



OFFICIAL RULES

The rules contained herein pertain to the GRAND SLAM Team Tournament 2024.

Interpretation and implementation of these rules will be made exclusively by the Brandon Belt Fishing (BBF) Board of Directors. The BBF Board of Directors reserves the right to make changes to these rules as deemed appropriate. Any rule change made will immediately supersede all previously published versions of rules.

The BBF Board of Directors delegates the oversight and enforcement of these rules to the on-site Tournament Director.

In the event of a rule violation, the BBF Board of Directors may impose sanctions including, but not limited to, disqualifications, forfeiture of prizes, and/or prohibition from participation in subsequent BBF tournaments. Decisions of the BBF Board of Directors are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal.

Anglers will be required upon registration to acknowledge that they have read, understand, and agree to adhere to all rules.

1. PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- a. Participation is open to all anglers regardless of their amateur, professional, or guide status.
- b. Any competitor under the age of 18 years must be paired with a partner who is 18 years or older. Competitors under the age of 18 years will be required to submit an official minor release form signed by a parent or legal guardian before the tournament.
- c. The BBF Board of Directors reserves the right to deny participation to any individual or team in any and all BBF events.

2. FEDERAL, STATE, AND LOCAL LAWS

- a. All contestants must have a valid fishing license and are required to obey all federal, state, and local laws and regulations.

3. TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- a. The GRAND SLAM is a team tournament platform. A team can be made up of one (1) or two (2) anglers. Only registered tournament anglers are allowed to be in a team's boat during tournament hours.

- b. The three-day tournament will consist of the full field fishing the first two days. The top 20 teams based on the combined total weight from days 1 & 2 will qualify to fish day 3.
- c. In the event of severe weather, BBF reserves the right to make changes to the tournament format if deemed necessary to enhance the safety of all competitors and staff.

4. **OFF-LIMITS**

- a. The GRAND SLAM will NOT have an off-limits period.

5. **PRACTICE PERIOD**

<i>TOURNAMENT LOCATION / DATE</i>		<i>OFF-LIMITS DATES</i>	<i>PRACTICE DATES</i>
Sam Rayburn Reservoir Umphrey Pavilion	Thursday-Saturday March 7-9	Not applicable	Monday-Wednesday March 4-6

- a. Official practice will begin THREE (3) DAYS prior to the official tournament start date.
- b. Teams must register BEFORE being on or in tournament waters on official practice dates.
- c. Anglers may only be on the water from 30 minutes before sunrise through 30 minutes after sunset on practice dates.
- d. Only paid contestants and their immediate family members (spouse, children, parents, siblings) may be in the team's boat during the official practice period.
- e. Team members are allowed to practice in separate boats.

6. **INFORMATION**

- a. From the time the practice period begins through the end of the tournament, contestants may not solicit and/or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone except other registered teams in the tournament and through publicly available sources. Quasi-public websites, blogs and social media pages, or any such page set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a group of individuals are NOT considered to be publicly available sources.
- b. Teams may not solicit or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone who has dropped out of or has been eliminated from the tournament.
- c. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular telephones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, pagers, or any electronic device to obtain fishing information from anyone during tournament hours is strictly prohibited.

7. **EMERGENCIES**

- a. In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should first call 911, then notify the onsite BBF Tournament Director at 936-674-9936 if possible.

8. **REGISTRATION**

- a. Registration will be available through Fishing Chaos. Please visit <https://brandonbeltfishing.com/register-today> or use the Fishing Chaos app to access registration.

- b. Entry fees are NON-REFUNDABLE. At the discretion of the BBF Board of Directors, entry fees may be transferred to another BBF event in the case of a verifiable emergency.

9. **INSURANCE**

- a. A minimum of \$100,000 in liability insurance coverage is required of all contestants who utilize their boat in a BBF tournament. BBF reserves the right to check for proof of such coverage.

10. **SAFETY**

- a. Safe boating must be observed at all times.
- b. Each contestant is required to wear a fastened (fully zipped and/or all clips fastened), U.S. Coast Guard approved, personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in gear during tournament hours.
- c. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device, which must be securely attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is on. The driver must be seated in the driver's seat anytime the combustion engine is engaged and in gear.
- d. Competitors are allowed to leave their boats and seek shelter in bad weather, at which time no fishing may occur.
- e. At the discretion of the BBF Board of Directors, tournament days may be shortened or canceled due to unsafe weather or any conditions that would endanger the safety of the competitors.

