



## 2012 NMBFN Qualifying Tournament Changes

1. The NMBFN members voted to reduce the total number of weekends fished from 4 to 2. Each weekend will consist of two one-day tournaments for a total of 4 qualifying events.
2. The weekends selected by vote of the members are April 28-29, 2012 Navajo and June 23-24, 2012 Ute. Official practice for both weekends will be the Friday prior to each weekend. See rule 9 below for further clarification.
3. Qualification format for the State Team will be the same, best 3 of 4 scores.
4. In addition, the NMBFN members voted to allot 4 State Team Nonboater spots (9<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup>) to the Win and Your In format. The allocation will be to the winner of each event, if not otherwise qualified through the current qualification format. Only the winner at each event is eligible. For example, if an angler wins a tournament and qualifies for the State Team through best 3 of 4, the spot will not be allocated to the Win and Your In format.
5. Registration will only be available on the Friday prior to the tournament weekend. Anglers must register for either or both events on the Friday prior to the pairings meeting. All option pots are per event, i.e. two per weekend.

## 2012 NMBFN QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT RULES

1. Size limit will be per state regulation as printed in the New Mexico Game and Fish Proclamation.
  - Navajo and Elephant Butte will be 12" – smallmouth and 14" – largemouth/spotted
  - Conchas and Ute lakes will be 14" –smallmouth, largemouth/spotted bass
  - NMBFN will use the red Wil-E-Go belly board (recessed) as the official measuring system.
2. Check-in times will be 3PM-first flight and 3:30PM-second flight.
3. No culling of dead fish will be allowed, PERIOD. Dead fish penalty is 4oz per fish. Penalty for culling a dead fish is **disqualification** from that tournament.



4. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall result in a penalty of 1 pound for each such bass plus that fish removed.
5. You must have your number **turned in** at the check-in point by your check-in time.
6. Late check-in penalty will be one pound per minute late up to 15 minutes. After that, the angler's weight will be disqualified for that day.
7. All fish caught while sight-fishing shall be hooked on the inside of the mouth and verified by that day's partner (unless fishing alone) before unhooking.
8. All ties will be broken by 1)-total fish weighed, 2)-total live fish weighed, 3)-big fish weighed. If still unresolved, a flip of a coin will decide placement.
9. It shall be NMBFN policy that the tournament waters are OFF-LIMITS starting on Sunday at 12:00 midnight through Friday morning safe light of the week immediately preceding the tournament execution days. **YOU ARE NOT ALLOWED TO BE ON TOURNAMENT WATERS DURING COMPETITION DAYS IF NOT REGISTERED FOR THAT DAY.** The Tournament Director may modify the off-limits dates to accommodate holidays or other extenuating circumstances
10. Individuals who operate a boat during any NMBFN tournament must have documented proof of boating liability insurance meeting BASS Federation Nation minimum requirements (currently \$300,000). Such documented proof must show an effective date and expiration date that includes the tournament dates they are fishing in and must be in possession of the boat operator.
11. This set of rules supersedes all other rules except when not specifically covered herein. If not covered, the next set of rules to follow will be the 2012 BASS Federation Nation Tournament rules. It is the responsibility of all contestants to understand and abide by these rules. All contestants will be given a copy at the first event of the year. Other copies will be available at each event.
12. The entry fee for each tournament will be \$100.00- all anglers
13. \$10.00 optional fee for Big Bass paid back. Big Bass open to boaters & nonboaters.
14. Optional nonboater pot at \$15.00.

### **Supplemental Information**

OPTION POTS – Check with Treasurer or Tournament Director for clarification.

- Year-end Option Pot- \$10.00 per event. Must fish and pay option in 3 events minimum. At the President's cup, the money will be divided with



50% of the pot going to the State Traveling Team. Only State Team qualifiers paying into the pot shall share in pot. The remaining 50% will be divided - 20% to 15<sup>th</sup> place-YTD standings, 10%- last place-YTD, all qualified entrants. The next pot is reserved for anglers fishing/paying all 4 events- 20%-drawing at President's Cup. Must be present to win.

