



Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Southeast Region 2015 Top 40 Championship Rules

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, entry fee 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.

C1. 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 and verified by either your partner/observer/camera operator. 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 including but not limited to monetary fines and/or reduction of Angler of Year points.

1. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

(i) Participation in this tournament is by invitation only. This tournament is open only to current members of B.A.S.S. who are 16 years of age or older, who are active members of the appropriate B.A.S.S. Nation state chapter and who have participated in the appropriate state B.A.S.S. Nation qualifying tournament(s). 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. The top 20 finishers in the Regional Circuit shall be known as boaters. The next 20 finishers shall be known as non-boaters. Proof of age 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.

It is recommended each contestant have an endorsement of having passed a boating safety course or grandfathered by law. Failure to do so may prevent boating on tournament waters. Boating safety courses are available online.

(ii) DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY B.A.S.S. TOURNAMENT, NO BOATER OR NON-BOATER COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT CONTESTANT 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.



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2. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT:

Anglers 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 shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates integrity, honor and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament staff and general public and does not reflect unfavorably on B.A.S.S., its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors. To this end, anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler who violates any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to reduction of points, 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.

3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:

(i) There will be a 30 day off limits period for the Southeast Region Top 40 Championship will be announced by Southeast Region Director.

(ii) There will be an official three day practice period immediately prior to the first day of competition. The official practice days will begin at “safe light” the Tuesday prior to the start of competition.

(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 a competitor can only have the assistance or advice of another competitor for the purposes of locating or catching bass on tournament waters. Competitors may only fish with other competitors during 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

(iii) Competitors 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 snorkel, “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.

(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, power generation, tidal charts, notes, etc., however using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs 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.



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(vii) Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, or 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 WRITING AND ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST WILL BE PROVIDED A COPY.**

By his/her official tournament entry confirmation, each competitor agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion. The Tournament Director, or such person designated by the Tournament Director, shall have the discretion to determine the need for a truth verification test. The 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 Tournament Director or his/her designee shall have sole responsibility selecting the location, date, and time of the test nearest 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 B.A.S.S. Nation Event.

4. REGISTRATION (PAIRINGS BANQUET):

Each competitor must attend the **MANDATORY PAIRINGS BANQUET** at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Failure to attend may result in disqualification from the event. Any competitor, who has not contacted the Tournament Staff 15 minutes prior to the Mandatory Pairings Banquet to report being late, may be disqualified from participating in the tournament. It shall be each competitor's responsibility to either check the schedule of events for time and location or obtain times from the Tournament Staff.

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 in operation. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may be reason for disqualification. Inflatable PFD's are allowed as long as U.S. Coast Guard regulations are met. The Coast Guard requires that inflatable PFD's must be worn at all times unless there is an equal number of non-inflatable Coast Guard approved PFD's on board. It is suggested the Boater competitor have a safety check with the Non-Boater each day prior to launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.

(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.

(iv) Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel any part 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.



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(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 THEN NOTIFY 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 or prohibited drugs 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. 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 Board of Directors. 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 Board of Directors.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:

Use of grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition. The use of a dip net, not exceeding 72 inches in length, is permitted. No "live bait," "dead bait," or "prepared bait" will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. Any umbrella-type rigging, harness, or other device designed to hold more than one lure at a time – with or without hooks – is allowed at State level. Only ONE casting, spin casting or spinning rod (8-foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. 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. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, to be counted as a



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legal fish, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked. With the mouth closed naturally, you must not be able to see where the hook point enters the fish to be considered hooked inside the mouth. Competitors are allowed to share baits and tackle at all times with one another.

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 manufactured lanyard may be used and it 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 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 strolling or long line technique is only allowed with the trolling motor. 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, 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 to be used by any competitor. "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. Boaters must make a back seat available for non-boaters each competition day.



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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. This number must be displayed or announced upon the request of tournament officials, and at each check-in.

12. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE:

During competition, in pro-am type events, boaters will fish from the front deck, non-boaters from the rear deck, **NO EXCEPTIONS**. During competition, non-boaters are only allowed to drive (outboard engine) the boater's boat in emergency situations with the exception of loading and unloading from trailers. During official practice, non-boaters may use their own boat. Any boater that, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap their non-boater, shall be disqualified. At no time may a boater competitor request that the non-boater competitor not fish. The cost of gas and oil for the competition days must be settled between anglers. In B.A.S.S. events where observers replace anglers as the official rider, observers cannot assist the competing angler in any way. Observers are not required to help with gas and oil expenses.

13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the Tournament Staff at the Mandatory Pairings Meeting. Any water within these boundaries posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing" by state or federal agencies as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director will be OFF-LIMITS 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. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations. Prior to the tournament meeting, 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.

14. 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. 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, 14, and 17. 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 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



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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.

15. 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. Once bass are bagged for weigh-in, anglers that are not weighing bass do not need to accompany their partner through the weigh-in line but must sign weigh slip.

16. SCORING:

Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by the total 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 Boaters limit shall be 5, Non-Boater limit shall be 3, of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials (example – hot weather/fish care concerns/championship events). 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 the loss of that days weight. 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.

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



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17. CATCH AND RELEASE:

CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 0.5 pound. to be deducted from their daily score. Competitors are allowed to ice a dead fish that is part of their daily catch. 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; however they are not allowed to receive ice from non contestants. It is recommended competitors keep all bass in live wells during the culling process. Placing bass on the boat carpet during culling is not advised. Non penetrable culling clips are recommended. Proper fizzing technique is suggested when needed. For instructions on acceptable fizzing practices please contact tournament officials.

18. LATE PENALTY:

Competitors who are not at the official check-in point, as described in Rule 15, 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.

19. TIES:

In case of a tie for first place for overall champion at the end of the tournament, that is not resolved by the three (3) tie breakers listed below, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials.

In case of a tie for first place weight in the Boater division at the end of the Top 40 Championship, 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) individual with heaviest single day catch during competition; (2)) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest number of legal fish weighed during competition; (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest 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 (other than champion).

In the Non-Boater division, should a situation arise after using all the tie breakers a tie for first place occur, a “flip-of-the-coin” will be arranged between the tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials.

20. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS:

Two competitors will be assigned to each boat. Announcement of your first-day fishing partner will be made at the Tournament Pairings Banquet, which must be attended, except with permission from the Tournament Director, by each competitor. It will be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed upon location, with sufficient time remaining to check out at the official checkpoint and start on time. Tournament officials shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. The Tournament Director, at his/her sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning take-off. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation prior



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to depart to the check-out point. When two competitors check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other and each other's catch, throughout the day, until the weigh-in is completed, except in case of dire emergency or exceptions (see Rule 14,15 &17). A competitor must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by BASS.

21. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE:

An appeals committee will be established by Region Director., which shall be comprised of the Tournament Director, and two other tournament staff 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 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. Appeals of non competition rulings must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director within 48 hours from the time and date of ruling for review.

22. 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. B.A.S.S. 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.'s sole judgment, in poor taste. B.A.S.S. will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. Each angler is encouraged to wear the B.A.S.S./B.A.S.S. NATION emblem.

23. PRIZES:

Payback will be awarded to the top three places in the Boater Division and the Non-Boater Division. The Champion in each division will secure an invitation to the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Team to compete at the B.A.S.S. Nation Regional Championship. In event this angler declines the invitation the next finishing angler will be invited. . There will be an optional Big Bass pot to be established at the tournament site.

It is the responsibility of each angler to read and familiarize themselves with these rules and regulations. Failure to be knowledgeable of the rules and regulations is unacceptable as a defense in a case of a violation. Upon confirmation by angler to compete in the event, said angler acknowledges that he or she agrees to abide by these rules and regulations.