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PO Box 1788 Bemidji, MN 56619

**KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS WALLEYE CLASSIC**  
**Tournament Results**  
**SATURDAY, JUNE 12, 2021**  
**LAKE BEMIDJI WATERFRONT**

For immediate release

The 20th annual **Knights of Columbus Walleye Classic (KCWC)**, a competitive, live-release walleye-fishing tournament held Saturday, June 12, 2021 on Lake Bemidji and Lake Irving, is reporting official results.

This year, 120 two-person teams competed for more than \$60,000 in cash and prizes for this 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration. First prize winners Kelly and Rylee Curb took home the \$20,000 Championship and the Legacy prize as our top ranked father and son team. The Curbs submitted the tournament limit of five fish for a total weight of 20.00 pounds.

Cash prizes were awarded to the top 15 teams, with a variety of custom rods and other prizes for select spots in the remaining field. The “Big Fish” prize went to the team of Rick and Justin Whittington for a 7.18 pound fish. A full listing of all tournament anglers and their official results is attached below.

This year saw the return of the Classic after a year off due to the COVID-19 pandemic. One of the changes that allowed its return was the adoption of a catch/record/release weigh-in format. A traditional tournament requires the fish to be brought to shore for weighing at the end of the day. This new format uses a phone app to record the fish size and send photographic proof to tournament officials before the fish is immediately released, significantly reducing fish mortality in our lakes.

Over the course of the one-day tournament, anglers registered a total of 587 fish. All fish were returned to the water. A total of 24 fish submitted on the app were disqualified for various reasons, 4% of the total. A fish could be disqualified if tournament judges were not able to verify the size of the fish or other similar errors on the angler-submitted photos.

“After a long, hard day of fishing, our anglers proved that Lakes Bemidji and Irving are a great competitive fishery,” said John Marcum, KCWC Tournament Director. “This year’s format changes created a new partnership between the tournament and our anglers. We’re proud of the way everyone was able to adjust and figure out the new process, even as it was taking place. Our goal is to deliver Northern Minnesota’s premier one day charitable walleye tournament, which we accomplished.”

The KC Walleye Classic Planning Committee is already meeting and making plans for next year's tournament, which will be held June 11, 2022. With the relaxation of Covid-19 restrictions, the planning committee is looking forward to bringing back the children's activities and possibly introduce additional entertainment. The committee would also like to thank the many sponsors and hundreds of volunteers who make this event possible.

The Knights of Columbus Walleye Classic fishing tournament is presented by Acme Tools/Milwaukee Tools/Honda Power Equipment, all proceeds from the *Walleye Classic* will benefit Bemidji Youth League Baseball, Wounded Warrior Guide Service, Bemidji Area Special Olympics, Fishing Has No Boundaries, Let's Go Fishing, Take A Kid Fishing, Bemidji Boy Scouts, the Lumberjack Youth League Fishing Team, All-Pro Dads, the local fisheries through DNR, and the Knights of Columbus.

This tournament is a continuation of the proud tradition begun as the Kraus-Anderson Walleye Classic, which to date has raised over \$864,000 for local charities.

For more information, contact tournament director John Marcum at (320) 293-4515 [bowhunterjohnm@gmail.com](mailto:bowhunterjohnm@gmail.com), or visit [www.kcwalleyeclassic.com](http://www.kcwalleyeclassic.com).