

Virginia Anglers Club Angling Rules

Section 1- Angling activity

The Angling Rules Committee will determine yearly club angling awards, establish and interpret angling rules, settle angling disputes, and disqualify any entries not in accord with the intent of the rules. Any member not satisfied with any ruling of this committee has the right to appeal to the Board of Directors.

Section 2- Members eligible to compete

All members in good standing, both resident and non-resident, are eligible to compete for angling championships, awards, and points, except for those who engage in commercial fishing, who guide fishing parties, or those who receive monetary remuneration at any time from work of this nature. Such professionals may fish for credit toward badge ratings and awards: provided such entries are obtained when said member is fishing for sport and not while working for any remuneration whatsoever.

Section 3- Angling achievement ratings

Member catch and/or release entries may be used to earn angling ratings, as follows:

Novice

Angler-plaque

Expert Angler

Freshwater – plaque

Saltwater – plaque

Joe Brooks Master Angler – plaque

Division Expert – plaque for each division

See “Virginia Anglers Club Rating Requirements” for details.

Section 4- Reinstated members

When a former member is reinstated to membership, he will receive credit toward the current rating requirements and for all entries made during his previous membership.

Section 5- Tackle and method specifications

Subsection 5(A)- General

To be eligible for the VAC recognition, all angling activity must conform to the rules of the International Game Fish Association (IGFA) for fly fishing or other fishing in both freshwater and saltwater classifications. In addition to the IGFA rules, VAC has established its own rules to distinguish the following tackle divisions in each classification:

Freshwater

Fly casting

Spinning

Plug casting

General (including Braid)

Surf casting

Saltwater

Fly casting

Spinning

Plug casting

General (including Braid)

Subsection 5(B)- Line classes

Line class is determined by the manufacturers’ rating or IGFA rating if greater. VAC recognizes and maintains club records for the catches made in the following tackle classes and line classes:

Tackle classes	Line classes								
	Freshwater	2#	4#	6#	8#	12#	16#	20#	Braid
Fly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Spin	X	X	X	X	X				
Plug	X	X	X	X	X	X			
General	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Saltwater	2#	4#	6#	8#	12#	16#	20#	30#	50#	80#	130#	Braid
	Fly	X	X	X	X	X	X	X				
Spin	X	X	X	X	X							
Plug	X	X	X	X	X	X						
General	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X

Surf One class – no line class limit, can use Braid.

Subsection 5(C)- Permitted lines and tippetts

Line class is determined by the manufacturers’ stated test; it should be noted that some of the manufacturers will purposely understate the advertised test and these lines are not permitted. (For example, the line label states the line is 12 lb. test, but the manufacturer also states that the line tests at something greater than 12 lbs.) The use of wire as a running line is prohibited. Dacron is permissible. Multifilament lines (Braid) that are pre-IGFA tested, such as Platypus, are permissible in stated line classes. Multifilament lines (Braid) that are not pre-IGFA tested are permissible for entry in the Braid category in both fresh and saltwater. Maximum manufacture’s stated test for Braid line shall not exceed 50 pounds in saltwater and 20 pounds in freshwater.

Subsection 5(D)- Tackle and methods

Tackle and angling methods in addition to those specified by IGFA are

Division	Reel Type	Total rod length	Rod butt length	Leader length	Bait type	Trolling allowed
Freshwater						
Fly	Fly	IGFA	IGFA	IGFA	Art.	No
Spin	Spinning*	5’ min.	18” max.**	Rod tip***	Art.	No
Plug	Conv.	5’ min.	18” max.**	Rod tip***	Art.	No
General	Spin or con.	IGFA	IGFA	IGFA	Art. or nat.	Yes
Saltwater						
Fly	Fly	IGFA	IGFA	IGFA	Art.	No
Spin	Spinning*	5’ min.	18” max.**	Rod tip***	Art.	No
Plug	Conv.	5’ min.	18” max.**	Rod tip***	Art.	No
General	Spin or con.	IGFA	IGFA	IGFA	Art. or nat.	Yes
Surf	Any	IGFA	IGFA	IGFA	Art. or nat.	No

(*) Open or closed face (**) From center reel seat to end of rod butt (***) From center or reel seat to rod tip or shorter (lure not included). The intent of this rule is to prevent the angler from having any double line or leader on the reel spool when casting. Freshwater IGFA max. leader length is 6 feet.