## NONBOATER EXPENSE FEES

Nonboaters are to pay a \$25.00 expense fee per day to be used to cover the boaters' expenses (\$50 per weekend). This will be collected at registration from nonboaters to be paid out at a later time to boaters that signed up with nonboaters.

## PAIRING

The pairing of boaters with nonboaters will be made by computer and will be random. Check with Tournament Director for clarification.

- There will be no restrictions on the pairing of boaters and nonboaters.
- A boater may be paired with a nonboater from the same club.
- A boater may be paired with the nonboater he registered with.
- No one will be paired with the same boater/nonboater twice.

**2012 OFFICIAL RULES**  
**B.A.S.S. FEDERATION NATION TOURNAMENTS**  
**Effective January 1, 2012**

The following rules shall apply to all B.A.S.S. Federation Nation tournaments, with the following exceptions: (i) rules for special tournaments may differ from those contained herein and (ii) these rules may be changed by B.A.S.S. immediately upon notice by B.A.S.S. to its members, which notice may be published on the B.A.S.S. internet site at [www.bassmaster.com](http://www.bassmaster.com). Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his/her designee at a tournament. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director or a rules committee may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate by them, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, entry fee and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Subject to the appeal process set forth in paragraph 22 below, the decision of the Tournament Director, his/her designee, or the rules committee, shall be final in all matters.

Penalties for rules violations may include the following:

- a) reduction of competition hours as determined by the Tournament Director
- b) loss of one or more fish in question. All such fish must be marked verified by either your partner/observer/camera operator. If not verified the entire catch may be disqualified.
- c) loss of catch for the day of the violation
- d) disqualification from the tournament in question
- e) disqualification from future B.A.S.S. events, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period of time, or may be a lifetime disqualification.
- f) 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 B.A.S.S. who are 16 years of age or older and who are active members of B.A.S.S. -affiliated chapters and who have participated in the appropriate state Federation Nation qualifying tournament(s). However, employees, officers and directors of B.A.S.S. or its parent, subsidiary, and affiliated companies and members of their immediate families (spouse, parents, children and sibling, regardless of where they live) are ineligible. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential 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 PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY B.A.S.S. TOURNAMENT, NO COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT COMPETITOR HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM**

**OF \$300,000 PER OCCURRENCE BOAT OWNERS 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 WILL BE CONDUCTED AND ANY COMPETITOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF IN-FORCE INSURANCE WITH \$300,000 COVERAGE MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

**(iii) A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE B.A.S.S. FEDERATION NATION DEPARTMENT ON OR BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE. ENTRY DEADLINE DATE FOR EACH TOURNAMENT SHALL BE 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST COMPETITION DAY OF EACH TOURNAMENT OR 7 DAYS AFTER THE FINAL DAY OF THE QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT IF THE TOURNAMENT FALLS WITHIN THE 30 DAY PERIOD.** The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and also the right to extend the acceptance date. As a participant in B.A.S.S. tournaments, you agree, if you qualify and are invited to be a competitor in the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship, or the Bassmaster Classic conducted by B.A.S.S., to use during the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship, or the Bassmaster Classic competition any and all official products and equipment so specified and provided by B.A.S.S. .

## **2. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Anglers participating in any 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 shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of professional anglers that will not reflect unfavorably on B.A.S.S. , its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

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

## **MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS**

The favorable public reputation of 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 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 B.A.S.S. organization. Competitors are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate

disagreement with 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 knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of B.A.S.S., 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 any tournament unless specified by the Tournament Director. Special off limits and practice periods for the Bassmaster Classic and the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship will be announced by B.A.S.S.

(ii) There will be an official practice period immediately prior to the first day of competition. Two official practice days will begin at 12:01 am the Monday prior to the start of competition. Unless otherwise specified, all official times are time zone specific to the local host community. The competitor must know and observe these dates. During practice and competition a competitor can only have the assistance or advice of another competitor for the purposes of locating or catching bass on tournament waters. **Competitors may only fish with other competitors during official practice and competition.** Flying over tournament waters, other than a ticketed commercial airline, is prohibited during official practice and competition unless approved by the tournament director.

