COLORADO TBF NATIONAL SEMI FIANAL CONTENDER QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT FORMAT, RULES AND REGULATIONS

These rules have been established to guide the qualification process for the Colorado TBF National Semi Final Contenders. As long as Colorado TBF consists of a Northern and Southern Division with separate National Semi Final Qualifying Tournaments; these rules shall remain in effect.

Northern-Southern Division National Semi Final Qualifiers:

1. The National TBF Office requests a list of the Colorado TBF National Semi Final Contenders in June, therefore the Colorado TBF National Semi Final Qualifiers will be conducted in April and May.
2. Beginning in 2019; the Northern Division National Semi Final Qualifier will be held in April and the Southern Division National Semi Final Qualifier will be held in May. In 2020 the qualifying months for the two divisions will be reversed, and will continue the alternate every year as long as Colorado TBF has two Divisions.
3. Lake selections will be made by each respective Division following established distance, date guidelines and approved by the Colorado TBF Tournament Director.
4. The Colorado TBF National Semi Final Contenders will be made up of the top 6 teams from the Northern and Southern Division Qualifiers, for a total of 12 teams.
5. It will be left up to individual chapter clubs on how they select their wild-card teams for the National Semi Finals. (Note-Chapter Club Presidents are encouraged to develop a tracking process for Chapter Club Members and their participation in Colorado TBF Sanctioned events. Member participation could have an impact on the number of Chapter Club and/or Federation wild-card teams that participate in the National Semi Finals).

1. RULES:

1. Great effort, study and research have gone into the formulation of these rules.
2. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director.
3. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions, as he/she deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments.
4. A representative from each Club participating in the Division Qualifier will be called upon for a decision for Tournament Disqualification only.
5. The decision of the Tournament Director and Tournament Officials shall be final in all matters.

2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

1. Participation in this tournament is by invitation only. This tournament is open only to members of the Colorado TBF who are 16 years of age or older and who are active members of Colorado T.B.F Inc. affiliated Chapters in good standing. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitors.
2. DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF COLORADO T.B.F. Inc. TOURNAMENT, NO CONTESTANT MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT CONTESTANT HAS A MINIMUM OF $300,000 BOATING LIABILITY INSURANCE. THIS DOCUMENTED PROOF MUST SHOW AN EFFECTIVE DATE AND EXPIRATION DATE AND MUST BE MAINTAINED IN THE COMPETITORS BOAT. THE PROOF OF INSURANCE AND A CURRENT COPY OF THE BOAT REGISTRATION WILL BE MADE AVAILABLE AT THE REQUEST OF ANY TOURNAMENT OFFICIAL AT ANY TIME DURING THE OFFICIAL PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE OR THE TOURNAMENT.
3. A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE COLORADO TBF TREASURER ON OR BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE OF **12:00 P.M. FRIDAY TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE DAY. ENTRIES RECEIVED AFTER THIS TIME WILL BE SUBJECT TO A $25.00 LATE FEE AND MUST BE PAID IN CASH.**
4. Order out will be determined by draw at the pre-tournament meeting.
5. There will be no refunds of entry fees except for hardship cases, which will be determined by the Tournament Director on a case-by-case basis.
6. Contestants must have in their possession a valid fishing license that covers the waters on which the tournament is held.

3. FORMAT:

1. The format for the Colorado TBF National Semi Final Contenders will be by team tournament
2. Qualifying Teams will determine between themselves who will be boater and non-boater.
3. Alternates for Team members that cannot move on to the will be replaced as follows:
   A) One of the top six teams drops out; that team will be replaced with the next full team that can attend, starting with the seventh-place team and moving down the list of teams until the position is filled, from the division that the team qualified with.
   B) One member of a top six team drops out; the remaining member will decide on being a boater or non-boater. A member of the next available team, starting with the seventh-place team and moving down the list of teams until the slot is filled, from the division that the team qualified from. It will be up to that team to decide which one will fill the slot. If no decision can be made the Federation Vice President/Tournament Director will make a final decision.

4. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE:

1. The Tournament waters shall be off limits to all competitors commencing at 12:01a.m, **MONDAY THE WEEK OF THE TOURNAMENT,** until safe light on the first practice day.
2. There will be a two-day official practice period immediately proceeding the first day of the Tournament beginning at safe light **the THURSDAY of the tournament weekend.**
3. During the official practice, and during the tournament, a Team may not have the assistance or advice of anyone, other than another participating contestant, for the purposes of locating or catching bass.
4. No Team may enter the tournament waters during the Pre-Tournament Practice with anyone **OTHER** than another contestant of this tournament, to include a professional guide, state or federal wildlife employee or any other person deemed an "expert" on these tournament waters by the Tournament Director.
5. During the official practice and during the tournament, contestants may not "SKIN DIVE" or "SCUBA DIVE" on the tournament waters.
6. During the official practice and during the tournament, the use of drones for locating or catching bass is prohibited.
7. During the official practice and competition days of the tournament, Teams may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine-band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communication device for the purpose of locating or catching bass. If so equipped, Teams may listen to the marine-band weather information.
8. Each Team agrees to report to the Tournament Director or any Tournament Official any violation or infraction of these Tournament Rules. **The failure to report violations or suggestions to violate these Rules or false verification of weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification.**
9. EACH COMPETITOR AGREES TO SUBMIT, BY HIS/HER SIGNATURE ON THE OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM, TO A POLYGRAPH TEST SHOULD HE/SHE BE ACCUSED OF ANY RULE VIOLATION. The administration and interpretation of the polygraph test results shall be solely 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, and the scope of the questions that may be asked during such tests. The Participant shall be available, at his/her expense, at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such examination.

