

# 2024 AMS Bowfishing Big 20 Challenge Rules

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**RULES WILL BE STRICTLY ENFORCED!**

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## General Rules:

1. **All team members must be present at team registration.** Registration will open at 12:00pm central time in Stratford, WI at **AMS Bowfishing, 212810 Connor Avenue, Stratford WI 54484.**
2. **All boats and teams must be registered by 4:00pm central time May 18.**
3. **A mandatory pre-tournament meeting will start at 5:00pm central time; all team members must be present.** At 5:45pm central time teams will go to vehicles and prepare for takeoff.
4. **AMS Reserves the right to allow or not allow late entries.** If allowed, late entries must go through rules overview and will leave last.
5. **2-4-person teams are allowed.** You **cannot** have a non-team member aid with transportation, driving the boat, shining of the lights or retrieving or transporting fish.
6. While we encourage youth to be involved in our event, all Teams must have at least one adult team member 18 years old or older. (All participants under 18 must have parent/guardian signatures for liability and media release. Please ask ahead of the event if needed.)
7. Team cancellation requests must be received 72 hours in advance of the start of the tournament for refund. Any team that pre-registers and does not show is considered forfeit.
8. **Tie Breaker: In the event there is a tie in total weight the team that has the heaviest common carp will advance. So, make sure to weigh your heaviest common carp. If there is a tie in the big fish categories, we will flip a coin for the winner as the fish will have been already disposed.**
9. **No Re-weighing of fish.**
10. **Departure from the Stratford Industrial Park.** The top 20 pre-registered teams will leave in order of registration. After that you will be placed in pods of 10. Teams 30-39 will leave as parked, then Teams 40-49 will leave as parked etc. Teams must remain in SINGLE FILE through the parking lot to the stop sign. Any passing in the parking lot or on residential streets will disqualify your team.
11. Each team will be given two tokens with their team number on it. Team captains must return one token to a staff member at the entrance of the Stratford Industrial Park by 8:00am CENTRAL TIME. Any teams that hand in a token after 8:00:00am CENTRAL TIME will be disqualified. The other token will be given to a staff member at weigh-in. All team members must be present at weigh-in to assist. Team members are expected to move fish for weighing and are solely responsible to put all fish in the dumpster when appropriate during or after weigh-in.
12. If you will be carrying a concealed firearm in your boat, please have your concealed carry permit.
13. If your team forfeits and leaves before weigh-in, one member must call or text the tournament organizer and let him know that your team number will not be returning for weigh-in. All teams need to be accounted for after the tournament for safety reasons.
14. AMS has the right to change and enforce rules as deemed necessary and has the right to deny entry and/or disqualify any team at any time for any reason as they see fit to preserve safety and the integrity of our tournament.
15. Failure to comply with tournament rules will result in disqualification and entry fee will be forfeited.
16. Polygraph testing on-site and randomly selected teams will be polygraphed.
17. **All participants are required to sign a liability and media release form at registration.**

## Boundary Rules:

1. Boundaries: any public waters in **Wisconsin** that have a public boat launch. Public boat launch means any boater can use the launch and it is open to the public. You cannot use a private boat launch or shoot fish in a private pond or lake.
2. **Mississippi River:** You can shoot the Minnesota and Iowa side of the Mississippi River however you cannot go past the railroad tracks on the Minnesota or Iowa side. You cannot launch a boat on the Minnesota/Iowa side. All boats must be launched from the Wisconsin side.
3. If you are bowfishing the Minnesota side of the Mississippi River you must obey the Minnesota regulations and licensing.
4. If you are bowfishing the Iowa side of the Mississippi River you must obey the Iowa Regulations and licensing.

## Fish & Fishing Related Rules:

1. **10 Limit on Buffalo. Teams may weigh no more than 10 Bigmouth or Smallmouth Buffalo combined.**
2. **Legal Species:** Any Legal Species by Wisconsin Regulations. Please check the WI regulations directly to be sure this list remains accurate. Rough fish include suckers, common carp, Asian carp (bighead, black, silver and grass), goldfish, redhorse, freshwater drum, burbot, bowfin, gar, buffalo, lamprey, alewife, gizzard shad, smelt, mooneye, and carsuckers (quillbacks).
3. **Catfish will not be allowed to weigh in.** No dumping of catfish in dumpsters. (Grounds for Disqualification). Catfish if harvested must remain with team.
4. **A Wisconsin fishing license is required anytime you are on the water shooting fish.**
5. Winner will be determined by the total weight of their 20 largest fish. No culling at weigh-in, teams are responsible to have their 20 biggest fish ready to be weighed. Only 10 Buffalo (Bigmouth or Smallmouth) will be allowed to weigh in.

