

MODEL MATCH RULES 2023



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1. The starting and finishing times for the match must be prominently displayed at match headquarters and on all literature relating to the match.
2. The recommended duration for a contest shall be five hours.
3. The match must be a pegged down competition. Pegs, preferably 20 metres apart and not less than 15 metres, must be staked out and numbered prior to fishing. All pegs used under normal conditions must be of a state to give competitors a practicable and reasonable chance to fish his or her swim. And must be a minimum of 30 metres from overhead power cables.
4. All officials participating in the organisation of the match must wear some kind of insignia, ie an armband, as clear evidence of their authority.
5. Each competitor on drawing their number shall proceed to the corresponding number on the bank and this will be considered their fishing ground where they will fish. The peg must remain in position until the weigh-in is completed.
6. Every competitor must fish from within one metre either side of their designated peg. On flowing water, the competitor may fish in the direction of the flow as far as the next peg. On still water, 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 is the line midway between each bank.

The competitor will restrict their activities completely to these boundaries, neither their person, their tackle, their hookbaits or groundbaits may intrude into their neighbours swim.

In an extreme situation eg snagged tackle of a snagged fish, an angler must seek permission from their neighbour/s before moving from their designated peg to try and remedy the situation.

A competitor must not cause annoyance to, or seek to interfere with another competitor during the course of the competition, and must act in a sporting manner at all times.

7. No competitor may move their peg or exchange their peg or draw card with another without the organiser's official consent.
8. No competitor shall buy more than one entry ticket for themselves from which it follows that all competitors must be strictly restricted to one draw.
9. Competitors must retain all fish in keepnets which comply with the relevant EA Byelaws. Competitors must take every practicable step to keep their fish alive and, after weighing them, must ensure their careful return to the water. If, for any reason fish are seen to be in distress, a competitor or match official has the right to demand that they be weighed immediately and returned to the water during the course of the match.
10. A competitor shall only have in use one rod or pole, one line and one single hook at any one time but may have other rods or poles and tackle assembled for use in position behind them, providing that no such other tackles are baited.
11. Any bait, subject to local rules, can be used except live or dead fish, frogs spinning baits or artificial lures.
12. No competitor shall have live or dead fish in their possession before a match. All competitors must submit to a search if requested by a contest official.
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 and wet groundbait, clear their ground of weed or obstructions and position their equipment. On no account must a feeder be used before the starting signal. A ledger weight may be cast to find depth and distance etc, but at no time must the line be left in the water whilst continuing to set up other tackle.
14. Competitors may receive assistance to or from their peg, or both, for themselves or their tackle, or both.
15. All groundbait may be thrown in by hand, or by use of one or two handed catapults, throwing sticks, swim feeders, bait droppers and bait cups, but no other mechanical means of projecting groundbait is allowed. No bait shall be introduced with a pole cup or bait dropper attached to an extra rod/pole whilst continuing to fish. Spodding is not permitted.
16. All hooks on all waters should be Barbless (Maximum size 10)
17. Braid Hook lengths are not allowed
18. Maximum permitted length of poles is 16 metres. Floating poles are not permitted.
19. The use of electronic fish finders is forbidden.

20. Surface floating baits, either hookbait or feedbait, are not permitted.
21. A competitor must strike, play and land his own fish.
22. Hand lining fish is not permitted, this includes handling elastics and line, also not allowed is the practice of trapping stretched elastic with the hand down the length of poles sections. Fish should never be bullied like this. **The use of Pulla bungs and similar devices is allowed.**
23. Keepnets should be dry when arriving to fish as dry nets do not spread disease. Fish must never be handled with gloves or towels.
24. Carp over 2lbs and silver fish must be kept in separate nets. No more than 70lbs in a net. Common sense must prevail when net weights are verified.
25. No bait or equipment can be given to any competitor during the course of the match. Competitors withdrawing from the match are not allowed to give their groundbait or hookbait to another competitor during the duration of a match.
26. Any competitor who abandons their peg having decided to cease taking part in the match but who decides to continue fishing must do so outside the confines of the length being used for the match.
27. All competitors shall, as far as possible, prevent any persons other than match officials from entering the fishing ground.
28. A competitor may wade provided that the water does not extend above the knees unless they can touch the bank with fingertips, in which case the water can extend above the knees. When platforms are used, the water must not come over the knees when standing on a river/lakebed.
29. No competitor shall leave their peg at any time during the course of the match other than to go to the toilet and then they must not leave their baited hook in the water. At the end of the match, a competitor must remain at their peg until their catch has been weighed unless they have been detailed for weighing duties. Any competitor so detailed must have a witness to the weighing of their own catch.
30. A competitor must cease fishing at the finishing signal. Should they still be playing a fish hooked before the signal is given, they will be permitted no more than fifteen minutes after time has been called to land the fish.

31. All fish caught are eligible for weighing with the exception of pike, zander, game fish and crustaceans. It will be the responsibility of the scalesman to return all live fish to the water after weighing. Dead fish, handed to the competitor by the scalesman, must be returned after the match, to the headquarters by the competitor concerned and placed in the receptacle provided.

Any fish suspected of being weighted or any fish considered suspicious by the weighers must be laid before the match organisers and the angler's weight be not confirmed until a ruling has been obtained.

If stewards recommend the disqualification of a competitor, they will weigh their fish in case the ruling is not upheld.

32. For Dial Scales, all catches will be weighed to the nearest quarter of an ounce or ten grammes rounded up. For Digital Scales, the exact weight can be recorded.
33. Each competitor will be responsible for ensuring the correct weight of their catch is recorded by the Steward and sign the sheet to that effect. In any dispute the decision of the weighers and the organisers will be final.
34. All fish must be weighed at the competitor's peg. Unless the bankside terrain renders impossible, no catch shall be carried more than ten yards to the scales.
35. Competitors are responsible for ensuring that their pegs are clear of litter and no competitor may have their catch weighed in who has litter lying on the banks of their swim.
36. Any objection to an angler's conduct, for whatever reason, must be lodged in writing with a match official or weigher within one hour of the end of the match. In all cases the objector shall inform the offender of their intentions at the time in order that they may speak in their own defence. Should an offender, after receiving such a warning leave the match scene, the objection shall be deemed to have been sustained and the match organisers must inform them of their findings and punishment (if any) within seven days.
37. All the foregoing rules are subject to the byelaws of the Environment Agency, and any local rules applicable to a fishery.
38. All holders of trophies must, on presentation of them, give a written guarantee for their safety and shall undertake to return same (when applicable) in a clean and presentable condition when asked by the organisers. In the case of a team trophy, all members of that team are obliged under this rule.
39. Any angler proved to have been in contravention of these rules will be disqualified.
40. Any association or organisation wishing to deviate from these recommended Angling Trust rules must advertise the fact and list the deviation on the match entry ticket and other literature.

THE FOLLOWING RULES WILL ONLY APPLY WHEN A TEAM COMPETITION AS WELL AS AN INDIVIDUAL EVENT IS BUILT INTO THE MATCH.

41. Details of each angler making up the team must be entered on a team card (or sheet) which must be handed in before the match begins. No alterations in the make-up of a team will be permitted once the draw has begun.

42. A team competition may be decided in two ways, by means of aggregate weight or by means of points. Where the latter is preferred the Angling Trust recommend that the system to be adopted be the same as that set out in the Angling Trusts Nationals Championship rules.