ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGIATE ANGLERS

2027 OFFICIAL RULES

Bass Pro Shops Collegiate Bass Fishing Series

Participation in the 2027 Bass Pro Shops Collegiate Bass Fishing Series constitutes each contestant's understanding of and full and unconditional agreement to and acceptance of these Official Rules. Contestants must obey all State, Federal and local fishing and safety laws.

The Tournament Director reserves the right to penalize or disqualify any contestant that is determined to be in violation of any term contained in these Official Rules. The Tournament Director's decision not to enforce a specific provision of the Official Rules does not constitute a waiver of that provision or of the Official Rules generally.

Interpretation of these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. Decisions of the Tournament Director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. At the sole discretion of the Tournament Director, entry may be refused to any individual or university fishing club/team. Protests must be made in writing within fifteen (15) minutes of the official check-in time of the final flight, however the ACA reserves the right to penalize or disqualify teams after an event, and adjust the standings, should eligibility or other rules be broken.

These Official Rules govern the 2027 season in its entirety. The Remote Online Allowance provisions in Section 4 took effect January 1, 2027 and apply to every event of the 2027 season.

Captions

The captions and section numbers at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules.

1. Participation / Eligibility

Participation in ACA events is open to teams and anglers meeting the rules and requirements set forth in these Official Rules.

Participation is open to college students who are enrolled full-time in an accredited college or university and are members in good standing of that college or university's institutionally recognized fishing club that has been cleared and approved to compete and represent their college or university. Full time is defined by your school regarding the diploma you are working towards in both graduate and undergraduate programs. Participants must have an overall (cumulative) GPA of 2.0 or higher to be eligible to compete in ACA events.

The ACA may grant a waiver to the minimum GPA requirement in cases of documented hardship or extenuating circumstances, solely at the ACA's discretion. Hardship includes, but is not limited to, medical or mental health circumstances, family emergency, military obligation, or a documented change in academic program. Academic underperformance on its own is not a basis for a waiver, and no waiver will be granted to accommodate an angler's fishing schedule, travel, or competitive commitments.

The ACA reserves the right to deny eligibility based on academic standards. Additionally, the ACA reserves the right to deny entry into any ACA event for any angler who the ACA deems is not an active student angler representing the spirit of college fishing. The ACA's final determinations to allow or deny participation of a school bass fishing club/team, or select angler, are the ACA's alone.

The ACA will be conducting eligibility checks for registered participants. Selected anglers will be required to provide official documentation that verifies they are eligible to participate in the event, according to the eligibility criteria contained within these rules. Failure to provide the required information by the requested deadline will result in disqualification from the event.

Student anglers must be prepared to provide a transcript, or any other requested academic information at all times, including in-person at events. Student anglers are also required to provide contact information of advisors and coaches, should the ACA not have that data. If student anglers do not provide the requested information, they will be ineligible for competition.

All anglers competing in ACA events should be prepared to provide an official transcript in a timely manner, if requested by the ACA. Failure to comply or provide an official transcript can result in disqualification, denying an angler entry, or prevent them from continuing to compete in a given event.

For students who drop a class or finish a semester with less than the total number of credits needed to be considered a full-time student per their institution's definition, the ACA reserves the right to review the requested transcript to make an official ruling on an angler's eligibility. In cases where an angler withdraws from an excessive number of classes, at the ACA's sole discretion, an angler will be ruled ineligible to compete.

Seniors and graduate students in their final semester are considered full-time students if they are enrolled in all remaining courses required for completion of their degree, even where that course load falls below their institution's full-time threshold. The student angler must notify the ACA and provide a current transcript and class schedule confirming that the courses in which they are enrolled represent the remainder of their degree requirements. No waiver is required under this provision.

Classes must be in session at the time of the tournament for new freshmen to be considered full-time undergraduate students.

Anglers representing a school that is not a traditional four-year institution, including Junior Colleges, Community Colleges, and Trade Schools among others, cannot compete at that school (or any other school of that level) for more than two years without a waiver that is approved by ACA.

