

Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Rules

- 1. INTRODUCTION:** Great effort, study and research have gone into the formulation of these rules. The following tournament rules will remain unchanged, except for special tournaments conducted by the Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation. Hereto after to be referred to as MNBFN. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions as he deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, entry fee and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director and tournament officials shall be final in all matters.
- 2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:** This tournament is open only to current B.A.S.S. members who are 16 years of age or older and members in good standing of Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation and have been selected as their club's representatives to the State Tournament of Champions. During the official practice and competition days no contestant may operate a boat unless that contestant has documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 boating liability insurance and presented upon request to the Tournament Director. This documented proof must show an effective date and expiration date and must be received on or before the application deadline date. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his partner or endanger the safety and well-being of his partner or himself shall not be eligible. A properly completed and signed official entry form must be received by the Tournament Director on or before the application deadline date.
- 3. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE:** Any "off limits" and "pre-fish" periods, will be determined by the tournament director once the TOC date and location have been determined. The exact dates and times of the practice period and the off-limits period must be obtained from the Tournament Director. The competitor must know and observe these dates. During the official practice, and during the tournament, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone for the purposes of locating or catching bass, nor enter the tournament waters with anyone who has been on the tournament waters during the off-limits period, a professional guide, state or federal wildlife agency employee, or any other person deemed an "expert" on these tournament waters by the Tournament Director, unless he is a contestant in the tournament. During the official practice and during the tournament, a competitor may not "skin dive", or "scuba dive" on the tournament waters. The use of underwater cameras is prohibited during the official competition days of the tournament. During the official competition days of the tournament, a competitor may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine-band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communication device for the purpose of locating or catching fish. Contestants are permitted to transmit by radio or telephone only in the event of an emergency. If so equipped, contestants may listen to the marine-band weather information and Lockmaster radio frequencies.
- 4. AGREEMENT TO REPORT VIOLATIONS:** Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director any violation or infraction of these Tournament Rules. The failure to report violations or suggestions to violate these Rules, or false verification of weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification. Each competitor agrees to submit, by his/her signature on the official entry form, to a

polygraph test should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The administration and interpretation of the polygraph test shall be solely the responsibility of the Tournament Director and his agents, and shall be used (or not used) at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Without limiting the foregoing, the Tournament Director shall have sole discretion to select the place at which such polygraph test shall be administered, the individual who administers such polygraph test, and the scope of the questions which may be asked during such test. The participant shall be available, at his expense, at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such examination.

- 5. REGISTRATION:** Any participating clubs, must submit a roster to the tournament officials no later than 45 days before the TOC pre-tournament meeting. Rosters shall be (balanced), meaning one non-boater for each boater submitted. Clubs will be allowed (non paired) entries, which will go into a separate pairing round. Each competitor must register in person with Tournament Officials at the time and place prescribed on the schedule of events. Failure to register in person during the prescribed hours shall result in a penalty of 1 pound off your total catch. **NO EXCEPTIONS. IT SHALL BE EACH COMPETITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR REGISTRATION TIME AND LOCATION OR OBTAIN TIMES FROM THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.**
- 6. SAFETY:** Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors. During the official practice and the tournament, each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver. This preserver must be worn anytime the combustion engine is operating. This preserver must be strapped, snapped, or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification. The Tournament Director has 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. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather. MSBCF 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.
- 7. SPORTSMANSHIP:** Competitors in 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. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the official practice or during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future MNBFN tournaments. 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 which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the state within which they fish. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, or when in the weigh-in area. 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 for disqualification. Any disqualification or suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding, any tournament or

fishing organization, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification.

- 8. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:** 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, spincasting, or spinning rod (8 foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types prohibited. 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. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day’s catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before unhooked to be counted as a legal fish. The use of gags or grippers in landing bass is prohibited.
- 9. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: MAXIMUM HORSEPOWER FOR ALL OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS USED IN OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT PRACTICE AND TOURNAMENT COMPETITION WILL BE 250 HP.** Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard in their ruling of November 01, 1972. 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. Any boat manufactured prior to November 01, 1972 must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Each competitor agrees to submit, by his signature on the official entry form, 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 to increase the performance of your engine is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of your motor to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating is forbidden, and will result in disqualification. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the motor also would be cause for immediate disqualification.
- 10. BOAT AND MOTOR:** For the safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH. This ignition-kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear. Any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear there must be a driver in the driver’s seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats may be used that are 14 feet or more in length. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. A small electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. However, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All BLADDER 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 legal. 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. During the official practice and during the tournament, 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 cumbersome craft will be permitted. NO BOAT EQUIPPED WITH “STICK STEERING” SHALL BE PERMITTED TO BE USED DURING OFFICIAL PRACTICE OR DURING THE TOURNAMENT BY ANY COMPETITOR. The definition of “stick steering” shall be made by the Tournament Director. A competitor answering affirmatively the question, “Will you bring a boat and motor?” will be expected to make that boat and motor available for tournament use by himself and his daily partner, if so

requested by tournament officials. Those answering the same question negatively will be presumed not to have a boat and motor available and will be paired with one who does when possible. It shall be the responsibility of the fishing partners to mutually agree on a basis for sharing operational expenses. If the partners are unable to agree, the Tournament Director shall make such determination, which shall be binding upon the partners.

