



NVKBA Competition Rules Standard

The terms and conditions presented in this document apply between Northern Virginia Kayak Bass Anglers, Inc. ("NVKBA") and those persons registering for and participating in NVKBA competitive Events ("Competitor"). "Events" include both "Tournaments" (meet-up competition) and "Challenges" (virtual, online-only competition where participants do not congregate). The pronouns "he", "him", "himself", and "his" herein are used as generic, gender-neutral terms and do not restrict or confirm access on the basis of sex.

Each NVKBA Challenge, Tournament or Event, (referred to herein as "Competition") is a CPR (Catch-Photo-Release) contest in which each Competitor catches his own fish in places, during times, and by procedures permitted in all pertinent rules and regulations, digitally photographs them according to the standards described herein, and submits the lengths and photographs for verification. These Competitions are conducted according to NVKBA Competition Rules found in two documents:

1. NVKBA Competition Rules Standard (this document) covers about 90% of the terms, conditions, and standards common to all NVKBA Events.
2. Event-specific rules are located on the NVKBA fishing chaos event page, which includes details such as dates, locations, times, eligible water boundaries, restrictions, and exceptions to the NVKBA Rules Standard. **Any exceptions, amendments, exclusions, or modifications to the rules for specific events will be detailed exclusively in the event details page for that event.**

Together, these two documents comprise the complete *NVKBA Competition Rules*. As a condition of participation in any NVKBA Competition, the participating angler ("Competitor") agrees to read, understand, and comply with all NVKBA Competition Rules. Failure to comply will result in a penalty, which may range from points deductions to photo submission denial or disqualification from the event.

For each Event, the NVKBA Event Coordinator and/or Tournament or Series Director ("TD") will be identified on the NVKBA event-specific page. The Tournament Director and/or Director of Operations has responsibility for the interpretation and enforcement of the NVKBA Competition Rules and may amplify or clarify them to make them more relevant or complete. **Tournament Director and/or Director of Operations decisions may be disputed, as described in Section 17.A.** NVKBA management will review the decisions and revise the NVKBA Competition Rules appropriately.

The most recent NVKBA Competition Rules Standard revisions will be highlighted in red in the body of the rule's standards for 60 days or as necessary to call attention to the revision. Announcement of the rule changes will also be posted as soon as possible and will be effective immediately upon publishing in the [NVKBA Facebook Group Page](#). NVKBA will notify all members via all available methods of communication above and through text and email where available. Understanding and being aware of the most recent rules prior to engaging in any competition or event is the **sole responsibility of the competitor**.

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1. Participation and Eligibility

A. **NVKBA Membership** – Participation in NVKBA Tournaments and Challenges is open only to current members of NVKBA unless otherwise specified in the event-specific descriptions. Competitors must be an active member by the event registration deadline. IF membership is waived for an event, non-members who register and compete in that event are not eligible for Angler-of-the-Year points or rewards.

B. **Professional Fishing Guides** may register and compete in competitions providing they do not guide-for-pay on eligible water within **14 Days** prior to the event's start-of-competition date.

C. **Event Registration** – All NVKBA Competitions are conducted using a Tournament Management System ("TMS"). Each angler who wishes to participate in such an Event must create a TMS user account before the first day of competition and must sign up for the event and pay the entry fee on the TMS, as specified on the event-specific page. NVKBA uses the Fishing Chaos application (app.fishingchaos.com)

D. Entry Fees

1. Entry fee amounts, administrative surcharges, convenience fees, registration deadlines, late fee exceptions, and refund or transfer restrictions are specified on the event-specific page for each competition.
2. No Satisfaction Guarantee – Competitor understands and agrees that payment for the event does not secure a guarantee or promise of satisfaction.
3. Competitor's failure or inability, for any reason except as otherwise provided herein, to participate in any or all of the activities of the event does not relieve or suspend the Competitor's obligation to make all payments required by NVKBA rules on a timely basis, nor entitle the competitor to a refund or credit, except as provided below.

E. **Payment** – Competitor agrees that once an event registration is submitted, the terms and conditions of the NVKBA Competition Rules Standard constitute an agreement that is a legally binding and an enforceable obligation of the Competitor.

F. **Competitor's Right to Cancel** – Cancellation before an event registration deadline, will be eligible for full credit to another NVKBA event or a refund minus 10%. If a NVKBA event is canceled, anglers will be fully refunded, or the entry fee can be credited towards another NVKBA event. NVKBA is not responsible for any refunds of expenses related to travel or lodging reservations or other payments involving third parties.

G. **Pre-Tournament Check-in** – Pre-Tournament check-in requirements will be specified in the event details section of each event.

H. **Captain's Meeting Participation** – Tournament Competitors are required to attend an on-site Captain's Meeting or view a recorded "Virtual" Captain's Meeting webcast, as stipulated on the event-specific page. Failure to comply may result in a competitor's disqualification from the event.

2. Fish Eligibility

A. *Species* – Only the Black Bass Species consisting of the following: Largemouth, Spotted, Bartram's, Mean Mouth, Guadalupe, Shoal and Smallmouth bass and any hybrid of the above are accepted species.

B. *Length* – The minimum length of bass scored in competition is 12 inches unless otherwise specified in event-specific rules.

