

Spotty Bowl 2026

Official Rules

LAOC Section

(By participating in Spotty Bowl 2026 you agree to familiarize yourself with and comply with these Rules. Any questions regarding the Tournament or these Rules should be directed to the Tournament Organizers.)

I. Tournament Format

- A. This is a catch, photograph, and release Spotted Bay Bass tournament for individual anglers focusing on catching the longest five fish bag under timed, tournament conditions. The Tournament also includes the opportunity to participate in multiple side pots at no additional charge, with prizes provided by very generous sponsors.

The Tournament utilizes a free App-based program called Discord for communications and submission of photos. Anglers will need to download Discord to their mobile device to participate. The Tournament will provide each angler with access to the Spotty Bowl server on Discord after paid entry is confirmed, and will set up the angler's private Discord channel where the angler will declare their Session each Round, and submit fish photographs. It is the angler's responsibility to be familiar with using the program on their mobile device before the Tournament begins. Make sure that GPS/location services on the mobile device are turned "ON" for all photographs submitted during the Tournament.

The Tournament Organizers strongly recommend that each angler explore the contents of the Spotty Bowl Discord server, practice submitting photographs to their private Spotty Bowl Discord channel, and ask for help or direct any questions or concerns the use of Discord to the Tournament Organizers BEFORE the Tournament begins. Spotty Bowl is not responsible for any malfunctions related to the Discord program or the angler's mobile device, or the angler's ability/inability to properly use the program.

- B. Divisions: There are three Divisions – two Divisions for anglers on Watercraft, and a Shore Division. Anglers self-select their Division at the time of registration after an honest self-assessment, in the spirit of fair play, and with respect for others. If an angler's final score in the immediately

prior Spotty Bowl season placed them as a “top four” playoff seed, or they were the Champion of their Division, they must move up at least one Division. Anglers desiring to move down in the Watercraft Divisions from their registered Division in the immediate prior year must receive permission from the Tournament Organizers. The Tournament Organizers reserve the right to move anglers between Divisions.

1. **Masters** - generally watercraft anglers who *regularly* score 70” or above for a 5 fish bag and typically average 4-5+ “legals” per session;
2. **Weekend Warrior** - generally watercraft anglers who *occasionally* score 70” or above for a 5 fish bag and typically average of 0-2 “legals” per session. This Division is intended for less-experienced anglers. Anglers who have previously won Angler of the Year or Champion for this Division in any previous year must register for the Masters Division.
3. **Shore** - All shore anglers.

At the end of the Regular Season, the highest scoring angler in each Division will be declared that Division’s Angler of the Year. The Champion of each Division shall be the winner of the Final Playoff Round.

C. Rounds and Sessions: There are seven Regular Season Rounds. At the end of the Regular Season, the top anglers in each Division will face off in the Playoff Rounds as set forth below. Anglers will select and declare which seven-hour Session they will fish during each Round.

1. Watercraft Divisions will choose and Declare one Session on **Friday, Saturday, or Sunday** each Tournament Weekend Round (Regular Season and Playoffs)
2. Shore Division will choose and Declare one Session each Tournament Week Round (**Monday through Sunday**) (Regular Season and Playoffs)
3. Sessions: (Fish pic submissions must have a Discord timestamp from the applicable start time “start:00” through the end time “end:00” below... “end:01” is late.)
 - a. Morning/AM Session (6:00 am – 1:00 pm)
 - b. Afternoon/PM Session (1:00 pm – 8:00 pm)
 - c. NIGHT Session (5:00 pm – 12:00 am) Friday and Saturday ONLY.

II. **Schedule and Locations:** For the Watercraft Divisions, the Rounds will be at the locations set forth in the schedule below. For Shore Division, the angler may choose to fish any of the Tournament Bays/Harbors regardless of the Round. The Tournament Bays/Harbors are: Marina Del Rey Harbor, Los Alamitos Bay, Huntington Harbor, Newport Harbor.

