

Crappie Anglers of Texas (CAT)

2026 Tournament Rules

(Updated November 4, 2025)

1. Entry Fees

a. Entry fees for each tournament will be determined by the Board of Directors

b. 2026 Qualifier entry fees for the three divisions will be:

PRO = \$170.00 including \$20 Big Fish Pot, Option \$100.00 Side Pot (CASH ONLY)

SEMI PRO= \$100.00 including \$20 Big Fish Pot,

AMATEUR - \$50.00 including a \$10.00 Big Fish Pot.

c. The amount or percentage of the entry fees that will be paid out at each tournament will be determined by the Board of Directors

d. Entry fees for the entire Team must be received by the Tournament Director by close of the designated late registration period. Withdrawal of entry must be stated by the team by close of late registration

e. Website entries will close Wednesday at midnight the week of the tournament.

f. Entry fees will not be refunded or moved to another tournament unless a tournament is canceled or postponed by the Tournament Director

2. Teams

a. Team members must have valid applicable fishing and boating licenses when participating in any tournament

b. All CAT Qualifier tournaments will be a competition among fishing Teams in three separate Divisions fishing against Teams that are in the same Division

c. A Team must be made up of CAT Members only and must have not more than

(i) two CAT Members,

(ii) two CAT Members and a Junior Angler, or

(iii) one CAT Member and two Junior Anglers

d. A "Junior Angler" is any angler that is not yet 18 years old and is a minor child of a Team member or other minor whose parent or legal guardian (that is a CAT Member) has authorized such minor to fish with the CAT Member and has signed the appropriate releases, as determined by the Board of Directors.

A Junior Angler is a member of the team and their fish are part of the "team's" 7 fish stringer. The team weighs in 7 fish total. Junior Anglers DO NOT weigh in additional fish, but the winnings will reflect on the adult(s) as the Junior Angler will get their own check for a win.

- e. Each team consists of two anglers. **A team may name one substitute for the season.** The substitute can fish in place of either team member at any event, for one or multiple tournaments. At least one original member must fish each tournament for points to count, and the substitute must be a registered Crappie Angler of Texas member before fishing.
- f. A CAT Member cannot be on more than one Team in any tournament, but may qualify to fish in the TSCC on more than one Team at different CAT Qualifier tournaments
- g. Teams members must fish from the same Boat
- h. Once a "Team" is declared on a tournament entry form, those two Team members must actually fish together in the tournament entered or one of the first three CAT Qualifier. After the Team members have actually fished together, one of those Team members may fish without the other Team member in any CAT Qualifier or the TSCC on behalf of the original Team.
- i. Once a Team qualifies to fish in the TSCC, either of those Team members may fish without the other Team member in the TSCC on behalf of the original Team. If both Team members of the qualified Team want to fish separately in the TSCC, then one Team member may fish in the TSCC on behalf of the original Team, and the other Team member must qualify to fish in the TSCC independently or as a part of a different Team. If both Team members of the qualified Team want to fish in the TSCC on behalf of the original Team and neither Team member has qualified independently or as a part of a different Team to fish in the TSCC, then neither Team member of the original Team may fish in the TSCC on behalf of the original Team.

3. Divisions

- a. Each CAT tournament will be made up of three Divisions: Pro, Semi Pro and Amateur. (see below for explanation)
- b. Any Team may compete in Pro in any Tournament
- c. The following individuals will be prohibited from competing in Semi Pro or Amateur
 - i. Any person that is a fishing guide, as defined by TP&W regulations, or has been a fishing guide during the previous calendar year
 - ii. Any other individual specifically prohibited from competing in Semi-Pro or Amateur by the Board of Directors
 - iii. **Any team or individual that enters and fishes the Pro Division at any tournament will be required to finish the year in the Pro Division, including the TSCC.**
- d. **Pro Division:** The Pro Division is the highest level of competition within Crappie Anglers of Texas. This division is open to guides, professional anglers, and any club members who wish to compete at the top level. **All Pro Division tournaments will be artificial bait only, NO LIVE BAIT.**
- e. **Semi-Pro Division, Advancement Rule:** The Semi-Pro Division is intended for experienced anglers who are not guides or professional competitors. This division provides a competitive

level between Amateur and Pro. To maintain fair competition, anglers who consistently finish at the top must advance to the Pro Division. Points will be awarded per tournament as follows:

