

COMPETITIVE LURE ANGLING

WHEN WE FISH AGAIN

Best Practice for the safe resumption of
lure angling competitions in England under
COVID 19 restrictions

Updated: 15/10/2020



#WHENWEFISHAGAIN



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Our When We Fish Again guidelines have been amended to reflect further guidance issued by the Government on the phased return of outdoor sport and recreation in England.

1

Running Competitions

- Subject to close season, owner and fishery specific restrictions. Competitions will be permitted on all waters where social distancing guidance can be adhered to. This would include canals, rivers, lakes and reservoirs.
- On October 14 the exceptions to the 'rule of six' were tightened and it is vital that all competitions avoid any 'gatherings' of more than six persons at anytime during the match - ie at the draw for swims, at the weigh in or at the prize giving. Competitive fishing has an exception under the regulations meaning that fishing matches can continue as the law continues to permit sporting events and certain outdoor activities, provided conditions are met. These include full risk assessments* and taking reasonable precautions by following the appropriate national guidelines.
- (a pro-forma risk assessment from Angling Trust for match organisers can be [downloaded HERE](#))
- In roving matches the area to be fished will be designated by the organiser who will ensure that all fishing areas are compatible with social distancing from other competitors and waterway users. This is particularly essential on canals with areas of narrow towpaths where it would be difficult to keep at least 2 metres away from passing pedestrians and cyclists, these should be marked as no fishing areas. Anglers should also be told to give plenty of room to moored boats and should remain a minimum of 2 metres away from them at all times.
- Contact details of all attendees are to be kept for 21 days to assist the NHS Test and Trace process.

2

Booking in payment of Pools / Entry money

- Anglers should "book on" to a competition as per the organiser's instructions, usually in advance by phone, email or online. It is strongly recommended that cash transactions be avoided and payments made by bank transfer or Paypal.

3

Travel / Arrival at the venue

- Competitors should travel in accordance with current Government guidelines only.
- Please note that the previous travel exemptions for those in lockdown areas in Wales or Level 3 areas in England for participation in 'elite sports' now only apply generally in Wales and just to professional sportspeople and Olympic and Commonwealth Games athletes in England.
- The travel guidance for Tier 3 areas states: 'you should try to avoid travelling outside the very-high alert level area you are in or entering a very-high alert level area, other than for things like work, education or youth services, to meet caring responsibilities or if you are travelling through as part of a longer journey'.

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Travel / Arrival at the venue (cont.)

- Whilst this is an advisory we all have a responsibility to fish safely and to adhere strictly to the rules and to follow the appropriate guidance for travel in the various areas. All major Angling Trust competitions will maintain records of those attending and their postcodes to assist with Track and Trace. These will be made available to the authorities if requested. It is up to individual anglers to be aware of the guidance in force at anytime in their own areas.
- On arrival at the venue vehicles should pay strict attention to signage and park under the instructions of the fishery/organiser. Organisers must ensure that there is sufficient space for competitors to park in a designated area and bear in mind that there will be more cars due to less car sharing because of Covid-19 restrictions.
- On leaving the vehicle, strict social distancing measures must be adhered to at all times, maintaining a minimum of 2 metres.
- No physical greetings handshaking etc. to take place.
- No refreshments or food should be supplied by the organiser.

4

The Draw

- Wherever possible the draw should take place before the day of the event by the organiser and competitors should be told their draw number in advance.
- Where an on-site draw is necessary, it should comply with guidelines on gatherings of over six people and take place outside conforming to the rules on social distancing. A "raffle style" approach is recommended and that the organiser should draw for all competitors.
- Competitors cards, catch returns and tape measures (if being supplied by organiser) should be prepared in advance, placed in a sealed bag and be handed to competitors using gloves by the organiser. Competitors should ensure they are a minimum of 2 metres from all other competitors at all times.

5

The Start

- For roving bank based matches the start should be staggered, with competitors setting off at 20 second intervals. Competitors must stay a minimum of 2 metres away from each other at all times, so if fishing on canals or tight riverside paths a "no over-taking" rule should apply as competitors head to where they intend to start fishing.
- For boat/kayak based matches extra time should be made available for competitors to move gear along the jetty or launch area to their allotted boat/kayak. Numbers using the jetty or launch area at one time should be minimised by only allowing small groups to load at a time. Once one group has finished loading their boat/kayak they should motor/paddle out to a designated holding area to clear the area for the next group. The wearing of gloves and face masks should be encouraged during this loading/set up process. Competitors should ensure they are a minimum of 2 metres from all other competitors at all times.

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6

Fishing

- If fishing pairs matches it should be emphasised that team mates must stay a minimum of 2 metres from each other at all times. Both team mates should carry a landing net, unhooking mat, measure, competitors card and smartphone for taking pictures. When a fish is hooked it should be landed, unhooked, measured and photographed by a single member of the team. Whoever is the designated captain, can then record the fish and length on the catch return. Anglers should be mindful of other competitors and waterway/towpath users at all times and ensure that they are conforming to the rules on social distancing.

7

End of the Match

- Bank based matches: At the end of the match competitors should go straight to their cars in the designated car parking area or other designated holding area and wait there for the organiser to give instructions with regards to the collection of measures and catch returns. They should ensure they remain 2 metres from all other competitors at all times.
- Boat/kayak based matches: At the end of the match competitors should return to the designated holding area used at the start and then return to shore to unload in small groups to avoid overcrowding in a repeat of the loading process. Competitors should ensure they are a minimum of 2 metres from all other competitors at all times.

8

Catch Returns

- The match organiser should wear gloves and have a bucket and a box. The box should be empty and is used to collect the catch returns, the bucket should be half full with disinfectant and is used for collecting measures (if they have been supplied by the organiser). The organiser should then arrange for competitors to return their measures and catch returns in an orderly manner, ensuring that social distancing is maintained at all times. Organisers should consider using an app system for checking competitor catch photographs or alternatively asking designated competitors to digitally send their catch photographs for ratification.

9

Prizes and Match Results

- The match organiser should consider posting results online for competitors to view.
- Match organisers should consider paying winnings directly into the angler's bank account by electronic means.
- Cash transactions should be avoided wherever possible. Social distancing must be observed at all times.

ENDORSEMENTS



I was happy to be involved with the Angling Trust to help produce these guidelines to ensure that lure fishing events can be held in a safe, professional and friendly manner during these difficult times.

Gary Palmer, Head Marshall of World Predator Classic and organiser of Perchmania



Lots of our members really enjoy competition lure fishing. They would like to get back to it, but want to fish in a way that's safe for them and for all towpath users. I was really pleased to help the Angling Trust put together the guidelines that will get us back to match fishing safely in these difficult times.

Derek Holmes, Competitions Secretary, Lure Anglers Canal Club

HELP AND SUPPORT

We're here to help you get started fishing again safely

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VISIT OUR SUPPORT HUB

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