

TENNESSEE B.A.S.S. NATION (TBN) STATE TOURNAMENT RULES TOURNAMENT RULES AND
REGULATIONS: Revised Sept 17, 2025 by unanimous vote of TBN Club Presidents

1. RULE CHANGES: The following rules of this tournament will remain unchanged, except for special tournaments conducted by TBN. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Rules Committee consisting of the Tournament Director and State Officers. The decision of the Tournament Director and tournament officials shall be final in all matters.

2. ELIGIBILITY: This tournament is open only to members of the Bass Angler Sportsman Society who are 16 years of age or older and who are active members of Tennessee B.A.S.S. Nation affiliated clubs/programs (Kayak, College, High School). Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitor. Each member club, whose dues are up to date and who have been members of the TBN for at least 30 days before tournament, clubs may send as many members as they wish, every attempt will made to enter an equal number of boaters and Co-Anglers. At a minimum clubs will submit a majority of Boaters over Co-Anglers. Clubs will not submit more co-anglers than boaters without the Tournament Directors written approval.

2A. STATE TOURNAMENT: The State Tournament will be held in the spring each year. The entry fee for the State Tournament will be for CY2024 starting CY2025 and until further notice the entry fee will be determined by vote at the previous annual club presidents meeting. Pay-out will be at least 95% of the entry fees and will be distributed by the number of entries per each division, i.e. boater and non-boater divisions.

3. REGISTRATION: A properly completed and signed official entry form must be received by the TBN on or before the application deadline date. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications and the right to extend the acceptance date. A team captain from each club will be responsible for pre-registering his club and team members. He will provide the following information at that time: NAME, CELL PHONE NUMBER, and BOATER OR NON-BOATER DESIGNATION. PROOF OF BOATER LIABILITY INSURANCE OF \$300,000 MINIMUM with EFFECTIVE DATE AND EXPIRATION DATE must be maintained on each boater's vessel and available at any time for inspection during the tournament. ENTRY DEADLINE DATE FOR EACH TOURNAMENT SHALL BE 15 DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST COMPETITION DAY. THERE WILL BE A \$50.00 LATE FEE FOR APPLICATIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE DEADLINE DATE. A. STATE TOURNAMENT: Teams that fail to send an application and entry fee fifteen (15) days prior to the First Competition Day will be considered not fishing by TBN Tournament Officials. Team changes can be made on the day of check-in if necessary.

4. THE TOURNAMENT: During the tournament and 30 days before a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone for the purpose of locating or catching bass other than team members before tournament. He shall not enter the tournament waters with 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 the person is a contestant in the tournament. During the tournament, a competitor may not "SKIN DIVE" or "SCUBA DIVE" on the tournament waters. No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other contestant for use during any competition day. During competition days of the tournament a competitor may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine-band radio, 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. Each competitor agrees to

report to the Tournament Director any violation or infraction of the 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 take a polygraph test should he 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. The official practice period will begin three (3) days before the first day of competition continuing until the off-limits period begins on registration day. All tournament safety rules will be in effect during the official practice period.

5. SAFETY: Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors. During 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. The 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. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in TBN 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 TBN 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 various states within which they fish. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during 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.

7. 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, spin-casting or spinning rod (8-foot maximum length from butt 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 being unhooked to be counted as a legal fish. Gaffs may not be used to boat bass or be permitted in boat at any time. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited. Any umbrella-type rigging, harness, or other device designed to hold more than one lure at a time – with or without hooks – is ALLOWED at TBN Operated Tournaments.

8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS; MAXIMUM HORSEPOWER FOR ALL OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS USED IN TOURNAMENT COMPETITION WILL BE 250 HP, not to exceed the horsepower limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard in their ruling of November 1, 1972. When required, each boat must have an U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacture. The horsepower of the outboard engine must not exceed the rating specified on this rating plate or the horsepower maximum set by TBN. Any boat manufactured prior to Nov 1, 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 number on the motor also would be cause for immediate disqualification from the entire tournament for both the contestant and his entire club team. (NOTE: IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE CLUB AND TEAM TO POLICE ITSELF)

9. 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. 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 may be used that are 16 feet or more in length. Any raised platform 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 and any other type of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacture 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 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 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. Each club will be responsible for providing their own back-up boat(s) in the event of a breakdown during the tournament.

10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: Every boat must have all required Coast Guard equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump 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."

11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Each boat will be given an official number and must remain with the boat until the end of the tournament or unless the Tournament Director changes the number. This number could be a button or some other numbering system and must be displayed during the tournament.

12. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE: Will be determined by each participating club prior to the tournament and settled within in participating club.

13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from TBN. 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. 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.

14. 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. 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. When a competitor must violate 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 that 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 and the competitors will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of the tournament officials.

15. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be only one official point for checkout 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 number assigned and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together.

