



Presented by 

**Official Rules
Bassmaster High School Series
Effective January 1, 2017**

Participation Agreement

P1. HAVING ACQUAINTED MYSELF WITH THE RULES AND REQUIREMENTS IN THIS BOOKLET, I HAVE SIGNED AND DATED THE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT.

In signing this agreement, I hereby agree to be bound by and comply with all tournament rules, payment schedules, late fines and regulations. I expressly assume all risks associated with the tournament series and I hereby release B.A.S.S., LLC, its parent, affiliated and subsidiary companies, the hosts, sponsors and tournament series officials from all claims of death, injury and/or property damage incurred by me in connection with my participation in this tournament series. If using a boat in this event, including official practice, I certify that I now have or will obtain prior to the tournament series, boat owners liability insurance (including coverage for third party property damage and bodily injury) with no "tournament exclusion," having a minimum limit of \$300,000 per occurrence. The insurance must be issued by a reputable insurer rated A or better by A.M. Best and Company. Policy must include international waters, or a separate policy for international waters must be obtained if I choose to fish international waters during applicable B.A.S.S. events. At B.A.S.S.'s request, I will provide satisfactory evidence of that insurance.

I hereby agree to waive my rights of privacy or publicity with regard to the programs of the tournament in which I appear and consent to B.A.S.S., LLC (and its parent, affiliated and subsidiary companies, its owners, directors, employees and agents and those acting under their permission or upon their authority), copyrighting, distributing, televising, publishing and using in any way the audio and visual portions of any television videotape,

film and photographs or pictures of me or of interviews, scenes or other sequences in which I may be included, and any reproduction thereof, anywhere at any time through any medium or media for advertising, promotion, trade, television programming or other lawful purpose whatsoever; and I shall not be entitled to receive any royalties or other compensation in connection with such use.

P2. CONTENT RIGHTS

B.A.S.S. holds the content rights to the tournaments it owns and operates. However B.A.S.S. grants certain exceptions, including the following content rights, to tournament participants:

- Anglers may use up to 10 minutes of video, shot by the angler during a tournament, for promotional or marketing purposes, and in social media.
- During tournaments B.A.S.S. may ask to mount a GoPro or similar camera in a competitor's boat (the footage may be used in B.A.S.S.'s web or TV coverage). A competitor is required to comply, even if he already has a personal camera mounted in his boat. Refusing to comply may result in a penalty.
- Still photos taken by an angler during a tournament may be posted to social media and the angler's website.
- B.A.S.S. also encourages anglers to send photos, videos and updates to fish@bassmaster.com for exposure on Bassmaster.com and our social media pages.
- In social media, you may use our hashtag #bassmaster to amplify and spread your post to our 1 million social fans.

B.A.S.S. reserves the right to revoke these exceptions, and the angler must remove the tournament-related content, if B.A.S.S. in its discretion believes the content is inappropriate or in any way violates other B.A.S.S. rules.

B.A.S.S. wants to help promote both your brand and the sport of professional bass fishing through its multimedia assets. If there are stories written about you or by you appearing on Bassmaster.com, B.A.S.S. grants permission to link to these stories, and any others on our website, from your website or social media pages. Please do credit Bassmaster.com.

P3. CONTINGENCY PROGRAMS

Contingency programs are sponsor-funded programs developed to reward competitors based on a predefined set of criteria. Participation in contingency programs is at the

anglers' discretion.

P4. ADDITIONAL AGREEMENTS

I further understand and agree that the Tournament Director reserves the right to reject my application for any reason and, upon such rejection, to refund the deposit or entry fee.

I am currently a member in good standing with B.A.S.S.

All anglers who elect to participate in B.A.S.S.-sanctioned tournaments will be required to execute a Participation Agreement containing the rules and regulations, code of conduct and tournament series specific content such as wrapped boat and uniform guidelines.

In addition to adhering to the Rules, Code of Conduct and and Uniform requirements presented in this booklet, In addition, to ensure effective and timely communication between B.A.S.S. and the anglers, I understand that I am required to provide B.A.S.S. with a current e-mail address. If I do not have my own e-mail address, I must furnish an e-mail address for a primary contact person. I agree that delivery of an e-mail to my designated contact will constitute delivery to me. I also understand I must provide my personal cell number capable of receiving text messages from B.A.S.S.

