

MIDLANDS STRIPER CLUB
CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

ARTICLE I

Name and Purpose

Section 1: Purpose

Midlands Striper Club is a family oriented club open to all interested in striped bass fishing. Our purpose is to stimulate public awareness of striper fishing as a major sport, to offer our state conservation department our organized moral and political support and encouragement, to promote full adherence to all conservation codes and demand adequate water standards, to improve our skills as striper anglers through fellowship and friendly exchange of striper catching techniques and ideas.

ARTICLE II

Membership

Section 1: Requirements for Membership

To become an Active member, a person shall:

- a. Voluntarily express a genuine interest in membership.
- b. Pay their annual membership dues and any initiation fees as set by the club at the time they complete their membership application. (Membership fees for new members joining after July 1 will be one-half the normal annual fee until the next calendar year begins.)
- c. Possess a valid state fishing, combination, gratis or lifetime license with no record of fish law violations for twelve (12) months from date of membership application.
- d. Sign application as a verification that prospective member is in compliance with item c. above.
The spouse, significant other and/or dependent children of an Active member are entitled to all Active membership benefits.

Section 2: Termination of Membership

A person's paid-up membership may be terminated for only the following reasons:

- a. Failure to pay their membership dues by the February meeting or within 30 days of joining, whichever is applicable.
- b. For any action that would reflect dishonor and disgrace on this club, as determined by 3/4 vote of all members present at any monthly meeting.
- c. For any accumulation within 12 months of 12 points of infractions as set forth in Article 2, Section 4: Membership Infractions, item e.

Regardless of points accumulated, if a member appears before the Board of Directors more than four times within a 24month period, the Board has the authority to revoke or suspend membership.

Section 3: Membership/Guest Restrictions

The following membership and guest restrictions apply:

a. Members and their families are considered as Active upon payment of dues and any initiation fees as set forth by the club. Members not paying annual dues by February of any calendar year are considered as Inactive members and may not vote in any club meeting, or participate in any club tournament except as a guest of an Active member.

b. Inactive members may reclaim their continuous Active status by paying all back dues owed.

c. Only Active members may vote (one vote per household, unless more than one member has paid annual dues), and only Active members and their families may be entered in the Angler Of The Year Competition.

d. Membership is closed to any applicant with a conviction for a fish law violation within twelve months of application.

e. Active members are encouraged to bring guests to meetings and to invite them to fish with the club. However, after attending six meetings or events, guests will be asked to submit application to join the club if they wish to continue participating. Any points earned during a calendar year as a guest may be counted toward Angler Of The Year for that same year after the guest becomes an Active member.

Section 4: Membership Infractions

a. Four Point Infractions

1. Citations for boat lighting, PFD's, registration
2. Using foul language on radio

b. Eight Point Infractions

1. Fish possession violation (over limit, undersize)
2. Fishing without a license
3. Discharging or possessing a firearm illegally on waterway
4. Setting a bad example while wearing club logo (subject to interpretation by Board of Directors)
5. Leaving a tournament early without informing others
6. Harassment of other fishermen
7. No wake/restricted area violation

c. Twelve Point Infractions

1. Citation for sale of game fish
2. Illegally taking game or gamefish (trapping, trot-lining, shooting, shocking, explosives, etc.)
3. Negligent boat operation endangering others or operation under the influence of alcohol or controlled/illegal substances
4. Captain's failure to render assistance to any vessel in danger of sinking/capsizing on the water, or when a channel 16 SOS has been broadcast on VHF radio.
5. Willful tournament cheating (adding weights to fish, conspiring to defraud tournament director(s), pre-catching fish with intent of entering pre-caught fish)
6. Loss of license through game and/or fish law violations

7. Resisting arrest for fish violations by use of force, attempting escape

8. Falsifying information for acceptance to club or failure to inform Board of Directors of violations.

d. Points will be removed from a member's record one year from date of issue.

e. Any member receiving twelve or more points will automatically be referred to the Board of Directors for review and possible loss of membership privileges.

