



TEXAS B.A.S.S. NATION REGIONAL TOURNAMENT RULES

1. Tournament Rules: Great effort and research has gone into the formulation of these rules. These rules shall remain unchanged throughout all regional 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/or forfeiture of prizes, entry fees, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Decisions of the Tournament Director and Tournament Officials are final in all matters, are not subject to appeal, and are not reviewable by any court of law. Regional Officials may recommend disqualification and/or forfeiture of prizes and entry fees; however, the final decision to disqualify an angler will be made by the Regional Tournament Director only after consultation with the TBN State President and/or BODs. Disqualification from any regional event may result in loss of point standings and/or participation in future regional events including the Regional Championship. Any competitor who in the judgement of the Tournament Director is disabled in such a manner as to endanger the safety or well-being of themselves or another competitor shall not be eligible to participate. The Texas B.A.S.S. Nation reserves the right to make needed changes to these rules to ensure the safety and welfare of all anglers, and/or the public and preserve the integrity of the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation. Any rule changes will immediately supersede all previously established rules. It is each angler's responsibility to read and understand these rules. Each angler, by submission of a signed entry form, acknowledges and agrees that they have read, understand, and accept these rules.



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2. Participation & Eligibility: All anglers must be a minimum of 16 years of age or older and possess a valid Texas fishing license. Anglers under the age of 18 must be accompanied to the event by a parent or legal guardian and have a release of liability form signed prior to fishing. Each participant must be a member in good standing of B.A.S.S., the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation, and a Texas B.A.S.S. Nation affiliated club. Members in good standing from any Texas B.A.S.S. Nation region may fish any region's tournament events and accumulate points for the region in which the event is held. Individuals who are not members of B.A.S.S., the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation, and a Texas B.A.S.S. Nation affiliated club are not eligible to participate.

3. Registration & Entry Fees: Entry fee for all Texas B.A.S.S. Nation regional tournaments will be \$100.00. Big Bass pots are optional and will be determined by each region. Contestants may register by online registration, by mail addressed to the Tournament Director if postmarked no later than Friday of the week prior to the tournament date, or at the registration/briefing meeting from 4:00 to 6:00 pm on the day prior to the tournament. Online registration will end at midnight on the Wednesday prior to the tournament. A contestant who has registered, but is unable to attend the tournament, may cancel his registration by notifying the Tournament Director or other tournament officials by close of registration on Friday. The entry fee of any such contestant shall be applied to the next tournament on the regional schedule. If cancellation is for the last event of the season, the contestant's entry fee will be refunded. Failure of the contestant to



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notify tournament officials will result in forfeiture of entry fees and loss of any points for the event. No points shall be awarded to any contestant that does not fish the event. Exception(s): A mechanical breakdown of the tow vehicle or boat or verifiable emergency after 6:00 pm on the day prior to the start of the tournament will not cause forfeiture of entry fees but will result in no points being awarded for the tournament. A boater who chooses to register with a non-boater shall specify such on the entry form and will be allowed to fish together. All other non-boaters will be placed in a random draw to be paired with a boater. A copy of insurance for all boaters is required to be given to the Regional Director prior to the first tournament of the year.

4. Pre-Tournament Practice/Off Limits/Guides: There will be no “off limits” period for any regional qualifying tournament events. All contestants must be off the water by 6:00 pm on the day prior to the scheduled tournament event. However, each Regional Championship tournament will observe an “off limits” period beginning at 6:00 pm on the Sunday prior to the scheduled championship tournament through safe light on the first official practice day. There will be one (1) official practice day for each day of competition at the Regional Championship (one-day event, one practice day, two-day event, two practice days). Official practice days will be announced by regional officials prior to the tournament and will begin at safe light, ending at 6:00 pm. Tournament Director will establish safe light. Only contestants entered in the tournament will be allowed to fish on official practice days. Contestants



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may not utilize the services of guides within 30 days prior to the official tournament event. Paid guides may not register or participate in a Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournament if they have guided on the tournament lake within the previous 30 days. Fishing guide definition: A person who, for compensation, accompanies, assists, or transports a person or persons engaged in fishing for bass in the waters of this state. During official practice or the tournament, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone other than another contestant for the purpose of catching or locating fish. No skin diving or scuba diving on the tournament waters during official practice or tournament days. No use of CB radios, VHF marine band radios, or cell phones for the purpose of locating or catching fish. The above equipment may be used in case of emergency. Each contestant agrees to report any violation of these rules to the Tournament Director or tournament officials. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of days catch and/or disqualification.

5. Permitted Fishing Locations: The Tournament Director will establish tournament waters. Any posted off limits or no fishing areas established by state or federal officials will be off limits. The live release area established by the Tournament Director will be off limits. This will be announced at the tournament briefing on Friday night. Anglers are not allowed to leave the boat to land fish or make the boat more accessible to fishable waters.