A. Regular Season Rounds

1. **Round 1:** Los Alamitos Bay – January 16-18 (Watercraft Divisions), January 12-18 (Shore Division)
2. **Round 2:** Huntington Harbor – February 6-8 (Watercraft Divisions), February 2-8 (Shore Division)
3. **Round 3:** Newport Harbor – March 6-8 (Watercraft Divisions), March 2-8 (Shore Division)
4. **Round 4:** Marina Del Rey Harbor – April 10-12 (Watercraft Divisions), April 6-12 (Shore Division)
5. **Round 5:** Huntington Harbor – May 1-3 (Watercraft Divisions), April 27 - May 3 (Shore Division)
6. **Round 6:** Newport Harbor – May 22-24 (Watercraft Divisions), May 18-24 (Shore Division)
7. **Round 7:** Angler Choice of Tournament Bay/Harbor – June 5-7 (Watercraft Divisions), June 1-7 (Shore Division)

B. Playoff Rounds

1. Special Rules applicable to all Playoff Rounds:

- a. *Each Playoff Round must be completed during the Playoff Week. Standard Session Rules apply, e.g., Watercraft Divisions may fish Friday-Sunday Sessions, and Shore Division may fish Monday-Sunday Sessions, etc..*
- b. *Playoff opponents are expected to communicate within 48 hours of the announcement of their Playoff Round pairings. It is the responsibility of BOTH anglers to timely complete these communications. Playoff anglers must cooperate in good faith in selecting a mutually agreeable day and Session during the Playoff Week **when they will both fish the same Session.** Anglers are expected to be respectful of unavoidable schedule conflicts (work, school, family graduation ceremonies, weddings, religious observance, etc.).*
- c. *In the event the anglers are unable to agree, each angler must submit a brief written statement on the angler's private Discord channel before the end of the 48 hour period. Each statement must include an explanation of the cooperation that occurred,*

proposals made, and reasons an agreement was not reached. Statements submitted after the deadline may not be considered.

- d. Each angler must declare their agreed day/Session, or submit their statement, before the end of the 48 hour period.
 - e. *Absent a timely declared agreement, the Tournament Organizers will review and discuss any provided statements and any other relevant information, and jointly determine the day/Session the involved anglers will fish.* The strong preference is for the anglers to fish the same day/Session, but the Tournament Organizers may, at their sole discretion, assign anglers to fish different days/Sessions during the Playoff Week. The affected anglers will then be notified of their day/Session via their private Discord channels.
 - f. If any Tournament Organizer is a current Playoff angler in a Division where a decision is to be made under Section “e,” that Tournament Organizer shall be excluded from the decision-making process.
2. **Quarter Final Round Playoff Week:** Huntington Harbor – June 15-21.
 3. **Semifinal Round Playoff Week:** Newport Harbor – July 6-12.
 4. **Final Round Playoff Week:** Marina Del Rey Harbor – July 20-26.
 5. **Awards Ceremony** – August 1, afternoon. Location TBD.

III. Tournament Boundaries

- A. Huntington Harbor –Anglers may fish navigable waterways within the Harbor, where legally permitted (beware of government/Navy restricted areas). Tournament Boundaries are noted on the map below.



