



Texas B.A.S.S. Nation

North Central Region

Tournament Rules

**1. RULE CHANGES-C:** Great effort, study and research have gone into the formulation of these rules. These rules shall remain unchanged throughout all events. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions, as he deems appropriate, including and without limitation, disqualification, and forfeiture of prizes, entry fees and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director or tournament officials shall be final.

**2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY-C:** Texas BASS Federation Nation tournaments are only open to members of the Texas B.A.S.S. Federation who are 16 or older. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of competitor. DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND TOURNAMENT HOURS NO CONTESTANT MAY OPERATE A BOAT WITHOUT PROOF OF BOAT LIABILITY INSURANCE OF \$300,000 OR MORE. ***Proof of insurance is not required to be sent in with the tournament registration, but will be required to be on the boat and ready for check if requested. If the insurance binder is not available, when/if requested the boater will not be eligible to participate in a tournament.*** Any contestant that is handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his partner or endanger his safety shall not be eligible. All tournament participants must be 16 years old or older, a member in good standing with B.A.S.S., a member in good standing with National BASS Federation Nation <http://www.bassmaster.com/federation>, a member in good standing with the Texas BASS Federation Nation <http://www.texasbassonline.com/> and a member in good standing of a Texas BASS Federation Nation affiliated club to accumulate tournament trail points.

**3. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE/OFF LIMITS-D:** There shall be **no off limits**, other than the designated tournament lake will be **off limits beginning at 6 pm, the day preceding the scheduled qualifying tournament date**. Championship Only – There is a 10- day off limits period prior to the Championship. The designated tournament lake will be off limits 10 days in advance of the start of the scheduled Tournament. Paid guides may not fish a tournament that they have guided on the tournament lake in the past seven (7) days. (Fishing Guide Definition – A person who, for compensation, accompanies, assists, or transports a person or persons engaged in fishing for bass in the water of this State) During practice, and during the tournament, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone for the purpose of locating or catching bass other than another contestant. The purchasing or bartering of information or the hiring of a bass fishing guide within seven (7) days prior to any tournament is prohibited. No skin diving or scuba diving on the tournament waters during official practice or tournament days. No use of CB Radios, VHF marine band radio or cellular phones for the purpose of locating or catching fish. All of the above may be used in the case of an emergency for location purposes only. Each contestant agrees to report any violation of these rules immediately to the tournament director. Failure to do so could result in your disqualification.

By your participation in this event you agree to submit to a polygraph test should you be accused of any rule violation. The administration and interpretation of the polygraph test shall be the sole



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responsibility of the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director shall select the place, the individual and the scope of questions. The contestants shall make themselves available at their own expense for this examination.

4. REGISTRATION and PAIRING OF CONTESTANTS-D: See North Central Region Registration Procedure on the website, for any special instructions. <http://www.texas-bass.com/nc/index.htm> Registration for the North Central Regional Tournament Trail will be conducted **by email** with a completed entry form attached and forwarded to the Tournament Director or Regional Director no later than 7:00 pm, the Thursday prior to the tournament date – herein after referred to as the “**due date**”. All contestants that have **completed the registration form** and notified the North Central Region by the **due date** may also pay their entry fee before the tournament begins, **in cash, cashier’s check, or money order (no exceptions)** by **either fax or email, or at the ramp** during official registration. Additionally, a fully-competed registration form **will be** accepted at the ramp **without prior notification by the due date**; however, a \$10 per tournament late registration fee will be collected. The contestant registering without notification by the due date will be added to the end of the blast-off order.

Official registration will commence 60 minutes prior to official start time of each tournament. It is the contestant’s responsibility to obtain any special instructions given at the official registration.

A contestant who has registered and pre-paid for a tournament, but is unable to attend the tournament, may cancel the registration by notifying the Tournament Director or Regional Director **before the start of the official registration period at the ramp**. The entry fee of the contestant shall be applied to the next tournament on the schedule.

Any contestant who has registered for the event by the due date, and fails to attend the tournament, and does not notify the Tournament Director or Regional Director before the start of official registration, shall owe the full tournament fee.