- Bait consisting of whole, parts or extracts of naturally occurring substances commonly used as bait (with exception of pork rind) shall be considered natural (nat.) bait and allowed only in the general and surf division. Examples include, but are not restricted to, shrimp, crab, worm, corn, insect, berry, etc.
- The surf casting division has the following requirements:

1. All entries must be hooked and caught, using orthodox casting techniques from the ocean-facing beach, jetties protruding from ocean-facing beaches or ocean inlet beaches. The following rules apply to ocean inlet beaches:
 - a. For the Chesapeake Bay entrance, beaches oceanward from the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Tunnel and the Lynnhaven Inlet Bridge are acceptable for surf entries.
 - b. For Oregon Inlet, fish caught from the beaches on the ocean side of the Oregon Inlet bridge are acceptable for surf entries.
 - c. Beaches associated with all other inlets, which are acceptable for surf entries, must face toward ocean.
 2. Entries may be made in the surf casting division or the division appropriate to the tackle used, including Braid.
 3. Metallic leaders may not exceed 24 inches.
 4. Fish caught from a pier are not eligible in the surf casting division.
- In all divisions, except general, the lure must be cast and retrieved by the angler in an orthodox manner. Casting and retrieving from a moving watercraft is permissible (except in surf), so long as the angler, and not the watercraft motion, imparts any action to the lure.

Section 6- Weighing

Entries must be weighed by one of the following means:

1. On a scale checked by a reputable tournament.
2. On a scale tested by a government bureau.
3. On a member-owned scale certified and tested either by a government bureau, an accredited non-governmental scale service or IGFA, or by the certified member of the club, and registered with the angling rules committee not more than one year prior to, or no later than 10 days after the date of entry. (See rule 8)
4. Reading of scales:
 - (A) Only weights indicated by the graduations on the scale will be accepted. Weights that fall between two graduations on the scale must be rounded to the lower of the two.
 - (B) If a digital scale is used, decimal fractions must be converted to ounces and rounded downward to the nearest ounce before entering on the electronic entry card,
 - (C) The weight of the sling, platform, rope or net (if one is used to secure the fish on the scale) must be determined immediately after weighing the fish, using the same scale, and deducted from the total weight. If the weight of the securing device falls between two graduations of the scale being used, the higher of the two weights will be deducted.
(Example: Using a 50 lb.-scale with 8 oz. graduations, if net weighs between 5 lb. and 5 lbs. 8 oz., angler must deduct 5 lbs. 8 oz.)
5. Entries weighed on floating objects will be allowed provided the following conditions are met:
 - (A) The fish must be released alive.
 - (B) Weighing of a catch must be witnessed by another person unless the member is fishing alone and released the fish.
 - (C) In conditions where the indicated weight fluctuates, the scale must be read at the lowest indicated weight.

Section 7- Eligible fish and minimum weights

The species eligible for entry and the basic weights for 100 points are listed on the current basic weight table. The minimum weight acceptable for any entry is 50 percent of the basic weight. It is the intent of the VAC to support conservation efforts in managing marine fisheries and to abide by all regulations governing recreational fishing. Therefore, any entry for a fish caught during a closed season for a

specified body of water will not be accepted. Entry of a fish that is subject to a slot-limit falling outside the slot is permitted as long as it is released.

Section 8- Territory and time limits

Entries are eligible from any part of the world. Entries shall be segregated into two categories for trophies and awards:

Local Those caught in Virginia or adjacent waters of North Carolina, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky and Tennessee.

Non-local All others.

If a catch is made from any area where adherence to the time limitations in these rules would be unreasonable, the time limit will be waived if the requirements are met as soon as practical.

Section 9- Point system

Points will be credited to the member according to the following method: Change the weight of the fish from pounds and ounces to decimal pounds:

Oz. Equiv.	Oz. Equiv.	Oz. Equiv.
1 = .0625	6 = .375	11 = .6875
2 = .125	7 = .4375	12 = .750
3 = .1875	8 = .5000	13 = .8125
4 = .250	9 = .5625	14 = .875
5 = .3125	10 = .625	15 = .9375

To find the number of points earned: multiply the weight of the fish, as converted to decimal by 100; then divide by the basic weight according to the current basic weight table. The answer equals the points earned.

(Fish weight x 100) / Basic weight = Points

Section 10- Released fish

A member will receive point credit for released fish, without weighing, by using the release weights listed on the current basic weight table and calculating the point total appropriate to the line test used. If no release weight is listed for the specie, 50 points will be awarded for the release.

A release is accomplished when the swivel, leader or lure reaches the rod tip or when a hand is placed on the leader and the fish is released. If it was not the angler's intention to release fish, no release can be counted.

Removing the hook should be done whenever possible. Fish, which are kept, even temporarily, until dead shall not be eligible to receive release weight calculation. Points from released fish shall be eligible for rating advancements, but not for annual awards.

