats
Crescent Lake – Maximum 15 boats
Bearskin Lake – Maximum 15 boats
Lake Julia – Maximum 15 boats
Moen Chain - Maximum 40 boats
Pelican Lake - Maximum 40 boats
Lake George- Maximum 15 boats
Sugar Camp Chain (Sand, Dam, Echo, Chain) – Maximum 30 boats

Check-In At Fishing Waters

Each team must check-in at the designated boat location prior to fishing. The check-in consists of presenting the team members and their boat for a thorough inspection. This authorizes that team to fish in those waters and to register a fish caught in those waters. You must check in between 6:00-7:00 AM each day. **If you need to be checked in after 7AM, a \$50 late check in fee will need to be paid to have a tournament official come to your location and check you in. The tournament reserves the right to send boats off in waves depending on the total number of boats at a specific lake/check in station.**

Boat launch fees, where applicable, MUST be paid for by the fishermen.

At check-in time, each boat will be thoroughly inspected. The live-well (or aerated container), all storage compartments, and coolers will be checked.

Fishing Hours

Tournament fishing hours are from 7:00 am to 5:00 pm on Saturday and from 7:00 am to 12:00 pm on Sunday. No fish may be registered after 5:00 pm on Saturday or after 12:00 pm on Sunday. For a fish to count, your text must be sent before, and received by the tournament official before 5:00 PM Saturday or 12:00 pm on Sunday. The time is kept by the Tournament Official using the official time (US Time) at clock.gov. Provided your cell phone has not been adjusted, this should be the time displayed on the cell phone.

Protests and Appeals

Only contestants and Tournament Officials have the right to contest the actions of another team or contestant. Protests by contestants must be filed in writing with Tournament Officials in person no later than one-half hour after the close of that fishing day. A \$100 protest fee must accompany any protest offered by a contestant. A three-person committee appointed by Tournament Officials will convene to investigate and make a decision regarding the protest.

The protest committee and their agents are authorized to use polygraph examinations and any other investigative technique, including testimony under oath, in order to determine the validity of the protest or the charge against a contestant. The decision of the protest committee shall be by majority vote and shall be final in all cases. Contestants waive any right or opportunity to appeal the decision of the protest committee, including any court of jurisdiction in this or any other state. If a protest by a contestant is found to be valid, the protest fee will be returned.

Any person found violating any of the rules of this Tournament (including not reporting an unsuccessful release) may be immediately disqualified from the Tournament or otherwise penalized by the Tournament Officials and the reasons for the disqualification or penalty announced at the Awards Ceremony.

Miscellaneous

1. Contestants are not permitted to fish within fifty feet of another boat at any time. In the interest of good sportsmanship, it is expected that competitors will not crowd nor impede each other. No two contestant boats may pull up to each other during Tournament hours.
2. Official and safety boats may pull up and inspect contestants at any time.
3. Wisconsin DNR regulations impose a no wake zone any time your boat is within 100 feet of shore. Please be respectful of land owners on the waterways.
4. All rules have loopholes. It is the intention of the Sponsors, Tournament Officials and the Northwoods United Way and Rhinelander Ice Association to host an honest, sportsman-like tournament. In the interest of good sportsmanship, contestants are reminded that the spirit of the rule will prevail in all judgment cases.
5. Contestants are responsible for all applicable taxes due on prizes awarded. The Rhinelander Ice Association is required to obtain social security numbers for recipients of prizes awarded for \$600 or more.

PRIZE PAYOUTS

Tournament Scoring:

1. 30 (thirty) points for a 34 (thirty-four) inch fish.
2. 1 (one) additional point for each 1/4 (one-quarter) inch over said size limit.
3. Any measurement falling between 1/4 inch marks shall be rounded down.
4. A team's final score is determined by the total number of point scored over the weekend

Once a musky is caught, there shall be no further fishing by both Team members, until your photo is sent to the Tournament Official, and the fish release is complete.

- Measurement may be taken with the fish's tail pinched.
- The fish shall be handled and placed by the angler on their certified bump board.
- When photographing the fish, make sure you can see the nose of the fish is touching the front of the board and that the tail of the fish is in the same picture with a clear view of the measurement. You must also have the certified sticker in the photo that is placed on your bump board.
- If the tournament official cannot clearly read the measurement or view the nose touching, or the certification sticker, they will make their best determination and that will be the final measurement.
- The Tournament Officials must be able to clearly read the measurement. Check your photos before releasing the fish so there are not any questions.
- You may also video the measurement which may provide for a more appropriate visual. Please also take a still photo if you decide to video.
- In addition to your measurement photo, you must also submit a photo showing the fish and angler wearing the HMC 2025 hat. When photographing the fish while holding it, each team must always hold the fish with the head facing the same way. (Each team may choose head facing left or right but they must all be submitted the same.)
- Both of your two photos must include the "playing card of the day" in it. This process of measuring and the necessary rules will be gone over in great detail at the mandatory Friday meeting.
- You will be given a new playing card to place in your photo for a 2nd, 3rd, etc fish of each day. The tournament official will text you with the new playing card once you have registered a fish.

Musky:

1. Prizes will be based on total points accumulated during the two days of fishing. Total prize money for the HMC equals 70% of registration fees collected.
2. 1st -10th place will be paid out. In the case of a tie, the two place prizes will be combined and divided equally among the contestants.
3. The largest legal Musky caught and successfully released throughout the weekend will be awarded \$1,000 (in addition to any other prize monies).
4. The largest musky of each lake will be put into a drawing for a chance to win \$500. One winner will be drawn, must be present at awards ceremony to win.
5. 11th Place Drawing: Each team that does not finish in the top 10 but successfully released a qualifying musky will be entered into a drawing on Sunday to win a \$300 cash prize. Teams must be present during the awards ceremony to win.

Northern Pike:

A \$300 Cash prize will be awarded to the largest Northern Pike as measured in one-quarter (1/4) inches rounded down.

Updated: September 10, 2025 *May be subject to change