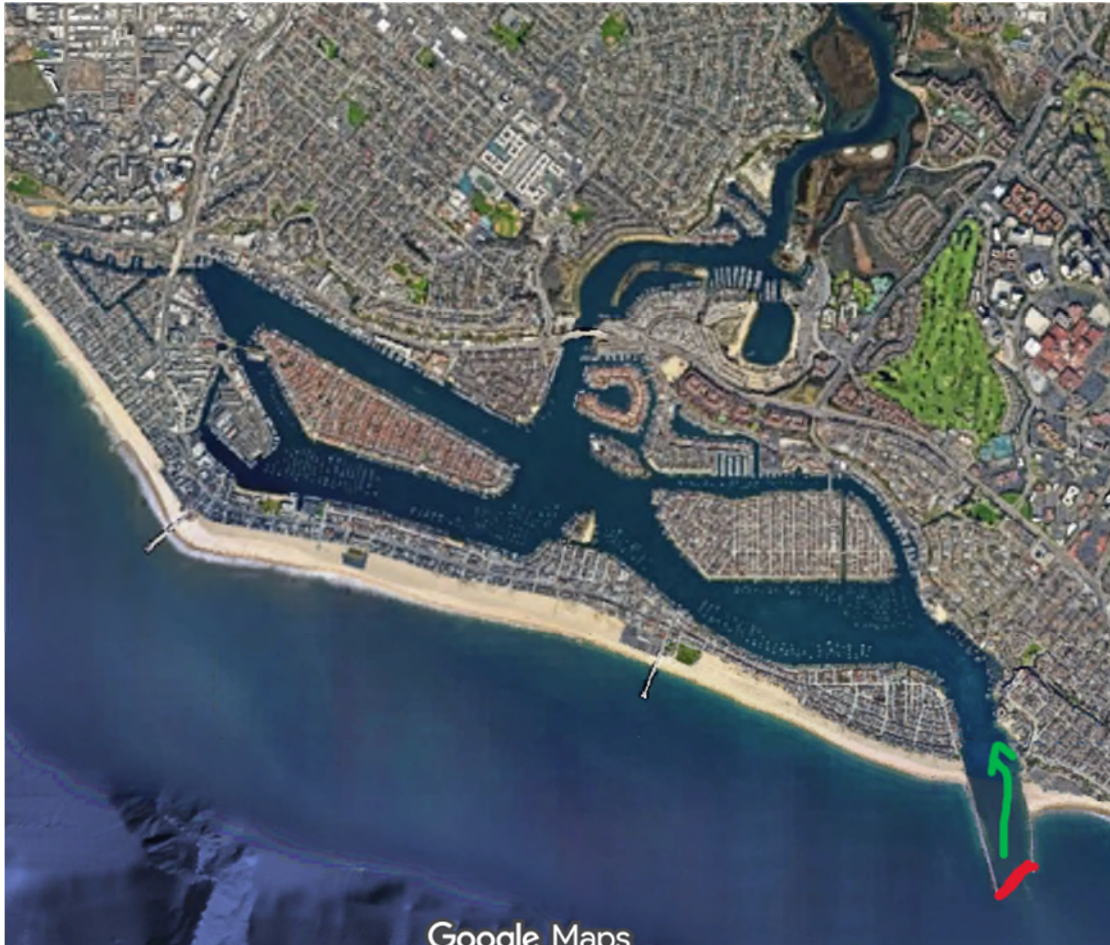
B. Marina Del Rey Harbor –Anglers may fish navigable waterways within the Harbor, where legally permitted (beware of government/Navy restricted areas). The boundary at the mouth of the Harbor shall be the line between the ends of the north and south Jetties. The channel /river on the South side of the South Jetty is NOT included in the Tournament Boundaries. See map below.



C. Los Alamitos Bay –Anglers may fish navigable waterways within the Bay, where legally permitted (beware of government/Navy restricted areas). The boundary at the mouth of the Bay shall be the line between the ends of the north and south Jetties. The channel /river on the South side of the South Jetty is NOT included in the Tournament Boundaries. The channel area commonly known as the Marine Stadium and related ski channel is NOT included in the Tournament Boundaries. See map below.



D. Newport Harbor –Anglers may fish navigable waterways within the Bay, where legally permitted (beware of government/Navy restricted areas, and all designated conservation/protected areas). The boundary at the mouth of the Harbor shall be the line between the ends of the north and south Jetties. See map below.



IV. General Rules

- A. Anglers must comply with all applicable fishing regulations, including possession of a valid fishing license. If an angler receives a fishing-related citation while competing in the Tournament, the angler will be disqualified.
- B. All anglers on the water must be in compliance with US Coast Guard Regulations regarding the use of Personal Flotation Devices when participating in Spotty Bowl.
- C. Speed limit for all Watercraft anglers is 5 MPH. This speed limit applies from the time the angler first puts a line in the water to start the angler's Declared Session until the end of that Declared Session. The 5 MPH

speed limit does not apply during other times when the angler may be fishing solely for side pots outside their Declared Session.

