



The following rules shall apply to the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation High School State Championship tournament. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his/her designee at the tournament. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director or designee may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate by them, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Subject to the appeal process set forth below, the decision of the Tournament Director, his/her designee shall be final in all matters. Penalties for rules violations may include the following:

- a) Loss of one or more fish in question.
- b) Disqualification from the tournament in question
- c) Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director

1. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

(i) Participation in this tournament is by invitation only. This tournament is open only to current members of official High School Clubs, recognized by said High School, who have graduated from the 8th grade and have not yet begun their freshman year of college or have been a High School Graduate less than 4 months.

Proof of grade or graduation date, to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of competitor. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is disabled in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his/her partner or endanger the safety and well-being of his/her partner or themselves shall not be eligible.

(ii) During the official competition day, no competitor or boat captain may operate a boat unless that boat captain has documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 per occurrence boat owner's liability insurance covering the boat being used in the tournament. Proof of insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover all passengers in that boat. Random checks may be conducted and any boat captain who does not have proof of in-force insurance with \$300,000 coverage may be dismissed. Each policy must show an effective start and expiration date. Tournament officials have sole authority to determine if insurance policies meet B.A.S.S., LLC requirements.

(iii) A properly completed and signed official entry form must be received by the tournament director before the start of the tournament.

2. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT

(i) Anglers participating in any Texas B.A.S.S. sanctioned event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Anglers, parents and family members of Anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of professional anglers that will not reflect unfavorably on Texas B.A.S.S. , its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

To this end, anglers, parents and family members of anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler, parents and family members of anglers who violate any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual Texas B.A.S.S. sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by Texas B.A.S.S.

(ii) Media comments, Public attacks

The favorable public reputation of Texas B.A.S.S. as a sanctioning organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets and tangible benefits for Texas B.A.S.S. Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers or the Texas B.A.S.S organization. Competitors, parents and/or family members are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with Texas B.A.S.S. policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that an angler, parents and/or family members knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of Texas B.A.S.S., Texas B.A.S.S. officials or sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming a professional and will result in disciplinary action.

3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION

(i) There will be no off-limits period for the Texas B.A.S.S. High School State Championship

(ii) During official competition a competitor can only have the assistance or advice of another competitor and the boat captain for the purposes of locating or catching bass on tournament waters. No information regarding fishing locations and methods should be given out before or during competition, with exception of the partner and boat captain.

(iii) No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from anyone for use during any competition day.

(iv) A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during the official competition day. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.

(v) Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any Tournament Rules. Failure to report violations or suggestions to another competitor that they violate these rules or false verification of weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification.

By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each competitor or boat captain agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The Texas B.A.S.S. Tournament Director, rules committee or such person designated by the Tournament Director shall have the discretion to determine the need for a truth verification test. The Texas B.A.S.S. Tournament Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for selecting an independent expert to administer and interpret the results and establishing, in consultation with

the expert administrator, the scope of the questions which may be asked during the test. The Texas B.A.S.S. Tournament Director or his/her designee shall have sole responsibility selecting the location, date, and time of the test nearest B.A.S.S. headquarters with respect to all concerned parties schedule and travel cost. The competitor shall make himself/herself available at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such test. Anglers taking a truth verification test may be responsible for any and all costs incurred. Random truth verifications tests may be administered on site during the course of a Texas B.A.S.S. High School Event.

4. REGISTRATION

Each team must register in person with official Texas B.A.S.S. High School State Championship staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Failure to register in person during the prescribed hours may result in a 1 Lb. penalty to be deducted from your total score. Any competitor, who has not contacted the Texas B.A.S.S. High School State Championship Tournament Staff 15 minutes after the closing of the posted on-site registration period, may be disqualified from participating in the tournament. It shall be each competitor's responsibility to check the schedule of events for registration time and location.

5. SAFETY

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the official competition, each competitor must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver any time the combustion engine is operating, as well as observe and abide by any and all state life preserver regulations that apply to his/her age, while in tournament waters. The preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition at all times. Inflatable life vests may only be worn by competitors 16 years of age or older and a weight of more than 80 pounds. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may be reason for disqualification.

(ii) When boating in low visibility situations i.e. fog, heavy rain, during competition, competitors must operate their boats at a safe speed and in a safe manner as determined by tournament officials.

(iii) Radar units permanently mounted in the boat, subject to approval by Texas B.A.S.S., may be approved for competition.

It is suggested the boat captain have a safety check with the anglers each day prior to launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.