Anglers looking to represent a two-year school, or any of the level of institutions listed above, for a third year can appeal for a waiver by submitting their case to the ACA via email: college@carecotv.com. A complete, up-to-date transcript, and class schedule for that current semester will need to be provided to the ACA in that waiver claim email. Examples would include hardships for medical, changes in curriculum, etc. However, no angler will be allowed to represent a two-year school for more than 3 years and all other academic requirements must be met to include GPA and class load, except in select cases to be approved by ACA.

All anglers, regardless of schools attended, are still upheld to only be able to participate in a maximum of five years of collegiate bass fishing tournaments (any organization at any level). Therefore, for anglers who compete in a total of 2 years of events for a school that is not a traditional four-year institution, their maximum eligibility would be two years at a Junior College, Community College, Trade School, etc., followed by three years representing a traditional four-year institution.

Graduate students must provide a copy of their Official Transcript, and the applicable graduate program they are enrolled in to gain their 5th year of fishing eligibility.

It's the school and team's responsibility to monitor eligibility. Penalties up to, and including, disqualification of the angler, as well as suspension of the school's ability to compete in future ACA events are possible punishments. All decisions are final once made by ACA on eligibility.

Transfers

Regarding transfer students, classes must be in session at the time of the tournament, with the student angler enrolled full-time in classes at their new university, to be considered eligible to compete. Student anglers who transfer and are seeking eligibility cannot do so in the middle of a semester. For those that opt to transfer mid-semester, they will forego their eligibility for the remainder of that semester and cannot compete in ACA events or tournaments where ACA rules apply.

Student anglers who have competed for three or more years at a four-year institution that intend to transfer to a two-year school (Junior College, Community College, or trade school) must reach out to the ACA to submit for a waiver, per the submission process listed above, to receive approval to compete in ACA events.

Waivers and Documentation

A granted eligibility waiver or approved appeal is only applicable to that event. For any future events, the student angler must submit another waiver/appeal to the ACA to be reviewed to determine further eligibility. Waivers are granted on the basis of documented hardship or extenuating circumstances — medical hardship, family emergency, military status, and documented changes in academic program are examples of circumstances the ACA will consider.

Attempting to fish professionally or semi-professionally, working full time, or any conflict arising from an angler's fishing schedule or competitive commitments are not approval reasons for eligibility waivers to compete in ACA events.

Student anglers must be able to provide a complete transcript, proof of address (such as a lease, utility bill, or official school housing record), and class schedule that specifically identifies the nature and location (online, hybrid, or in-person) of the classes being taken upon request. Inability to provide this information with the required details will result in disqualification, or an angler being deemed ineligible.

Students who graduated within five (5) months of the tournament date are eligible to compete if they are in good standing with their school's fishing club/team. All participants will be required to show a student ID and a state-issued photo ID at registration.

Anglers who have participated in five years of collegiate bass fishing tournaments (any organization at any level) are not eligible to compete.

Each team must provide its own equipment including, without limitation, fishing equipment, and a boat, all subject to the restrictions contained in these Official Rules.

All contestants must have in their possession a valid fishing license for the specified tournament waters being fished. Licenses must be purchased prior to official practice days. Failure to provide proof of a valid fishing license will result in a disqualification of that event. (See fact sheet for license requirements for that specific event)

The ACA reserves the right to deny an angler entry into an event to protect the integrity of the field.

The ACA also wants all anglers to know we can help them start a school fishing program near their residence or place of work, and has been doing this for over 20 years.

To appeal or request more information or clarification on an angler, email college@carecotv.com. The ACA will review the situations on a case-by-case basis.

2. Coach and Advisor Rules Acknowledgment

Prior to a school bass fishing club/team's first ACA event of each season, the club's head coach or faculty advisor must submit a signed acknowledgment to the ACA confirming that they have read, understand, and agree to abide by these Official Rules in their entirety, including the Participation and Eligibility requirements in Section 1.