C. *Condition* – Fish may not appear to be dead, mutilated, frozen, mangled, or otherwise damaged, or it appears to have been mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered.

D. Fish Entry is based on events. For Multiple Day events (Championships) the same fish may not be entered more than once, even if caught on separate days. **See Photo Standards (Section 9) and Scoring (Section 10) for additional requirements.**

3. Competition Period

A. Competition start and end dates and times are stated on the event-specific page. Competitors may place their watercraft in the water, occupy them, shove off, and then stage (float, drift, or anchor) in the immediate area until the official "Earliest Launch," at which time they may proceed underway. Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the event. **Tournament Off-limits period are ONLY observed if specifically outlined in Event Specific Details.**

B. Check-in – Tournament competitors must check-in by complying with event-specific rules by the specified time. **(Failure to comply may result in disqualification from the event and forfeiture of all entitlements of that event)**

4. Pre-fishing

Pre-fishing is considered to be any activity that takes place on eligible water defined in the event-specific rules including fishing, scouting, and graphing. At the end of the pre-fishing time specified in the event-specific rules, the angler must be off the water. **Unless otherwise specified, all pre-fishing for events will cease at 4pm EST the Friday before each event.**

5. Competition Area

A. Competitive fishing is allowed only on publicly accessible waters within the geographic area designated on the Event Page as "Eligible Water." Photos of fish caught outside of eligible water boundaries will be denied.

1. Photos that competitors submit for scoring in every NVKBA Challenge or tournament must be of fish caught from Eligible Water. To be "Eligible," the body of water must be inside the competition area boundary, during public-access hours, be accessible to the public, and be where fishing is permitted by regulations. During practice and competition, anglers are not allowed to make changes to the waterway, and it must be utilized how it's naturally presented. This includes but is not limited to adding, cutting or removing trees/ brush, digging/ filling ditches, adding or removing rocks and purposely adding or removing vegetation.

2. Resident only or community ponds are not eligible for NVKBA competition.

3. Any body of water that requires special permission is not eligible for NVKBA competition unless specifically permitted per the event description (i.e. Military Establishments, Membership Lakes, etc.)

4. Community (neighborhood) lakes that provide public access are off-limits to NVKBA competition regardless of whether or not they allow public access.

5. If a lake has posted use times, it is eligible only during the hours permitted by the regulatory body. For example, if a park permits launching from daylight and closes at sunset, and that is the location used to access the lake, then the lake is off-limits outside of the permitted launch times.

6. Use of private access to fish in any public waters is not permitted (**Privately operated marinas, campgrounds and venues that allow paid public access are permitted provided that any member of the public can launch there, even if a fee is required**).

7. A competitor must access the water from or across publicly accessible areas. Additionally, anglers MAY NOT cast into or otherwise obtain access to off-limits areas from eligible water. (Example: Posted/restricted spawning areas or other refuges)

8. Clarification of eligible waters is the sole responsibility of the competitor prior to engaging in competition. (**Fishing in off-limits waters is grounds for disqualification from the event, not just loss of fish caught while out of bounds.**)

B. Competitors may launch from any public access directly into Eligible Water. Crossing restricted property to reach Eligible Water is not permitted. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

C. Competitors are not restricted to fishing where they start each day but are permitted to relocate to other eligible waters during tournament hours.

D. Watercraft must not be anchored in such a position as to prevent or block access for other watercraft or powerboats. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

E. Unless posted otherwise, as it pertains to tributaries of the main body of water, competitors must be able to float in and out or through an area during tournament days for it to be considered legal waters to navigate. Anglers can use pedal/ paddle/acceptable motors (RULE 8. E) and/or push-pole to navigate. If an anglers' kayak bottoms out and becomes completely or partially immobilized from the bottom while navigating, they are no longer considered floating. Anglers are responsible for verifying their launch is publicly accessible as well as paying any launch fee required to utilize the facility. If a ramp or launch site is not clearly designated a public launch or it isn't easily determined as publicly accessible competitors may request launch site evaluation and approval no later than 30 days prior to the event start date.

F. During NVKBA events, competitors MAY conduct wade fishing within reasonable distance from their kayak. If a competitor catches a fish while wade fishing, they must immediately return to their kayak to capture their submission photos of the fish (while on kayak deck) and release immediately following. Competitors may NOT keep fish on a stringer or restraining device while continuing to wade fish (bed fishing tactics, etc.).

6. Cooperation, Assistance and Information Gathering.

A. Up until the end of the established pre-fishing period, competitors may fish with and receive direct assistance from other anglers and professional guides on the Eligible Water, except as restricted in Rule 6.B. and 6.C., below.

B. Within **21 days** prior to the Event, a Competitor may **NOT** fish on Eligible Water with, nor receive expert advice from, a professional fishing guide who receives payment for those services. *Additionally, anglers may not contract for hire services to provide mothership or other on the water transportation assistance.* Off the water shuttles and transportation assistance are permitted. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event and forfeiture of all entry fees or prize eligibility.**

C. The purchasing of or bartering for information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters (other than through commercially available sources) is not permitted. ANY use of or communication with a professional guide or guide services, directly or indirectly, pertaining to tournament waters within **21 days** of the event is prohibited, other than through publicly available sources. Anglers may not solicit fishing or waterway information from anyone in attempt to gain a competitive advantage with anyone other than other competitors registered for and actively participating in the event.