- D. Artificial baits/lures only. Bait scents are allowed.
- E. Anglers in all Divisions may fish navigable waterways, where legally permitted, within the Tournament Boundaries. Trespassing is not allowed. For purposes of this Tournament, fishing from any dock, pier, or other location that has a fence, gate, sign, or other structure intended to control access or expressly prohibiting fishing, regardless of whether the angler has access or permission to fish that location, is prohibited during the Tournament. If you have a question about whether fishing a specific location is permitted under these Rules, it is the angler's responsibility to contact the Tournament Organizers, and cooperate with them, to obtain a formal ruling *before* fishing at that location. The Tournament Organizers may ask anglers to submit location metadata for submitted photos at any time. If an angler is unable (make sure the photo location settings are turned "on" on your phone used to take fish photos) or unwilling to submit this location metadata when requested, the fish/photo is subject to disqualification.
- F. Maximum one (1) line in the water at a time. Rod must be in the angler's hand at the time of the bite, no unattended rods.
- G. No trolling, and no long lining.
- H. Since this is a catch, photograph and release tournament, there is no minimum fish size limit.
- I. Shore division anglers may not count fish hooked, fought, or landed from a watercraft during their Declared Session.
- J. Tournament Anglers who observe a violation of any Rule are to promptly report the details, including relevant photographs or video, of such violation to the Tournament Organizers via their private Discord channel. All anglers are required to cooperate in the investigation of any reported alleged Rule violation.

V. Declaring your Session, Scoring, Photo Requirements, and Penalties

- A. Each Round, all anglers must Declare the fishing day and Session they will fish using their private channel on the Discord server *prior to the start time for that Declared Session*.
- B. A Session Code will be issued on Discord at the beginning of each Session.
- C. Each angler's top six Regular Season Round scores will be "count" towards their Season Tournament score, each angler's lowest Regular Season

Round score will be considered their “mulligan” Round, and will not count towards their final Season Tournament Score.

- D. All submitted fish must be hooked, fought, landed, measured, photographed, and submitted to Discord solely and exclusively by the angler. Others may not assist the angler in these activities. Anglers with disabilities that require assistance must obtain prior written permission to receive such assistance from the Tournament Organizers before utilizing such assistance. Penalty – fish disqualification.
- E. To be eligible for scoring, the angler must submit a picture of the fish to their private Discord channel **during their Declared Session**. Fish submitted (based on the time stamp of the submission in Discord, not the timestamp of when the photo was taken) after the end of the Declared Session will not count. The picture must include:
1. The fish, measured on a rigid “bump board” (acceptable versions include those made by Hobie, Ketch, and Yak Attack, and must have clear and accurate measurement marks at least every .25 inches). If a fish is too short to reach the first set of measurement marks on the bump board, the angler must place the nose of the fish at the 10” line to start measuring. The Tournament Organizers will make any final decisions regarding the official length of submitted fish measured using this method. Any questions about your bump board, please ask the Tournament Organizers before fishing.
 2. No stickers allowed on the bump plate. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 3. The Session Code for your Declared Session. Penalty – fish disqualified.
 4. The fish facing to the left, with the dorsal spines facing away from you. Penalty – fish disqualified.
 5. Fish mouth/lips must be 100% closed and touching the bump plate. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 6. No hooks/lures in the mouth of the fish. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 7. The top 1/3 of the dorsal portion of the fish must be visible without obstruction from the mouth/lips to the tail. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 8. No pressing on or touching the eyes of the fish. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 9. No fingers in gills. Penalty – 1” deduction.
 10. The tail must be flared/semi-flared, the top/bottom tips of tail must be wider than the base of the tail (no pinched tails). Penalty – 1” deduction.