Where a club has no head coach or faculty advisor, the acknowledgment must be submitted by the club president or another club officer designated by the institution. The individual who signs is the ACA's point of accountability for that club's compliance with these rules for the season.

A current acknowledgment must be on file with the ACA before any angler from that club may be registered for an ACA event. A club that has not submitted a current acknowledgment will not be permitted to register anglers. Submission of the acknowledgment does not transfer responsibility away from individual anglers, who remain accountable for their own eligibility and conduct under these rules.

3. Registration and Field Size

Official Registration for each ACA event closes ten (10) days prior to that event's official tournament meeting. Complete rosters, with ROA anglers denoted, must be received by the ACA prior to that deadline. Rosters received after the deadline will not be accepted for that event.

The field at each ACA event, other than the ACA Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship, is limited to a maximum of three hundred (300) boats. Each two-angler team fishes from one boat, and each registered team counts as one boat against this limit.

Registration for an event closes when the field reaches three hundred (300) boats or at the registration deadline above, whichever occurs first. The ACA will not accept entries into the field beyond the field limit.

The field size for the ACA Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship is set by the Championship fact sheet and is governed by the ACA Championship Qualification Criteria. The 300-boat limit in this section does not apply to the Championship.

Waiting List

Once an event's field has reached three hundred (300) boats, teams that subsequently register are placed on a waiting list for that event. A team's position on the waiting list is set by the date and time its registration is received by the ACA. The first team to join the waiting list is the first team called for an available position, and teams are called in that order throughout.

If a position becomes available — through withdrawal, failure to meet eligibility requirements, or any other reason — the ACA will contact the next team on the waiting list in order. A team that is called must confirm its entry immediately in order to claim the position. A team that does not confirm when called forfeits its place on the waiting list, and the ACA will move to the next team in order.

A team on the waiting list must satisfy every requirement of these Official Rules to be entered into the field, including all eligibility requirements and, where applicable, the roster submission and ROA denotation requirements in Section 4. Being called from the waiting list does not waive or extend any requirement or deadline.

The waiting list remains active until twenty-four (24) hours prior to that event's official tournament meeting. The field is set at close of business on the day before the official tournament meeting, and no team will be called into the field after that point.

4. Remote Online Allowance (ROA)

The ACA maintains a school limit to the total number of Remote Online Allowance (ROA) anglers which a school bass fishing club/team can have registered for each ACA event. An ROA angler is defined as a student who takes all online classes and does not reside within 75 driving miles of the university's Main Campus during school sessions. It is that respective bass fishing club/team's responsibility to submit roster details and information to the ACA, per the requirements below.

Student anglers are allowed to take online classes but must adhere to the standards and requirements set forth by the ACA to maintain eligibility. To count toward eligibility, an online course must include regular teacher-student interaction, have defined start and end dates, and allow for validation of student work. Enrollment solely in self-paced courses without instructor interaction is not permitted.

Hybrid classes, courses which involve both in-person attendance in a classroom and online course work, are acceptable, provided that the student angler adheres to all other ACA eligibility criteria.

Student anglers who attend any portion of their coursework in person, including hybrid classes, are eligible to compete without restriction, and a school may register as many of these anglers as it wishes for any event, subject to the field size limit for that event.

Student anglers who take all online classes and reside within 75 driving miles of the university's Main Campus during school sessions are eligible to compete without restriction, and a school may register as many of these anglers as it wishes for any event, subject to the field size limit for that event.

Student anglers who take all online classes and do not reside within 75 driving miles of the university's Main Campus during school sessions remain eligible to compete but count against their school's ROA limit for each event in which they register.

Registering as an ROA angler does not excuse any other requirement. Any student angler who does not meet other additional eligibility requirements at any point, including minimum GPA and full-time enrollment, will be deemed ineligible and will not be allowed to compete.

Graduate students are subject to the same ROA criteria as undergraduate students. A graduate student, including a student enrolled in a master's program, who takes all online classes and does not reside within 75 driving miles of the university's Main Campus during school sessions counts against their school's ROA limit for each event in which they register. There is no graduate-level exemption from the ROA limit.