6. Alcoholic Beverages & Drugs: No alcoholic beverages or drugs (unless prescribed) are allowed in the boat or to be consumed during



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tournament hours. Tournament hours are concluded for a contestant once their catch has been presented to tournament officials for weigh-in. If a contestant does not present a catch to tournament officials for weigh-in, their tournament hours are concluded upon official check-in.

7. **Sportsmanship:** Any contestant, who in the judgement of tournament officials, displays poor sportsmanship or brings unfavorable publicity to the sport of bass fishing, may be disqualified and/or forfeit entry fees and prize money. Contestants may not come within 50 feet of another contestant with their trolling motor down and not within 100 feet of a contestant that is anchored with their trolling motor up. In a continuous effort to promote fairness and sportsmanship, any angler who divulges a previous partner's fishing location with another competitor will be disqualified along with the person utilizing this information. Any contestant who in the judgement of tournament officials operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap their partner may be disqualified. In view of the large expense associated with operation and maintaining a tournament boat it is suggested that non-boaters at least share part of the cost of gas and oil for the completion day.

8. **Boats & Motors:** All boats must meet U.S. Coast Guard and state regulations. No motor shall exceed the BIA rating for that boat. The maximum horsepower allowed for any contestant's boat will be 250-hp. Minimum boat length for any contestant's boat is 16 feet. All boats must have all U.S. Coast Guard required safety equipment including,



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but not limited to, a functioning kill switch, bow and stern lights, a signaling device, fire extinguisher, and a throw cushion. All boats must have a functioning aerated live well system to keep fish alive during tournament hours. A tournament official may inspect any boat prior to the start of the tournament. It is required that all boaters carry a minimum \$300,000 of liability insurance coverage for any boat used in a Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournament. If requested, a copy of the certificate of insurance must be presented to tournament officials or the contestant will not be allowed to fish in that tournament.

9. Safety: Safe boating operations must be conducted at all times. During official practice and competition days, each competitor must wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved chest-type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is running. The preserver must be zipped, buckled, or otherwise fastened anytime the combustion engine is running. A functioning kill switch must be securely attached to the boat operator anytime the combustion engine is running. Inflatable PFDs are allowed as long as USCG regulations are met. *The USCG requires that inflatable PFDs be worn at all times unless there is an equal number of non-inflatable USCG approved PFDs on board. Tournament officials retain the right to delay, shorten, or cancel any part of a tournament due to severe weather or other factors that may endanger the safety of competitors.

In the event of an emergency, competitors should call 911 first, then notify tournament officials as soon as possible.



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10. Tackle & Equipment: All fish must be caught in a legal sporting manner on artificial lures. No “live bait”, “dead bait”, or “prepared bait” will be permitted during official practice or competition, with the exception of pork rinds/strips. During practice and competition, no more than one artificial or biodegradable artificial lure may be attached to a line at one time (including umbrella-type rigs). One lure is defined as a single device designed to attract and/or catch one fish at a time. Umbrella-type rigs (Alabama rigs) are allowed. An umbrella-type rig is defined as a device with no more than five (5) arms attached with single hooks, no more than 6.5” in length. Umbrella-type rigs used in tandem are not allowed. Adding trailer hooks, plastic trailers, or blades to a single lure is acceptable. If multiple fish are caught on a single manmade lure, on a single cast, all fish are considered legal and may be added to the daily catch subject to scoring rules. Twin-arm spinnerbaits, underspins, and buzzbaits are allowed. Tournament officials have the sole authority to determine whether a lure is considered a single lure as defined above. No trolling with the combustion engine or snagging of fish is permitted. Only one rod may be used at any time. Only bait casting, spinning, or spin cast rods 10 ft. or less in length may be used. All fish must be caught in a conventional sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snagging visible fish will forfeit their days catch. When “sight fishing” for visible fish all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your co-angler (if present). No gaffs may be used to boat fish or be present in the boat at any time. The use of grippers in



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landing fish is prohibited. The use of electronic tracking equipment is not allowed at any time. Landing nets are allowed however, they must not exceed 6.5 ft in length. Only non-penetrating cull rings will be allowed for culling.

11. **Protests:** All protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director within 15 minutes of the close of weigh-in.

12. **Polygraph:** All contestants are subject to polygraph examination at the request of the Tournament Director. Failure to submit to or pass a polygraph examination will result in immediate disqualification and forfeiture of entry fees and claims to any prizes.

13. **Officials:** All contestants are required to cooperate with all requests from tournament officials both on and off the water. Failure to do so may result in forfeiture of days catch and/or disqualification.

