



2019 State Championship Rules

April 26-27, 2019

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1) Rules and Penalties

- a) The following rules shall apply to all Texas B.A.S.S. 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation immediately upon notice to its members, which notice may be published on the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation internet site at <http://www.texasbass.org>.
- b) 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 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. The decision of the Tournament Director, or his/her designee, shall be final in all matters.
- c) Except for very serious rules violations, as determined by Texas B.A.S.S. Nation, such as the no-information and off-limits rules and any rules that might lead to disqualification of a competitor from participation in Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournaments, rules violations must be reported to the Tournament Director within 1 hour of the final flight check-in on the day of the alleged violation.
- d) Penalties for rules violations may include the following:
 - i) Reduction of competition hours as determined by the Tournament Director
 - ii) Loss of one or more fish caught in potential violation of rules or regulations. All bass under question must be marked and verified by your partner. If not verified the entire catch may be disqualified.
 - iii) Loss of catch for the day of the violation
 - iv) Disqualification from the tournament in question
 - v) Disqualification from future Texas B.A.S.S. Nation events, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period of time, or may be a lifetime disqualification.
 - vi) Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director including but not limited to monetary fines and/or reduction of points from competitor point standing.

2) Participants and Eligibility

- a) The Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Championship is an invitation only tournament where individuals from affiliated clubs compete for prize money. Eligible individuals must be in good standing in accordance with the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Bylaws.
 - i) Clubs are allowed to send up to 100% of the paid membership for 2019. (Affiliated Texas B.A.S.S. Nation clubs consisting of at least 6 members will be able to send 6 members: 3 boaters and 3 co-anglers)
 - ii) Boaters/Co-Anglers must be equal – anyone not attending, then the last entry on either side (boater or co-angler from same club will be dropped)
 - iii) Club President will be responsible to assemble the forms, and entry fees to be sent to Texas B.A.S.S. Nation President
 - iv) All Clubs, and individual members, must be in good standing with BASSMASTER, and Texas BASS Nation for the qualifying year and current year for qualification. (Note: The BASS Nation roster is reset on September 1st but all Nation memberships are good till December 1st).
 - v) Region Directors will be able to send up to 3 boaters and 3 co-anglers.
- b) For the 2019 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Championship, these following paragraphs (c), (c)(i), (c)(ii) DO NOT APPLY. Paragraph (c)(iii) DOES APPLY.



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- c) Regions are allowed to send up to 50% of the total average amount of anglers that competed in the qualifying year's tournament trail, rounded down when unequal numbers exist (example: Region event average is 50 – Region is allowed to send 12 boaters and 12 co-anglers) An angler must compete in a minimum of 3 events in Regions that have 4 qualifying events and 4 events in Regions having 6 qualifying events per existing qualifying guidelines. Directors have discretion – if angler is already qualified through the club route, the Director may go down the list to complete the total maximum allowed participants.
- (i) Boaters/Co-Anglers must be equally matched. If anyone does not attend, the last entry on either side (boater or co-angler from same region will be dropped)
 - (ii) Region Director will be responsible to assemble the forms, and entry fees to be sent to Texas B.A.S.S. Nation President
 - (iii) **In order to compete in the 2019 Texas B.A.S.S Nation State Championship**, all Regions, and any individual members, must be in good standing with BASSMASTER, BASS Nation and Texas BASS Nation **no later than February 15, 2019**.
- d) The State Championship is an individual boater/non-boater "B.A.S.S. Open" style tournament where five (5) boaters and five (5) non--boaters will earn berths to the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Team, which will compete at the B.A.S.S. Nation Central Regional. The five (5) boater berths will be awarded based on total overall individual boater tournament standings, with no more than two (2) of the five (5) boater berths being awarded to boater competitors from the same Texas B.A.S.S. Nation region. The five (5) non-boater births will be awarded based on total overall individual non--boater tournament standings, with no more than two (2) of the five (5) non--boater berths being awarded to non--boater competitors from the same Texas B.A.S.S. Nation region. Determination of a competitor's region is based on the region (*North Central, Northeast, South, Southeast or Northwest*) in which the competing team's club is located. A State Team Alternate spot will be offered to the runner-up angler beginning with the boater division.
- e) This tournament is open only to members of Texas B.A.S.S. Nation who are 16 years of age or older. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitor. This tournament is not open to non-chapter (*at--large*) members.
- f) 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 will not be eligible to compete.
- g) Full-Time paid guides may not register or compete in a Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Championship tournament if they have guided on the tournament lake within the 30 days prior to the first day of the State Championship. (Fishing Guide Definition – A person whose main source of income is the accompanying, assisting or transporting of a person or persons engaged in fishing for bass on Texas state lakes/waters.
- h) Full-Time Bassmaster Elite Series, FLW Tour, or MLF pros are ineligible to compete in the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Events.
- i) During official practice and competition days of any Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournament, no boater or non-boater competitor may operate a boat unless that competitor has a documented boat owner's liability insurance of a minimum of \$300,000 (*per occurrence*) covering the boat being used. Documented boat owner's liability insurance must be with the boat being used and must



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cover all passengers in that boat. Random checks will be conducted and any competitor who does not have an in-force boat owner's liability insurance with \$300,000 coverage (*per occurrence*) may be disqualified. Each policy must show an effective start and expiration date. The Tournament Director or his/her designee has sole authority to determine if insurance policies meet B.A.S.S., LLC requirements. **This policy must be in paper form. Cell phone pictures are NOT acceptable.**

- j) A properly completed and signed official entry form must be received by the Tournament Director or his/her designee on or before **April 12, 2019**. Tournament entry fees must be received by the Tournament Director or his/her designee on or before the entry deadline date. As a participant in Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournaments, you agree, if you qualify and are invited to be a competitor on the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation State Team at the B.A.S.S. Nation Central Regional, to use sponsor products and/or equipment so specified and provided by Texas B.A.S.S. Nation.