(iv) Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel the start of the official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather.

(v) Texas B.A.S.S. reserves the right to impose boat speed limits on any or all tournaments. Whether or not to impose a speed limit, the area covered by the speed limit and/or the actual speed limit imposed shall be left exclusively to the discretion of the Tournament Director.

(vi) **IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, COMPETITORS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND ONCE SAFE THEN NOTIFY TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.**

(vii) **COMPETITORS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BOAT AND SEEK SAFE SHELTER IN BAD WEATHER WHERE DANGER MAY BE IMMINENT.**

6. SPORTSMANSHIP

Competitors in Texas B.A.S.S. tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification.

(i) Use of alcohol, tobacco or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor or boat captain during the official practice or during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future Texas B.A.S.S. tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, tobacco or other non-prescription stimulants or depressants shall be allowed in the boats during the official competition day, or when in the weigh-in area.

(ii) Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a competitor or boat captain, which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification.

(iii) All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the State of Texas. Competitors are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations.

(iv) Chemical-substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. Any disqualification, suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in a Texas B.A.S.S. tournament and/or for disqualification from a Texas B.A.S.S. tournament after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT

The use of grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition. Only artificial lures and biodegradable artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. Only ONE casting, spin-casting or spinning rod (8-foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. A hung lure that is not in or on the water is not considered in use and may be set aside while another

is in use. Other rigs as specified above may be in boat ready for use; however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. If a competitor breaks his line while setting the hook or retrieving a fish, he is allowed to make an attempt with the rod being used or by hand to secure the line and land the fish to be

counted as legal. He may NOT hook the line with another lure, rod and reel, or other device. If a competitor loses his rod and reel while landing a bass he MAY use another rod and reel to retrieve the lost outfit. If that rod and reel is verified to be the lost outfit that bass may be landed and counted as a legal fish. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their catch disqualified. When visually fishing a bed or for bedding bass, to be counted as a legal fish, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked. With the mouth closed naturally, you must not be able to see where the hook point enters the fish to be considered hooked inside the mouth. Competitors are allowed to share baits and tackle at all times.

8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS

Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition will be 250. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard. When required, each boat MUST have a U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must NOT exceed the rating specified on this plate or the horsepower maximum set by B.A.S.S. Each boat captain agrees to submit the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament to an inspection by factory-trained personnel, if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance of engines is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of a competitor's engine to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating is forbidden.

9. BOAT AND MOTOR

For the safety of all competitors, during official competition, all boats must be equipped with an approved type operable ignition kill switch and lanyard. Only one manufactured lanyard may be used and it must be attached to the boat captain's body any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear. Anytime the combustion engine is operating and in gear, the boat captain must be in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats that are 16 feet or more in length may be used. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Standing on the outboard motor or seats while fishing is not allowed. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering; however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All bladder tanks and any other type of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer are permitted. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat. No portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor. No "barges" or similar craft will be permitted. No boat equipped with

“Stick steering” shall be permitted to be used by any competitor. “Stick steering” shall be as defined by the Tournament Director. Jet drive engines are not allowed during competition.

10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT

During official competition, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment and a functional bilge pump. During official competition, every boat must have live-well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive, a limit catch of bass. Texas B.A.S.S. recommends live-wells are maintained at full level and aerators/re-circulators on manual. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate.

11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION

Prior to each day’s start, each boat may be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Each day, each boat may be given a number, which **must** remain with the boat. This number must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials, and at each check-in.

12. BOAT OPERATION

Control of the boat any time the combustion engine is in use is limited to the boat captain. Control of the boat by the competitors is limited to the use of the trolling motor. It is suggested that competitors come to agreement concerning control of the trolling motor prior to the start of the tournament.

13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director. Any water within these boundaries posted “Off-Limits” or “No Fishing” by state or federal agencies as well as the live-Texas B.A.S.S. release area established by the Tournament Director will be off limits and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to all public fishing will be considered tournament waters. All angling must be done from the boat. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations. Prior to the tournament registration, any questionable areas must be brought to the attention of tournament officials to be considered tournament waters and may be announced in the briefing for all to hear unless determined otherwise by tournament officials. Tournament officials reserve the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on conversations with local authorities.