Boater or Non-Boater - Entrants will register and declare themselves as a boater or non-boater. A random pairing of registered boaters and non-boaters will take place prior to the start of the tournament. The random pairing shall be conducted so that boaters receive equal sharing of non-boaters, throughout the tournament trail. (example: 20 boaters registers and 5 non-boaters register, those boaters paired for the first tournament shall be pulled out of the pairing for the next tournament, and the process repeated until all boaters have shared non-boaters) **Registered boaters will take their boat regardless of pairing**. Take off numbers conduct with a **random, manual draw system (ie, number drawn from hat or bag)**; exceptions shall be made by the Regional Director. A boater that chooses to register **with** a non-boater shall specify such on the entry form, and shall be allowed to fish together for the tournament that the entry form has been received and paid.

5. BOAT, MOTOR & SAFETY-C: Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors. During official practice and tournament hours, each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver. This life preserver must be worn anytime the combustion engine is operating. The preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and



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maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. For the safety of all, boats must be equipped with some type of ignition kill switch. This device must be attached to the driver any time the combustion engine is operating. All boats must be 16 ft or more in length. No raised platforms or decks higher than the gunnels. No bladder or auxiliary gas tanks that were not installed by the manufacturer permitted. No stick steering boats permitted to be used.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP-C: Contestants are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any contestant(s) who displays poor sportsmanship, violates these rules, or any federal, state, or local laws, or brings unfavorable publicity to the sport of bass fishing will be disqualified and shall forfeit all entry fees and/or prize money. During official practice and all tournament hours no competitor shall use alcohol or drugs other than those prescribed by a physician. Doing so will result in immediate disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially in the vicinity of a non-competitor's boat.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT-C: Dip nets are allowed. Dip nets cannot exceed 6 1/2 feet in overall length. If fish are netted, B.A.S.S. recommends the use of a rubber or vinyl-coated net. Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or prepared bait will be permitted, with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only one casting, spin casting, or spinning rod (8ft. max. from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types of rods are prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the 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. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will lose their day's catch. When visible fishing, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before unhooking to be a legal fish. No gaffs may be used to boat a bass or be permitted in the boat at any time. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited.

8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS-C: Maximum horsepower for all competitors will be 250hp. No boat may exceed the maximum Coast Guard rating. No altered motors to increase the horsepower over the factory rating allowed.

9. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT-C: Every boat must have all required safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and live well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain a limit catch of bass by both fishermen using the boat.

10. STARTING POSITION-D: Contestants will receive their starting position as assigned by the Regional Director. Boat numbers will be randomly and **manually drawn (ie, drawn from bag or hat)**, by the **end of the official registration period**. Any contestant who starts prior to their assigned number being called may have their day's catch nullified.

11. BOAT OPERATION-D: A full discussion between partners must be held prior to the morning departure as to the schedule of boat operations. This schedule must permit each partner equal time to fish from the front of the boat and operate the trolling motor so as to offer each partner the opportunity to fish his selected water an equal number of hours. Distance traveled to fishing locations



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must be considered in order not to deprive either partner fishing time. If a contestant waives the above rights, he/she shall retain the right to select the fishing water for one-half the tournament day. ***In a continuous effort to promote fairness and sportsmanship a draw partner who shares or divulges a previous partner's fishing locations with other competitors will be disqualified along with the person utilizing this information.*** Any contestant who, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap his partner shall be disqualified. An electronic trolling motor may be used for positioning only. No trolling with the electronic trolling motor for the purposes of fishing. Each contestant being considered a boater is expected to make that boat and motor available for tournament use by himself and his daily partner. In view of the large expense in operating and maintaining a tournament boat, it is suggested that the non-boater at least share part of the cost of gas and oil for the competition day.

12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS-C: The Tournament Director shall establish Tournament waters. Any posted off limits or no fishing by state or federal officials will be off limits. The live bass release area established by the tournament director will be off limits. This area will be announced at the tournament briefing. All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants must remain 50ft from another contestant with the trolling motor down and 100ft from contestants that are anchored with the trolling motor up. All such boats are required to advise any other competitor when such boat believes the competitor is close to being within these distances.

13. CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT-C: Contestants may not leave their boat to land a fish or make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during each tournament day. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. Both competitors must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. 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 to be scored. If a competitor must violate this rule then both partners must cease fishing and have their catch verified by a tournament official in order for that catch to be scored. A restart will be allowed and the competitors will continue from that time. ***The only exception to this rule will be when launching and loading the boat, one angler will be allowed to park and retrieve the launch vehicle.*** No trailering of tournament boats will be allowed except by the direction of the tournament director.

14. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT-C: There shall be only one official point for check out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon, and **the posted launch site** is designated as such for each tournament. Following a mandatory live well check, and safety inspection, all contestants are expected to be in the water ready for the first safelight take off. Take-off will be in order of number assigned by the Regional Director or Tournament Director.

15. SCORING-D: Will be based upon a points system. (Example-200 points for 1<sup>st</sup>, 199 points for 2<sup>nd</sup>, 198 points for 3<sup>rd</sup> and so on through the placements). Points drop by one for each position until all entrants are awarded points who weighed fish. Any contestant not weighing in fish shall be awarded **30 points** less than the points awarded for the last point placement. Each angler should ask to have his/her big fish weighed. Each contestant may weigh a 5-fish limit with a minimum length of 14 inches (courtesy check is allowed) unless the lake minimum is greater. Contestants, who present



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bass at weigh-in which fall short of the official length or presents more than the legal limit of bass, shall lose that day's catch, as this constitutes a violation of state law. Culling of fish is each contestant's responsibility and no more than 5 fish may be kept in the livewell. Culling of dead fish is not allowed. Only Largemouth, Guadalupe, Smallmouth and Kentucky Spotted Bass will be weighed. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the tournament official's discretion. The Gator Grip Golden Rule will be the official tournament measuring board.

16. KILLING YOUR CATCH-C: Each competitor is expected to keep his catch alive and properly aerated. There will be a .50 lb penalty for each dead fish presented at the weigh in. **The culling of dead fish is a violation of Texas law, and a violation of B.A.S.S. rules. Any contestant that culls a dead fish shall lose that day's catch.**

17. LATE PENALTY-C: Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area, as described in rule 14, at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of his catch that day. The penalty will also be deducted from big bass weight. Any competitor more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. All fishing must cease when that contestant has checked in. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament water is prohibited except during the tournament hours. Tournament start and check-in times will be announced at the tournament briefing.

18. TIES-D: In case of a tie, the following tiebreakers will be used; (1) the individual with the most fish weighed in, (2) the individual with the largest single fish (the contestant must have had their big fish weighed), (3) if a tie still remains, the flip of a coin will determine the winner or the two individuals may agree to split (equally) the proceeds of the tied position(s).

19. ENTRY FEE/PAYBACK: Entry fee for each tournament will be \$75.00. The Optional Big Bass Pot Entry Fee is \$10.00. Table 1 shows the allocation of the \$75 dollar entry fee by category. The tournament payout at each of the six qualifying events will pay one place paid per five (5) entries, through the first 25 entries, and increase one payout per additional five entries. Payback for the largest bass by net weight is 100%. For the Big Fish prize winnings, provided a Big Bass is weighed in dead, the dead fish penalty will apply to the Big Fish being weighed in to determine actual "net" weight. All payback (and any prizes) will be issued at the weigh-in site, or immediately thereafter. Any late registration fees, or other fees collected will be added into the Region fund.