(iii) Anglers renting boat slips may launch and proceed immediately to slip location. Testing of engines after the weigh-in is only allowed with permission from the Tournament Director. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** During the official practice and during the tournament, a competitor may not "SKIN DIVE" or "SCUBA DIVE" in the tournament waters.

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

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

(vi) 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. **OFFICIAL PROTESTS MUST BE FILED IN WRITING AND ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST WILL BE PROVIDED A COPY.**

**By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation.** The 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 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 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 B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Event.

**4. REGISTRATION:** Each competitor must register in person with official B.A.S.S. 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 \$50 fine. Any competitor, who has not contacted the B.A.S.S. 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 either check the schedule of events for registration time and location or obtain times from the B.A.S.S. Tournament Department.

#### **5. SAFETY:**

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the **official practice and competition**, each competitor must wear a Coast Guard-approved **chest-type** life preserver anytime the combustion engine is in gear. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is out of gear or shut off. 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 both practice and 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 B.A.S.S., may be approved for competition.

**It is suggested boater have a safety check with the non-boater 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 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. Weather delays on full field days resulting in half of the tournament day being lost (first flight take off and check in) shall result in cancellation. Full fields may be carried over to cut days.

(v) 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 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 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 B.A.S.S. tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, other non-prescription stimulants or depressants shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, 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 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 various states within which they fish. 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 B.A.S.S. tournament and/or for disqualification from a 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 including competitors who have been cut from competition.

**8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS:** MAXIMUM HORSEPOWER FOR ALL OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS USED IN OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT PRACTICE AND IN TOURNAMENT COMPETITION WILL BE 250 HP. 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 competitor agrees to submit, by his/her 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 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, and will result in disqualification. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine is also cause for immediate disqualification from B.A.S.S. tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by B.A.S.S. must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits shall result in loss of competition hours and not limited to disqualification.

**9. BOAT AND MOTOR:** For the safety of all competitors, **during official practice and 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 driver’s body any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear. Anytime 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 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 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.

**10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT:** During **official practice and 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 B.A.S.S. by both competitors using the boat. B.A.S.S. recommends live-wells be 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. Boaters must make a back seat available for non boaters each competition day.

**11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION:** Prior to each day's start, each boat must 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 AND EXPENSE:** **A full discussion must be held between the two partners prior to a 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 to operate the trolling motor, so as to afford each partner the opportunity to fish his/her selected waters an equal number of hours. Distance traveled to fishing locations must be considered in order not to deprive either partner fishing time while traveling to and from fishing waters. If a competitor waives the above rights, he/she shall retain the right to select the fishing waters for one-half the tournament day. Any competitor who, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap his/her partner shall be disqualified. **The cost of gas and oil for the competition days must be settled within your own team.** In B.A.S.S. events where observers replace anglers as the official rider, observers cannot assist the competing angler in any way. Observers are not required to help with gas and oil expenses.

**13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Department. Any water within these boundaries posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing" by state or federal agencies as well as the live-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 days, 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 days. 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, 14 and 17. 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 if both are weighing bass. Once bass are bagged for weigh-in, anglers that are not weighing bass do not need to accompany their partner 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 competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye or Shoal 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 competitor have in his or her possession more than the tournament 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 bass 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. 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. 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 competitor. 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 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 stringered at any time during the tournament. Culling tags or clips are allowed. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the Tournament Director and must be used for the weigh-in.

**17. CATCH AND RELEASE: CULLING OF DEAD B.A.S.S. IS PROHIBITED.** For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 4 oz. The Tournament Director or his designees shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points. In addition, the Tournament Director, or

his/her designees, may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water; however they are not allowed to receive ice from non contestants. 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. **SMALL DIP NETS FOR CULLING PURPOSES ARE ENCOURAGED.**

**18. LATE PENALTY:** Competitors 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 his/her catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a “big bass award”. 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 site; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during the tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the tournament briefing. It is each angler’s responsibility to confirm check-in times each day on the daily pairings.