During the tournament hours of each day (First Launch- Fishing Concludes) contestants may not share information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Anglers may communicate with fellow competitors verbally and specifically on how to respectfully share an area that all parties are utilizing. During the tournament hours of each day (First Launch- Fishing Concludes) an electronic device may not be used to speak to anyone about tournament waters, fishing strategies, techniques, etc. These devices may still be used as a means of communication to NVKBA Staff, social media updates, safety checks, ride coordination, and/or work and family emergencies/urgent matters. Any collaboration on or off the water with other competitors or non- competitors for the purpose of sharing or pooling winnings is strictly prohibited and will result in a disqualification of all involved. Any questions or concerns about tournament rules or violations needs to be communicated with NVKBA Staff immediately and initially to be considered.

D. Competitors may not receive assistance in catching fish that are photographed and submitted for scoring, including boat positioning, casting, retrieving, hooking, playing, or landing a fish. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

7. Fishing Tackle, Equipment, Methods and Measuring Boards

A. All fish submitted for score must be caught live by the Competitor who submits them for scoring using only equipment and legal methods that comply with all sportfishing statutes and regulations of the states and body of water in which they are taken. Competitors are responsible for research of and compliance with all applicable fishing and boating regulations. Snatching or snagging fish is not permitted. When visually fishing a bed for spawning bass, to be admissible all bass must be hooked inside the mouth. Fish MAY NOT be retained while bed fishing to improve chances of catching another fish. Fish must be caught, photographed (and video where required) and released prior to resuming fishing. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

B. All fish must be caught by the Competitor on rod, reel, line, and hook with artificial lures only. No traps, snares, set lines, or other methods of fishing other than rod, reel and line are permissible, even if legal under state game laws. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

C. **Acceptable measuring boards** for all NVKBA competitions are the aluminum Ketch Products Measuring Board, the Ketch Karbonate (plastic) and the Ketch X.

1. Measuring boards may be shortened only by removing inches from the upper end (opposite the fence). For example, one may cut off the end of a measuring board at the 26-inch mark in order for it to fit crossways between a watercraft's gunwales. However, it may not be broken, snapped, or cut apart and then reassembled at any point between the two ends. Violation will result, at minimum, in denial of the photo submission.
2. A slight flex in a measuring board resulting from a fish's weight is allowed; however, Competitors are prohibited from deliberately flexing or deforming a measuring board by exerting pressure or reshaping it. Any modification of a measuring board that results in a misrepresentation of a fish's actual length is grounds for a competitor's disqualification from the event and may result in subsequent sanctions and penalties as described in Rule 11.
3. A clean measuring device is expected to ensure we can give you a proper score.
4. Competitors may share measuring boards.

D. Technology – Each competitor is responsible for having the necessary technology with GPS, location, and capture capability. As technology changes and to protect the integrity of our sport, we may include an appendix to these rules.

1. When a Competitor's technology becomes inoperable or is lost, they may share with other Competitors, provided each Competitor logs into his own TMS account in order to submit photos of fish he caught. Competitors under the same circumstances may share technology, provided each Competitor can clearly and positively identify photos of the fish he caught. Violation will result in denial of photo submission.

E. Only artificial lures and biodegradable artificial lures may be used. No live bait, preserved bait, or prepared bait will be permitted during competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

F. Only ONE casting, spin-casting, spinning, or fly rod and reel may be in use at any one time. A rod and reel are considered to be "in use" when a lure attached to it by a line is in or on the water. A hung lure (one snagged in an overhanging tree) that is not in or on the water is not considered in use and the attached rod and reel may be set aside while another is in use.

H. Nets and grippers (e.g., Fish Grip, Boga-Grip) may be used for landing fish during tournament competition, but grippers must not remain attached to the fish in photos. **Violation will result in denial of the photo submission.**

1. 1. Fish may not be retained on stringers or in live wells, other than to momentarily revive the fish or to prepare for photographing the fish.

I. 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 devices. If a Competitor loses his rod and reel while landing a fish he MAY use another rod and reel to retrieve the lost outfit. If after retrieval, the fish is still hooked, it may be landed, photographed, and submitted as a legal fish. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

8. Watercraft & Propulsion

A. Watercraft acceptable for use in NVKBA Competition are those manufactured and marketed as canoes, kayaks, or SUPs for which paddling is the primary means of propulsion. Any other watercraft must be submitted to the NVKBA Director of Operations for review and approval prior to use in competition. Watercraft specifically approved as exceptions in advance of competition by NVKBA Management are:

- Blue Sky Boatworks 360 Angler
- Biyak
- Greentop Enterprise Creek Boats
- Solo Skiff
- Beavertail Stealth

Use of watercraft in competition other than those listed above as acceptable or exceptions will result in disqualification from the event.

B. Unless approved as exceptions by the NVKBA Director of Operations, the following watercraft may not be used in competition:

1. Gas- or liquid-fueled motorized or hybrid fuel/electric powerboats or personal watercraft
2. Sailboats
3. Jon boats
4. Pirogues, coracles and rowboats
5. Dinghies and skiffs
6. Float tubes, inflatable rafts, and rigid inflatable boats (e.g., Zodiac)
7. Pontoon boats, pontoon-style pond boats, twin-hull watercraft, or similar.