11. **TACKLE AND FISHING METHODS**

- a. Only artificial lures may be used.
- b. Alabama rigs and similar umbrella-type rigs are limited to a maximum of five wires with a maximum of five spinners, five lures, and five hooks.
- c. Only one fishing rod per angler may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is attempted or rod is used.
- d. Trolling with the combustion engine as a method of fishing is prohibited.
- e. Switching or sharing fish with other teams or individuals is prohibited.
- f. All fish must be caught alive, in a conventional, sporting manner.
- g. When sight fishing, all fish must be hooked inside the mouth to be counted as a legal fish.
- h. All fishing must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish, or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

12. **SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONDUCT**

- a. All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification or denial of participation.
- b. 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.

- c. Past or present actions of any competitor which are deemed unacceptable by BBF may be grounds for denial of participation and/or disqualification. Examples of such conduct include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - i. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages and/or illegal drugs during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure.
 - ii. Actions or words which reflect unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, and fair competition.
 - iii. Disqualification from other fishing organization events that resulted from rule violations, the outcome of which compromised a contestant's honesty, integrity, and/or character.
 - iv. Any previous conviction for a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude, or a crime related to, arising out of, or involving any fishing tournament or event, except with full, prior written disclosure under oath and by affidavit of all facts and circumstances surrounding such conviction. Written disclosure must be submitted to the BBF Director of Operations at cwillmon@brandonbeltfishing.com at least ten (10) days before the tournament being entered, and is thereafter subject to the BBF Board of Directors' discretion that such conviction does not result in the contestant's honesty, integrity, character or qualifications to enter the event being called into question.

13. **BOAT AND HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS**

- a. Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment.
- b. Boats must contain a properly aerated live well.
- c. Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition may not exceed the horsepower limitations as set by the U. S. Coast Guard in such vessels. Altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating plate to conceal such limitations is prohibited.
- d. Platforms, raised decks, or ladders which are higher than the gunnel of the boat are not allowed.
- e. Standing on the fishing seats or outboard motor is not allowed in BBF events.
- f. No air or jet drive boats will be permitted.
- g. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Optional remote engine fuel tanks must be factory or installed by a factory-authorized dealer and be strapped or otherwise secured. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

14. **PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS**

- a. Tournament waters and off-limits areas shall be established by BBF prior to each event. Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat, EXCEPT:
 - i. Areas designated as off-limits by BBF or marked as "no boats", "keep out", "restricted" or "no fishing" (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by local, state, or federal officials. Any such areas will be off-limits to anglers. Off-limits boundaries set by authorities or event officials should be treated as a wall, meaning anglers cannot cast over that boundary while fishing.

- ii. Within 50 yards of a competitor's boat which was first anchored. To be considered anchored, a boat must have the trolling motor in the stowed (up) position and be secured in a stable position by a line or anchor.

15. TOURNAMENT DAY SETUP

- a. Days 1 & 2
 - i. Trailering WILL BE ALLOWED on days 1 & 2 of the tournament. Teams can launch from any PUBLIC boat ramp on tournament waters.
 - ii. Once registration closes, boat numbers will be generated randomly.
 - iii. Flights and weigh-in times on day 2 will be the reverse of day 1. Example: the teams in the first flight to weigh in on day 1 will be in the last flight to weigh in on day 2.
- b. Day 3
 - i. The top 20 teams based on the combined total weight from days 1 & 2 will qualify to fish on day 3.
 - ii. Trailering WILL NOT BE ALLOWED on day 3.
 - iii. The launch order for Day 3 will be based on the team's placement in the standings after Days 1 & 2. The 1st place team will launch first, followed by the 2nd place team, and so on.
- c. Boat numbers, flight information, start/stop fishing times, and weigh-times will be sent to anglers electronically through Fishing Chaos by e-mail and/or text the night before each tournament day.

