

KANSAS WALLEYE ASSOCIATION – 2026 Tournament Rules

These rules will be interpreted solely by the Tournament Committee. All decisions are final.

1. **Contestant Eligibility:**

Each KWA tournament is a two person Buddy Team tournament. Contestants must be 16 years of age or accompanied by an adult to participate. You do not have to be a KWA member to fish the tournament or be eligible for prizes at the tournament. However, both team contestants must be members in order for the team to receive points for year-end awards.

2. **Pre-Tournament Practice:**

There are no closed periods on the lake prior to registration. The lake will be closed to all contestants at 6:00pm the evening prior to the tournament.

3. **Pre-Meeting:**

A pre-meeting is held on the evening before each tournament, beginning with registration at 6:00pm. The tournament rules, boat inspection time and start time will be announced at this meeting. At least one member per team is required to attend and sign-in at the pre-meeting. Failure to attend will result in that team being placed at the end of the take-off line, regardless of original take-off position.

4. **Waiver:**

Promoters, tournament officials, directors and organizations assisting in the tournament operation, their agencies, agents, etc., are not responsible for death, injuries, damages, liability, theft, fire or loss of any ding to entrants. Each entrant upon signing an entry form will be in effect, signing a waiver form.

5. **Fees:**

The entry fee is \$150.00 per boat for KWA members and \$170.00 for non-members for all tournaments. Mail proper entry fee and forms to **KWA, 7953 N West St, Valley Center, KS 67147**. All entries paid for by personal check must be postmarked one week in advance of the tournament. Entries will also be accepted at the pre-meeting if paid with cash, money order or Venmo.

6. **Take-off Position:**

The take-off position will be determined first, by the early bird drawing held at the annual awards

banquet and after that by the earliest postmarked date or order in which contestants sign up at the pre-meeting.

7. **Safety:**

Safe boating conduct and a high standard of sportsmanship and courtesy must be observed at all times. All State and Local safety regulations must be followed. Any infractions of these rules may be cause for disqualification. All entrants must wear a personal floatation device when the big motor is engaged at more than a trolling speed. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES are allowed in the boat at any time during tournament hours. The safety of all contestants is the number one concern in all KWA tournaments.

WEATHER - It is solely the responsibility of the contestants to be aware of changing weather situations. If weather conditions become unsafe during the event hours, the contestants are required to seek safe shelter until the weather passes. All teams are required to check in by the end of each tournament whether or not the team has fish to weigh-in.

8. **Tackle and Equipment:**

Each team is responsible for supplying its own boat and equipment. All fish must be caught by rod and reel using legal methods only. Only two rods per person are allowed unless a team member has a Kansas license to fish with a third rod.

9. **Contestant Communication:**

During tournament hours (i.e. from takeoff until weigh-in) all on-water communication by contestants with other contestants (excluding partner) pertaining to 1)method or type of presentation being used, 2)lure selection or color and 3)location of fish or type of water being fished is strictly prohibited. Additionally, during tournament hours, contestants may not obtain or receive assistance from non-competitors or follow a non-competitor's boat. Neither contestants nor non-contestants are allowed to hold spots for KWA tournament contestants. KWA tournaments are boat versus boat competition, no group team fishing is allowed.

During the tournament hours a competitor may not transmit by any form of communication including but not limited to a cell phone, CB radio, VHF marine band radio, texting or any other type of communication device for the purpose of locating, catching fish or discussing your daily catch with nor receive any form of communication to aid you in the locating or catching of fish. Contestants are permitted to transmit by radio or cell phone, texting, etc. in case of emergency only.

10. Permitted Fishing Locations:

Each tournament is restricted to fishing within the boundaries of that lake. There are no off-limits areas except where as posted "off-limits" or "no fishing" by Local, State or Federal officials will be off limits. All fishing must be done from a boat. Contestants must remain in their boat at all times except in emergencies.

11. Buffer Zones:

All boats must maintain a 50-ft buffer zone between boats (except officials' boats). If other tournament contestants come within that zone, you may ask them to move if you were there first.

12. eTournament Rules:

- a. Anglers must use the eTournament app.
- b. Anglers agree to use any and all official equipment provided by the KWA.
- c. The Catch-Record-Release procedures will be reviewed at each rules meeting.
- d. Measuring the fish- One angler places the fish on the official KWA ruler, belly towards the angler. The mouth of the fish may be open or closed, but must touch the bump plate on the ruler to the LEFT (head to left), and the tail is extended back to its maximum length on the RIGHT end of the ruler (tail to the right). You may not insert anything into the gill plate of the fish while measuring. Tail may be pinched for measurement.
- e. The anglers agree on the length of the fish to 1/4 inch accuracy. If the tail TOUCHES a graduation line on the ruler, the official length of the fish for

scoring purposes shall be to that ¼ inch increment. (round down)

- f. While the fish is being held on the ruler a scoring photo must be taken. The photo must clearly show the overall length of the fish. The HEAD and TAIL must be clearly visible in the photo. The photograph will be of the LEFT side of the fish only. Tail fin must be flat on the ruler. A photo that does not clearly show the overall length of the fish, including head touching the bump board, and the left side of the fish, WILL NOT BE SCORED. A photo that does not clearly show the overall length of the fish, including the head touching the bump board but missing the tail, will be scored to the visible length in the picture AS LONG AS THE VISIBLE PORTION EXTENDS BEYOND MINIMUM LENGTH REQUIREMENTS. **While taking the photo you may only have one hand on or near the gill plate and your other hand cannot be touching the fish. No part of the arm above the wrist may touch the fish.** More than one attempt to get a valid scoring photo is allowed.

