



Walleye Weekend – 2026 Breakout Band Contest (Battle of the Bands)

Application Process:

All entries must be received by close of business, Thursday, May 21st, 2026. Include the following along with the application (on next page)

- Electronic Press Kit (**or**)
 - 2-3 recorded songs
 - 1 video link (optional)

Drop off in person at:

Mike's Music & Sound (Monday – Friday: 10am – 7pm / Saturday: 10am – 4pm)
Address: 289 N. Main Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935

<or send information to> Email: Info@mikesmusic.net

All entries must be received **by Thursday, May 21st**. Bands will be selected through a vetting process that includes a combination of quality of music, choice of music, and energy. The top bands will play at Walleye Weekend 2025 on the Grande Cheese Center Stage on Sunday June 14th, between 11:30am and 2:30pm. You will play 3 songs or a maximum of 15 minutes to showcase your talents. Bands will be judged on quality of music, originality, appearance, improvisation, and interface with the audience.

Qualifications:

- Submission must include one original song
- No age restrictions
- All band members must be from the State of Wisconsin
- Must be available to play on Sunday, June 14, 2026, between the times of 11:30am and 2:30pm.

Winning band:

A total of a maximum of four (4) qualifying bands will earn the opportunity to play a 15-minute set at Walleye Weekend. Each band will be required to load in at **10:30am on Sunday, June 14th** (A drum kit* and sound production will be provided, but individual instruments and *cymbals are the responsibility of the competing bands' musicians). Qualifying bands will be featured on partnering radio stations.

A winning band will be selected based on a pre-determined set of criteria at Walleye Weekend on Sunday, June 14th and that band will win a \$500 cash prize and the Walleye Weekend 2026 "Breakout Band" trophy. Winning band will also have the opportunity to sign a contract to play Walleye Weekend 2027 (Dates: June 11th – 13th, 2027).





Walleye Weekend – Breakout Band Contest Application

Make sure to include an Electronic Press Kit (EPK) or 2-3 recorded songs and 1 video link (optional) with your application and submit by midnight on Thursday, May 21st, 2026.

Mike’s Music & Sound (Monday – Friday: 10am – 7pm / Saturday: 10am – 4pm)
Address: 289 N. Main Street, Fond du Lac, WI 54935

<or send information to>

Email: Info@mikesmusic.net

Band Name: _____

Contact Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email: _____

Band Members & Instrumentation:

Band Bio Paragraph:

Official Website or Facebook link:



Performance Criteria



- 1) All entrants must be able to guarantee that they will be able to perform at Walleye Weekend at the designated times and be at Walleye Weekend by 10:00am on Sunday, June 14th for instructions and pre-performance staging and/or set-up. The day of the competition will be split into four (4) equal performance windows with load-out directly after your scheduled performances (Start Times: 11:30am / 12:15pm / 1pm / 1:45pm / Judging: 2:15 – 2:30pm).
- 2) "The Breakout Band Contest" finalists (4) performers must play a maximum of 15 minutes and perform 3 songs. (See penalty below)
 - a. For every minute exceeding the 15-minute limit, the band will be penalized 5 points from their total score.
- 3) All competing bands are strongly encouraged to participate in promotion of the event for the advantage of crowd applause, which will be one of the criteria for which judging is based.
- 4) Any distasteful behavior, and or damage to Walleye Weekend stage/equipment will result in the automatic disqualification at the hands of management and judges.
- 5) Walleye Weekend will not be held accountable for any broken equipment, injuries, or any other negative occurrences outside of our staff's control.
- 6) To ensure fairness and equality; There will be no effects provided by Walleye Weekend or affiliated production crew. All performers will use the same stage with the same lighting state. There will be no reverb supplied. Bands must all use the provided drum kit, but bring their own cymbals.

Finalist Live Performance - Judging Scale and Criteria (100 Points)

1) Planning/Preparedness – 20 Points Total

- a. Evidence of performance planning
- b. Appeared ready and prepared to play?
- c. Did band complete three (3) songs and stay within 15-minute timeframe? (5 points deducted for each minute over).

2) Originality – 30 Points Total

- a. Material: How unique did the songs sound? Even if it is a cover song, did they spin their own creativity into it?
- b. Appearance: Did the band look original? Did the band stand out? *
- c. Improvisation: Did the band demonstrate any level of original improvisational skill? I.e. 'jam out' or vocal through an instrument change, repair or equipment failure

3) Interface with Audience – 10 Points Total

- a. Verbal Interaction: Did the band talk to or with the audience? *
- b. Physical Interaction: Did the band physically participate with the audience e.g. Eye contact, head nod, acknowledgments, applause etc. *
- c. Confidence: Was the band confident in their interaction with the audience?

4) Quality of Performance – 20 Points Total

- a. Confidence/Competence: Did the band look at ease whilst playing? Did the band appear to be able to do what they wanted to do?
- b. Set Dynamism: Did the band's setlist appear to play according to a plan i.e. was it well constructed and able to manipulate the audience's mood?
- c. Stage Presence: Did the band use the stage effectively? Did the band appear positive about their performance? Did the band interact effectively on stage? How did the band cope with any problems they may have encountered?
- d. Conformance to contest rules: Did the band followed the rules stated in the contest i.e. time limit, profanity?

5) Presentation – 20 Points Total

- a. Attitude: Did the band's on-stage attitude appear suitable to their genre i.e. were they 'Punk' if Punk, 'Raucous' if Rock?
- b. Appearance: Did the band show personality on stage? Did the band appear to enjoy what they were doing?
- c. Entertainment Factor/Showmanship: Did the band entertain? Did one or the entire band display showmanship towards the crowd?