- 1st place – 3 points
- 2nd place – 2 points
- 3rd place – 1 point

Any angler or team who accumulates 10 points or more within a single season will be required to move up to the Pro Division for the following season.

f. **Amateur Division**, Advancement Rule: The Amateur Division is intended for developing anglers. To ensure fair competition, anglers who consistently place at the top must advance to the next division. Points will be awarded per tournament as follows:

- 1st place – 3 points
- 2nd place – 2 points
- 3rd place – 1 point

Any angler or team who accumulates 8 points or more within a single season will be required to move up immediately, even if you are in the middle of the season. The board has discretion.

d. Any individual that is prohibited from competing in Semi-Pro or Amateur by the above rule may ask the Board of Directors in writing for an exception to fish in Semi-Pro or Amateur, and such exceptions may be granted by the Board of Directors at its sole discretion.

e. Once a team moves up to a higher division they must stay in that division until the next fishing year.

4. CAT Texas State Championship

a. Each Team that **fishes and checks in at 3 or more CAT Qualifier Tournaments** will qualify to fish in the CAT Texas State Championship in a division in which they fished one or more of the CAT Qualifier Tournaments. (**“check in” must be done at the weigh-in location or by contacting a CAT Board member**) Teams fishing at a CAT Sanctioned Tournament may qualify to fish in the CAT Texas State Championship in accordance with standards and regulations set forth by the Board of Directors.

i. Teams that qualify through a CAT Sanctioned Tournament will fish in the CAT Texas State Championship in the Division designated by the Board of Directors

ii. Teams that qualify through a CAT Qualifier Tournament will fish in the CAT Texas State Championship in the Division they competed in during the CAT Qualifier Tournament in which they qualified. **If a team or individual has qualified to fish the TSCC in Semi-Pro but has entered Pro at a qualifier they will be required to fish the Pro Division from that point forward including the TSCC.**

b. A “CAT Sanctioned Tournament” is any tournament sanctioned by the Board of Directors, other than a CAT Qualifier Tournament.

c. A “CAT Qualifier Tournament” is any tournament run in accordance with CAT’s tournament rules, administered by CAT members and designated by the Board of Directors as a CAT Qualifier Tournament prior to the date of such event

d. The CAT Texas State Championship will be a two-day tournament and special **pre-fishing days, off-limits rules, and entry fees** may be set by the Board of Directors prior to the tournament

e. **The entry fee for the 2026 TSCC will be as follows: Pro Division= \$380 including the \$20 big fish pot (per day) and Semi-Pro Division = \$240 including the \$20 big fish pot (per day), Amateur Division will be \$120.00, \$10 being Big Fish (per day).**

f. Other rules may be implemented for the CAT Texas State Championship by the Board of Directors and announced prior to the CAT Texas State Championship.

g. Other Teams may be permitted to fish in the CAT Texas State Championship by the Board of Directors in its sole discretion

h. The lake where the CAT Texas State Championship is being held will be off-limits beginning one hour following the conclusion of the first day weigh-in until 12:01AM of the second day of the tournament

5. Anglers of the Year Competition—The Points Race

a. The Angler of the Year (AOY) competition recognizes the most consistent and successful anglers throughout the tournament season. Points are awarded based on final standings at each event and are accumulated toward the season total. There will be one dropped tournament per team.

b. Pro Division: The Pro Division will participate in the full Angler of the Year points race. Points will be awarded at each sanctioned event and accumulated through the season to determine the Pro Division Angler of the Year. Ties will be decided by total weight for the season. Only Pro Division anglers are eligible for Pro AOY awards and standings

c. Semi-Pro Division: The Semi-Pro Division will also participate in a full season-long points race to determine the Semi-Pro Angler of the Year. Points will be earned based on tournament placement at each event and totaled at the end of the season. Ties will be determined by total weight for the season. Semi-Pro points and AOY standings are separate from all other divisions.