C. Watercraft propulsion is restricted to paddle, pedal, pole, or electric motor (see E.ii).

D. Unless specifically prohibited on the event-specific page, use of a single electric propulsion unit per watercraft in NVKBA sanctioned competition is approved with the following restrictions: NOTE: No more than one electric motor may be installed on competitor's watercraft at any time during official competition times.

E. Competitors must comply with all boating regulations pertaining to motorized kayak/electric propulsion watercraft registration, use, and operating restrictions for the designated fishing area. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

Electric motor used to propel a watercraft:

1. Must be attached to the kayak in a safe manner for operation, and
2. May not exceed the lesser of (i.) the manufacturer's labeled Maximum HP/Thrust Capacity, (ii.) 3 HP, or (iii.) 155 foot-pound thrust. Violation of either condition will result in disqualification from the Event. (This does *not* pertain to wattage capacity.)
3. Competitors are required to meet all documentation and registration requirements for operating a motorized watercraft including all required safety equipment and lighting.

F. Towing, transport, or relocation assistance from another watercraft, including "mother shipping," is NOT permitted except in cases of emergency, as when pulling a kayak from a danger zone or restricted area. Once the emergency has ended, the Competitor may resume fishing only if the watercraft was pulled no more than needed to be removed from the danger zone. **Violation will result in disqualification from the event.**

G. Trolling lure(s) attached to a single rod and towed behind a watercraft while underway is permitted in NVKBA Competition. Competitors must demonstrate sportsmanlike conduct and avoid impeding other competitors or recreational anglers while trolling.

NOTE: *Multiple fish caught on the same lure, at the same time (topwater, A-Rig, etc.) may both be accepted for scoring provided all fish are caught, photographed (or video where required) and released prior to resuming fishing. For this allowance to exist, both (or more) fish must be caught legally within the eligible waters and during a single cast and/or retrieve. The additional fish may be retained by lip gripper, Donkey Leash or landing net while preparing for and taking photos of each fish.*

9. Photo Standards – Digital photographs of each fish submitted to judges for scoring must meet these criteria:

A. **Unique** – Each digital photo submitted in each Event must be of a different fish. The Judge will deny subsequent digital photos of the same fish submitted by the Competitor in an Event. Possession of multiple fish is not permitted. All fish must be caught, photographed (video where required) and released prior to resuming fishing for subsequent fish.

B. **Position/Visible/Legible** – Each photo must be in focus and clear enough for a judge to:

1. Fish must be positioned facing left, dorsal fin up (belly down), tail to the right. (see illustration in G.2 for clarification)
2. Verify the **Official NVKBA Identifier Form** and event ID code. The inability of the judge to verify will result in the denial of the photo submission.
3. Verify the fish's condition. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission.
4. Verify the fish's length. The judge will score fish at the greatest length of which he is certain.
5. Verify whether the bass' jaw or lip is in contact with the measuring board fence. The inability of the judge to verify will result in a minimum penalty of 1 inch and may result in denial of the photo submission at the judge's discretion.
6. The entire fish, from its mouth/jaw to the end of its caudal (tail) fin must be visible in photos (Except where allowed to be covered by hand). In addition, at least one visible one-inch increment of the measuring board must be clearly visible to make an accurate length determination (Example. If the fish is 17.75 and the 17 is covered, the 18' mark must be clearly visible). If either end of the fish is covered or cropped off, the photo may be denied at the judge's discretion.

C. **Centered** – Camera lens positioned directly over the center of the fish's body, which contributes to accurate measurement by judges. Photos taken at a low angle to obscure an open mouth may be denied or penalized at the judge's discretion.

D. **First-generation** – Each digital photo must be a first-generation image (not a photo of or screenshot of another photo). Violation will result in denial of the photo submission.

E. **Identifiable** – Official NVKBA Identifier Form above, below, or beside the fish (not laying on top of the fish), unless placed on the Competitor's hand or arm).

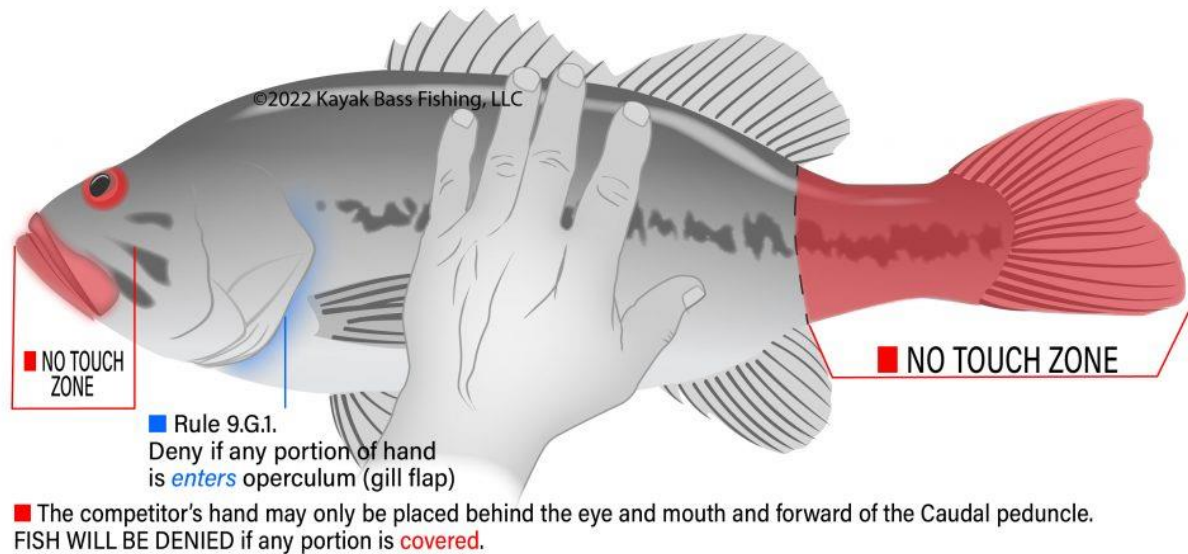
NOTE: Only the official NVKBA identifier is acceptable for photo submission. No hand-drawn images, codes written on hands, or forms from other series are permitted. Other series identifiers may be used as long as the Official NVKBA identifier is also clearly visible. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission.