Signature _____

Print Name _____

Date _____

Effective January 1, 2017

The following rules shall apply to all B . A . S . S . High School Nation tournaments, with the following exceptions:

- (i) rules for special tournaments may differ from those contained herein and
- (ii) these rules may be changed by B.A.S.S. immediately upon notice by B.A.S.S. to its members, which notice may be published on the B.A.S.S. internet site at www.bassmaster.com. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his/her designee at a tournament. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director or a rules committee may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate by

them, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Subject to the appeal process set forth in paragraph 21 below, the decision of the Tournament Director, his/her designee, or the rules committee, shall be final in all matters.

Except for very serious rules violations, as determined by B.A.S.S., such as the no-information and off-limits rules and any rules that might lead to disqualification of an angler from participation in the B.A.S.S. Nation tournaments or other B.A.S.S. circuits, rules violations must be reported to tournament officials within 24 hours of the final flight check-in on the day of the alleged violation

Penalties for rules violations may include the following:

- a) reduction of competition hours as determined by the Tournament Director
- b) loss of one or more fish in question. All such fish must be marked verified by either your partner or boat captain. If not verified the entire catch may be disqualified.
- c) loss of catch for the day of the violation
- d) disqualification from the tournament in question
- e) disqualification from future B.A.S.S. events, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period of time, or may be a lifetime disqualification.
- f) any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director.

1. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

(i) Participation in this tournament series is by invitation only. You must be a student currently enrolled in high school, in good academic standard, and a member of your institution's fishing team. Certain schools allow 8th grade students to compete. If your institution allows 8th grade students to compete a letter must be submitted with a faculty member's signature stating this permission. 7th grade students are not allowed to compete in Bassmaster High School tournaments. Competitors will be considered an "incoming student" into the next grade once they have completed their final exams in their current grade. They will then be able to participate in events once the aforementioned criteria has been met and they are in the admissible grade bracket to compete. Graduating seniors will be extended a grace period and allowed to compete in the summer months once their senior year has been completed. They will not be allowed to fish in any events that are qualifying for the next calendar school year. **This is a team event. You must have a partner and coach to compete. If extenuating circumstances exist that prohibit you from having a partner in the tournament, then a request must be submitted to B.A.S.S.** in writing for approval. B.A.S.S. reserves the right to accept or deny such request. This tournament is open only to current members of official High School Clubs, recognized by said High School or an official Community Club.

Each participating team must have a Coach (Boat Captain). **Boat Captains must be of the age that would place them out of High School.** Each tournament contestants will receive coaching rules. All the rules in this document and the coaching rules document must be followed. Failure to following these rules may result in penalties as laid out in this document.

Employees, officers and directors of B.A.S.S. or its parent, subsidiary, and affiliated companies and members of their immediate families (spouse, parents, children and sibling, regardless of where they live) are ineligible. Proof of grade or graduation date, to

the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitor. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is disabled in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his/her partner or endanger the safety and well-being of his/her partner or themselves shall not be eligible.

(ii) DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY B.A.S.S. TOURNAMENT, NO COMPETITOR OR BOAT CAPTAIN MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT COMPETITOR OR BOAT CAPTAIN HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM OF \$300,000 PER OCCURRENCE BOAT OWNERS LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERING THE BOAT BEING USED IN THE TOURNAMENT. PROOF OF INSURANCE MUST BE WITH THE BOAT BEING USED AND MUST COVER ALL PASSENGERS IN THAT BOAT. RANDOM CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED AND ANY COMPETITOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF IN-FORCE INSURANCE WITH \$300,000 COVERAGE MAY BE DISQUALIFIED. EACH POLICY MUST SHOW AN EFFECTIVE START AND EXPIRATION DATE. Tournament officials have sole authority to determine if insurance policies meet B.A.S.S., LLC requirements.

(iii) A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE B.A.S.S. NATION DEPARTMENT ON OR BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and also the right to extend the acceptance date. As a participant in B.A.S.S. tournaments, you agree, if you qualify and are invited to be a competitor in the Bassmaster Classic High School Exhibition conducted by B.A.S.S., to use during the Bassmaster Classic High School Exhibition, any and all official products and equipment so specified and provided by B.A.S.S.

2. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT

Anglers/Coaches participating in any B.A.S.S. sanctioned event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Anglers, parents and family members of Anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of professional anglers that will not reflect unfavorably on B.A.S.S. , its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

To this end, anglers, parents, coaches, faculty members, friends and family members of anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler, parents and family members of anglers who violate any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual B.A.S.S. sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by B.A.S.S.