d. Amateur Division: The Amateur Division is designed as an entry-level class and will not participate in a season-long points race. Each tournament will be scored as a standalone event, and no cumulative points will be recorded.

e. Junior Anglers will not receive points in either division d. Prizes and awards will be determined by the Board of Directors.

f. The Points Race in the Pro Division

g. Points will be awarded to Teams in CAT Qualifier Tournaments only as follows:

1. 100 points to the 1st place Team in each CAT Qualifier Tournament

2. Each Team beginning with the 2nd place Team receives 1 point fewer than received by the Team finishing ahead of them
3. Each Team that does not weigh in at least one Legal Crappie in a tournament will receive 0 points, regardless of their finishing position
4. Each Team's total points in their top **6** CAT Qualifier Tournaments will be totaled at the end of the season. There will be one dropped tournament.

g. The Points Race in the Semi-Pro Division

h. Points will be awarded to individuals in CAT Qualifier Tournaments only as follows:

1. 100 points to the 1st place Team that actually fished in each CAT Qualifier Tournament
2. Each Team beginning with the 2nd place Team receives 1 point fewer than received by the Team finishing ahead of them
3. Each Team that does not weigh in at least one Legal Crappie in a tournament will receive 0 points, regardless of the Team's finishing position
4. Each Team's total points in their top **6** CAT Qualifier Tournaments will be totaled at the end of the season. There will be one dropped tournament.

i. The Points Race in the Semi-Pro Division

g. In case of a tie for Anglers of the Year in either division, there will be no tie breaker. Teams tied will share the award and prizes equally.

6. Tournament Lakes

a. All tournament lakes will be determined by the Board of Directors

b. There will be NO OFF LIMITS for CAT qualifiers for the 2026 season.

c. The TSCC tournament lake will be off limits Monday and Tuesday the week of the tournament.

7. Safety

a. Tournament Hours will be set and announced by the Tournament Director in his sole discretion

i. "Tournament Hours" is the time period beginning at the start of a tournament and ending when the weigh-in is concluded, all prizes have been awarded, and the Tournament Director has declared that the tournament is concluded

b. No spectators are allowed in a Boat with a Team during Tournament Hours to include family and camera people

c. Teams may start fishing (line in the water) anywhere on the lake at the starting time announced by the Tournament Director

d. The Tournament Director may cancel, postpone, delay or shorten any tournament in his sole discretion due to extreme weather or water conditions

- e. Team members must comply with all applicable State and Federal fishing and boating regulations during tournament hours, including the use of boat kill switches
- f. PFDs must be worn by Team members during Tournament Hours when their Boat is on plane
- g. Team members may not use or be under the influence of alcohol or illegal drugs during Tournament Hours
- h. Team members must operate their Boats in a safe and courteous manner at all times during Tournament Hours
- i. All Team members must sign a release form prior to participation in any tournament.

8. Weigh-Ins

- a. The site for each tournament weigh-in will be determined by the Tournament Director in his sole discretion
- b. The Tournament Director will determine the time of opening and closure of the weigh-in line in his sole discretion
- c. Once the Tournament Director announces that the weigh-in line is closed no Team or Team member will be allowed to enter the weigh-in line
- d. Not more than 7 Legal Crappie that are caught and landed by Team members on permissible Fishing Tackle, Bait or Lures may be weighed-in and the total weight of the Legal Crappie weighed-in by each Team will determine the order of finish
 - i. A Legal Crappie is any crappie that is alive when entering the weigh-in line, is caught from a Permitted Fishing Area during the applicable Tournament Hours, does not have any weight enhancements, was caught in a legal manner, and is legal to be kept by the Team under applicable state law
 - ii. Once a Team brings its fish to the weigh-in area, no fish may be removed
 - iii. Presenting more than 7 Legal Crappie to be weighed-in will result in the disqualification of the Team
 - iv. Presenting any fish to be weighed-in that is not a Legal Crappie will result in the disqualification of the Team
 - v. Exception--If an otherwise Legal Crappie is dead when entering the weigh-in line, the dead crappie will be removed, and the Team may continue to the scales for the weigh-in without replacing the dead crappie
- e. The first tie breaker after total weight will be the weight of the Teams' biggest Legal Crappie.
- f. After weigh-in, all fish should be released live back into the lake. No collection of fish in coolers is allowed at the weigh-in area without prior approval by the board. Any donation of fish to other individuals must follow TP&W regulations and be accompanied by a Wildlife Resource Document. That responsibility is on you and does not/cannot be monitored by the board or participating staff members.