## Vehicle, Boat, Transport & Equipment Related Rules:

1. You must finish the tournament with the same marked vehicle and boat that you started with. Boats and vehicles will be marked for identification and license plates and boat registration numbers will be documented and verified by staff at boat inspection before departure and at the check-in station.
2. Each boat must have proper boat registration numbers and papers.
3. Each boat must have the following safety equipment. Proper running lights, fire extinguisher, horn or whistle, life jackets for each individual in the boat and one throwable PFD. Each team member must wear a Coast Guard approved life jacket anytime the boat is running faster than no wake.
4. Fanboats and airboats must have a solid, welded construction fan shroud that covers the entire prop from top to bottom. Shroud must cover entire front of fan and outer perimeter of blades. Backside of blades can be open. For Example, tacked up mesh with zip ties or rope is not acceptable. It must be a permanent structure in your boat and properly welded. If we feel your shroud is unsafe or marginal, we will not allow you to participate.
5. Trailering will be allowed.
6. Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is working with us and will notify us of any complaints and incidents on the water. This also applies while driving your vehicle to your destination. You must obey speed limits and traffic laws. Any citation will be called in to AMS staff and may result in disqualification.

## Fish Handling Rules:

1. Only single hook gaffs will be allowed in boats the night of the tournament for landing big fish. Nets, snares or gigs are NOT allowed.
2. All fish must be shot with bow and arrow and show evidence of such.

3. Team members may wade in the water to shoot fish; however, you must stay within 25 yards of the boat at all times. You cannot drop team members off on shore, leave and return to pick them and their fish up.
4. Scouting is allowed, however any boat that is on Wisconsin water with bows, arrows, gaffs, nets, or gigs 24 hours prior to the start of the tournament will be disqualified and entry fee will not be refunded.
5. Fish disposal available at weigh-in. **NO DUMPING OF FISH BACK IN WATER.** It is illegal to return any fish in Wisconsin waters that have been shot with bow.
6. No altering fish to add weight or remove weight. Random fish will be gutted during weigh ins. Small fish must be together in one piece. No gills removed, punched with holes, insides missing or dried out.
7. To prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species and disease, Wisconsin law requires that you drain all water from your boat, motor and all equipment before transporting on a highway. Immediately after leaving any waterbody and before leaving any landing or associated parking area, you must remove all attached aquatic plants or animals. **No barrels of fish may return to the Stratford Industrial Park in water or ice. Any dumping of boat water, fish water, or fish remains on the grounds is prohibited and will be grounds for disqualification. Teams may lay fish on the grass individually to cull through and weigh before weigh-in but absolutely no dumping fish from the barrel onto the grass. Fish must be cleaned of debris prior to weigh-in.**

### **Sportsmanship Related Rules:**

1. Teams must respect others on the water. No crowding and no harassing other teams.
2. Absolutely no teaming up, no buddy system and no transferring fish from one boat or vehicle to another.
3. Unsportsmanlike conduct will not be tolerated and may result in disqualification, depending on severity. If a warning is given, you will have one chance to resolve the issue. While many issues can be considered Unsportsmanlike, some examples are – blocking highway traffic, blocking multiple boat ramps, blocking fishing holes, waking another boat.
4. **Any participant involved in poor sportsmanship, heated arguments or similar behavior will have their team warned or disqualified at AMS staff option. We will not allow any altercation, including inappropriate cursing of others before, during or after the tournament. All TEAMS involved will be warned or disqualified regardless of fault. You are guilty by involvement. Zero tolerance.**
5. **Any physical altercations by participants will result in the team being disqualified and banned from any future AMS Bowfishing events and will be asked to leave immediately.**
6. Any accusation of a team cheating must be accompanied by a \$100 protest fee and concrete evidence of such. Photos, videos, proof of citation etc. If tournament staff agrees with your protest, the protest fee will be refunded and the accused team will be disqualified.
7. AMS Tournament staff will have final decision on all protest claims and complaints.

### **No Alcohol Permitted Rule:**

1. **No alcohol or drugs permitted, before, during or after our tournament. All teams will be asked if you have any alcohol at registration, if you do you will be given one chance to remove it. We will store your alcohol if necessary and can be picked up at the end of the tournament. After registration, if you or a team member is caught with alcohol the team will be disqualified. If a team returns to weigh in and alcohol is found, the team will be disqualified. If you are perceived under the influence, you will not be allowed to enter and will be disqualified. Final determination of a disputed claim will be determined by local on-call law enforcement. Very simple rule, leave the beer and alcohol at home.**