Anglers are frequently in the public eye and are considered role models; therefore, it is imperative that tournament competitors demonstrate good sportsmanship in fishing. Sportsmanship is defined as fair play, respect for opponents and polite behavior while competing in the sport.

(i.) Following are examples of unacceptable behavior by competitors in B.A.S.S. events that will be cause for penalties as outlined in this document.

- Heated public disagreements with B.A.S.S. officials, other competitors and fans and volunteers during an event.
- Public attacks through media, including social media, upon the integrity of B.A.S.S. rules or officials.
- Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of B.A.S.S., B.A.S.S. officials or its sponsors
- Displays of anger and displeasure for reasons related to fishing competition where members of the public, including other anglers, spectators and the media, are present.
- Publicly questioning or criticizing a tournament official or official decision, ruling or penalty except through the proper channels.
- Abuse (physical, verbal, threatening or slanderous) of tournament officials, volunteers, fellow competitors or others connected with a B.A.S.S. event.
- Offensive or slanderous comments with racial, cultural or sexual overtones regarding event officials, event personnel or fellow anglers.
- Intentionally interfering with a fellow angler's ability to compete. Any disqualification, suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by any tournament or fishing organization may result in disqualification from

MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS

The favorable public reputation of B.A.S.S. as a sanctioning organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets *and tangible benefits for B.A.S.S.* Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers or the B.A.S.S. organization. Competitors, parents and/or family members are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with B.A.S.S. policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that an angler, parents and/or family members knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of B.A.S.S. ,B.A.S.S. officials or

sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming a professional and will result in disciplinary action.

3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:

(i) There will be no off limits period for any tournament unless specified by the Tournament Director. Special off limits and practice periods for the National Championship and Bassmaster Classic will be announced by B.A.S.S.

(ii) Official practice days will begin at 12:01 am the Monday prior to the start of competition. No competitors will be allowed on Tournament waters after registration until the first day of competition, except under rule 3(iii). Unless otherwise specified, all official times are time zone specific to local host community. The competitor must know and observe these dates. During practice and competition, anglers cannot solicit, gather or intentionally receive any information from anyone other than another competitor in the tournament. **NO EXCEPTIONS. Competitors may only fish with other competitors during official practice and competition.** . Flying over tournament waters, other than a ticketed commercial airline, is prohibited during official practice and competition unless approved by the tournament director. **The use of drones for the purposes of locating or catching fish or to gain a competitive advantage is prohibited in both official practice and competition.** During the official practice competitors are not allowed to live well or keep any bass unless they have permission from tournament officials.

No practicing at night, defined as beginning at 30 minutes after local sunset and ending 30 minutes before local sunrise, to include running to and from a fishing location. In practice and competition, when running in low light conditions, running lights should be in operation.

(iii) Anglers renting boat slips may launch boats and proceed immediately to slip location. Testing of engines after the weigh-in is only allowed with permission from the Tournament Director. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** During the official practice and during the tournament, a competitor may not “SKIN DIVE” OR “SCUBA DIVE” in the tournament waters.

(iv) No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day. Once daily cuts are announced at the post weigh in rules meeting, competitors not making the cut are no longer considered in the tournament. Competitors making cut may not receive information under rule 3 (ii).

(v) During the official competition days of the tournament a competitor may not make cell

calls for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Cell phones may be used for emergency situations. Competitors are allowed to call lockmasters for locking purposes only. Competitors are allowed to use smart phones for global maps, weather, notes, Bassmaster.com updates, etc., however using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs or participate in social media is not permitted.

(vi) A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during the official practice or competition days. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.

(vii) **Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, suggestions to another competitor that they violate these rules or false verification of weigh-in forms may be cause for disqualification. Official protests must be filed in accordance with Rule 1. All parties of interest will be provided a copy.**

By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The B.A.S.S. Tournament Director, rules committee, or such person designated by the Tournament Director, shall have the discretion to determine the need for a truth verification test. The B.A.S.S. Tournament Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for selecting an independent expert to administer and interpret the results and establishing, in consultation with the expert administrator, the scope of the questions which may be asked during the test. The B.A.S.S. Tournament Director or his/her designee shall have sole responsibility selecting the location, date, and time of the test nearest B.A.S.S. headquarters with respect to all concerned parties schedule and travel cost. The competitor shall make himself/herself available at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such test. Anglers taking a truth verification test may be responsible for any and all costs incurred.

Random truth verifications tests may be administered on site during the course of a High School Series Event.