11. The background of the photo (under/behind the bump board), must show the angler's watercraft (for Watercraft anglers) or the natural environment (for shore anglers) where the fish was caught. No mats, towels, etc.. Penalty – fish disqualified.
12. Submit only 1 photo per fish. Include the size you think the fish is either immediately before or after the picture of each fish. No bulk submissions/uploads (submitting multiple fish at once, with or without listing the size of each fish as described above). Penalty – disqualification of one or more submissions.

VI. Side Pots

The Spotty Bowl entry fee includes an opportunity to compete for a number of sponsored side pots, in addition to the main Tournament competition. These side pots have their own General and Side Pot Specific Rules, criteria, and requirements, which are set forth on the Discord Server. Anglers entering side pots must review and comply with all General and Side Pot Specific Rules, criteria, and requirements as set forth the Discord, in addition to complying with these standard Spotty Bowl Rules.

VII. Playoffs and Finals

- A. Masters, Weekend Warrior (LAOC): Top 7 at the end of the Regular Season make Playoffs. Shore: Top 6 at the end of the Regular Season make Playoffs. If an angler who qualifies for Playoffs knows that they cannot fish the Tournament Week of *any* Playoff Round (vacations, weddings, other known schedule conflicts, etc.), they must notify the Judge within 48 hours after announcement of the First Round of Playoff Seedings and Matchups. That angler will forfeit their playoff position, and the playoff field will be re-seeded, with everyone moving "up" to fill the vacated spot, until all playoff spots are filled.
- B. After the commencement of the First Round, if a playoff angler cannot fish any Playoff or Final Round for any reason, the angler forfeits the Round, and their opponent advances to the next Round.
- C. The First Round of Playoff Seedings and Matchups will be announced during the Results Show for Round 7 of the Regular Season and posted to Discord shortly thereafter. #1 seed will have a bye the First Round.
- D. Semi-Final Playoff Round matchups will be announced during the Results Show for the First Round of Playoffs and posted to Discord shortly thereafter.

- E. Final Round matchups will be announced during the Results Show for the Semi-Final Playoff Round of Playoffs and posted to Discord shortly thereafter.
- F. Location for each Playoff Round is pre-determined by schedule for Watercraft divisions. Shore division may fish either/any Tournament Bay in their Section.
- G. Seeding:

First Playoff Round (LAOC)

All Watercraft Divisions

- 1 vs BYE
- 2 vs 7
- 3 vs 6
- 4 vs 5

Shore Division

- 1 & 2 - BYE
- 3 vs 6
- 4 vs 5

Semi-Final Playoff Round (LAOC)

All Watercraft Divisions

- 1 vs 1 vs [winner 4 vs 5]
- [winner 2 vs 7] vs [winner 3 vs 6]

Shore Division

- 1 vs [winner 4 vs 5]
- 2 vs [winner 3 vs 6]

Final Round (All LAOC Divisions)

Winners of Semi-Final Rounds vs each other.

X. Payouts

\$50 of each Entry Fee goes towards Tournament Administrative Expenses (including Championship Belts, Winner Plaques, the Awards Ceremony/Party, web-hosting, etc.) The remainder of the Entry Fee will be distributed as the Prize Pot for the respective Division Winners as set forth in the Official Rules. The Prize Pot for each respective Division shall be distributed according to the following schedule based on the outcome of the Playoff and Final Rounds:

MASTERS: 1st 40%, 2nd 20%, 3rd 15%, 4th 12%, 5th 8%, 6th 5%

WEEKEND WARRIOR: 1st 40%, 2nd 20%, 3rd 15%, 4th 12%, 5th 8%, 6th 5%

SHORE: 1st 40%, 2nd 30%, 3rd 20%, 4th 10%

The rankings of 3rd through 7th place shall be determined by comparing the total scores of the last Playoff Round in which those anglers competed. For example, 3rd and 4th place will be determined by comparing the Semifinal Round scores of the two anglers that did not advance to the Division's Final Round; and 5th, 6th and 7th place will be determined by comparing the Quarterfinal Round scores of the First Round anglers that did not advance to the Division's Semifinal Round.

END