5. Pre-Tournament Check-In/Registration:

1. Each TEAM or Team Representative (prior notification must be made to the Tournament Director) must check in with official Colorado TBF Tournament staff at the time and place prescribed on the schedule of events.
2. At the Pre-Tournament Check-In/Registration Teams will participate in order out draw.
3. IT SHALL BE EACH COMPETITOR'S RESPONSIBILITY TO CHECK THE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR REGISTRATION TIME AND LOCATION OR OBTAIN THIS INFORMATION FROM THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.

6. SAFETY:

1. Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors.
2. During the official practice and the tournament, each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver. This preserver must be worn anytime the combustion engine is operating, except for unloading and loading boat. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor team reaches their fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason

for disqualification.

3. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start or lengthen the day of an official tournament in the case of inclement weather.
4. The Tournament Director reserves the right to impose boat speed limits on this tournament. 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.
5. **Navigation lights will be in use from tournament start until Teams reach their first fishing location**.
6. Participating boats will be marked to distinguish them from other boats on the tournament waters.

7. SPORTSMANSHIP:

1. Competitors in ANY COLORADO TBF Tournament is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification.
2. 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.
3. Prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish bind all competitors.
4. Use of 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 Federation Tournaments.
5. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days or when in the weigh-in area. Chemical-substance addiction or abuse 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.
6. **Written Protest** must be submitted to a Tournament Official within **30 minutes** of the completion of the weigh in on that day.
7. **Protest from the Official Practice period will be submitted in writing to a Tournament Official within 30 minutes of the conclusion of the weigh in on the first Tournament Day.**
8. If at any time, any of the Tournament Officials are made aware of any rule's violation during the official practice or tournament, the incident will be investigated to determine the validity of the incident.
9. If it is determined that a rules violation has occurred appropriate penalties will be enforced.
10. A committee of Chapter Representatives will be established in matters that may result in disqualification only.
11. During the investigation by Chapter Representatives, only the description of the incident will be presented. Names will only be provided after a decision has been made.
12. The following dispositions will be used for submitted protest,
13. UNFOUNDED: No misconduct.
14. NON-SUSTAINED: There is not sufficient evidence to prove or disprove the protest.
15. SUSTAINED WITH NO PENALTY: The allegation did occur, but there was just cause for the violation.
16. SUSTAINED: The allegation did occur and a penalty will be imposed.
17. Any disqualification or suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in future Federation Tournaments.

8. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:

1. Only artificial lures may be used.
2. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc.
3. 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. 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.
4. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner.
5. When visually fishing for bedding bass, anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. Bass caught during events scheduled during the spawn will be examined for injuries to the body consistent with being snagged.
6. No gaffs may be used to boat bass or be permitted in boat at any time.

7. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited.
8. The use of nets is allowed.

9. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS:

1. 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 rating plate.
2. Any boat manufactured prior to Nov. 1, 1972 must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats.
3. 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.
4. Normal maintenance to increase the performance of your engine is allowed.

10. BOAT AND MOTOR:

1. For the safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH**.**
2. During official practice and the Tournament, the ignition-kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating; the only exception will be while loading and unloading the boat from the trailer.
3. 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, except in the case of loading onto the trailer. Fishing boats may be used that are 15 feet or more in length. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat.
4. A small electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering; however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited.
5. All BLADDER tanks and any other type of AUXILLARY gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory-installed are restricted to the U.S. Coast Guard maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline.
6. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat.
7. During the official practice and during the tournament, no portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor.

11. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT:

1. Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump. All state boating regulations also apply.
2. EVERY BOAT MUST HAVE LIVEWELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED, TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE, A LIMIT CATCH OF BASS.

12. TEAM IDENTIFICATION:

1. Each boat MUST be given, prior to each day's start, an inspection check by a tournament official, also an identification number, which MUST remain with your boat until turned in.
2. This Identification Number must be displayed at any time upon the request of any tournament official, also at check-in and turned in to the tournament officials at the completion of the tournament.

13. PERMITTED FISHING/TOURNAMNETS LOCATIONS:

1. Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. The Federation will hold tournaments within 400 driving miles of Bass Pro Shops, Colorado Springs.
2. 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 circle claimed by him. Spot Lock equipped boats will not qualify for the dropped anchor rule, however; shallow water anchoring systems will, when the trolling motor is out of the water.
3. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor.
4. Any water within these boundaries posted Off-Limits or No Fishing areas as designated by state or federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS**.** The boundaries to off limits areas will be treated as brick walls.
5. The live-bass release area established by the Tournament Director will be OFF-LIMITS and will be

announced at the Tournament Briefing.