4. REGISTRATION: Each competitor must register in person with official B.A.S.S. staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Failure to register in person during the prescribed hours may result in a \$50 fine, or other penalties. Any competitor who has not contacted the B.A.S.S. Tournament Staff 15 minutes after the closing of the posted on-site registration period, may be disqualified from participating in the

tournament. It shall be each competitor's responsibility to either check the schedule of events for registration time and location or obtain times from the B.A.S.S. Tournament Department.

5. SAFETY:

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the **official practice and competition**, each competitor must wear a Coast Guard-approved **chest-type** life preserver anytime the combustion engine is running. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is out of gear or shut off. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may be reason for disqualification.

(ii) When boating in low visibility situations i.e. fog, heavy rain, during both practice and competition, competitors must operate their boats at a safe speed and in a safe manner as determined by tournament officials.

(iii) Radar units permanently mounted in the boat, subject to approval by B.A.S.S., may be approved for competition.

It is suggested the Boater have a safety check with their partner each day prior to launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.

It is recommended each contestant successfully complete a boating safety course. Boating safety certification, or a "grandfathered" exception, may be required in certain states. Boating safety courses are available online and should carry an endorsement by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators or NASBLA.

(iv) Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather. Weather delays on full field days, resulting in half of the

tournament day being lost (first flight take-off and check in), shall result in cancellation. Full fields may be carried over to cut days.

(v) B.A.S.S. reserves the right to impose boat speed limits during any or all tournaments. 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.

(vi) IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, COMPETITORS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND ONCE SAFE THEN NOTIFIES TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

(vii) COMPETITORS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BOAT AND SEEK SAFE SHELTER IN BAD WEATHER WHERE DANGER MAY BE IMMINENT.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in B.A.S.S. tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification.

(i) Use of alcohol or the 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 B.A.S.S. tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, other non-prescription stimulants or depressants shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, or when in the weigh-in area.

(ii) 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, may be reason for disqualification.

(iii) All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states in which they fish. Some regulations may differ from these rules resulting in fines, citations or other penalties at the discretion of law enforcement and may or may not result in tournament penalties. Competitors are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations.

(iv) Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. 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 B.A.S.S. tournament, and/or disqualification from a B.A.S.S. tournament, after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: Use of grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition.

During practice and competition no more than one artificial or biodegradable artificial lure may be attached to a line at one time. One lure is defined as a single manmade device designed to attract and/or catch one fish at a time. Adding trailer hooks, plastic trailers, blades, etc., to a single lure is acceptable. If multiple fish are caught on a single manmade lure, on a single cast, all fish are considered legal and may be added to the daily catch subject to scoring rules (C17). No "live bait," "dead bait," or "prepared bait" will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds.

Only ONE casting, spin casting or spinning rod (10-foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. A hung or snagged lure that is not in or on the water is not considered in use and may be set aside while another is in use. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use; however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. 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 with his hands to secure the visible line and land the fish for it to be counted as legal. He may NOT hook the line with another lure, rod and reel or other device.

No competitor may intentionally snag or foul-hook a bass to be counted in his daily catch. Anyone guilty of intentionally snatching or snagging visible fish will have his catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, to be counted as a legal fish, each bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by the assigned partner or other observer before being unhooked. With the fish's mouth closed naturally, you must not be able to see where the hook point enters the fish for it to be considered hooked inside the mouth.

Competitors, including those who have been "cut" from competition in an event, are allowed to share baits and tackle with one another at any time.

8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: Maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and in tournament competition will be **250 HP**. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard. When required,

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 plate nor the horsepower maximum set by B.A.S.S. Each competitor agrees to submit, by their 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 reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance of engines is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of a competitor's engine to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating, is forbidden and will result in disqualification. Falsifying information on entry forms, or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine, is also cause for immediate disqualification from B.A.S.S. tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by B.A.S.S. must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits shall result in loss of competition hours and not limited to disqualification.

