

## HAYWARD LAKES CHAPTER of MUSKIES, INC. 2026 TOURNAMENT RULES

1. Tournament waters are the Chippewa Flowage, Round Lakes, Spider Chain, Moose Lake, Callahan Lake, Grindstone Lake, Lost Land-Teal Lakes, Lac Courte Oreilles, Tiger Cat Flowage, Ghost Lake, Lake Hayward, Clear Lake, Eau Claire Chain, Whitefish, Big Sissabagama, Sand Lake, Namekagon and all bays and sloughs accessible without portage are included. **Note these special boundaries:** On Moose Lake, fisherman may go up the West Fork of the Chippewa River 1 mile, as far as the first rapids known as Browns Rapids. On the Chippewa Flowage, fisherman may go under the bridge at B for 1/2 mile to the first rapids. On Lake Hayward, fisherman may go up the Namekagon 1/2 mile to the first rapids.
2. All occupants of a boat must be registered contestants. Guides may be used as long as they are registered contestants.
3. All fish must be caught on legal sport-fishing tackle using artificial baits only. Also snagging, the use of set lines or spearing of a fish is not allowed. All other Wisconsin fishing and boat regulations apply. Motor trolling is permitted where allowed by law but only one line per person, no more than three lines per boat. **NO LIVE BAIT ALLOWED!**
4. **THE USE OF FORWARD-FACING "LIVE ACTION" SONAR IS PROHIBITED AND CAUSE FOR DISQUALIFICATION. To ensure compliance, you may remove the live transducer, cover it or lock it out.**
5. The minimum length of fish to be entered from tournament waters is 34 inches. Note that most lakes now have legal minimum size limits of 40 or 50 inches. Fish may be entered in the tournament even if they are smaller than the lake's minimum, but are at least 34 inches.
6. **Fish may be registered either via the traditional paper entry/release forms that are turned in to our official release stations or electronically submitted via photo entries emailed to our Tournament Headquarters.** Eight points will be awarded for each 34-inch muskie released plus one point for each additional inch. Fractions will be measured to the nearest 1/2 inch (rounding down). Example: a 34-1/2 inch muskie receives 8-1/2 points; a 41-1/4 inch muskie receives 15 points. Winners will be decided on a cumulative point total.
7. Fish entered in the tournament via the traditional paper form entry method must be measured and released **ALIVE** in the presence of at least TWO witnesses, of which one person must be **OUTSIDE** the contestant's boat and party. Non-contestants may witness releases to assure quick releases. The witnesses must fill out and sign the release form and fill in the size of the fish.
- ★ 8. **NOTE! For the paper entry method, you may not move your boat to go to a witness - they must come to you. When you have caught a fish, you can only use your motor to maintain position. Contestants should fish in sight of other people and have an air horn and flag. In addition, please watch for other fisherman who may need a witness. This rule is to comply with DNR tournament and possession regulations. If a contestant moves his boat, the fish cannot be entered in the tournament. Have a large net and keep the fish in the water!**
9. Fish may be electronically entered via **Cellphone pictures (with location) and Email**. In 2025, 65% of entries were made via this method. With this method, witnesses aren't required, so there is no need to wait for witnesses to verify the catch-and-release. The photos are the verification of the time, location and size.
10. **Detailed instructions for entering fish electronically, including phone settings and Email procedures will be posted NLT 1 Sept 2026 on the Muskies Inc Hayward Chapter Facebook page and our website at: [www.muskiesinc-hayward.org](http://www.muskiesinc-hayward.org) After the detailed instructions are published, participants are encouraged to practice entry procedures by taking photos and emailing them to our Tournament Headquarters before the event—our staff will respond and assist with any problems with phone/ email settings.**
11. For **Friday and Saturday** fishing hours are from **8:00am until 6:00pm**. All fish must be released and witnessed or photographed NLT 6:00pm both days. For paper entries, forms must be physically taken to one of our Official entry/release stations by **7:30pm** on the day of the catch. For photo entries, the photos and catch info needs to be emailed to Tournament HQ by **7:30pm** on these two days.
12. For **Sunday**, fishing hours start at **7:00am** and end in time for you to either physically bring paper entry/release forms to an Official Station or email Cellphone photo entries to Tournament Headquarters by **Noon—the Final Deadline**. All entries, whether witnessed paper forms or emailed fish photo entries will be reviewed and verified by our staff and Tournament Officials. Note: hours are set to comply with state law which allows a maximum of 10 hours per day of competition.
13. For each fish entered in the tournament, a separate tournament form must be filled out and physically turned in, or a separate email with photos and catch information must be sent in. The official entry/release stations are: **Hayward Bait & Tackle, Angler's Haven Resort, Jenk's Bait & Tackle, Mogasheen Resort and Bobber Down Bait and Tackle.**
14. All contest winners must be present at awards ceremony at **2:30pm on Sunday, September 27, 2026 - NO EXCEPTIONS.**
15. Written protests must be presented to Tournament Judges prior to 12:30pm on Sunday at Tournament Headquarters, the Hayward Sports Center. A \$100 protest fee must accompany each written protest. The fee will be refunded if the protest is found to be valid. If the protest is valid, the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs, including polygraph testing. If the protest is invalid, the fee will be retained and the protesting party must pay all investigative costs including polygraph testing.
16. The Hayward Lakes Chapter of Muskies, Inc. reserves the right to reject any registration.
17. All witnesses on all forms will be verified; Measurements, times, and locations will be verified on all Photo-Email entries.
18. All decisions of the judges are final. In the interest of good sportsmanship, all participants are reminded that the "spirit of the rule" will prevail in all judgement cases. At the judges' discretion, a polygraph test may be administered to any contestant or witness.
19. Tournament officials will be present on tournament waters during the contest.
20. ANY INFRACTION of these rules may call for immediate disqualification.