



Southeast Region Texas BASS Nation Top 40 Championship Tournament Rules



1. *Rules* - All rules stated below will remain unchanged. All decisions made by the tournament director will be final. The tournament director can make a change when the safety of contestants is in question.
2. *Sportsmanship* - All contestants are expected to practice courtesy, safety, and follow local and state game laws. Anyone displaying poor sportsmanship will be disqualified.
3. *Format/Rules* – The Top 40 Championship will be a two day tournament, at a lake selected by the Region Director, (**Friday & Saturday**). There will be three days practice prior to tournament (Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday). Off limits will be Sept 8th through Oct. 8th . All Regular Season SETX B.A.S.S. Nation tournament rules remain in effect, with the addition of the Off-Limits Provision provided below:

Off-Limits Rule: The official tournament lake will be off limits from September 8th at midnight through October 8th at "safe light". Off limits includes the following "No Information" provision:

1. During the “no information” period, practice, and competition days, all contestants (including those on the waiting list) may not solicit and/or receive fishing information (techniques, GPS coordinates/locations) about tournament waters from anyone except confirmed participants and through publicly available published sources (media, internet websites, newspapers).
2. Contestants may not speak or communicate with, or fish with, anyone considered an expert on the tournament waters, about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, during the no information period, official practice, or competition.
3. Receiving information from and/or having a non-contestant provide you with information (i.e. pre-fishing for you) during the off-limit period is a violation.
4. Contestants found guilty by the Tournament Director of receiving information from sources deemed non-public, including but not limited to the use of internet, email, electronic communication, verbal, and written communications, to gain an unfair advantage shall be disqualified from the event in question. (Example: Having knowledge that someone is going to post information on an internet destination that will only reside at that destination for a short period of time before being removed. Also, any internet destination that (1) is not available to



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the general public or (2) not available to the general public and requires a membership, password or permission will be presumed to contain non-public information.).

Total pounds for the two days will determine the Regional Champion.

During official tournament hours, no contestant may operate a boat without proof of boat liability insurance of \$300,000 or more. Proof of insurance is required to be on the boat and ready for check if requested. If the insurance binder is not available when/if requested the boater will not be eligible

4. *Eligibility* - Contestants for this tournament will be made up of the top 40 points leaders of the Regional Circuit or down the line until 40 contestants are found. The 40 contestants will be required to have fished 4 of the 6 Regional Tournaments.

5. *Participation* - This will be a draw tournament. The top 20 finishers in the Regional Circuit shall be known as boaters. The next 20 finishers shall be known as non-boaters. Non-boaters will be given the right to his water for half of each day. Which half will be decided by the pair (this includes running of the troll motor). If an agreement cannot be made, a coin flip will be used to settle disputes. Each contestant will fish with a different partner each day and will not be paired with a member of his own club. Non-boaters will be required to pay a minimum of \$30/day to the boater for gas/oil and operating expenses. Certain cases may require pairs to work out other arrangements. Failure to comply may lead to disqualification at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

6. *Alcoholic Beverages & Drugs* - No alcoholic beverages or drugs (unless prescribed) are allowed in the boat or consumed during the tournament hours.

7. *Baits and Tackle* - Only artificial lures may be used with the exception of pork rinds and liquid attractants. NO live or prepared bait. No trolling with the main engine or intentional snagging of fish is permitted. Only one rod at a time may be used. A cast must be fully retrieved before another rod is picked up. Nets WILL be allowed.

8. *Permissible Waters* - All fish must be caught from a boat. No tubes or wade fishing. No fishing inside host marina. No fishing allowed within 50 feet of a non-anchored boat, or 100 feet from an anchored boat, without that boats permission. Contestants must be able to drive into fishing area without leaving the boat. Contestants cannot leave the boat to land fish.



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9. *Practice Catch and Release* - Contestants will be furnished with weigh-in bags at the weigh-in site. Fish will not be weighed in if they are brought to the scales in bags not furnished at the tournament. Every effort must be made to keep fish in good shape and ready for release.
10. *Protests* - All protests must be submitted in writing within 15 minutes of the weigh-in to the tournament director. The decision of the tournament director will be final.
11. *Boats and Motors* - All boats and motors must meet all U.S. Coast Guard and State regulations. No motor shall exceed the maximum BIA horsepower rating for the boat on which it is used. All boats must have a working kill switch and adequate aerated livewell. All boats will be inspected by a tournament official prior to the start of the tournament.
12. *Safety* - U.S. Coast Guard approved chest type life preservers must be worn and fully fastened by all boat occupants at all times while the combustion engine is in operation and the kill switch must be attached to the boat operator.
13. *Polygraph* - All contestants are subject to a polygraph examination at the request of the tournament director. Failure to submit to or pass a polygraph examination will result in immediate disqualification and forfeiture of any entry fees and claim to any prizes.
14. *Scoring* - A maximum of 5 fish per contestant per day will be weighed. All fish must measure 14 inches in length on official tournament measuring board unless the lake minimum is greater. A dead fish penalty of .50 pounds per fish will be deducted from the total weight of that contestant. Any contestant bringing a fish to weigh-in that is short of legal length will lose his entire weight for that day as this constitutes a violation of state law. Culling of fish is each contestant's responsibility and no more than 5 fish may be kept in the live well. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth and Kentucky Spotted Bass will be weighed in.
15. *Late Penalty* - Each contestant is required to leave from and return to the designated checkpoint. Any contestant returning to the checkpoint late will be penalized at a rate of 1 pound per minute up to 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, no weight will be allowed. All contestants must check in at the weigh-in site before leaving early.



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16. *Ties* - In case of a tie, the following tie breakers will be used.

(1.) The individual with the most fish weighed in.

(2.) The individual with the largest single fish.

(3.) If a tie still remains, a flip of the coin will determine the winner.

Big bass will be penalized .50 pounds if weighed in dead due to this being a separate prize.

17. *Guides* - No guides will be allowed on practice days or 30 days prior to practice days.

18. *Prizes* - Payback will be awarded to the first five places. \$5 from each Regional Circuit entry will go towards this fund. There will be an optional Big Bass pot to be established at the tournament site.

19. The tournament will be manned by the Regional Director and his appointed staff. In case of emergencies or no-shows, a member of the weigh-in team will be used as an observer.