ROA Limit and Roster Submission

School bass fishing clubs/teams can only register 20% of their active roster (a maximum of 10 anglers for teams with a roster of 50+ members) as ROA anglers to participate in an ACA tournament. In the event of a partial position, the ACA will round DOWN to the nearest whole number for eligibility.

Active Roster

Active roster is defined as the school bass fishing club/team's current membership list of student anglers cleared to represent the institution, as submitted to the ACA.

To be listed on a school's active roster, a student angler must have competed within the past twelve (12) months in a scholastic-level event for college anglers. For incoming freshmen, competition within the past twelve (12) months in a high school event satisfies this requirement.

The active roster is a list of competing anglers. A club member who does not meet the competition requirement above may not be counted toward the active roster, and a roster may not be expanded with non-competing members for the purpose of increasing a school's ROA allocation. The ACA may request documentation confirming that any angler listed on a roster meets this requirement.

An angler who is uncertain whether a particular event satisfies this requirement should contact the ACA at college@carecotv.com for clarification before the roster is submitted.

It is the responsibility of the school bass fishing club/coach/advisor to manage their roster in accordance with this rule. If a school has students competing under these criteria, they must provide the following information prior to the closing of Official Registration for each ACA event.

For those teams which have ANY ROA anglers registered, the school bass fishing club/team must submit a complete, active team roster and denote which members are using ROA positions.

If a school bass fishing club/team does not provide this information prior to the closing of Official Registration for a given event, those ROA anglers will not be allowed to compete under any circumstances. It's solely the team's, advisor's, or coach's responsibility to be able to provide that data in advance of the deadline.

A school bass fishing club/team, under no circumstance, will be allowed to have more than their allotted 20% (10 anglers for teams with 50+ members) ROA anglers approved for registration and competition. There are no additional exceptions or exemptions from this rule. This ceiling applies at every ACA event, including the Championship, as set out in Section 5.

At regular-season events, it is solely at the school's discretion if it provides a student angler one of its ROA positions for competition. At the Championship, where qualified pairings are fixed, Section 5 governs instead.

For example, State University has an active roster of 33 anglers. 20% of their roster, a maximum of six anglers, would have the ability to be registered as ROA anglers for a given ACA event. The school may register as many additional student anglers as they want who are not ROA anglers, in accordance with all other ACA criteria.

From regular-season event to regular-season event, it does not have to be the same ROA anglers that register to compete. If a team were to want to send specific anglers, under this provision, to the first event of the season but change some of those out for the second event, they can do so. This flexibility does not extend to the Championship, where qualified pairings are fixed. In all cases, each school bass fishing club/team must submit a complete, active team roster and denote which members of that roster are ROA anglers that are signed up to participate for approval, for each event prior to the closing of Official Registration.

ROA Violations

It is the responsibility of the anglers, advisors, coaches, and clubs/teams to adhere to all ACA eligibility rules, including the above regarding ROA student anglers. Any violation of these rules can result in penalty, up to disqualification, of individual anglers, two-angler pairings, and even the entire club/team.

If a violation of the above rule were to occur at an ACA event, the school bass fishing club/team would have its School of the Year points revoked for the tournament at which the violation occurs and would not be allowed to compete at the next event on the schedule. Any additional violations at later tournaments would result in disqualification, and nullification of School of the Year points earned at ACA events for the remainder of the season, including the event at which the violation occurred.

5. ROA at the ACA Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship

A school bass fishing club/team's ROA limit applies at the ACA Collegiate Bass Fishing Championship exactly as it does at every other ACA event: a maximum of ten (10) ROA anglers. The Championship carries no separate, expanded, or additional ROA allotment.

Championship positions are earned. Beyond a school's first qualifying team, Championship positions are earned through competition under the ACA Championship Qualification Criteria, and ROA anglers earn them on the same terms as every other angler. Holding an ROA position at a regular-season event confers no qualification advantage and reserves no place in the Championship field.