9. BOAT AND MOTOR: These restrictions apply during official practice and competition. For the safety of all competitors, all boats must be equipped with an approved type of operable ignition kill switch and lanyard. Only one manufacturer's lanyard may be used and must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear. Any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats that are 16 feet or more in length may be used. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Standing on the outboard engine or seats while fishing is not allowed. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. However, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. **The "Long-Lining" or "Strolling" technique is NOT allowed in either practice or competition and defined as intentionally using a trolling motor or outboard to mechanically extend a cast.** No exceptions. All bladder tanks and any other type of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer are permitted. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat. No portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor. No "barges" or similar craft will be permitted. No boat equipped with "stick steering" shall be permitted. "Stick steering" shall be as defined by the Tournament Director. Jet drive engines are not allowed during both official practice and competition

10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: During **official practice and competition**, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment and a functional bilge pump. During official competition, every boat must have live-well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive, a limit catch of bass by both competitors using the boat. B.A.S.S. recommends live-wells be maintained at full level and aerators/re-circulators on manual. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate.

11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Prior to each day's start, each boat **must** be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Each day, each boat may be given a number, which **must** remain with the boat. This number must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials, and at each check-in.

12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the B.A.S.S. Tournament Department. Any water within these boundaries that are legally and obviously posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing," as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director, will be off-limits to tournament competitors and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to all public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Waters deemed off-limits by authorities or tournament officials should be treated like a wall. No boats or casting behind that boundary while fishing. All angling must be done from the boat. In states where landowners have the legal authority to claim private property, these areas must be posted or they will be considered tournament waters unless instructed otherwise by tournament officials at any time during the event. If forced to leave, a competitor must report the incident to tournament officials as soon as possible. Any water to which a competitor is barred access becomes off-limits to all competitors. Prior to the tournament registration, any questionable areas must be brought to the attention of tournament officials to be considered tournament waters and may be announced in the briefing for all to hear unless determined otherwise by tournament officials. Tournament officials reserve the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on conversations with local authorities. Competitors are not allowed to cut, remove, displace, or engage in any type structure removal from private property (dry land) during off limits, official practice or competition. Moving structure to include sawing of logs or other obstructions in the water is only allowed if laws permit. No competitor may place any object that may impede or cause danger to boaters.

13. COMPETITORS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT: During the competition days, competitors must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Competitors may not shift a majority of their weight outside the boat and onto a dock or other object outside the boat for the purpose of landing a bass or accessing a fishing spot. While keeping the majority of weight in the boat anglers are allowed for boat protection to push off or shove off objects while landing a fish to counted as legal. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times, except in case of dire emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director. Exceptions spelled out in rules 5, 13, and 16. In such an emergency, or with permission of the Tournament Director, competitors may be removed from their boat, either to a boat operated by other competitors, or a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch, under the conditions cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. In breakdown situations and with a tournament official's permission, Co-anglers may transfer their boat's (Pro's and Co-angler's) fish to another competitor's boat and ride to check in, and they may leave their Pro with the disabled boat. In such cases, the co-angler must stay with their catches at all times and

assisting boat's partners should verify the catch. In the event of a needed restroom break or refueling situation at a marina gas pump, contestants are allowed to leave the boat, at which time all fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat. If a competitor violates any of the above conditions (to contact a tournament official by phone or other means, or to report an emergency or breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament. If, after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials, and enough time is left for the competitors to resume fishing, a **restart** will be allowed, the competitors will continue, and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations as determined by the Tournament Director or his/her designee. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials.

Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until back in the boat before making another cast.

14. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS: There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning, and one official check-in point in the afternoon, which points shall be designated at the tournament briefing. Failure to go through boat check and check-out in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point in the afternoon may result in disqualification. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbers described in Rule 11 and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, through the weigh-in process if both are weighing bass. .

15. SCORING: Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound-and-ounce weight of each competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye or Shoal bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5, of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials (example – hot weather/fish care concerns). At no time shall a competitor have in his or her possession more than the tournament limit. If a competitor determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce his catch to the tournament limit with a live bass of their choice from their catch. Each returned bass will result in a 2 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. In this case, competitors must attempt to notify tournament officials and if unsuccessful must notify officials at check in. Once a competitor checks in they must present all legal bass to tournament officials at the verification table. If competitors at the verification table have more than the tournament limit, the competitor will reduce with live bass to the tournament limit and each returned bass will result in a 2 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. If a competitor has his fish verified, weighed and upon returning to the boat discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that were not presented to officials; he then must notify tournament officials within one hour of final flight check in to receive a 2 lb. penalty for each bass discovered. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the Tournament

Briefing. In most cases it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in a penalty of 1 pound for each such bass, which penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. After competitors check in at the official checkpoint they MUST present all LEGAL fish in their possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a competitor's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that competitor may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament. Culling tags or clips are allowed. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the Tournament Director and must be used for the weigh-in.