F. **Background** – Competitors' watercraft must be clearly visible in all eligible photographs. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission. Watercraft must have been launched and underway to be eligible for submission. Kayak may not be in or on competitor's vehicle or trailer while photos are taken.

G. **Hand Position** – It is recommended to take the photo with hand as close to centered on the fish as possible. Hand placement must meet the following guidelines:

1. No portion of the hand may enter the gill plate. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission. (**NOTE:** incidental contact with the external portion of the gill plate will not result in photo denial)
2. The competitor's hand must be placed to provide a clear view of the fish's eye. Obstruction or coverage of any portion of the fish's eye will result in the denial of the photo submission. Hand must be placed forward of the Caudal peduncle (fleshy, scaled part of the bass' body at the base of the

caudal fin). Competitor's hand may not contact any portion of the Caudal Peduncle past the back edge of the fish's dorsal or anal fin. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission. **(See Photo Submission Guidelines).** **NOTE: The photo below is for advisory purposes and indicates areas for competitors to avoid. Official scoring is based on Photo Submission Guidelines. Additionally, no portion of the prescribed no touch zone shall be covered by any other items. (arm, net, fish grips, etc...)**



H. Mouth

1. Bass' lip or jaw must be in contact with the measuring board fence (bump board, upright), and the fence must be visible in the photo. Violation will result in denial of the photo submission.
2. In bass fishing competition, a closed mouth is required for uniformity of measurement and to validate contact with the measuring board fence. If a judge considers the mouth to be open (even if it is structurally unable to close) a one-half inch penalty will be assessed. In addition, if the mouth is opened excessively in an attempt to make the fish appear longer, the entire fish may be denied. *NOTE: This determination will be made by the judge and will only be considered for review through submission of a formal dispute.*

I. **Not "In-possession"** In most states, though not all, unless a fish is secured by a restraint device or is placed in a holding container, state regulatory agencies do not consider it to be "in possession" by Competitors, so states' minimum length regulations do not apply for photo submissions. However, if an event occurs in a state where photographing a fish constitutes "possession," and a photo is submitted of a fish that does not comply with state size limits, the photo will be denied. (Refer to regulatory compliance, Rule 7.A.)

10. Scoring

A. Fish length is determined by its caudal fin (tail fin) touching or crossing the manufacturer's quarter-inch mark (e.g., ridges, grooves) on the measuring board. If it falls short of a 1/4-inch factory mark, the length is rounded to the next lower 1/4-inch mark that the bass' caudal fin touches or crosses. In reviewing photographs, judges will visualize as accurately as possible where a 1/4-inch factory mark would be if it extended the entire width of

a board and use that imaginary line to determine a fish's length. Entire caudal fin lifted away and out of contact with the board will result in denial of the photo submission.

B. If any portion of a bass' caudal (tail) fin extends off the edge of a Measuring Board surface, the score will be determined by the highest 1/4-inch measurement reached or crossed by the portion of caudal fin on the measuring board. Any portion of the caudal fin extending off the edge of a Measuring Board is not considered in scoring. Alignment aids and attachments to a NVKBA-approved measuring board (e.g., a cradle attachment for the Ketch measuring board) will not be considered part of a measuring board surface when determining a fish's length.

C. Tournament ranking, contingency awards, Angler of the Year Points, Challenge Points, and Championship qualification shall be determined by the aggregate length of each Competitor's photos remaining on the leaderboard when judging has concluded, and the dispute period has closed. Unless otherwise stipulated on the event-specific page.

D. If a judge denies a competitor's photo after the end-of-competition, it may be automatically replaced by a previously submitted and auto-culled photo; however, no Competitor may submit a replacement photo after the end-of-competition time.

E. In the event of a tie-in score, the tied competitors' longest (highest-scored) fish are compared, and the tie breaks in favor of the competitor with the longest (highest-scoring) fish. If the longest fish are equal, the second-longest fish are compared and determine which competitor wins the tie. If the second-longest are identical, the process repeats for each remaining fish. If all of the tied competitors' highest scoring fish are identical, the tie breaks in favor of the competitor whose last leaderboard photo was uploaded earliest.

F. NVKBA judges apply the following scoring criteria to adjust measurements, approve or deny photos, and penalize photos by deducting points (length) or disqualifying a competitor.

