

# **FISHERS OF MEN TEXAS EAST DIVISION ADAPTED RULES**



## **1. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY**

Open to all individuals, male and female, except;

**Elite Level Anglers** Any angler who has competed in an “Elite Level” professional tournament or series during the 12 months prior to the Fishers of Men event they wish to enter. An Elite Level tournament series is defined as a tournament series in which all competitors must earn their way in by doing well in a lower level event or series. Any and all professional level tournaments that are available for entry to anyone who can pay an entry do not disqualify the competitors from Fishing in Fishers of Men Tournaments. Examples: Major League Fishing Bass Pro Tour, Bassmaster Elite Series, Bassmaster Elite Qualifiers Series.

\*All competitors MUST have a signed waiver (2026 version) on file with Fishers of Men prior to competing in any Fishers of Men event.

\*Each team MUST include at least one boater who has met all of the legal requirements to operate a watercraft in the state in which that team wishes to compete.

**B. Special Cases** Fishers of Men Texas East reserves the right to reject any entries which we feel are not in the best interest of the tournament.

Those under 18 years of age, not fishing with a parent, must have written permission from a parent or guardian. Each competitor in each tournament, including championships, must be a current Fishers of Men member in good standing. No membership is required for a legal substitute, as described in rule 16, fishing one tournament as a sub.

Fishers of Men division directors are eligible to compete in the division in which they are the director, provided they follow all of the guidelines set by the National Office. A copy of these guidelines will be made available, by the National Office, to anyone upon request.

**C. Guide Participation Rule** Any fishing guide who has provided guide services (anyone who accepted payment for taking someone fishing) on the tournament lake within the 30 days immediately prior to the tournament day is ineligible to compete in that tournament. Additionally, guides holding a Fishers of Men Annual Membership may not provide fishing information to any Texas East Division tournament anglers during the same 30-day pre-tournament period. This rule does not ban guides from participation entirely, but it does impose a 30-day off-limits period that applies exclusively to guides.

## **2. INFORMATION & OFF LIMITS**

There will be **no “off limits”** for Texas East Division regular season tournaments nor official practice days for divisional events except during the pre-tournament meeting hours. On tournament day; The use of electronic communication devices for the purpose of sharing fishing information during tournament hours is prohibited. Teams may not have the assistance of any non-competitor for the purpose of locating or catching fish on the competition day.

## **3. MANDATORY ATTENDACE MEETINGS**

All teams must have a least one team member present at each meeting (from the time the keynote speaker is introduced until the end of the meeting) to be eligible to compete in that tournament.

#### **4. TOURNAMENT HOURS**

Tournament hours will be from lines-in to 3:00 p.m. (lines-in time will be announced at the pre-tournament banquet.)

#### **5. SAFETY**

Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved personal floatation device, securely fastened, at all times while the boat is being propelled by the combustion engine. Furthermore, a kill switch must be fastened to the driver any time the combustion engine is propelling the boat. Failure to do so is grounds for disqualification of the offending team's catch. Running lights must be operational and turned on at the blast-off of each tournament. Each competitor's boat must be equipped with a livewell system capable of keeping a tournament limit of bass alive. Any boat equipped with a motor that exceeds the horse power rating of the boat according to the manufacturer is prohibited from being used in any Fishers of Men Tournament. All auxiliary gas tanks and 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 the boat. 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.

#### **6. SPORTSMANSHIP**

Each contestant is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation. No team may fish within 50 yards of any other boat which is anchored with the trolling motor up. Furthermore, no team may fish within 25 yards of any other boat without the other boater's permission. Permission may not be granted to any team at the exclusion of any other team. Utilizing "Spot-lock" or similar technology that holds a boat position using the trolling motor is NOT considered "anchored with the trolling motor up", as mentioned above. No hole sitting by a non-competitor or by another competitor, to aid a tournament participant will be allowed. Violators will have their catch disqualified.

#### **7. TACKLE AND FISHING METHODS**

Only artificial baits may be used. No live or cut bait is permitted (pork baits are permitted). All bass must be caught alive in a legal and sporting manner. No snagging. Each competitor may only use 1 rod at a time. No more than 1 line in the water at a time per angler. Trolling with the combustion motor is not permitted. No competitor may leave the boat to land or catch fish. Lures that have been banned by state or local authorities, are not allowed in Fishers of Men tournaments in the areas where the ban is in place.

