

**Angling Trust RIVERFEST**  
**Match Rules**  
**Effective from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2020**

1. The Angling Trust (AT) will organise a RiverFest competition each year. The AT **Board** will appoint a committee who will be responsible for supervising the arrangements.
2. The qualifiers will be “pegged down” competitions, fished on rivers, pegs to be preferably 30 yards apart, or more if possible.
3. In order to qualify to compete in the competition entrants must have paid their subscription for the current entry year.  
**N.B. All competitors taking part in the competition must be individual members of the AT.**
4. The draw for pegs will take place on the morning of the match.
5. The match officials will have the right to examine all containers carried by competitors prior to commencement of the competition, at their pegs.
6. Officials will do their utmost to prevent spectators approaching or interfering with the competitors
7. No competitor will change his or her section or peg. Any angler fishing at the wrong peg will be disqualified.
8. Competitors **must use private transport** to transfer from HQ to their section and return.
9. Any angler may bring a caddy to assist them to get themselves and their tackle to their peg.
10. No competitor will have live or dead fish in their possession before the competition.
11. The signal to commence and cease fishing will be given by the match organiser or nominated official.
12. The duration of the competition will be five hours.
13. Before the starting signal no competitor must on any account groundbait or loose feed the swim but will be allowed to wet a line, plumb the depth and test the float, mix or wet groundbait, clear his/her fishing ground of weed or obstructions and position his/her equipment. On no account must a feeder be used prior to the starting signal.
14. A competitor may wade provided that the water does not extend above the knees, unless they can touch the bank with their fingertips, in which case the water can extend above the knees. When platforms are used the water must not come over the anglers knees when standing on river/lake bed.
15. Every competitor must fish from within one metre either side of their designated peg.
  - (a) On flowing water, they will fish from their position in the direction of the flow as far as the next peg.
  - (b) On stillwaters they may fish as far as half the distance between their peg and the pegs on either side.Where competitors are drawn on opposite banks, the limit of the swim will be the middle line between either bank and as defined in (a) and/or (b) above.

The competitor will restrict their activities completely to these boundaries. Neither their person, tackle, bait, groundbait or hooked fish

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may intrude into their neighbours' swims.

In an extreme situation, e.g. snagged tackle or a snagged fish, an angler must seek permission from their neighbour/neighbours before moving from their designated peg to try and remedy the situation.

16. No competitor may leave his or her peg during the competition other than to answer the call of nature. However, in the event of an emergency and/or severe weather conditions, a competitor may leave their peg, but only with the express permission of the match organiser or designated official.

In such circumstances the match organiser may decide that in the best interests of the competitors, fishing should be temporarily suspended. In this instance time will not be extended beyond the scheduled finish time to complete the five hours duration.

In the worst case the match organiser may terminate fishing and the result decided as if the scheduled duration had been completed.

17. A competitor must not cause annoyance to, seek to interfere with another competitor during the course of the competition. They must act in a sporting manner at all times.
18. A competitor shall have in use one rod or pole, one line and single hook at any one time. They may have other poles or rods and tackle assembled in a position behind them, if possible, providing no such other tackle is baited.
19. Maximum length of poles is 16 metres. Floating poles are not permitted.

20. Braid hooklengths are not permitted

21. Competitors are prohibited from throwing/discarding their bait into water at the end of day one when taking part in Angling Trust Riverfest final

22. Any bait, subject to the local rules appertaining at the time of acceptance as a National Championship venue, may be used during the National Championship, except live or dead fish, spinning baits and artificial lures.

23. The use of electronic fish finders is forbidden.

24. No competitor shall present their baited hooks into their swim by any means other than the pole or rod to which the line is attached.

25. All feed may be thrown in by hand, or by the use of one or two handed catapults, throwing sticks, swimfeeders, baitdroppers, bait cups and bait shuttles, but no other mechanical means of projecting feed is allowed. No bait shall be introduced with a pole or bait dropper attached to an extra pole or rod whilst continuing to fish.

26. Competitors must strike, play and land their own fish from the confines of their own peg.

27. Competitors must retain all fish in a keepnet that complies with the relevant Environment Agency bylaws. Nets should be dry when arriving to fish, as dry nets do not spread diseases.  
Fish must never be handled with gloves or towels.