16. CHECK-IN PROCEDURES

- a. An official checkpoint for check-in in the afternoon will be designated.
- b. It is the contestants' responsibility to ensure their boat number is checked in on time with the designated tournament official. Failure to check in will result in the forfeiture of that day's catch.
- c. In the event of a mechanical breakdown, three (3) methods of returning to the check-in are permitted:
 - i. by remaining in the boat and being towed by water.
 - ii. by entering the boat of another competitor.
 - iii. by entering a boat of designated BBF staff.

Contestants must return to the official check-in location by one of these methods no later than their assigned check-in time to avoid late penalty. Contestants who elect to return to the check-in by any other means will forfeit their catch as of that point in time of the tournament day.

- d. All fishing must cease upon check-in.
- e. Contestants who are not at the official check-in point by the appointed time will be assessed a penalty of one (1) pound per minute which will be deducted from both their total weight for the day AND, if applicable, the weight of any single fish weighed in (ex. Big Bass). Any contestant not checked-in more than 15 minutes after the appointed time will forfeit that day's catch.

17. SCORING AND FISH CARE

- a. Scoring is based on the official weight of each team's catch during the tournament.
- b. Only Largemouth, Spotted, Red Eye, or Smallmouth Bass are accepted.
- c. The limit will be five (5) fish per team, per day. Any contestant who possesses more than the tournament limit, unless actively culling, will have their catch for that day disqualified. Culling must be done immediately.
- d. The minimum official length limit for any fish will be 14" (unless the lake limit is different, in which case the lake limit will prevail.) Fish presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the prescribed length limit will result in loss of that particular fish AND a one (1)-pound penalty assessed to the weight of the remaining fish. Fish will be measured with the mouth closed, tail compressed, and swiped to achieve the overall greatest length. A measuring board will be provided at weigh-in and will serve as the official measuring standard.
- e. Every effort must be made to keep fish alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. The use of chemical live well additives which promote the healthy return of fish to their natural habitat are recommended. A one (1)-pound penalty will be deducted for each dead fish presented for weigh-in. Culling of dead fish is prohibited. Dead fish will not be eligible for Big Bass awards or prizes.

18. CLOSING OF SCALES

- a. Scales will close thirty (30) minutes after the last flight is due in unless communicated otherwise.
- b. At the Tournament Director's discretion, this time may be lengthened or shortened. Any change to the official scale closing time will be communicated electronically through e-mail and/or text.

19. TIES

- a. In the event of a tie for first place in the tournament, the following tie-breakers will be used in the order listed to determine the winner:
 - i. The team with the heaviest single day's catch during the tournament.
 - ii. The team with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the tournament.
 - iii. A coin flip.
- b. In ties for places other than first, prize money will be combined and split evenly among contestants.

20. POLYGRAPH TESTING

- a. Polygraph testing will be used for all tournaments as deemed appropriate by BBF.
- b. By the submission of their registration, all contestants agree to submit to polygraph testing if deemed appropriate by BBF and to abide by its conclusion.
- c. The determination of the meaning of polygraph test results will be made solely by BBF.
- d. In the event a contestant refuses to take or fails a polygraph test, the contestant's team will be disqualified from the tournament and further disciplinary action will be directed by the BBF Board of Directors.

- e. Should a contestant be polygraph-tested and receive an inconclusive result, the BBF Board of Directors will convene and determine a course of action.
- f. BBF reserves the right to place a hold on a team's tournament prizes should a contestant's polygraph test results be anything other than passing.

21. **PROTEST AND REPORTING PROCEDURES**

- a. All protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director within fifteen (15) minutes of the scales closing.
- b. The protestor agrees that if there is a question in regard to verifying the protest charge, he or she may be subject to a polygraph exam and agree to testify in a court of law if necessary.

22. **MEDIA COVERAGE**

- a. Contestants are required to comply with all requests made by the BBF production crew for the purpose of gathering media coverage. Such requests may include, but are not limited to, taking live on-the-water or other video footage, taking still camera footage, accessing boats, and accessing fishing areas.
- b. BBF reserves the right to require the use of location-tracking technologies for the purpose of gathering media coverage.
- c. **Refusal to coordinate with and accommodate the BBF media production crew needs in any BBF tournament will result in disqualification from that event.**