#### **8. STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS**

All participants are expected to abide by all state and federal laws and game regulations. Included is the proper safe boater training, certification, and/or licensing required by the governing bodies of the state where participants are competing. Any team who intentionally violates a law or regulation in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage will have their catch disqualified. Bringing short fish or slot fish to the scales will be penalized as described in rule 12. In the case of multiple governing authorities, the strictest law is applicable. Any participant who consumes, or is under the influence of alcoholic beverages, stimulants or depressants during any Fishers of Men function will have their catch disqualified. (Prescribed medications taken per doctor's instructions are excluded)

## **9. SCORING**

A limit of 5 bass (largemouth & spotted bass) may be weighed in. 14" minimum length for both species. Lengths will be measured with mouth closed. A short fish or slot fish brought to the scales will not be weighed, and will result in a 1-pound penalty. Dead fish will be penalized .25 (1/4) pound. The dead fish penalty will also apply to any fish weighed as a Big Fish if that fish is dead. All culling must be done at the time the 6th fish is caught; no team may continue fishing with more than the tournament limit in the livewell at any time during the tournament, with the exception of dead fish that is not included in their limit. The penalty for possessing more than 5 fish, bringing more than 5 fish to the scales, or culling at the ramp will be 1 pound. That 1 pound will be deducted from the total weight of the team's best 5 fish. On any water where State or local laws prohibit culling or impose limits of less than 5 fish, the state or local laws will replace the above as the rule.

## **10. EMERGENCIES**

Competitors shall remain with their partners in the boat at all times during the tournament, except in the event of sickness or brief excursions for "nature calling", severe storm or other such hazard. It is permitted for a competitor to leave the boat for marina services. On competition days, competitors may leave the boat to dislodge it, but only to return the boat in the direction it came from. Leaving the boat, on a competition day, to advance it is not permitted. (In falling water conditions, a team may leave the boat to advance it only to return from water they accessed without leaving the boat.) If for any reason either or both team members decide to leave the tournament waters early, both members shall bear full responsibility for notifying a tournament official. If one team member leaves the water early, he/she must notify the director before returning to fish and the other team member may continue fishing in his/her absence. In the event that he/she does not intend to return, his/her partner may continue fishing alone for the remainder of the tournament hours. In case of a breakdown, one partner may return with fish by another tournament boat or a boat designated by FOM tournament staff while the other partner is permitted to stay with the disabled boat.

## **11. WEIGH-IN PROCEDURES**

Weigh-in will be on a first come first serve basis. Once fish have been presented to a tournament official to be weighed-in all fish become the property of the F.O.M.N.T.T. and no additional fish may be brought to the scales. Bags will be limited in order to avoid a bottleneck at the weigh-in tanks. Teams not weighing any fish are still required to check in with tournament officials in order to account for all teams. Once a team member has checked in or left the boat for the purpose of checking in, neither team member may fish or continue fishing.

## **12. AFTERNOON CHECK-IN AND LATE PENALTIES**

All teams must be back and checked in by 4 p.m. Competitors who are not checked in by 4 p.m. will be penalized at a rate of 1 pound per minute, up to 15 minutes at which time their catch will be disqualified. The contestants will retain their participation points for their yearly total. Late penalties will be deducted from "Big Fish" weight as well as total weight. The check-in procedure may be a staff person with a check-in list, a check-in board with numbered chips, or other process as deemed necessary by the director. It is each competitor's responsibility to know their check in procedure.

### **13. PROTEST AND POLYGRAPH TEST**

Any protest must be submitted in writing to the tournament director within 15 minutes of the close of the weigh-in. The Fishers of Men National Tournament Trail and the Texas East Division reserves the right to give a polygraph or other truth verification test to any participant at any time. This test does not have to be administered on site and may be set up by the tournament director at his discretion. **By entering the tournament**, all participants agree to abide by the results of any polygraph or other truth verification test administered. In the event of a protest and an off-site polygraph or other truth verification test the tournament director will have the option of mailing all the checks to the teams in the money pending the outcome of the test.