9. Permitted Fishing Areas

- a. All areas of the designated tournament lake during tournament hours that are open to all Teams and accessible by the Tournament Director in his or her Boat, except fishing within 50 feet of another Team that is already fishing is prohibited
- b. The “50 feet” rule is waived when fishing in and around bridge columns
- c. The Board of Directors may declare certain areas of a tournament lake to be off-limits during a CAT Qualifier tournament or the TSCC

10. Permissible Boats, Fishing Tackle, Baits and Lures

- a. A Boat is any vessel propelled by a gasoline-powered motor. Canoes, Kayaks, rubber rafts and float tubes are not considered to be “Boats” for purposes of these rules
- b. Team Members must use rod and reel combos, hand-held pole and reel combos or hand-held poles
- c. Each Team is limited to not more than 8 poles with not more than 2 baits on each pole in the water at any one time
- d. Live, artificial baits and lures are permitted for Semi-Pro and Amateur Divisions; however Pro Division will be artificial bait only, NO LIVE BAIT
- e. Landing Nets may be used

11. Sportsmanship

- a. Team members may not (i) hire or compensate any person in any way to fish with or for a Team Member during any tournament, or (ii) hire or compensate any person in any way to fish with a Team member on a lake which will host a CAT Qualifier Tournament or the TSCC 30 days prior to such tournament
 - i. This rule does not restrict Team members from agreeing to share tournament expenses
- b. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CB's or the like to communicate fishing information during Tournament Hours is prohibited
- c. Hole sitting (holding a spot for a Team) by any Team, Team member or any non-competitor on behalf of a Team or Team member is prohibited
- d. Teams are urged to release any Crappie following the weigh-in that are likely to survive
- e. Teams are urged not to release any Crappie following the weigh-in that are not likely to survive
- f. Unsportsmanlike conduct during Tournament Hours may be grounds for disqualification from the tournament
- g. **Any fish may be examined at the weigh in, including but not limited to, metal detectors or opening a fish up, at the tournament director's discretion.**

12. Violations

- a. Unless otherwise specifically stated in these Rules, a violation of any of these Rules will result in disqualification from the tournament in which the violation occurred and the forfeiture of any prizes received
- b. Protests alleging a violation of any of these rules during a tournament must be made in writing to the Tournament Director within 30 minutes following the end of the weigh-in. All protests must cite the rule number allegedly broken and must be signed by the person making the protest. The person making the protest and the person against whom the protest is being made may be required to submit to and pass a polygraph test or other truth test.
- c. At the request of the Tournament Director, one or more Team members that fished in the tournament must submit to and pass a polygraph test or any other truth test deemed necessary to determine compliance with these rules. Each Team whose Team member or members fail to pass a polygraph test or other truth test will result in the disqualification of the Team from the tournament and the forfeiture of any prizes received. If a Team member has a verifiable medical condition that prevents the administration of a polygraph test or other truth test, another Team member may take the test. By participating in any CAT tournament, Team members agree to release Crappie Anglers of Texas, its Board of Directors and its sponsors from any liability arising from the administration of the test and/or the decisions made as a result of the test.
- d. The interpretation of the rules shall be at the sole discretion of the Board of Directors