14. COMPETITORS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT

During the competition day, competitors must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament day. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both competitors must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency or with permission from the Tournament Director. Exceptions spelled out in rules 5 and 14. In such an emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director, competitors may be removed from their boat to either a boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch under the conditions cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. In the event of a needed restroom break a refueling situation at a marina gas pump, contestants are allowed to leave the boat, at which time all fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat. If a competitor violates any of the above conditions, (to contact a tournament official by phone or other means or to report an emergency or breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point, and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament. If, after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials, and enough time is left for the competitors to resume fishing, a restart will be allowed, the competitors will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations as determined by the Tournament Director or his/her designee. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until back in the boat before making another cast.

15. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS

There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning, and one official check-in point in the afternoon, which points shall be designated at the tournament briefing. Failure to go through boat check and check-out in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point in the afternoon may result in disqualification. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbers described in Rule 11 and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, through the weigh-in process.

16. SCORING

Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound and ounce weight of each team's catch during the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, or Spotted Bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials. (Example – hot weather/fish care concerns) At no time shall a team have in its possession more than the tournament limit. If a team determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce their catch to the tournament limit with a live bass of their choice from their catch. Each returned bass will result in a 2 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. In this case, teams must attempt to notify tournament officials and if unsuccessful must notify officials at check in. Once a team checks in they must present all legal bass to tournament officials at the verification table. If teams at the verification table have more than the tournament limit, the team will reduce with live bass to the tournament limit and each returned bass will result in a 1 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. The official length for

bass shall be a minimum of 14". Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in a penalty of 1 pound for each such bass, which penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the team. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. After teams check in at the official checkpoint they MUST present all LEGAL fish in their possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a team's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that team may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be attached to a stringer at any time during the tournament. Culling tags or clips are allowed.

17. CATCH AND RELEASE: CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED

For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the team shall be penalized 1 pound. The Tournament Director or his designees shall have sole authority for assessing penalties. In addition, the Tournament Director, or his/her designees, may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. Upon mutual consent between both competitors paired together, for fish care concerns, the verification table will open one hour prior to check-in time of the first flight.

18. LATE PENALTY

Teams who are not at the official check-in point, as described in Rule 15, at the appointed time, shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute late to be deducted from the total weight of the team's catch, including any weight to be counted toward a "big bass award". Any team more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case shall a team be allowed to make up "lost time." After proper recognition at the check-in point, teams will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the tournament briefing.

19. TIES

At the Texas B.A.S.S. High School State Championship tournament, in case of a tie, the winning team will be decided by the following three tie breakers
The heaviest single fish caught during competition (2) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the second heaviest single fish caught during competition. (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the third heaviest single fish caught during competition. If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie, and prizes will be awarded in an equal amount between the tied teams. In the instance where merchandise is involved, prizes will be awarded as determined by tournament officials

20. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS

Two competitors from the same High School club will be assigned to each boat. It will be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed upon location with sufficient time remaining to check-out at the official checkpoint and start on time. Tournament officials shall have

no responsibility for finding missing partners. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation to depart to the check-out point. When two competitors check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other and each other's catch throughout the day until the

Weigh-in; except in case of dire emergency (see also Rule 14 and 15). A team must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another team. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by Texas B.A.S.S.

21. RULES VIOLATIONS

Protests may be submitted to the tournament director and must be in writing. Once considered by the tournament director, all decisions and sanctions are final.

22. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE

Anglers are encouraged to wear their own clothing which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the angler's sponsors. Texas B.A.S.S. may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are, in Texas B.A.S.S.' sole judgment, in poor taste. Texas B.A.S.S. will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. Required for participation in this event, each competitor agrees to wear The B.A.S.S. Shield on the front of club jersey or hat. School name and colors must be prominently displayed on your jersey. For every competing tournament trail logo(s) that is present on your jersey, there must be one (1) B.A.S.S. shield or B.A.S.S. logo of equal size or larger. In addition, if B.A.S.S. provides any ancillary clothing or products (such as life vests) bearing the logos of B.A.S.S. or the official sponsors of B.A.S.S. each competitor shall wear such clothing or utilize such products in a manner requested by B.A.S.S.

23. TAXES

Some state or federal laws require income taxes be paid on awards, such as scholarships. Anglers/Observers are responsible for all applicable taxes on all awards. Various States require tax on merchandise be paid upon the awarding of certificates and teams or individuals awarded merchandise certificates in these States are responsible for remitting their tax to B.A.S.S. Failure to meet that obligation may result in fines or disqualification from all future B.A.S.S. events.

24. WAIVER AND RELEASE

As a condition of participation in each tournament, each competitor must execute a waiver and release of liability and a name and likeness release.