Item	Photo Scoring Criteria	Penalty
a. Photo	Blurry photo/length unclear: scored at the highest mark of which there is no doubt (Rule 9.B.3)	n/a
b. Photo	Blurry photo; completely unable to judge (Rule 9.B)	Deny
c. Photo	Appears to be second-generation (e.g., screen shot, photo of photo) (Rule 9.D)	Deny
d. Photo	EXIF data does not exist and/or other evidence substantiates photo taken outside of Eligible Water boundaries (Rule 5.A)	Deny
e. Photo	EXIF data, other evidence substantiates photo was taken outside of competition hours (Rule 3.A)	Deny
f. Photo	Multiple digital photos submitted of the same fish; unintentional violation (Rule 9.A)	Deny
g. Photo	Multiple digital photos submitted of the same fish; evidence indicates intentionally (Rule 9.A)	Ban
h. Photo	Competitor's watercraft not visible in photo background (Rule 9.F)	Deny
i. Photo	Entire fish not in picture (Rule 9.B.5)	Deny
j. Orientation	Fish positioned with right side of body toward camera; head pointing right and caudal fin left	Deny
k. Orientation	Fish positioned with dorsal fins at bottom of photo, pelvic and anal fins upward	Deny
l. Identifier	Identifier Card is laying on the fish (Rule 9.E)	Deny
m. Identifier	Official identifier Card missing, counterfeit, or incorrect code for the event. (Rule 9.B.1)	Deny
n. Fish	Secured by restraining device (e.g., stringer, tape, or clip attached to fish) (Rule 7.H.1)	Deny
o. Fish	Photo violates state regulations regarding possession (Rule 9.I)	Deny

p. Species	Photo of any species or variety of fish other than that approved for the Competition (Rule 2.A)	Deny
q. Body	Photo Bass caudal (tail) fin tip fails to reach 12.00" line on measuring board (Rule 2.B)	Deny
r. Body	Any portion of a hand or fingers under the fish's operculum (gill flap or cover) (Rule 9.G.1)	Deny
s. Body	Finger(s) or hand touching or covering bass in violation of rule Rule 9.G.2.	Deny
t. Body	Entire caudal (tail) fin entirely lifted away and out of contact with the measuring board (Rule 10.A)	Deny
u. Body	Fish appears to have been snagged, snatched, or hooked in the body rather than mouth (Rule 7.A)	Deny
v. Body	Fish appears to be dead, mutilated, frozen, mangled, or otherwise damaged or appears to have been mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered to increase its length (Rule 2.C)	Deny
w. Mouth	Bass lip or jaw clearly not touching measuring board fence (upright end plate) (Rule 9.H.1)	Deny
x. Mouth	Unable to ascertain with certainty that bass lip or jaw is touching measuring board fence (Rule 9.B.4)	1.00" - Deny
y. Mouth	Mouth open, even if it appears to be structurally unable to close completely. (Rule 9.H.2)	.50" - Deny

11. Penalties

A. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such penalties as deemed appropriate, including without limitation, the following:

1. Reduction of score (length) as described above or determined by the Tournament Director
2. Loss of catch for the day or up until the violation has been remedied
3. Disqualification from the tournament in question
4. Any additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations, including but not limited to monetary fines and/or reduction of Competitor's Angler of the Year points.
5. Subject to the dispute and appeal processes set forth below, the Tournament Director's decisions on violations are final.

B. Following a review of the evidence, a determination by the NVKBA Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations of cheating or conviction of fraud will result in permanent revocation of NVKBA Membership, suspension from all NVKBA competition and NVKBA-affiliated events, and series, and revocation of all NVKBA Social Media privileges. In addition, the findings will be published on a password-protected NVKBA members-only web page.

C. Competitor acknowledges that (i.) the use of polygraph tests may be necessary to verify compliance with rules and to settle disputes and (ii.) entry constitutes acceptance of this requirement and agreement to abide by its conclusion. Refusal by a Competitor to submit to a polygraph test is grounds for immediate disqualification from the NVKBA event and prohibition against future participation in any NVKBA affiliated event. Results of a polygraph test will not be the sole determining factor in a NVKBA Management Review of a Competitor's eligibility for awards and qualification for future participation but may be one of several factors considered in such review.

D. Competitors may be randomly selected to undergo polygraph examinations during or following all NVKBA competitive competitions.

E. NVKBA Director of Tournament Operations shall

1. Have the discretion to determine the need for a Polygraph examination.
2. Be responsible for (i.) selecting an independent expert to administer the polygraph test, (ii.) establishing, in consultation with the expert administrator, the scope of the questions that may be asked during the test examination, and (iii.) interpreting the results.
3. Have sole responsibility for selecting the location, date, and time of the test nearest NVKBA headquarters with respect to all concerned parties' schedule and travel costs.

F. The Competitor shall:

1. Make themselves available at the location selected by the Director of Tournament Operations.
2. Cooperate in all respects with such tests.

12. Awarding of Prizes

A. Prizes and numbers of positions paid out are addressed on the event-specific page. Amounts paid per rank are subject to change based on participation (lower value for fewer entries and higher value for more entries) and sponsor provision.

B. Prizes will be processed after all photos submitted for scoring have been judged, the results reviewed, and disputes have been resolved.