Section 5: Active Membership Recognition

Members with continuous active membership in the club, as well as any awarded lifetime status, shall be recognized as follows at the regular monthly Club meeting in January.

a. **Lifetime Status** – awarded with all future dues waved to any member deemed to have made significant contributions to the Club as determined by vote of 2/3 majority of membership present at the December meeting in secret ballot. Nominations must be made no later than the regular monthly Club meeting during November. Ballots shall be distributed for secret vote of membership present at the regular monthly Club meeting in December, with award made during the regular monthly Club meeting during January.

b. **Angler of the Year** – presented at the regular monthly Club meeting in January to the Active member who has earned the most points during the past year's regular points tournaments.

c. **Brian Thomas Spirit Award** – honors those truly special individuals who are constantly involved in the club and its activities while displaying the positive, caring attitude and interest in others and striper fishing that made all who met Brian Thomas call him their friend. Award is presented at the discretion of the club through committee. The BTSA selection committee is appointed annually by the club president. It shall consist of one club officer, one PAC member, and two at-large members of the club. In the event of a tie vote, the President or Vice President of the club will be called upon to break the tie. Deadline for nominations to receive the award is MSC's annual December meeting. Nominations must be in writing and anyone wishing to make a nomination may get a BTSA nomination form from the MSC Secretary or Treasurer.

BTSA Criteria:

- Must be a dedicated club member - involved in the club and its activities
- Must exert a positive influence on the club and sport
- Must have been a member for at least a full year
- Must be a member in good standing
- Cannot have received the award in the prior five years.

ARTICLE III

Officers, Elections, Vacancies and Eligibility

Section 1: Officers and Projects and Conservation Committee

The officers of the club shall consist of:

a. **President** -- presides over all meetings and directs all official business. Supervises all club functions.

b. **Vice President** -- assists the President in his duties and presides in the absence of the President.

c. **Secretary** -- maintains accurate minutes of all meetings, reports at each meeting; handles club correspondence and bylaws/tournament rules changes, working with newsletter/webmaster.

d. **Treasurer** -- maintains accurate financial records and reports at each meeting.

e. **Tournament Director(s)** – sets tournament schedule and conducts all official club tournaments.

f. **Parliamentarian** -- maintains order at club meetings, following *Robert's Rules of Order*.

g. **Projects and Conservation Committee** -- PAC assists in the operation and running of club tournaments, conservation, legislative and membership/sponsorship projects; consists of all club officers and tournament director(s), plus members-at-large elected from the general MSC Active membership during election of officers; PAC chairman shall be appointed from the full PAC by the MSC President, who sits on PAC but votes only in case of a tie vote.

Section 2: Elections

The election of officers shall be held annually at a regular meeting during the month of December. Election shall be by simple majority of members present. Election for each office shall be held separately in order listed in Article III, Section 1: Officers.

Section 3: Term of Office

Officers shall serve for one year, January 1 through the last meeting day in December, or until successor assumes office.

Section 4: Vacancies

In the event of an office or committee appointment becoming vacant, nominations shall be asked for and an election held to fill the unexpired term at the next regular meeting by simple majority vote.

Section 5: Eligibility

To be eligible to hold club office or serve on a committee, a person must have been an active member for 6 months prior to the date of the election.

ARTICLE IV

Method of Amending Constitution and Bylaws

The constitution may be amended at any regular meeting, provided that the proposed amendment was presented in writing to all club members two weeks prior to the regular club meeting at which vote is to be held. A vote in favor of the amendment by 2/3 of those present is required to pass the amendment. (Active members seeking club discussion for possible bylaws or tournament rules changes are requested to notify the president prior to the meeting so that time may be allotted on the meeting agenda.)

ARTICLE V

Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of the elected club officers and the Tournament Director(s). The Board shall serve as the advisory group for the President. The Board shall have sole authority over any tournament or membership protest. Any decision rendered by them shall be final. (Active members with questions about actions, eligibility or Active status of another member or guest are asked to bring their concerns, in private, to the President or a member of the Board.)

