

OFFICIAL RULES

- 1. RULES CHANGES:** These rules shall remain in effect and unchanged throughout the current tournament year unless superseded by law or changed at the discretion of the Tournament Director.
- 2. BOAT & MOTOR & SAFETY:** Boats must be minimum 15ft in length and have a center console to be driven. Each boat must have required USCG safety equipment, including but not limited to approved chest type personal flotation devices, a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher, distress horn/flag/whistle, and working navigation lights. It must also have a properly aerated livewell space to maintain, alive, a limit of bass. If lights are not working you may be held at takeoff. Tournament officials have the right to reject any boat they determine to be unsafe for any reason. In addition a functioning bilge pump or bailing device is required. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open and available to all contenders and the public. Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each contestant is required to wear a USCG-approved chest type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is operating. The preserver must be fastened securely until the engine is shut off. All boats must be equipped with an ignition kill switch that is securely attached to the driver's body anytime the combustion engine is operating. Participants must always abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start of a tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. In the event of a thunderstorm, lightning, severe weather or any unsafe condition, participants should remove themselves from the competition and seek safety or shelter until it is safe to continue fishing. The horsepower of the engine must not exceed the USCG rating plate for that boat. Violation of these rules will be reason for disqualification. All members must carry boater liability insurance of reasonable amounts. Anglers must provide proof of insurance upon request.
- 3. PERMITTED FISHING METHODS:** Only artificial lures may be used. No live or prepared bait except "pork baits" may be used. Only one rod may be used at a time. Rods longer than eight (8) feet are not permitted. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All fish must be caught live in a conventional sporting manner. Snag hooking bedding fish is prohibited and grounds for disqualification.
- 4. SPORTSMANSHIP:** All contestants are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, fellowship, and conservation. Use of alcohol or drugs during the tournament (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the tournament will result in automatic disqualification. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported to tournament officials for further investigation. Any violation of these basic sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification.

5. **PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Contestants may fish anywhere on the tournament waters reachable by boat, but not within 50 yards of any marina gas pump, within 50 yards of Launch Site or within 50 yards of another competitor anchored boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position. An anchored boat is a boat held in a fixed position by a line attached to a weight or by a shallow water anchor, such as a Power-Pole or Talon with the trolling motor in the up position. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him to the exclusion of any other competitor. All fishing must be done from the boat; contestants may not depart the boat to land fish. Boats must stay in the tournament waters during tournament hours; all contestants must remain in the boat except in the case of an emergency or where safety is involved. Partners must always remain together, unless in an emergency or to stay with the boat after a rescue. If a competitor must violate any of these conditions except due to an emergency, his catch for that day shall not be counted in the tournament. Trailering of boats during tournament hours, except by Tournament Director's direction, is prohibited. Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Officials. Absolutely no hole-sitting or holding of a fishing spot. Any water within these tournament boundaries posted "off-limits or no fishing" by state or federal agencies will be off-limits. Competitors may not exit their boat to gain access to fishable waters. There are no off-limit days.
6. **SCORING:** Scoring shall be determined by pounds and hundredths of each competitor's catch during the tournament. Each team's total weight will determine the final standings. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth and Spotted Bass, Red Eye or Shoal Bass can be scored. Length and bag limits of eligible fish will be set for each tournament and will be announced at each event. The limit is five (5) bass per day, following local regulations for length, on a golden rule. Only fish which measure the official length(s) on the longest straight line shall be weighed-in. Each contestant must present his own catch for weigh-in. A penalty shall be assessed for any bass presented for weigh-in which fail to meet prescribed limits; such penalty shall be loss of undersized bass, plus a .50 lbs. (8oz) penalty. At NO TIME may any contestant have more than 5 bass. Culling of fish must be done immediately. Bass may not be stringered at any time during a tournament. Any bass that appears to have been mutilated, mashed or stretched to reach the limit will disqualify the contestant. Every effort must be made to keep fish alive. A 0.25 lbs. (4oz) penalty will be deducted for each dead bass. The tournament director shall be sole judge for the viability of live release. Once a contestant's catch has been presented to tournament officials, that team may not return to their boat until his catch has been counted, weighed and recorded. Competitors may choose only one bass out of their bag as an entry into the "big bass side pots".
7. **TIES:** In the case of a tie for any place, the number of fish in creel will determine the winner. Should a tie still exist the largest bass from each contestant's bag will be used. If this method fails to break the tie, the place and prize (if applicable) is shared.

8. **CHECK IN AND LATE PENALTY:** All contestants must check in at the official check in point at or before the official check in time even if they do not weigh in fish. For each 1 minute or portion thereof that a contestant is late checking in he shall be penalized 1 pound. Any contestant checking in more than 15 minutes late shall lose all weight for that day. All fishing ceases at check in.
9. **PROTESTS:** All protests relative to the actual tournament must be done before weigh-in. All protests relative to the weigh-in must be done immediately following the weigh-in.
10. **BOAT IDENTIFICATION:** All angling activities must be done from a previously inspected boat. Each boat **MUST** be given, prior to takeoff, a livewell check by a tournament official, also a boat marker may be given which **MUST** remain in or on the boat and be turned in during check-in at the end of each day.
11. **CELL PHONES AND RADIOS:** Cell phones and radios are encouraged for safety reasons but are prohibited during tournament hours unless of an emergency or communications with the Tournament Director.
12. **PARTICIPATION/ELIGIBILITY:** Tournaments are open to any full-time student who is enrolled in an accredited university or college. **EVERY INDIVIDUAL MUST COMPLETE AND SIGN A LIABILITY RELEASE BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO COMPLETE, NO EXCEPTIONS**
13. **BAITING:** "Baiting" of any kind is prohibited. Baiting of brush piles, weed lines, lilies, or any other structure will not be tolerated. This will help create a more level playing field for all anglers.
14. **EMERGENCY OR BREAK DOWN:** In case of an emergency/breakdown a team may bring their fish back in a competitor's boat but there must be at least one member from each team present when checking in with their clearly marked fish. Anglers must identify their fish with some sort of marker or separation system before entering the rescue boat with fish, to return to launch site. No fishing from the rescue boat.