14. **Take-Off & Check-In:** There will be only one official checkpoint for take-off and check-in. All anglers will use the designated tournament launch site. Trailering will be allowed at the discretion of the Tournament Director for safety reasons. Take-off will be in numbered order assigned by the Tournament Director and/or Regional Director. Each contestant is required to leave and return to the designated checkpoint. Any contestant returning late to the checkpoint will be penalized at a rate of one (1) pound per minute up to fifteen (15) minutes. After fifteen (15) minutes, no weigh-in will be allowed. If sharing the boat with a non-boater, both anglers must stay within sight of one another until both anglers' catches have been presented for



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weigh-in. The only exceptions to this rule are when one angler is launching or loading the boat and restroom breaks.

15. **Points:** Points will be awarded based on finish. Contestants that do not weigh-in any fish will receive points based on each individual regions point system. Points will be used to determine “Angler of the Year” standings and for qualification into each regions Regional Championship tournament.

16. **Bag Limits and Culling:**

Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by the weight of each competitor’s catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye or Shoal bass will be weighed. The Boater limit shall be five (5); non-boater limit shall be three (3) of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials (example – hot weather/fish care concerns/championship events). The statewide minimum length limit is fourteen (14) inches. Tournaments held on bodies of water that have exceptions to statewide freshwater harvest regulations will follow the regulations set forth by TPWD for that particular body of water. The Tournament Director at the registration meeting the day prior to the tournament will announce daily bag limit and length limits for the tournament waters. It is each competitor’s responsibility to know the daily bag and length limit for the tournament waters that they are fishing. At no time shall a competitor have in his or her possession more than the tournament



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limit. If a competitor determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce his 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, competitors must attempt to notify tournament officials and if unsuccessful must notify officials at check in. Once a competitor checks in, they must present all legal fish to tournament officials at the verification table. If competitors at the verification table have more than the tournament limit, the competitor will reduce with live bass to the tournament limit and each returned bass will result in a 2-pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. If a competitor has his or her fish verified, weighed and upon returning to the boat discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that were not presented to officials; he or she then must notify tournament officials within one hour of final flight check in to receive a 2-pound penalty for each bass discovered. Anglers who do not remove fin clips prior to verification will be assessed a 4-ounce penalty per clip. No manmade or foreign object connected to a bass will be weighed and shall be removed by tournament officials. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the Tournament Briefing. In most cases, it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Fish will be measured on a flat board with the mouth closed and tail swept (not pinched). Any bass presented for weigh-in, which fails to measure the



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official length, shall result in a 1-pound penalty for each such bass, which penalty shall be deducted from the total weight of the catch. If an angler chooses to weigh a single fish for big bass, that fish must be alive. No dead fish will be weighed for big bass. A dead fish penalty of $\frac{1}{2}$ (0.5) pound per dead fish will be deducted from the total weight of the angler's catch. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, or otherwise altered will not be weighed. After competitors 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 competitor's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that competitor may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be placed on a stringer at any time during the tournament. Specially designed bags, which increase survival rate, will be furnished by the Tournament Director and must be used for the weigh-in.

17. **Ties:**

In the case of a tie in weight, the following tiebreaker will be used: The competitor with the largest number of legal fish weighed in. If a tie remains, a flip of a coin will determine the winner.

18. **Conservation:** Fish care and conservation are the primary concerns of all regions of the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation. The "Keeping Bass Alive" guidebook established by B.A.S.S. is the gold standard for tournament fish care and can be accessed at the following link:

[KeepingBassAlive_guidebook20comp.pdf](#). All Texas BASS Nation members and staff



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are encouraged to adopt these fish care recommendations.

Contestants will bring their fish to the scales in weigh-in bags with enough fresh water to keep the fish alive and healthy throughout the weigh-in process. The Tournament Director will establish the allowable number of anglers to be in the weigh-in line at any one time. Anglers not in the weigh-in line should keep their fish in the livewell with aerators and re-circulators running. All fish caught during a regional tournament become the property of the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation and will be released alive if possible.

19. Starting Positions: Contestants, who register online, by mail, or at the registration meeting, will be assigned starting positions by the Tournament Director and/or Regional Director.

20. Regional Championships: Each region will hold a Regional Championship in a boater/non-boater format tournament after the regional circuits are concluded. It is suggested that this tournament be held at a location outside of each region's home circuit. To qualify for a Regional Championship each contestant must fish the required number of regional circuit events for that specific region. Each region will determine the number of contestants that will be eligible to compete in their Regional Championship field. The top boater and non-boater from each region's Regional Championship will receive invitations to compete at the B.A.S.S. Nation Regional Qualifier (Super Regional).