Section 11- Club Entries

Club entries will be made using the electronic entry card (E-Card) which can be accessed in the Members area of the club website www.virginiaanglersclub.org. Entries must be made no later than 21 days after the date of the catch and no later than December 10 to be eligible for annual awards. In the event a member has no access to the Internet, paper cards will be accepted and can be mailed. Mailed cards must be postmarked no later than 21 days after the date of the catch and must be completed in their entirety to be eligible.

Unless the member was fishing alone, a witness must be provided on the entry. The weighing of the catch must be witnessed by another person unless the member was fishing alone and released the fish.

Catches must be entered in the tackle class (division), which is appropriate for the tackle, line, and method being used. For example, a catch made using tackle, line and method which meets the VAC requirements for spinning tackle, line and method must be entered in spin division and may not be entered in the general division, except when trolling. Catches made using spin, plug, or fly tackle may be entered in the surf division provided they satisfy the requirements listed in Section 5(D). Within a tackle class (division), a catch may be entered in the line class of the line, which was used, or any higher class allowed in that division.

Any change to a submitted entry must be approved by the Angling Rules Committee. By submitting an entry, the member declares that the catch was made according to all applicable VAC Angling Rules and all federal, state or local regulations in effect during the period in which the catch was made. If a member submits a catch to the IGFA for consideration, the final club entry must conform to the IGFA's ruling for that catch.

Section 12- Club records

The heaviest all-time entry, earning at least 100 points, in each tackle class for each species will be considered the club record. In the event of ties, the first catch is the club record.

Section 13- Angling year

The angling year during which the annual championships and awards will be determined will start each December 1 and continue through the following November 30.

Section 14- Trophies and awards

All trophies and awards presented for outstanding catches covering the angling year span must be caught in Virginia, North Carolina, Maryland, West Virginia, Kentucky or Tennessee waters and worth a minimum of 100 points. In case of entries earning equal points or fish of equal weight, the entry caught on the earliest date (or time, if same date) will receive the award. There shall be no duplication of awards within Group 1, where the highest ranking trophy will be given. Group 1 awards are listed in order of ranking, highest to lowest.

Subsection 14(A)- Group 1 Awards

President's Award

A trophy will be given for the fish caught earning the greatest number of points in each of the freshwater and saltwater classifications.

Division Award

A trophy will be given for the highest point fish in each angling division.

Species Awards

A certificate or cup (angler choice) will be given for both the heaviest and the highest point fish caught for each club-recognized species. A single certificate or cup will be awarded if the same fish is both the heaviest and the highest point fish of the species.

Subsection 14(B)- Group 2 Awards

Youth Awards

Trophies will be awarded at the end of each angling year to any youth, under age 18, fishing with a club member entering the highest point fish in each of the freshwater and saltwater classifications. The awards will be available in the following age groups: 0 through 6, 7 through 12, and 13 through 17.

Non-local Award

At the discretion of the Angling Rules Committee, a trophy is given for an outstanding catch made outside the local fishing area. The catch may be either freshwater or saltwater.

Subsection 14(C)- Angler of the Year Award

Freshwater, Saltwater, and Overall Angler of the Year awards have been established to recognize the VAC member who, through his angling accomplishments in local waters, has demonstrated his skill in all tackle divisions across multiple fish species.

Criteria:

- 100 point minimum per entry
- Only fish caught in local waters may be entered
- Only fish caught during the current angling year are eligible
- No fish species can be duplicated
- For the Saltwater Angler of the Year, one entry is required for each tackle division (5 total), the winner is determined by the having the highest cumulative total points.
- For the Freshwater Angler of the Year, one entry is required for each tackle division plus one optional division (5 total), the winner is determined by the having the highest cumulative total points.
- The overall Angler of the Year shall be awarded to the angler submitting the highest cumulative total points for both the Saltwater and Freshwater Angler of the Year awards (5 saltwater and 5 freshwater entries are required).
- Members shall submit an application, including a list of all entries, for consideration for the Angler of the Year awards to the Angling Rules Committee by December 15th.

Subsection 14(D)- New Member Angler of the Year Award

This award has been established to recognize the new VAC member who, through his angling accomplishments in local waters, has demonstrated his skill in one or all tackle divisions in freshwater and/or saltwater across multiple fish species. For the purpose of this award, a new member is defined as a person who has joined the VAC during the current or the previous angling year. This award will recognize the new angler who submits the highest point total for up to 10 fish of different species caught with any tackle.

Criteria:

- 50 point minimum entry.
- Only fish caught in local waters.
- Only fish caught in the current angling year.
- The winner and runners up will be determined by the Angling Rules Committee from approved entries made during each angling year.

Section 15-Changes in rules

Any change in the foregoing angling rules will become effective only at the beginning of the new angling year.