6. 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.
7. All angling must be done from the boat.
8. Competitors are not permitted to place any type of fish habitat or structure in the tournament waters after the off-limits period or during the official practice and tournament.

14. CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT:

1. 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. Competitors must remain in their boat at all times except in cases of an emergency (i.e. Restroom). In an emergency, a member of a competing team may be removed from their boat and taken to Safety or Weigh-In (with that days catch) **IN A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT.**
2. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials, or for the purpose of making mechanical repairs (with the approval of the Tournament Director), and weather conditions that would create concern for the safety of the competitors participating in the tournament.

15. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:

1. 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.
2. 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 teams shall identify themselves by means of their identification number and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area.

16. SCORING:

1. Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the weight of each Teams catch during the competition days of the tournament.
2. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, or Redeye bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day, unless the prevailing state limit is less than 5, or a special limit is established for a particular tournament by the tournament officials, in which case the state limit, or special limit, shall be the tournament limit.
3. At no time shall a Team have in their possession more than the tournament limit. This does not apply to teams that are in the process of culling a fish. This affects teams that have more than the tournament limit in livewells. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of this provision**,** and in the event a Team has more than the above-described limits to possession, tournament officials shall cull the largest bass first, down to the limit described. In addition, if a Team is found to be in possession of more than the limit specified they will be penalized by the weight of their largest fish in that days catch.
4. Culling of bass will be completed immediately if the competitor has in his possession the described limit. **Culling of dead fish will be prohibited**.
5. **No culling of bass will be permitted after a competitor checks in at the Official Check-in point.**
6. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the tournament briefing. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed-in. The Federation will use a "Golden Rule" to determine official length.
7. After a Team checks-in at the official checkpoint they MUST present all LEGAL fish in their possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed.
8. No courtesy board will be available.
9. The signature of a Tournament Official and a **team member** must certify each teams catch on their daily weigh slip.
10. Teams may not return to their boats with bass in their possession.
11. Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament. Stringered is any system that connects two or more bass together. The only exceptions will be during the use of a balance beam in regards to the culling of a fish. At the completion of the balance beam check both fish must be removed from the balance beam immediately.
12. Specially designed bags, which increase survival rate, will be furnished by the Tournament Director, and these bags must be used for the weigh-in.
13. A weigh-in slip must be completed by all Teams whether they caught fish or not.

17. PENALTY POINTS:

1. For each dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the Team shall be penalized 8 ounces of weight, to be deducted from their daily weight. The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points. **No dead bass shall be weighed for big bass awards.**
2. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall accrue penalties at the rate of 1 pound for each such bass and that bass will not be added to total weight. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the Team. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will not be accepted for weigh in.

18. LATE PENALTY:

1. Teams 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 weight of their catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "Big Bass."
2. Any Team more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch.
3. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case shall a Team be allowed to make up "lost time." Exceptions to this rule, due to emergency circumstance shall be at the sole discretion of the tournament officials.
4. After proper recognition at the check-in point, Teams will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in.
5. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during the tournament hours.
6. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the tournament briefing.

19. TIES:

1. In case of a tie the following tie-breakers will be used in order to establish the top six teams:
2. The Team with the largest number of legal bass presented for weigh in.
3. The Team with the heaviest single-day catch during competition.
4. The Team with overall "Big Bass" for the competition.
5. The Team with "Big Bass" from the first day.
6. The Team with "Big Bass" from the second day.
7. In the unlikely event that Teams remain tied after these five tiebreakers are employed, then a flip of a coin will be used to determine the winners.

20. BOAT CHECKS:

1. None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated tournament official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat at any time during the official practice period or the official competition days

21. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE:

1. The Federation encourages the use of patches, logos and other signage to promote local and T.B.F. Inc. sponsors.

22. PAYMENT OF ENTRY FEES:

1. It is suggested that the individual entry fees are paid to the individual's Chapter Club, and the Chapter Club sends one check for the combined entry fees with the entry forms to the Colorado TBF Treasurer by the cutoff date.
2. No personal checks will be accepted. Entry fees paid to the Colorado T.B.F. Inc. must be by Chapter Check, Certified Check or Money Order only, except for late entries which must be cash with late fees attached.

23. PAYOUT:

1. The Colorado TBF National Semi Final Qualifying Tournaments payout will be,
2. Entry Fees for Colorado TBF National Semi Final Qualifiers will be $50.00.
3. $10.00 from each entry fee will go towards a daily big bass pot.
4. $20.00 from each entry fee will go towards the Colorado TBF.
5. $20.00 from each entry fee will go towards the Nation Contender fund to assist with off setting cost for the National Contenders, determined by the National Semi Finals.
6. Side pots are encouraged but will not be set, collected or awarded by anyone deemed a Tournament Official.

Revised 02-10-19, Stephen Way, Colorado TBF VP/Tournament Director.