### **14. LIABILITY INSURANCE**

All members must carry a minimum of \$100,000 of liability insurance on any boat they use during any Fishers of Men Tournament. Failure to do so, or reporting of false information will result in disqualification of catch. Participants must include the company name and either the policy number or the name of the agent binding the coverage on the entry form for each tournament.

### **15. VIOLATION OF RULES AND DISQUALIFICATION**

The violation of a tournament rule by either team member may result in weight loss, the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day (eligible for a restart), loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification for the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligibility to participate in future FOM events.

If a team is disqualified from a tournament their weight will be recorded as 0 lb. However, they will still receive tournament points as if they had just caught no fish. If the director feels that their violation was a willful attempt to gain an unfair advantage or to intentionally cheat, then the director has the right to refuse entry from that team or team members in the future and may inform all other Fishers of Men directors of the situation.

### **16. CHANGE OF RULES**

These rules will remain unchanged for the current season unless unforeseen circumstances create a situation where changes are absolutely necessary. The Fishers of Men National Office reserves the right to amend and/or adjust these rules if necessary.

### **17. RULES ENFORCEMENT**

It is the tournament director's responsibility to enforce all of these rules as they are written. Infractions of any rule may result in a penalty or disqualification of catch.

### **18. MANDATORY BOATER EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS (TEXAS)**

Boater Education training is recommended for all boat operators and **required** for those born on or after **Sept. 1, 1993**, must pass a boater education course to operate a vessel over 15 horsepower or a windblown vessel over 14 feet. All competitors are expected to abide by all boater safety requirements, as governed by Texas state Law. All teams **MUST** include at least one boater who meets those requirements to be eligible to compete in a Fishers of Men event.

Absolutely no person may operate the boat at any time if that person has not met the requirements set by state laws.

All boaters will be required to show proof of compliance to be eligible to compete in any Fishers of Men Tournament.

### **19. “No-Scope” Bonus (NO-FFS Bonus)**

This is an optional bonus that participants can choose to **NOT** use any form of **LIVE** sonar such as Live Scope, Active Target or Mega Live (also commonly known as Forward Facing Sonar). 360 is allowed and we do not define it as a Live sonar. To be eligible for this bonus Anglers must have their live transducer/s **PHYSICALLY DISCONNECTED** from the control unit (the screen) during the entire tournament day from Lines-in time to Lines-out Time. \*Having the unit powered off **IS NOT** a sufficient alternative to the required physical disconnection.

### **20. HIGH SCHOOL TEAMS (Adult Junior Team Rule)**

An Adult/Junior team (or high school team) is defined as a team made up of one adult member who has reached his/her nineteenth birthday on or before December 31 of the current year, and one or more members who have not reached his/her nineteenth birthday on or before December 31 of the current year. Adult Junior teams may compete in our events with more than one junior member in the boat in any team series event, but only two of the members are allowed to be fishing at any time. Substitutes are not permitted to replace or become a third member of a team. For a team to legally compete with multiple junior anglers, all of the junior anglers must be a part of the original team.

### **21. AGREEMENT TO RULES AND DIRECTOR AUTHORITY**

By registering for and/or participating in any Fishers of Men – Texas East Division tournament, each angler acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by all tournament rules. Participants further agree that the Tournament Director has **full authority** to enforce these rules and to impose penalties, including disqualification, as deemed necessary to preserve the fairness, integrity, and Christian witness of the event. All decisions of the Tournament Director are final.

### **PATH TO THE NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP SUMMARY**

#### **1. Qualify for a District Championship**

- Fish a minimum of 3 divisional tournaments in your home division, OR
- Fish 5 divisional tournaments AND attend 3 pre-tournament meetings to be eligible for any District Championship or the Wildcard nationwide.

#### **2. Advance from the District Championship (National Qualification)**

- The top 20% of teams from the District Championship advance to the National Championship.
- The highest placing Adult/Junior team the District Championship advances.
- The highest placing Male/Female team the District Championship advances.
- If a qualifying team declines, the invitation rolls down to the next eligible team.

\*See full Team Series Rules for more information

## Fishers of Men National Tournament Trail Rules



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