Table 1 – Tournament Entry Fee Allocation

Category	Allocation of \$75.00 entry fee
Tournament Payout	\$54.00
Operating Fund	\$12.00
State Team Support	\$6.00
Angler of the Year Fund	\$3.00
<b>Tournament Payout</b>	<b>Based on 25 entries</b>



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Place	Payout
1 <sup>st</sup>	\$540.00
2 <sup>nd</sup>	\$405.00
3 <sup>rd</sup>	\$202.50
4 <sup>th</sup>	\$135.00
5 <sup>th</sup>	\$67.50

20. ANGLER OF THE YEAR: Will be awarded to the angler having the greatest number of points totaled from all qualifying and the championship tournaments. In the event of a tie, the angler with the highest place finishes during the Regional Trail will be named “Angler of the Year.” **The Angler of the Year will receive the funds from the “Angler of the Year” fund at the conclusion of the North Central Regional Championship. In order to be angler of the year they must fish all six tournaments to qualify.**

21. PROTESTS-C: Any protest must be in writing no later than 15 minutes after the close of the daily weigh-in to the Tournament Director.

22. NORTH CENTRAL REGION CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSIC: The North Central Regional State Team representative (anglers (boater / co-angler) who goes to the divisional tournament) will be determined at a Championship Classic draw tournament after the Regional Trail is concluded – **The Road to the Bassmaster Classic.** <http://www.bassmaster.com/news/bass-federation-nation>

**A contestant who fishes all of the Regional Trail qualifying tournaments receives an automatic bid to the championship.** All other Contestants for the Championship Classic must have fished at 4 out of 6 tournaments during the Regional Trail tournaments to qualify. The number of contestants for this tournament will come from the 60% of the average tournament field during the Regional Tournament Trail, and adding those that qualified by fishing all events. **(example – add all entries for the year (146), divide by # of tournaments (4) and multiply by sixty percent and add # of contestants (3) that qualified by fishing all 4 events:  $(146) / 4 = 36.5 \times 60\% = 22 + 3$ .)** The North Central Regional Championship will be a two-day draw event with the top 50% of qualifiers being designated as boaters. The remaining field will be designated as co-anglers. The Championship will have an even field of boaters and non-boaters, and may be amended by the Regional Director to ensure maximum participation. The Tournament Champion Boater and Co-Angler will represent the North Central Region on the State Team participating in the Central Division qualifier. **The Regional Director will determine if adequate Region funds exist to enhance the prize winnings at this event. All North Central Region participants are encouraged to solicit sponsorship, prizes, gifts, etc. and provide the Regional Director with assistance, and ensure that sponsorships are sent to the Director’s attention. Any sponsorship or support will receive special recognition at the tournament site and throughout the year on the North Central Region’s website.**

23. REGIONAL TEAM: The contestants for the Regional Team competing in the State Individual Championship or the Top Six Championship will be selected from the North Central Regional Championship Classic contestants. The Regional representative(s) must also have been a paid



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member of the North Central Region "Team" Club. (B.A.S.S. rules allow each person to maintain membership with up to "3" three B.A.S.S. Clubs) The Region may elect to designate "two teams" for competing in the State Top Six Championship. If for any reason a six-member team cannot be selected and less than six (6) members wish to participate in the State Tournament, they still must pay the full entry fee. Under all circumstances, the Regional Director shall have final direction for the formation of the Regional Top Six Team(s), to encourage maximum participation at the Top Six Championship or the Team Members for the Individual State Championship. This will provide the anglers competing within the North Central Region another opportunity to represent the Region at the Central Divisional tournament – **The Road to the Bassmaster Classic.** <http://www.bassmaster.com/news/bass-federation-nation>. **Those members that choose to be considered for the Region Team shall have paid their dues to their NCR Club before the tournament year begins, and shall also pay an additional \$50 dollars upon selection to team(s) representing the Region, after the standings have been announced. Provided there is enough support from the region participants, the Region may send additional teams/participants to the State Top Six or Individual Championship events.**

24. OTHER RULES: The Texas B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Tournament Rules and Regulations will be used if a rule is not specifically covered in these rules. The North Central Regional Director reserves the right to make final decisions on any rule/issue.

25. Emergency/Leave Early: If a contestant wishes to leave the lake prior to weigh-in, that contestant **MUST** notify the tournament director or a tournament official, leave a note at the designated check-in area, or notify another tournament contestant that **will be present** at the weigh-in in order to receive points for the tournament. This is a safety requirement that all **must** adhere to.

C = Common rules across all Regions in the State.

D = Discretionary general rule that may be customized to accommodate Region constraints.