C. Product prizes (e.g., kayaks, paddles, propulsion units) may require additional processing or delivery time. This allows competitors some flexibility in selecting model, color, or style. Product selection may be limited to specific features and models.

13. Taxes

Competitors are responsible for all applicable taxes on both cash/electronic payment and merchandise awards. Failure to meet those obligations may result in disqualification from all future NVKBA competitions. In addition, all prize recipients must fill out and submit a substitute IRS Form W-9 including name, address, social security number, signature, and date. These are used to prepare IRS 1099 forms for distribution in January.

14. Sale of Prizes

No prizes won participating in NVKBA competitions may be advertised or promoted for sale on NVKBA Facebook pages for one full year. Violation of this rule will result in ineligibility for all future competitions and forfeiture of qualification status.

15. Safety

A. During competition, every Competitor must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment (e.g., light source, whistle or other audible signal devices, Coast Guard-approved, chest-type life preserver [PFD]). See www.uscgboating.org/.

B. PFD Usage — At all times while actively engaged in competition, except as described below (Rule 15.B.1. PFD Wear Exceptions), the Competitor must wear a fastened USCG-certified vest-style PFD (inherent flotation or inflatable) or float jacket. A belt-style PFD, even one that deploys as a vest, is not permitted during competition.

When an infraction, as described above, is verified by the Tournament Director, the competitor is disqualified from participation in the event.

C. PFD Wear Exceptions — The competitor assumes responsibility for all consequences of removing his PFD. The competitor may cease competition and remove the PFD while his watercraft is beached, anchored, or adrift only if doing so creates no unsafe condition. The competitor must put on and securely fasten the PFD before going underway or resuming competition.

If all the following conditions exist, Competitor may briefly remove his PFD while afloat (anchored or adrift) to change, add or remove articles of clothing:

1. No fishing lines are in the water; and
2. The watercraft is not underway; and
3. Weather and water conditions permit one to do so safely; and
4. The competitor is over the age of 12.

When finished changing his attire, Competitor must immediately put the PFD back on before going underway, fishing, or engaging in any other competition-related activity.

D. Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations has the right to postpone or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of adverse weather conditions or other factors that jeopardize the Competitors' safety. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather.

E. In the event of weather emergencies that pose an imminent threat to Competitors, the Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations may terminate competition before the scheduled end-of-competition time. An early termination announcement with an adjusted end-of-competition time will be broadcast to Competitors via email and group text messaging. It will also be posted on the TMS site and social media sites. The announcement will also specify an adjusted report-in time and location. If safe to do so, upon receiving the notification, the competitor should make his way to the specified location at that time. The competitor is required to stop fishing as soon as he receives the early termination announcement. No photos of fish caught after the adjusted end-of-competition time may be submitted for scoring. However, to accommodate those seeking shelter immediately, the competitor has up to 15 minutes after the adjusted end time to submit a photo of any bass caught before the adjusted end-of-competition time/photo submission deadline.

F. In the event of an emergency, the Competitor should call 911 first and then notify tournament officials as soon as possible.

G. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any Competitor during an Event will not be tolerated and cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future NVKBA competitions. No alcoholic beverages, non-prescription stimulants, or depressants shall be allowed in watercraft during competition days. 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 competition rules, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by NVKBA's Director of Tournament Operations. 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 NVKBA competition, and/or disqualification from a NVKBA competition after circumstances are reviewed by the NVKBA Director of Tournament Operations.

H. **Night Competitions** that take place between April 1 and September 30, in which boats leave or return after 10:30 P.M., must comply with the following six stipulations in order for the event(s) to be eligible for Event Liability Insurance coverage provided through the North American Tournament Association's policy.

1. All participant boats must be equipped with working Coast Guard-approved running lights. Running lights must remain on in accordance with the governing state regulations. [Note: Kayaks are categorized by USCG as "oar-driving craft" and meet USCG requirements by having "at hand" an "electric torch" (a.k.a. flashlight) that can be used to signal other boaters. While anchored, all watercraft must display a 360-degree white light. Some states impose additional requirements.]
2. The NVKBA Tournament Director or Director of Tournament Operations shall have predetermined the availability of cell phone or radio coverage to assure reasonable communications in the event of an emergency. [Note: All competitors should make sure their cell phone numbers are entered in the TMS and the Tournament Director should have a list of all competitors with cell phone numbers for texting or calls.]
3. The NVKBA Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations shall have on hand the contact information for emergency rescue and medical services and must maintain the ability to make contact at all times during the competition.
4. The governing authority, as required by law or ordinance, shall be notified of the competition date and hours.
5. Competitors are restricted to an on-the-water speed limit of not more than 35 miles per hour between sunset and sunrise.
6. The Tournament Director and/or Director of Tournament Operations shall have in place a system of accounting for the return of all participants. [Note: This includes not only an end-of-competition check-in but also a way for competitors who leave early to notify the NVKBA Tournament Director.]

16. Competitor Conduct

Competitors participating in any NVKBA sanctioned event must observe the applicable rules for the Competition and must conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects favorably on the sport of kayak bass fishing, NVKBA, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors. Competitors are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, integrity, safety, and conservation in support of the sport of kayak bass fishing, especially when in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on or beside Eligible Water. Any Competitor who violates these principles, intentionally violates NVKBA Competition Rules or regulations (attempts to commit fraud), or behaves in ways that reflect unfavorably upon NVKBA's efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, may forfeit competition winnings, face suspension from future NVKBA sanctioned competitions, be permanently banned from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by NVKBA.