Earning a Championship position does not override the ROA ceiling. Where the anglers a school has qualified for the Championship include more ROA anglers than its ROA allotment permits, only anglers up to that allotment are eligible to compete. Any ROA angler beyond the ceiling is not eligible to compete at the Championship, notwithstanding having earned a qualifying position.

Qualified pairings are fixed. A team that earns a Championship position must compete in the same two-angler pairing that earned it. Partners may not be substituted, exchanged between qualified teams, or replaced with another angler from the same school. Because the pairing is fixed, a school cannot reassign its ROA positions among individual anglers at the Championship, and the discretion a school has over which anglers fill its ROA positions at regular-season events does not apply here.

A school's ten ROA positions for the Championship are filled in qualifying order — that is, in the order in which its pairings earn Championship positions over the course of the season. Positions are claimed as qualification occurs, not at Championship registration. Once a school's ten ROA positions have been filled, any ROA angler from that school who subsequently earns a Championship position is not eligible to compete at the Championship, notwithstanding having qualified.

A pairing is never split to fit the ceiling. Where a qualifying pairing cannot be accommodated in full within a school's remaining ROA positions, that pairing is not eligible to compete — both anglers compete or neither does.

Because positions fill in qualifying order as the season progresses, a school can track its remaining ROA positions at any point in the season and is expected to do so. Once a school has ten ROA anglers qualified for

the Championship, it should plan its pairings accordingly for the remainder of the season. The ACA will confirm a school's current ROA qualification count on request. Responsibility for monitoring that count rests with the school, its coach or advisor, and its anglers.

For example, a school that earns five qualifying team positions filled entirely by ROA anglers has reached its ten-angler maximum. A sixth all-ROA pairing from that school is not eligible to compete, even though it earned a Championship position, because the school's ROA ceiling for the event has already been met. A pairing in which only one angler is an ROA angler consumes one ROA position rather than two.

The school must identify its ROA anglers, by pairing, on the roster it submits at Championship registration. All other ROA requirements remain in full effect at the Championship, including the definition of an ROA angler, the roster submission requirement, and the consequences for failing to submit a complete roster prior to the closing of Official Registration.

6. Off-Limits / Pre-Tournament Practice

Reference fact sheet for specific off-limits restrictions and times.

No contestant may be on the tournament waters after the start of the mandatory tournament check-in, except during tournament hours.

No practice is permitted at night during the designated practice period just before each tournament. Anglers may only be on the water from 30 minutes before official sunrise through 30 minutes after official sunset, unless other start and stop times are set for that day. The ACA reserves the right to cancel official practice days at any time, and anglers are then not allowed on tournament waters for any reason.

Anglers may not enter tournament waters to fish, test equipment, or sightsee, for any reason, without permission from the Tournament Director during the off-limits period.

Anglers may not purposely, knowingly or intentionally obtain information or advice from non-contestants about locating or catching fish on tournament waters once the Official Practice period begins. Any angler who inadvertently receives information from a non-contestant about locating or catching fish on tournament waters must contact the Tournament Director as soon as practical and share the information.

Anglers may practice alone, with an approved media representative, or a guest arranged by the ACA.

Approved media representatives may also ride along with contestants during competition. (Each media representative must submit a media request form and complete a signed waiver)

Flights over tournament waters, including drones, are not permitted beginning with the start of any off-limits period or during official practice. This includes competition days. Drones are permitted by approved media representatives working on an angler or school's behalf. Anglers may not view any drone video prior to or during a tournament unless the video is made public on Facebook, Instagram or YouTube, and the Collegiate Bass Series is tagged.

Non-public websites, blogs and/or social media pages, set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a small group of individuals are NOT public. The Tournament Director and ACA staff have final say on all rulings.

7. Restrictions

Beginning with official practice and extending through competition, non-competitors (family, coaches, friends, etc.) are not allowed to be in the boat with contestants except in the event of an emergency (rescue, mechanical breakdown, etc.) This is addressed in more detail below.