Last Amended - January, 2010

Midlands Striper Club Tournament Rules

By fishing in a tournament sponsored by Midlands Striper Club, each participant, whether member or guest, recognizes that Midlands Striper Club is not responsible for any participant's safety. MSC has no control over the weather (or its effects), the acts of other boaters, the condition or hazards of the lake, or any number of unsafe conditions that may arise while fishing. Each participant of MSC tournaments understands the potential safety problems which may arise while fishing and voluntarily consents to participate knowing the risks involved.

Honesty

A high degree of honesty and sportsmanship is required of all members at all times.

Fees

The entry fee of \$6.00 as set by the club should be paid before fishing tournaments. Entry fees should be paid at the meeting prior to the tournament unless other payment arrangements are approved by a tournament director. Acceptance of late payment for tournament fees shall be at the discretion of the tournament director(s). A boat check may be requested by the tournament director(s). Late entries should be a rare exception. Competitors are expected to arrive and pay on time.

Non-Fishing Family Members

To encourage family participation, children and spouses may be in the respective boats and not pay to fish the tournament. In all other cases, everyone in the boat must be a paid tournament entrant. Failure to comply with the above rule will result in all paid entrants in the boat being disqualified from the tournament.

Guests

Guests may fish any tournament, but must fish with a sponsoring Active Member and must pay the tournament entry fee. Guests are eligible to compete for monthly tournament prize money for 1st, 2nd, and 3rd places, or for big fish, but are not eligible for the Angler of the Year Competition. Guide parties taking place during a tournament, and their guides, are considered ineligible. Guides are not allowed to take guide parties during tournament hours while participating in a tournament.

Individual Angler of the Year Scoring

Only active members and their spouses or significant others and dependent children are eligible for **Angler of the Year Competition**. Points for Angler of the Year award are earned in the following three ways:

1. 50 participation points for each regular meeting you attend.
2. 50 entry fee points for each individual or team tournament you pay to enter, even if you do not fish the tournament.
3. 50 participation points for each tournament you fish, verified at the weigh-in or by notifying a Tournament Director or Club Officer prior to leaving the water early if not attending the official weigh-in. **This holds true for both individual and team events.**
4. One (1) point is earned for each ounce of fish you weigh in, with the exception of the December tournament, which earns two (2) points per ounce of fish you weigh in.
5. If a tiebreaker is necessary to determine a payout, then the weight of the largest fish shall be used to break the tie. If the weight of the largest fish is not sufficient to break the tie, then the payout shall be split as appropriate. Two individuals that tie for first shall split the combined payout for first and second. Two individuals that tie for second shall split the payout for 2nd and 3rd places.

Team of the Year

1. Members are strongly encouraged to declare their teams and team captain at or prior to the February tournament weigh-in which is the first in the **TOTY** series.
2. Team of the Year scoring is based on where a team places relative to other participating teams the aggregate weight in ounces for all of the team events throughout the year.
3. The first place team in each tournament shall receive 150 points. The 2nd place team shall receive 140 points with each place below earning five less points (points = 150 - (place X 5)). For teams that tie in total weight, the weight of the largest fish shall be used to break the tie. If the weight of the largest fish is not sufficient to break the tie, then the ranking in team points from the previous tournament or year shall be used to break the tie. For new teams with no prior team tournament experience,, a coin toss shall break the tie. No points will be awarded for finishes less than 29th place. Teams that participate but do not weigh any fish, will all be awarded the points for one place lower than the team with the smallest creel.
4. Team member additions and substitutions are allowed at the Captains discretion for any tournament provided a tournament director or club officer are informed of changes prior to the tournament and all team members pay the tournament fee.
5. If a team should disband during the course of the year, all accumulated points will remain with the designated team Captain.
6. The order of finish for the final team of the year tournament shall be used to break any ties in the final points standings.
7. Each member of the **Team of the Year** that fishes in at least 4 team tournaments, receives a plaque honoring the accomplishment. Additional prizes may be awarded based on sponsorship of the year-long competition.
8. Weights recorded for **TOTY** have no bearing on individual angler scoring. **TOTY** is separate from **Individual Angler of the Year** competition.