- 11. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT:** Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump, if so equipped, and LIVE WELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED, TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE A LIMIT CATCH OF BASS BY BOTH FISHERMEN USING THE BOAT. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is “proper and adequate”.
- 12. BOAT IDENTIFICATION:** Each boat MUST be given, prior to each day’s start, an inspection check by a tournament official, also a numbered flag, which MUST remain with your boat until turned in each day at the check-in. This flag must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials, and turned in to the officials at each check-in.
- 13. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE:** In Pro/AM type events, “boaters” will fish from the front deck, and “non-boaters” will fish from the back deck, During the Official Competition. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** There is no consideration of bow control time for the non-boater. Non-boaters are only allowed to drive (outboard engine) of the boaters boat in emergency situations with the exception of loading or unloading. In view of the large expense involved in operating and maintaining a tournament boat, it is suggested that the non-owner partner at least share part of the cost of gas and oil for the competition day.
- 14. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the Tournament Director. Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: within 50 yards of another competitor’s boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water. All such boats are required to advise any other competitor when such boat believes the competitor is close to being within this 50-yard radius. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor. Competitors may not purchase “rights” to “spots” from another competitor. Any water within these boundaries posted Off-Limits or No Fishing by state or federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS. Also the live-bass 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. Any waters closed to public fishing will be closed to this tournament’s contestants. 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.
- 15. CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT:** Contestants 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 days. 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. In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boat to: A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT. Exception: A contestant may leave the boat for the sole purpose of retrieving a lure which has been hooked on private property, and must remain in visual contact of their partner at all

times.

- 16. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:** There shall be only one official point for check-out in the morning, and check-in in the afternoon, and this point shall be designated at the Tournament Briefing. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director; at check-in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbered flags and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, and flags must be turned in at check-in.
- 17. SCORING:** Tournament standings, auxiliary awards, and final winners shall be determined by the pound and hundredth of a pound weight of each competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth and Smallmouth bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day, unless the prevailing state limit is less than 5, or a special limit is established for a particular tournament by the tournament officials, in which case the state limit, or special limit, shall be the tournament limit. At no time shall a competitor have reduced to possession more than the tournament limit. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of this provision, and in the event a competitor has reduced more than the above-described limits to possession, shall cull the largest bass first, down to the limit described. 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 in. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall accrue penalties at the rate of 1 pound for each such bass. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of the Tournament Director. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint he **MUST** present all LEGAL fish in his possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured, and weighed. His catch must be certified by the signature of his partner of that day. Once a competitor's catch is measured, counted, and verified by a tournament official, that contestant may not return to his boat until his catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the Tournament Director, and these bags must be used for the weigh-in.
- 18. DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH:** Each competitor is expected to keep his bass alive by use of a properly aerated livewell. The few bass which do not survive will be used for scientific study and/or for charity.
- 19. PENALTY POINTS:** For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized .25 pounds of weight, to be deducted from his daily score. The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points.
- 20. LATE PENALTY:** Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 16 at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of his catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "lunker award", for each 1 minute he is late. Any competitor 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 competitor be allowed to make up "lost time". After proper recognition at the check-in point, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in sight; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in

times will be announced at the Tournament Briefing.

- 21. TIES:** Method of breaking ties for any position will be determined by the Tournament Director.
- 22. PAIRINGS:** Two competitors will be assigned to each boat. Boaters may potentially be paired with another boater. Boaters may not fish alone (see Rule 26). No contestants from the same club will be paired, nor shall two contestants fish together more than one day. Announcements of fishing partners shall be made at the Tournament Briefing, which **MUST BE ATTENDED** by each competitor. Tournament officials will do everything within their power to pair a “boater” with a “non-boater”. In the event, two boaters are paired, the control of the bow will be equally split. A full conversation **MUST** take place before morning take off as to the schedule of boat operation. This schedule must permit each partner equal time to fish from the front of the boat and operate the trolling motor, so each person has the opportunity to fish their selected waters an equal number of hours. If one contestant waives the above rights, they shall retain the right to select the fishing waters for one-half the tournament day. **ANY CONTESTANT WHO, IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE OFFICIALS, OPERATES THE BOAT IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO UNFAIRLY HANDICAP THEIR PARTNER SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED.** It shall 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. The Tournament Director, at his sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning take-off. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation to depart to the check-out point. When two contestants 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 is completed except in case of dire emergency (see Rule 15). A contestant must not allow any bass caught by him to be counted on the score of another contestant. In such case, both contestants shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by the MNBFN.
- 23. ENFORCEMENT:** None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated tournament official from approaching or boarding any competitor’s boat at any time during the official practice period or the official competition days.
- 24. CLUB WORKERS:** The tournament will be run by the club workers and the tournament committee under the direction of the Tournament Director. Each club shall have a designated worker age 16 or over present at the beginning of each tournament day. Clubs with two or fewer contestants are exempt from providing a club worker.
- 25. CLUB-BOATS:** Clubs entering the State Tournament shall have a minimum of one boat for every two (2) contestants.
- 26. ODD MAN:** Odd man in any State Tournament, will fish with an observer appointed by the Tournament Director.