During the official practice days and competition days, contestants may not solicit and/or receive fishing information from anyone except other contestants.

During Official Practice Days and Competition days, only competitors may be in the boat with competitors. Non-competitors (family, coaches, friends, etc.) are allowed on-the-water during practice or tournament hours. Non-competitors on the water cannot provide anglers with any advantage. For example: non-anglers cannot deliver baits, fuel, or gear. No communication regarding fishing conditions or resulting in knowledge about lake/fishing is permitted. This includes, but is not limited to, providing updates on how any other team is currently doing at the event.

For an angler to receive assistance regarding non-emergency issues, such as mechanical help, the boat must be beached or tied up to a dock for a bystander to get in the boat to assess issues, unless otherwise approved by tournament officials.

During official practice, or during the event, GPS waypoints may not be provided to contestants by anyone except other contestants. Contestants may not follow a non-competitor's boat or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" or the placing of markers by anyone.

The purchasing or bartering for information or the hiring of services is not permitted after the start of the official practice period.

The use of cellular phones will be allowed during tournament hours for the following reasons:

- To send pictures, location, or any other information requested by the Association of Collegiate Anglers staff and posting of photos to publicly available social media channels. Anglers are not allowed to monitor or look at any other social media accounts during the event other than their own. Anglers may stream live from their boats during tournament hours with approval from ACA to publicly available platforms.
- To check live leaderboard (if available) on the Association of Collegiate Anglers website.
- Emergency situations.

8. Safety

Every participant must have completed a mandatory boater's safety course and possess a valid identification or certification for that boater safety training. Anglers must be prepared to present that proof of completion to an ACA staff member. Failure to do so will result in disqualification for that event. (Reference the event fact sheet for specific details pertaining to state boating requirements)

Anglers must submit and execute a completed liability waiver upon registering for their first event of the 2027 season.

Safe boating must be observed at all times. Contestants must observe "no wake" areas including posted bridges and other areas identified by the Tournament Director. Failure to adhere to safe boating can result in penalties up to, and including, disqualification.

Each contestant is required to wear a fastened, U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation device at all times when the combustion engine is in operation, during official practice days and during the tournament days. This includes launching and loading of boats. Failure to adhere to safe boating can result in penalties up to, and including, disqualification.

All anglers must be seated at all times when the big motor is in operation.

Distracted boating is not permitted. This includes not operating cell phones, graphs, or other items when the big motor is running.

Officials STRONGLY admonish all anglers to operate your vessel responsibly and safely for any given condition, allow plenty of travel time and SLOW DOWN. DO NOT OPERATE YOUR VESSEL IN CONDITIONS YOU FEEL ARE UNSAFE FOR YOUR VESSEL. ONLY YOU CAN DETERMINE THIS, AND BY COMPETING IN THIS EVENT YOU AGREE YOU ARE 100% RESPONSIBLE FOR SAFE OPERATION OF YOUR VESSEL.

All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut off device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation, this includes launching and loading of boats.

At the discretion of the Tournament Director, practice days or tournament days may be shortened, postponed or canceled due to unsafe weather or water conditions.

Any anglers caught in violation of the rules above will result in a penalty to be administered by the Tournament Director up to and including disqualification.

Anglers are expected to use sound judgment in the case of inclement weather.

9. Sportsmanship

All anglers are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to the ACA, ACA sponsors, the sport of fishing and the general efforts to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following, and the final decision is up to the Tournament Director on punishment and enforcement:

- Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the rules for ACA events.
- Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during check-in or tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure.
- Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.
- Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months.
- Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.
- Boat operation in an unsafe or unsportsmanlike manner.
- Violation of a posted no-wake area.
- Publicly criticizing or questioning the integrity of tournament officials, including, but not limited to, rules, policies and procedures of any organization.
- Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set forth in these rules.

In case of any conduct not complying with these standards, the Tournament Director shall have the right to refuse any application, or to deny a confirmed application, by returning the registration of a previously accepted application, or to disqualify a contestant.