17. Disputes and Appeals

A. If a Competitor wishes to dispute a rules violation penalty, a judge's scoring decision, a Tournament Director's decision or other action that materially affected the Competitor's ranking or prize eligibility, he must email and/or call the Tournament Director using the contact information provided in the event description within 24 hours (one full day) following completion of Event judging. Judging is considered complete when all tournament standings are "unhidden" on the TMS. The dispute must include the following:

1. Event title, location, and date
2. Description or identification of penalty imposed, or condition being disputed
3. Reference to pertinent rule
4. Reason for dispute and requested action

Except for situations involving fraud or other law violations, any disputes submitted after the 24- hour dispute deadline will be reviewed without affecting the outcome of an event. No change in rank or reward will result from disputes submitted after the deadline. Only Competitors in the Event where the disputed action occurred may submit disputes. Disputes must be handled privately. All parties directly involved will be provided a copy of the dispute. The Tournament Director (for judge's rulings) or Director of Tournament Operations (for Tournament Director rulings) will review the Competitor's claims, thoroughly investigate the disputed decision, and issue a ruling.

B. The Competitor who filed the dispute may appeal the dispute results. Appeals of dispute results must be presented to the NVKBA Director of Tournament Operations (for Tournament Director's dispute rulings) or President (Director of Tournament Operations dispute rulings) using the same aforementioned process within 24 hours from the time and date of the ruling. An Appeals Processing Fee of \$100 must be paid to NVKBA through the most appropriate and available method. The NVKBA executive handling the appeal will impanel an appeals committee composed of one NVKBA staff member not involved directly in directing or judging the Event and two NVKBA Members who were not Competitors in the Event. 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 the prescribed time of the hearing. The appeals committee will submit its findings and recommendations to the NVKBA Executive handling the appeal, whose decisions are final. If the final ruling is in the Competitor's favor and reverses or nullifies a dispute ruling, then the entire Appeal Processing Fee will be refunded; however, if the ruling stands, then the Fee is forfeited.

18. Public Comments

A. The favorable public reputation of NVKBA as a sanctioning organization in the sport of kayak bass fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media channels are valuable assets and tangible benefits for NVKBA. Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments in public forums and social media or to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of NVKBA competitions, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow Competitors, or the NVKBA organization. Competitors are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules of officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with NVKBA policies are encouraged, as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that a Competitor knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of NVKBA Inc., NVKBA officials, NVKBA members or sponsors, may result in disciplinary action.

B. Sponsor contributions will not be devalued by disputes or disagreements in public forums or social media platforms.

C. Publicly disputing a judge's ruling or any dispute or appeal decision by a NVKBA Tournament Director, Series Director or NVKBA Executive will result in the participant receiving a warning for a first offense. A repeat of the offense will result in disciplinary action up to disqualification from the current Event and permanent termination of eligibility for future NVKBA competitions, even if previously qualified. This provision is not intended to discourage legitimate disputes but to ensure that a fair and unbiased approach is used, and the approved challenge and appeals processes are followed in determining the best possible outcome.

19. Unavailability and Force Majeure

NVKBA will use reasonable efforts to hold the Event; however, under no circumstances will NVKBA be held responsible for unavailability caused by circumstances beyond NVKBA's control, including flood, fire, hurricanes, earthquakes, or other "acts of God," acts of government, civil unrest, acts of terror, strikes or labor problems nor will any Event Registration be canceled, altered or amended once the Event has commenced on the basis of circumstances beyond NVKBA's reasonable control.

20. Compliance with Laws

This Agreement shall be governed by the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. All rights and obligations of NVKBA and the Competitor under this Agreement are subject to all applicable federal, state, and local laws and regulations. These terms and conditions shall be deemed revised to conform to applicable statutes, rules, and regulations. NVKBA may modify the terms and conditions stated herein at any time at its sole and absolute discretion. Competitor shall be bound by the modified Agreement and agree that no other modifications shall be enforceable. This Agreement constitutes the entire Agreement between the parties and supersedes all prior agreements between the parties, whether written or oral. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision hereof shall not affect the validity or enforceability of any other provision. The waiver of any breach shall not constitute a waiver of any subsequent breach.

21. Waivers and Releases

A. **Name and Likeness Release** — By registering for this NVKBA Event, the Competitor grants to NVKBA the right to use all photographs, likenesses, stories, accounts, details of Competitor contributions, exploits, interviews, bloopers, and information pertinent to the NVKBA Event, as well as any video footage, photographs gathered at the Event, for marketing and promotional purposes. This release is granted without expectation for additional compensation upon submission of Event Registration.

B. **Waiver and Release of Liability** — As a condition of participation in a Competition, and by virtue of registering for the Competition, each Competitor agrees to accept the terms and condition of the NVKBA Waiver and Release of Liability Agreement (below). This Agreement absolves NVKBA, Inc., its officers, staff, and volunteers from responsibility and threat of litigation in the case of injury, loss, or death sustained by a Competitor in the Event. Registrants under the age of 18 must have their waiver/release form signed by the parent or adult guardian who will accompany them throughout competition.