16. CATCH AND RELEASE: CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 4 oz. to be deducted from their daily score. The Tournament Director, or his/her designees, shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points. In addition, the Tournament Director, or his/her designees, may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water. The verification table will open one hour prior to check in time of the first flight. **SMALL DIP NETS FOR CULLING PURPOSES ARE ENCOURAGED.** It is recommended competitors keep all bass in live wells during the culling process. Placing bass on the boat carpet during culling is not an advised practice. **Culling tags designed to penetrate a fish's mouth are not allowed.**

17. LATE PENALTY: Competitors who are not at the official check-in point, as described in Rule 14, at the appointed time, shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late; to be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "big bass award". Any competitor more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. **There shall be no excuse for tardiness, and in no case, shall a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time."** After proper recognition at the check-in point, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. It is each competitor's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day on the daily pairings.

18. TIES: In case of a tie for first place weight at the end of the tournament, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials.

All other ties will be resolved in the following order: (1) team with heaviest single day catch during competition; (2) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the

individual with the second heaviest single day catch during competition; (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the team with the largest number of legal fish weighed during competition; (4) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the team with the largest number of legal live fish weighed during competition. If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie, and monetary prizes for each competitor will be awarded in an equal amount between the tied competitors. Angler of the Year points will be awarded for the place of the tied position and each competitor will be awarded equal points. In the instance where merchandise is involved, it will be awarded as determined by tournament officials. Ties for any cut will be resolved in the same order explained above and if the tie is not broken, will be awarded as determined by tournament officials.

19. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE: An appeals committee will be established by B.A.S.S., which shall be comprised of one B.A.S.S. employee not affiliated with the Tournament Department, and two anglers who are not competitors in the event in question. Appeals for penalties assessed under rule C1 (b), (c), (d), (e), & (f) must be presented in writing 48 hours from the time and date of ruling to the Tournament Director. Appeals hearings shall take place within seven (7) business days, if possible from the date of receipt of the written appeal and all parties must make themselves available at prescribed time of hearing. If competitors admit to a rules violation, they may not file an appeal of either the finding that they have violated the rules or the penalty imposed for the violation. Decisions of the appeals committee shall be final.

Competitors are allowed to compete under appeal for penalties assessed under Rule C1 (e) & (f) until final ruling by Appeals Committee.

Competitors are allowed to compete while under appeal. Field sizes after cuts would include any appealing angler making the cut for the next round of competition for that event. Final standings will not be official until all appeals hearings are final and ruled upon. However, all standings above that of any appealing angler, as well as any adjusted final standings may be declared official. Standings, including points and monetary awards, may be adjusted after appeals final ruling and all affected anglers shall comply with all details of the final ruling.

The three member ruling committee should remain confidential within the immediate appeals process.

20. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE: Anglers are encouraged to wear their own clothing which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the angler's sponsors. BASS may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are, in B.A.S.S.' sole judgment, in competition with the products or services of official BASS sponsors, or which are, in B.A.S.S.' sole judgment, in poor

taste. B.A.S.S. will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. By signing this document, each angler agrees to wear an official B.A.S.S. patch (2 ¼" X 2 ¾") on either left/right chest, with the top of the patch hitting the left/right collarbone during competition, including the weigh-in. This patch may be embroidered. In addition, if B.A.S.S. provides any ancillary clothing or products (such as life vests) bearing the logos of B.A.S.S. or the official sponsors of B.A.S.S., each competitor shall wear such clothing or utilize such products in a manner requested by B.A.S.S.

21. B.A.S.S. SPONSOR BOATS: When using B.A.S.S. sponsor boats, anglers are responsible for the physical care of the boat. Damage incurred, determined to be excessive or wanton by the Tournament Director, shall result in the angler being responsible for all costs of repair.

22. TAXES: Where and when state laws require income taxes be paid on cash awards to non-residents, the taxes will be automatically deducted prior to the awards being presented to the winners. Anglers/Observers are responsible for all applicable taxes on both cash and merchandise awards. Various States require withholding tax on merchandise be paid upon the awarding of certificates and anglers awarded merchandise certificates in these States are responsible for remitting their tax to B.A.S.S. Failure to meet those obligations may result in reduction of Angler of Year Points, fines, and/or disqualification from all future BASS events.

23. WAIVER AND RELEASE: As a condition of participation in each tournament, each competitor must execute a waiver and release of liability, and a name and likeness release.

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