10. Reporting of Violations

A contestant who directly witnesses conduct that violates these Official Rules must report it to the Tournament Director as soon as it is practical and safe to do so. Where the conduct is witnessed during an event, the report must be made before the conclusion of that event. Where conduct comes to a contestant's attention after an event, the report must be made promptly upon discovery.

This obligation attaches only to conduct a contestant has directly witnessed. A contestant is not required to report, and will not be penalized for failing to report, information received secondhand, rumor, hearsay, or speculation. Nothing in this section obligates any contestant to investigate, to question other anglers, or to repeat what they have been told by others.

The head coach, faculty advisor, or club officer who submitted the acknowledgment required under Section 2 is subject to the same obligation with respect to conduct they directly witness.

Failure to report conduct a contestant directly witnessed may result in penalty up to and including disqualification, at the Tournament Director's discretion. In setting any penalty the Tournament Director will consider the contestant's proximity to the conduct, whether the contestant benefited from it, and whether the failure to report was intended to conceal it.

Protection for Anglers Who Report or Cooperate

No contestant, coach, advisor, or club will be penalized by the ACA for having reported a suspected violation in good faith, including where the report is not substantiated.

Retaliation against any person for making a report under this section, or for cooperating with an ACA inquiry, is conduct not complying with the sportsmanship standards in Section 9. Retaliation includes, without limitation, exclusion from a team or roster, removal from or denial of entry to events, withdrawal of a position already earned, and targeting or isolating a person within a club. Retaliation may result in penalty up to disqualification of individual anglers and denial of entry to the club or team.

The ACA will not disclose the identity of a person who reports a suspected violation, except where disclosure is necessary to resolve the matter and the person has agreed to it.

A report made in bad faith, or made knowing it to be false, is itself a violation of these Official Rules and may be penalized accordingly.

11. Boat and Horsepower Regulations

All boats must be a minimum of 16 feet in length. No cumbersome crafts will be allowed.

All boats must be equipped with wheel steering; no other steering device will be permitted.

Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard required safety equipment.

Boats must contain a properly aerated live-well capable of maintaining alive a limit of bass.

Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in the Tournament may not exceed the horsepower set forth on the "Maximum Capacities" placard described below. The maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and competition is 250 HP.

Each boat must have a clearly legible "Maximum Capacities" placard that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must not exceed the maximum horsepower capacity specified on the boat placard. By registering for the Tournament, each contestant agrees to submit his or her boat and/or motor to an inspection by the Tournament Director.

Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or "Maximum Capacities" placard will be cause for disqualification from the Tournament and may result in ineligibility to compete in future events.

No platforms may be used during tournament competition to gain height advantage.

Fuel may be carried only in factory installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public. Fuel must be pumped directly into the boat using a hose and nozzle.

12. Permitted Fishing Methods

All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner.

When sight fishing, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth.

Only artificial lures may be used except for pork rinds. Only one fishing rod per angler may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is attempted or rod is used.

Trolling, defined as moving the bait with the assistance of the combustion engine, as a method of fishing is not allowed.

No strolling or long-lining will be permitted.

All angling must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish, or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Bank fishing is not permissible.

13. Permitted Fishing Locations

At no time may teams leave a boat to push it into and out of an area. Anglers must be able to use their motor (combustion or electric) to enter and depart a fishing area.

Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as “Off-Limits”, “No Fishing”, “No Boats”, “Boats Keep Out”, etc. by local, state or federal officials. Contestants are prohibited from casting into these areas or having their boat in these areas at any time. Contestants may not fish within 50 yards of a competitor’s boat that was first anchored (an anchored boat is a boat held in a stable position by a line attached to a weight or a Power-Pole anchor with the trolling motor in the up position).

At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day.

No tournament boat may be loaded on the trailer before weigh-in except with the permission of the Tournament Director.

Equipment Failure and Return to Checkpoint

In the event of equipment failure or emergency, there will be only two permitted methods of returning to the official checkpoint:

- By the team members remaining in their boat and being towed in by water, by any other boat.
- By one or both team members boarding another competitor’s boat to be brought to shore.

