

GRAINGER COUNTY FISHING TOURNAMENT

Official Rules | October 24, 2026

Grainger County Park | Cherokee Lake

Special Guest: Ott DeFoe — Signing Event

Entry: \$135 (Early) / \$155 (After July 30)

PART ONE — OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

1. General Overview

Event Date	Saturday, October 24, 2026
Location	Grainger County Park, Cherokee Lake
Launch	Safe light — tiered by boat number
Weigh-In	Tiered based on number of participating boats
Entry Fee	\$135 early / \$155 after July 30
Prize Pool	100% of entry fees distributed to winners
Format	Two-angler teams; five-fish limit; artificial lures only

2. Eligibility

- Open to all anglers holding a valid Tennessee fishing license.
- All participants must comply with TWRA regulations.
- Minors (under 18) must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian.
- No pre-fishing within tournament boundaries after the mandatory meeting.

3. Registration

- Registration opens May 5, 2026 and closes the day before the event or when capacity is reached.
- Early registration: \$135 per team (deadline July 30) — includes \$10 Big Fish pool contribution.
- Late registration: \$155 per team (July 31 through close of registration) — includes \$10 Big Fish pool contribution.
- Register online via the official tournament QR code or website link.

- No refunds after registration is confirmed.
- Each team must check in at the tournament meeting the evening before or morning of the event.
- Teams with an angler aged 15 or under must have a parent or legal guardian co-sign the registration form. The parent or guardian assumes full legal responsibility for the minor participant.

4. Tournament Format

- Teams consist of one or two anglers per boat.
- Launch occurs at safe light with tiered launch order by assigned boat number.
- All boats must have a functioning, aerated livewell.
- Artificial lures only — no live or cut bait. Trolling is prohibited.
- Five-fish limit per team. Only largemouth, smallmouth, or spotted bass count toward weight.
- All fish must meet TWRA minimum size limits for the body of water.
- Weigh-in times are tiered and posted based on final boat count.

5. Prize Structure — Scales with Participation

To reward more anglers as participation grows, prize places are tiered by the number of boats entered. The Big Fish Prize Pool is included in the registration fee — \$10 of each team’s entry is designated for the Big Fish pot and tracked separately from the main prize pool.

Boats Entered	# Places Paid	Big Fish Pool	Prize Distribution
Under 25	Top 3	\$100 Big Fish	1st 50% / 2nd 30% / 3rd 20%
25 – 49	Top 5	\$150 Big Fish	1st 40% / 2nd 25% / 3rd 15% / 4th 12% / 5th 8%
50 – 74	Top 7	\$200 Big Fish	1st 35% / 2nd 20% / 3rd 14% / 4th 11% / 5th 8% / 6th 7% / 7th 5%
75 – 99	Top 8	\$250 Big Fish	1st 33% / 2nd 20% / 3rd 13% / 4th 10% / 5th 8% / 6th 6% / 7th 5% / 8th 5%
100+	Top 10	\$300 Big Fish	1st 30% / 2nd 18% / 3rd 12% / 4th 10% / 5th 8% / 6th 6% / 7th 5% / 8th 4% / 9th 4% / 10th 3%

Note: \$10 of each team’s registration fee is designated for the Big Fish pool. Big Fish is paid out to the angler with the heaviest single fish regardless of team placement. In the event of a tie in standings, the largest single fish determines the higher-placing team.

5a. Detailed Payout Example — 50 Boats (7 Places Paid)

At 50 boats at \$135/team = \$6,750 total prize pool (100% distributed):

Place	% of Prize Pool	Example (50 boats @ \$135)
1st Place	35%	\$2,363
2nd Place	20%	\$1,350
3rd Place	14%	\$945
4th Place	11%	\$743
5th Place	8%	\$540
6th Place	7%	\$473
7th Place	5%	\$338
Big Fish	Included in registration (\$10/team)	\$500 (50 boats)

6. Youth Angler Prize

- Any team with at least one angler aged 15 or under is eligible for the Youth Angler Prize.
- The youth team with the heaviest five-fish limit wins a dedicated prize separate from the main payout.
- Youth teams are also eligible for the standard prize places — youth designation is additive, not exclusive.
- Youth prize amount is subject to sponsor contribution. Final amount will be posted on the official tournament website and announced at the pre-tournament meeting no later than 7 days before the event.
- Teams must declare youth eligibility at check-in.
- Any cash prize awarded to a team that includes an angler aged 15 or under will be paid directly to the registered parent or legal guardian on behalf of the team.

7. Conduct and Safety

- Life jackets must be worn at all times while the boat is under power — no exceptions.
- Each boat must carry all TWRA and USCG required safety equipment.

- Alcohol and illegal substances are strictly prohibited during tournament hours.
- Unsportsmanlike conduct, cheating, or abuse of officials will result in immediate disqualification.
- Tournament officials reserve the right to inspect any boat, livewell, or catch at any time.
- All boats must have a working bilge pump and be considered seaworthy before launch.

8. Weigh-In Procedures

- Fish must be alive at weigh-in. Dead fish incur a 0.25 lb penalty per fish.
- Fish must meet TWRA minimum size limits. Short fish result in a 0.25 lb penalty per fish.
- Teams must report to the weigh-in line by their designated tiered time. Late arrivals are disqualified.
- Only five fish per team may be weighed.
- Fish must be kept in the livewell until called to weigh-in. No culling in the weigh-in line.
- Tournament officials will measure and weigh all fish on a certified scale.

9. Disputes

- All protests must be filed in writing with the tournament director within 15 minutes of weigh-in completion.
- A \$50 protest fee is required (refunded if protest is upheld).
- The tournament director's decision is final and binding.

10. Sponsorship & Special Events

- Ott DeFoe — professional bass angler — will appear for a signing event. Time and location posted at check-in.
- Sponsor challenges and additional prizes may be announced at the pre-tournament meeting.