16. **SCORING:** Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound and ounces weight of each member's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only largemouth, spotted, red-eye or smallmouth bass (Note: TWRA considers Smallmouth/spotted bass cross (tooth patch on tongue does not determine spotted bass) (commonly known as a Mean-Mouth) a Smallmouth and will scored as such)) will be weighed. The Boater limit shall be five (5) and the Co-Angler limit shall be three (3) of the above species and varieties per day unless specified otherwise by tournament officials (for example: hot weather/fish care concerns/championship events). At no time shall a competitor have in their possession more than the tournament limit. Competitors must reduce their catch to the tournament limit prior to making the next cast. If a competitor determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce their 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. If a competitor has their fish verified and weighed and, upon returning to the boat, discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that was not presented to officials; he/she then must notify tournament officials within one hour of final flight check-in to receive a 2-pound penalty for each bass discovered. Failure to notify officials after one (1) hour of final flight check-in time will result in a loss of a day's catch. Anglers who present fish at the verification table with fin clips attached will be assessed a 4-ounce penalty per clip. No man-made or foreign object(s) connected to a bass, outside of natural causes, will be weighed and shall be removed by tournament officials. Competitors are not allowed to replace anything attached to a bass or regurgitated by a bass to be included as part of their catch. 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. THE OFFICIAL MEASURING DEVICE SHALL BE A FLAT-BOARD (GOLDEN RULE TYPE). Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall accrue penalties at the rate of one (1) pound for each such bass, plus loss of short fish. Bass which violate TWRA slot limit bass will be treated as a short fish. 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 tournament officials. 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 stringer at any time during the tournament. The Tournament Director will furnish special designed bags, which increase survival rate, and these bags must be used to carry fish to weigh-in. Fish will then be placed in plastic basket and weighed without the bags.

17. **DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH:** Each competitor is expected to keep his bass alive by use of a properly aerated live well. The few bas which do not survive will be used for scientific study and for charity. Only non-penetrating culling clips and culling beams are allowed for use. Any clip or device that penetrates or is designed to penetrate the skin or mouth of a fish is not allowed.

18. **PENALTY POINTS:** For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized eight (8) ounces of weight, to be deducted from his daily score. The tournament director and his designated appointees shall have a sole authority for accessing penalty points. No culling of dead fish.

19. **LATE PENALTY:** Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 15 at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute, to be deducted from the total weigh of his catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "big fish award," for each 1 minute he is late. Any competitors 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.

20. **TIES:** In case of a tie, the following tie-breakers will be used in order: 1.) largest number of legal fish weighed-in during the competition; 2) largest number of legal live fish weighed-in during the competition; 3) heaviest single-day catch during competition; 4) second-heaviest single-day catch during competition. In the unlikely event that Boater Division remains tied after these four tie-breakers are employed, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials. In the unlikely event co-angler division remains tied after these four tie-breakers are employed, a sudden death fish-off at a lake and date to be determined by the tournament officials shall take place to determined, under the direction and special rules established by the tournament director

21. **PARING OF CONTESTANTS:** Two contestants will be assigned to each boat, if the divisions are not equal in number of contestants, any boater who is not assigned a co-angler on day one, will be assigned a co-angler on day two. At no time will a Boater be paired with another Boater, unless a Boater submits a written request to be so paired in an emergency situation, the tournament Director may place an observer with a boater at his/her discretion. Whenever possible, no contestants from the same club will be paired, nor shall two competitors fish together more than one day. Announcements of your fishing partners shall be made at the tournament briefing, which **MUST BE ATTENDED** by each competitor. Any member fishing the State Tournament must fish with the person he/she is paired with; without regard to race, age, color, and creed or gender (sex). 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/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 checkout 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. A contestant must not allow any bass caught by him to be counted on the score of another contestant (**NO SHARING OF FISH**). In such case, both contestants shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by the TBN.

22. **REGISTRATION DAY:** On the day before the first day of competition, all competitors (Boater and Non-Boaters) must attend the registration meeting. In an emergency situation and only after being

authorized by the tournament director in a written communication (Email/Text Message), a representative can check a competitor in with the Tournament Officials. Time and place of registration will be announced. The lake shall be "OFF LIMITS" after 3:00pm tournament launch site time on registration day. Failure to follow this rule will result in disqualification from the tournament for that individual.

23. DISQUALIFICATION: unless otherwise specified, rules violation are grounds for disqualification of the violator from that event.

24. CHAMPIONS/Advancement: Advancement of competitors to the B.A.S.S. Nation Championship and the B.A.S.S. Nation Southern National Qualifier guaranteed entry seats, are based upon total member participation of TBN Membership as awarded by B.A.S.S. and will be solely determined by place of finish. Alternates will be offered a place on the team in the order of final standings

25. PROTESTS: All protests must be turned into the Tournament Director no later than 30 minutes of the closing of the scales. All protests must be in writing. Protests received after the thirty (30) minute time limit will not be considered