13. Length & Stringer Limits:

For eTournament (catch-photo-video release) tournaments, minimum length limit will be 15 inches. For live weigh-in tournaments the length limits will be consistent with State Regulations for that body of water. Each team will be allowed to weigh-in five (5) walleye, sauger, saugeye – or any combination there of unless state regulations dictate otherwise. All fish must meet walleye length limits. Any team presenting a short fish will have their entire day's catch disqualified. If any fish presented at weigh-in are questionable (white gills, overall pink flesh, soft flesh, sunken eyes, etc.) due to poor handling by a team, those fish may not be counted. Tournament officials reserve the right to disallow any questionable fish from the stringer.

14. Penalty for Dead Fish:

The KWA encourages contestants to keep their fish catches alive and releasable. In Live Weigh-In tournaments there will be a deduction of 8oz for each legal fish deemed to be un-releasable by tournament officials.

15. Weigh-In:

If the event is a Live Weigh-In format, fish will be left in the livewell until the boat is trailered. The driver will stop at the front of the weigh trailer and let the partner take the fish to the scales.

16. Late Penalty:

Teams must be inside the take-off cove (or designated area) at the designated time for their flight. Up to 15 minutes late will result in half the day's weight being deducted. If a team arrives up to 15 minutes late and holds the large walleye for the tournament, that team will remain eligible for the large walleye prize while still being penalized half their weight. Any team arriving over 15 minutes late will forfeit the entire day's catch.

17. Prizes and Awards

Prizes are awarded according to the total weight of each team's catch. The big walleye for each team shall be used to break heavy stringer ties. In the case of live weigh-in tournaments, the team will be responsible for choosing their largest walleye. Payout structure will be 80% payback of fees collected at each tournament, being paid back one place for each six entries (1:6). At a minimum the Top 5 will be paid as long as there are a minimum of 20 boats entered. There is also a cash prize of \$100 for the largest walleye caught at each event. Plaques are awarded to the top 3 finishing teams at each tournament as well as the person catching the largest walleye. Contestant teams do not need to be KWA members to be eligible for individual tournament prizes and awards. An IRS form 1099 will be filed for any fishing contestant earning \$600 or more during the current season.

18. Point System:

Points are awarded to KWA member teams at each tournament. Each team receives five (5) points for entering the tournament plus 50 points for a first place finish. Therefore a total of 55

points is received for first place, 54 points for second, etc. If you weigh a walleye in the tournament, you will receive a minimum of ten (10) points. If tournament boats do not check in at the end of the tournament day, the team will not receive their points for that day. Season totals will be calculated based on a team's best four (4) events. In the event a tie in points occurs, tie breakers are as follows: 1) total weight for the year, 2) total fish weighed, 3) heaviest fish weighed, 4) coin flip. The year-end order of finish, starting with the highest scorers, will determine who will be eligible for slots awarded to our club for the Bass Pro Shops / Cabela's National Team Championship (NTC) the following year. The top 5 finishing teams in season points will receive recognition at the annual awards banquet.

19. Team Substitutes

There is a hardship rule for emergencies. Each team is allowed one (1) substitute per partner per season. Substitutes do not have to be KWA members. In the event of a two day event (or events on back to back days on the same lake), the same substitute may be used for both days at no penalty.

20. Youth Awards

Each youth (defined as sixteen years of age or younger) that fishes in a KWA event will receive one entry into a year end drawing for a grand prize (2026 will be a lifetime fishing license). If the youth fishes all five tournaments, they will receive five entries. Tournament finish will be irrelevant. Youth are not required to fish with the same partner to be eligible. Youth angler must be designated as such at registration and listed on the official entry form. Other prizes may be awarded at individual events and/or year end pending availability.

21. Tournament Rights:

Tournament officials reserve the right to refuse entry to any individuals.

22. Protests:

Only contestants and tournament officials have a right to protest a team or contestant. An official written protest with a \$100 fee must be filed with a tournament official within 30 minutes of the completion of the daily weigh-in. Following

interviews with the concerned parties, tournament directors will issue a ruling. The fee will be returned if the protest is found valid. If the protest is found not to be valid, the accuser will forfeit the \$100 fee. In the event a rules infraction incurred a penalty for daily and/or tournament weight may be applied. Cash, prizes and awards must be returned if so requested. If a protest is found valid, the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs.

23. Disabled Boat

In the event of boat trouble, you may ride in with another tournament boat to weigh fish. Anglers may call a tournament official without penalty. If riding in with another competitor, anglers shall notify a tournament official noting which team is receiving the assistance and which team is providing assistance. If the event is a live weigh-in event, fish must remain separated. Teams will still be required to meet their designated check in times. In the event a tournament director is

called to assist or rescue a team, that tournament director will be excused in the event the boat is late.

24. Miscellaneous

All entrants must read the rules, fill out the entry form, sign the entry form, pay the appropriate fees and be at the pre-meeting. No refunds will be made nor will credit be extended for any team that choose not to fish due to inclement weather or unforeseen circumstances. No other refunds allowed (except in case of emergencies). All rules have 'loop-holes'. It is the intention of the sponsors to provide an honest and sportsman-like tournament. Contestants are reminded that each team should conduct themselves in a sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner when fishing. In the interest of good sportsmanship, all contestants are reminded that the 'spirit of the rule' will prevail in all judgement cases. All decisions are final.