Under these conditions, the team catch may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, fish care penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Contestants who elect to return to the official checkpoint by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day’s catch to that point in time in the tournament day. Any contestant returning to the checkpoint will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the Tournament Director or his designated Tournament Official. It is the sole responsibility of contestants to locate the Tournament Director to request a restart.

14. Official Checkpoints

There will be only one official checkpoint for boat check-in in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat checkpoint in the morning or failure to check-in at the official checkpoint in the afternoon will result in losing credit for that day’s catch. All competitors and their boats must be in full compliance with tournament rules before they can depart from the official checkpoint in the morning. All contestants MUST check-in in the afternoon even if they don’t have any fish to weigh. All fishing must cease upon check-in in the afternoon.

15. Late Penalty

Contestants who are not at the official check-in area at the appointed time will be penalized one (1) pound per minute deducted from the total weight including any weight to be counted toward a big bass award. Any contestant more than fifteen (15) minutes late will lose credit for that day’s weight.

16. Live Fish

Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live-well. The use of live-well additives is encouraged to promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat.

A half-pound (.50 pounds) will be deducted from the total weight for each dead bass presented for weigh-in. Contestants are not allowed to cull dead fish for any reason.

17. Scoring

Only Largemouth, Spotted, and Smallmouth bass are accepted species.

Any fish which fail to measure the prescribed minimum length will not be weighed and will be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound for each short fish presented.

Bass Pro Shops School of the Year presented by Abu Garcia points will be based off each team's catch in relation to the final standings. Only the top two (2) teams from a college/university will be eligible to earn points in accordance with the School of the Year program rules, with the exception of the Championship. Refer to current School of the Year rules for exact points available at all events. Teams must weigh a fish to earn points.

18. Ties

Ties will be determined by a coin flip.

19. Television Coverage

During all televised events, contestants may not fish while using tobacco products when the camera is videoing them. Smoking or the use of tobacco products is also not allowed in weigh-in lines or on stage.

All contestants must allow camera boats to follow them at all times, upon request from the Bass Pro Shops Collegiate Bass Fishing Series. Refusal will include penalties up to and including disqualification.

20. Truth Verification Test

Each contestant agrees to submit, by signature on the release form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in disqualification. Truth verification tests will be used at the Tournament Director's sole discretion, and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by the Tournament Director.

Refusal to submit to an examination requested by the Tournament Director carries the same consequence as failure to pass. A contestant who refuses will be disqualified from the event in question, and the refusal may additionally result in denial of entry to future ACA events.

This provision applies whether the examination is requested during an event or after an event has concluded, consistent with the ACA's authority to consider violations reported or discovered after a tournament has ended.

21. Insurance

Watercraft liability insurance will be the responsibility of each angler. It must have the minimum coverage that the state requires and is mandatory of all contestants participating in the tournament.

The ACA reserves the right to consider rule violations reported or discovered after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for future events, including denying entry to compete.

22. Other

The Association of Collegiate Anglers (ACA) offers numerous discount and contingency programs via our partners. Any mis-use of these discount or contingency programs, including but not limited to providing discount codes or products purchased using these discount programs to another person, even if that other person is also a collegiate angler, or posting discount codes on-line for others to use is a violation of ACA and discount and contingency program rules. In addition, to qualify for a contingency program, anglers must fully

meet requirements of that contingency program rules and standards. Failure to obey and abide by any rules may result in a contestant and/or the contestant's school bass fishing club being penalized. These penalties are invoked solely at the discretion of the ACA and Tournament Director and can be applied to the individual contestant or school bass fishing program. Penalties may range from not being allowed to receive / utilize any collegiate discount or contingency program in the future, up to disqualification in events and banishment of the school from competing in ACA events.

The ACA reserves the right to deny entry to any university or college team that does not accurately reflect the ACA mission to ensure education and campus life is at the forefront of a student's growth.