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28. All fish caught are eligible for weighing except game fish, pike, zander and crustaceans.
29. Competitors must, if practicable, keep all fish caught alive.  
If for any reason a competitor is struggling to keep a fish alive, it can be weighed in during the competition and returned to the water if it is still alive.
30. Competitors must cease fishing at the signal. Should a competitor still be playing a fish hooked before the finishing signal is given, they will be permitted no more than 15 minutes after time has been called to land the fish.
31. All competitors will remain at their pegs, except for the purpose of clearing litter from their swims, for reasons (as defined in Rules 17 and 18), or if they have been allocated weighing in duties, until details of their catch have been recorded by the Steward, even if they have caught no fish.
32. **Competitors are responsible** for ensuring their pegs are clear of litter and no competitor shall have their catch weighed in who has litter on the banks of their swim.
33. Both the competitor and scales steward **MUST** ensure that the correct procedure for transferring fish from keepnet to weigh net and weigh net back to the water is followed.  
**Keepnet to weigh net:** - (a) Swim the fish from the bottom of the keepnet to the top, ensuring that the top ring is out of the water, and gather the rings up from the bottom as the fish move up. Once the fish are between the top ring and the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> ring (depending on the number of fish in the net), remove the keepnet from the water and gently slide the fish into the weigh net. Should the number of fish require more than one weigh, only slide sufficient fish into the weigh net for the first weigh. Whilst the weigh is taking place, hold the remaining fish back in the water until required for weighing and repeat until all fish have been weighed.  
**(b)** Remove the keepnet from the water collapsing the net down until the 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> from the bottom can be reached from the inside.  
Pull the chosen ring through the top ring and then gently slide the fish into the weigh net. Should the number of fish require more than one weigh, only slide sufficient fish into the weigh net for the first weigh. Whilst the weigh is taking place, hold the remaining fish back in the water until required for weighing and repeat until all the fish have been weighed.  
After each competitor is weighed in at their peg, it will be the duty of the Scales Steward after each weigh to return the fish to the water.  
Under **NO CIRCUMSTANCES** must the keepnet be removed from the water and fish tipped down from bottom to top.
34. The individual weight of each competitor will be recorded to the nearest 10 grams rounded up (where 10Kg scales are used) and 20 grams, rounded up (Where 20Kg scales are used). If imperial scales are used round up to the nearest four drams.
35. Each competitor **will be responsible** for ensuring that the weight of his or her catch is correctly recorded on the weigh sheet and on his/her peg card. He/she **MUST** sign both to that effect.

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- The peg card **MUST** be kept safe in case of a query.
36. After being weighed any dead fish are to be suitably disposed of by the scales steward.
37. Any fish about which the stewards have any doubt must be brought before the match organiser and the competitor's weight will not be confirmed until a ruling has been obtained. Even if a steward recommends the disqualification of a competitor they **MUST** weigh the fish in case the stewards ruling is not upheld.
38. Any objections must be made in writing and lodged with the match organiser or weigh steward, no later than one hour after the end of the competition on the official forms issued to the weigh stewards. Irregularities which are brought to notice at a later date may be dealt with only by and at the discretion of the **AT Competitions team**.
39. All competitions must conform to Environment Agency bylaws. Any competitor reported to the match organiser or AT officials by the Environment Agency for being unable to produce a valid licence shall be deemed to be in contravention of the rules and shall be disqualified. All pools, entry fees etc in respect of the said competitor shall be forfeited. **Local fishery rules will also apply.**
40. The use of lead, including any alloy or compound of lead, in the form of split shot or any other suitable items for weighting fishing lines is prohibited. The prohibition does not apply to weights of lead, alloy or compound of lead, of 0.06g or less or of more than 28.35g. The prohibition also does not apply to weights of lead, alloy or compound less than 28.35g if the said lead, alloy or compound is incorporated in the construction of swimfeeders or self-cocking floats.
41. If in the opinion of the match organiser, any individual is in breach of these rules or is guilty of behaviour which is contrary to the best interests of the sport, or upon complaint being received by the AT Competitions team that there has been an alleged breach of the rules, the match organiser shall make a decision on all available facts and that decision will be final and binding. The match organiser shall lodge a copy of the complaint, facts and subsequent decision with AT HQ within 2 days of the match. **An appeal can be made to the AT Board; a copy of the appeals procedure is available from AT HQ.**
42. Any competitor proved to be in contravention of these rules will be disqualified.
43. Any individual angler deemed to be bringing the sport into disrepute will be severely dealt with by the AT Competitions team.
44. In the very unlikely event of two or more anglers having the same best weight in a Zone, every organiser will have an envelope containing 10 'tie-break' draw tickets. One of them will be a qualifying draw. Each angler will draw until the qualifying ticket is drawn. The angler drawing the lucky ticket will go through to the final.

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45. Unless there is a valid reason, any angler not turning up for a qualifying match may be barred from taking part in qualifying matches in the future. If an angler can't attend the qualifier, he or she must contact the Angling Trust or the local organiser to let them know. The ticket can then be reallocated.

**Angling Trust  
The Old Police Station  
Wharncliffe Road  
Ilkeston  
DE7 5GF  
Tel: 0115 822 4519/4532**