

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.

Midlands Striper Club will comply with all Federal and State laws and regulations pertaining to non-discrimination and equal opportunity. Midlands Striper Club welcomes all people to join the membership, participate in leadership, and engage in Club activities and will not discriminate against any person on the basis of age, gender, race, ethnicity, creed, sexual orientation, color, physical condition, or national origin. However, to assure a fair competition, participation in tournaments and other events may be limited on the basis of gender, age, skill level or physical ability.

ARTICLE II

Membership

Section 1: Requirements for Membership

To become an Active member, a person shall:

- a. Submit a membership application to the club secretary or other MSC officer.
- b. Pay their annual membership dues and any initiation fees as set by the PAC at the time they complete their membership application. (Membership fee 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 license with no record of fish law violations for twelve (12) months from date of membership application.
- d. Sign an application as a verification that prospective member is in compliance with item c. above.

Section 2: Termination of Membership

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

- a. 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.

b. 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 Team Of The Year Competition. The spouse, significant other and/or dependent children of an Active member are entitled to all Active membership benefits.

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 three 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 Team 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. Harassment of other fishermen
6. 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, attempting 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 waived 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. **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. The vice president also coordinates programs and guest speakers for all meetings throughout the year.
- 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** -- is responsible for issuing checks and collecting funds while maintaining 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 six 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.

Section 3: Term of Office

Officers shall serve for one calendar year, January 1 through the last 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 posted prominently on the MSC website at least two weeks prior to the regular club meeting at which a 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. Should situations arise needing immediate action between PAC meetings, the Board of Directors shall make decisions on behalf of the club. 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, 2012

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 that 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 \$10.00 as set by the club should be paid before fishing MSC points 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, non-competing 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 perform or assist all activities necessary for the team as it participates in the tournament. Guest participation is limited to no more than three MSC meetings or tournaments before a guest will be requested to apply for full membership. 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.

Team of the Year

1. Members are strongly encouraged to declare their teams and team captain at or prior to the January tournament weigh-in that 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 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. A participating team with no fish cannot receive more than 10th place points.

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 7 team tournaments receives a plaque honoring the accomplishment. Additional prizes may be awarded based on sponsorship of the yearlong 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 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

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. The Tournament Director(s) may alter hours due to safe light or weather conditions and under special circumstances or tournament events. The tournaments will start with "Lines-In" as announced in advance by the tournament director/s and end with "Lines-Out" 8 hours later. All fish must be boated prior to the designated time for "Lines-Out". The scales will open 30 minutes after "Lines-Out". Tournaments are generally conducted on the 3rd Saturday of every month. Night tournaments hours will generally be 6:30 PM until 10 AM of the following day. 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, Club Officer or their designee at any time during or immediately prior to a tournament. 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 begin the weigh-in thirty minutes after the "Lines-Out" time of the tournament. 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.

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. Teams will generally be allowed to weigh their 4 largest fish with a 21-inch minimum length unless alternative lengths and limits are announced by the tournament director/s prior to competition. Only fish of the genus *Morone* or hybridized crosses of the genus *Morone* can be weighed for tournament competition. All fish weighed must measure a minimum of 21 inches total length with the fish's mouth closed. In the event a team brings a fish of less than 21 inches to the official scales, that fish and the team's biggest fish will be disqualified. Alternate fish species and lengths may be weighed for special events as announced by the tournament director(s) prior to competition.

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.)