**19. TIES:** At any Divisional or the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship, in case of a tie for first place on a state team, division champion or overall champion at the end of the tournament, that is not resolved by the following four (4) tie breakers, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials.

All other team or individual ties, the following tie breakers will be used in the following order: (1) largest number of legal fish weighed during competition; (2) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the largest number of legal **live** fish weighed during competition; (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the heaviest single day catch during competition; (4) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the second heaviest single day catch during competition. If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie, and monetary prizes will be awarded in an equal amount between the tied teams or individuals. In the instance where merchandise is involved, prizes will be awarded as determined by tournament officials.

**20. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS:** Two competitors will be assigned to each boat. Wherever possible, no competitors from the same state team will be paired, nor should two competitors fish together more than one day. Announcement of your first-day fishing partner shall be made at the tournament briefing, which **MUST BE ATTENDED** by each competitor. 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. The Tournament Director, at his/her 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 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 Rule 14,15 and 17). A competitor must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by B.A.S.S.

#### **21. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE:**

An appeals committee will be established by B.A.S.S. which shall be comprised of one B.A.S.S. employee not affiliated with the Tournament Department, and two anglers who are not competitors in the event in question. Appeals for penalties assessed under PENALTIES (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) must be presented in writing 48 hours from the time and date of ruling to the Tournament Director. Appeals hearings shall take place within seven (7) business days from the date of receipt of the written appeal and all parties must make themselves available at prescribed time of hearing. If competitors admit to a rules violation, they may not file an appeal of either the finding that they have violated the rules or the penalty imposed for the violation. Decisions of the appeals committee shall be final.

Competitors are allowed to compete under appeal however penalties assessed under PENALTIES (e) and (f) will remain until final ruling by Appeals Committee.

Appeals of non-competition rulings must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director within 48 hours from the time and date of ruling for review

**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. B.A.S.S. may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are, in B.A.S.S.' sole judgment, in poor taste. B.A.S.S. will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. By signing this document, each competitor agrees to wear an official B.A.S.S. patch (2 1/4' x 2 3/4") on either their left or right chest, or hat during competition, including the weigh-in. This patch may be embroidered or sublimated. 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. B.A.S.S. SPONSOR BOATS.** When using B.A.S.S. sponsor boats at the B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship or the Bassmaster Classic, anglers are responsible for physical care of the boat. Damage incurred, determined to be excessive or wanton by the Tournament Director, shall result in the angler being responsible for all costs of repair.

**24. TAXES:** Where and when state laws require income taxes be paid on cash awards to non-residents, the taxes will be automatically deducted prior to the awards being presented to the winners. Anglers/Observers are responsible for all applicable taxes on both cash and merchandise 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.

**25. 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.

**26. STATE TEAM BOATS:** Each twelve-person state team will designate six boaters and six non-boaters during the official tournament competition days. B.A.S.S. recommends that each team bring at least one extra boat that meets B.A.S.S. regulations.

**27. STATE TEAM ALTERNATES:** Each twelve-person state team will be allowed one alternate team member to replace an official team member if an official team member becomes ill or injured or has to leave the tournament due to personal business or tragedy. In addition, the State Federation Nation president or his/her designated representative will be considered a second alternate. **B.A.S.S. Headquarters must receive a completed entry form from the alternate team member and the State Federation Nation president or his/her designated representative on or before the tournament entry deadline date or the state will not be allowed an alternate team member.** The Tournament Director must approve the reason for the leaving of the official team member before a replacement of the official team member with the alternate will be allowed. If the official tournament competition has begun, the team score will be determined by using the score of the official team member on the competition days in which he participated and the score of the alternate on the competition days in which he participated as a team member. The scores for the individual competition will be taken from each competitor's own scores.

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