Tournament Payouts:

Payouts will be a fixed amount of \$325 per tournament in the following breakout:

1st Place	\$100
2nd Place	\$75
3rd Place	\$50
Big Fish	\$75
Lowest Weight	\$25

If only one individual or team catches a tournament legal fish, then that angler or team shall receive the payouts for all places, big fish, and lowest creel. If only two individuals or teams have tournament legal fish, then 3rd place prize money shall be split between the two teams. All tiebreakers shall be considered before payouts.

Tournament Hours

Tournament hours will be "Safe Light" to 3:00 PM on the 3rd Saturday of every month, except during night tournaments when hours will be 6:30 PM until 10 AM of the following day. Safe light is defined as 30 minutes preceding official sunrise for that day, and will be adjusted for starting tournaments to the closest hour or half-hour. All hours listed above are Eastern Standard Time, which automatically includes Daylight Savings Time. The Tournament Director(s) may alter hours due to safe light or weather conditions and under special circumstances or tournament events. It is the entrant's responsibility to be aware of the changes as announced by the Tournament Director(s). (Check newsletter and MSC website and ask when paying your entry fee!)

Tournament Start

All tournament boats may be in the water and proceed to their fishing site prior to tournament start time in lieu of a typical blast-off, but may not place any lines or baits in the water before official "Lines-In" start time. Entrants

must be prepared for a boat check if requested by a Tournament Director or Club Officer. Official tournament start time will be the time as displayed on GPS devices. In the interest of safety, all entrants are requested to check in with a Tournament Director or Club Officer prior to leaving the water early if not attending the official weigh-in.

VHF Marine Radio

If an entrant's boat is equipped with a VHF marine radio, he or she may utilize the club channel for safety and tournament information. While MSC usually uses channel 72 as its designated channel, the Tournament Director(s) may change this designation under special circumstances or tournament events. It is up to each entrant to find out the designated channel prior to tournament start and to observe proper radio procedure.

Any member using profanity during a radio transmission may be subject to a point violation as per Section 4.a.2. of the club bylaws.

Weigh-in

The Tournament Director(s) will specify the weigh-in start time, which typically coincides with the tournament end time, at which time the scales will open. The Tournament Director(s) will announce "Last Call" for tournament weigh-in three (3) times. If a member or member boat fails to weigh his or her fish by the third "Last Call," the member's or member boat's total catch will be disqualified.

Fish Identification

All fish must be clearly marked or strung as to ownership when they are boated. Boats are subject to check by the Tournament Committee at any time during or immediately prior to a tournament. Failure to comply will result in a boat's total catch being disqualified. (All fish to which an angler claims ownership must have been fought to the boat by that angler on a legal rod and reel device during the tournament.)

Tournament Creel and Size Limits

An entrant may possess the legal limit for the body of water fished during a tournament, but may weigh-in no more than the maximum number of fish allowed in the tournament. It is the individual angler's responsibility to be aware of the tournament limit prior to fishing. All fish weighed must measure a minimum of 21 inches total length with the fish's mouth closed. In the event an entrant brings a fish of less than 21 inches to the official scales, that fish and the entrant's biggest fish will be disqualified.

Tournament Challenge

If an entrant is suspected of an unsportsmanlike or unethical act or acts, the entrant may be challenged by the Tournament Committee and may be required to take a polygraph test at club expense. Board of Directors will be the sole determiners as to disciplinary action taken, including loss of prize money and barring from future tournaments. (Any member believing they have knowledge of a possible infraction of the above tournament rules shall discreetly and privately bring the matter to the attention of the club president or one of the Board of Directors.)

Last Amended – December, 2009 for 2010 Tournament Year