3) Practice and Competition

- a) There will not be an off-limits period prior to the official practice.
- b) There will be an official practice period immediately prior to the first day of competition. Two official practice days will begin at safelight the Wednesday prior to the start of competition. **No competitors will be allowed on tournament waters after 4:30 p.m. on each of the Official Practice Days except under rule 3.** (c). No competitor may use the services of a guide within 30 days of the first practice day. 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 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. **DURING OFFICIAL PRACTICE ANGLERS WILL ADHERE TO OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS.**
- c) 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.
- d) No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day.
- e) During the official competition days, of the tournament, a competitor may not make cell phone calls for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Cell phones may be used for emergency situations. Competitors are allowed to use smart phones for global maps, weather, notes, etc., however using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs or social media is not permitted.



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- f) 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.
- g) 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 accordance with rule 1 above. 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. 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, 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation event.
- h) All competitors must have a valid **Texas fishing license**...This license will be checked during Registration.

4) Registration

- a) Each competitor must register in person with official Texas B.A.S.S. Nation staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Failure to register in person during the prescribed hours will result in a \$50 fine for each competitor that is late. Any competitor, who has not contacted the Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Staff 15 minutes after the closing of the posted onsite registration period, will 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Director.

5) Safety

- a) 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. It is recommended each contestant successfully complete a boating safety course. Boating safety courses are available online and should carry an endorsement by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators or NASBLA.



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- b) 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.
 - c) Radar units permanently mounted in the boat, subject to approval by the Tournament Director, may be approved for competition.
 - d) 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.
 - e) The Tournament Director reserves the right to impose boat speed limits during official practice and competition days. 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.
 - f) In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should call 911 first and then notify the tournament director as soon as possible.
 - g) Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather where danger may be imminent.
- 6) **Sportsmanship**
- a) Competitors in Texas B.A.S.S. Nation 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.
 - b) 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation 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.
 - c) 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.
 - d) 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.
- 7) **Tackle and Equipment**
- a) 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



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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 (17). Alabama (*umbrella*) rigs are allowed on State Level event but are prohibited in advance events. 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 their daily catch. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, to be counted as a 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 with one another at any time.

8) Horsepower Regulations

- a) 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation. 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by Texas B.A.S.S. Nation 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

- a) 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 lining" technique is not allowed in both practice and competition (*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



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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.

- b) It is the responsibility of each team or competitor to have a standby boat if required. The Tournament Director or staff will not be responsible for acquiring a replacement boat for any competitor.

10) Basic Boat Equipment

- a) During official practice and competition, every boat must have all required U.S. 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. It is recommended that 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. Boater competitors must make a back seat available for non-Boaters each competition day.

11) Boat Identification

- a) 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) Boat Operation and Expense

- a) During competition, in boater/non-boater type events, boaters will fish from the front deck, non-boaters from the rear deck (*no exceptions*). During both official practice and competition, non-boaters are allowed to drive (*outboard engine*) the boater's boat in only emergency situations with the exception of loading and unloading from trailers. During official practice, non-boaters not practicing with a boater competitor, may practice, drive, and fish from the front deck of the boat. Any boater that, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap their non-boater partner shall be disqualified. At no time may a boater competitor request that the non-boater competitor not fish. The cost of gas, oil or other expenses must be settled between the boater and non-boater prior to the beginning of the tournament day.

13) Permitted Fishing Locations

- a) Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director. Each competitor must obtain this information from the Tournament Director during the Tournament Briefing. 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. 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. Prior to the tournament registration, any questionable areas must be brought to the attention of tournament director to be considered tournament waters and may be announced in the briefing for all to hear unless determined otherwise by the tournament director. The Tournament director reserve the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on conversations with local authorities.



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14) Competitors Must Remain in Boat

- a) 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. A bass that cannot be landed without the angler leaving the boat or shifting his weight outside the boat must be released immediately. While keeping the majority of weight in the boat anglers are allowed for boat protection to push or shove off objects while landing a fish to be counted as legal. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until the competitor is back in the boat. Only then may another cast be made. 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 emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director. Exceptions spelled out in rules 5, 15, and 18. 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, contestant 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 the Tournament Director or his/her designee 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 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 the Tournament Director.

15) Official Checkpoints

- a) 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 12 and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, through the weigh-in process.

16) Scoring and Payout

- a) 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 tournament limit shall be 5 fish for the boater and 3 fish for the non-boater, of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by the Tournament Director (*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 their 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



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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 forfeiture of the weight of that days catch. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of the tournament director or his/her designee. After competitors check in at the official check-point 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 placed on a stringer 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. The scores for the individual competition will be taken from each competitor's own scores.

- b) Payouts for the State Championship shall be determined by the combined weight as defined in rule. Payouts will be made based on individual competitor's scores. This tournament will payout 80% of the total entry fees collected and will be paid at minimum of one (1) place per every **seven (7)** entries and the two (2) competitors with biggest bass on the first and second day.

17) Catch and Release

- a) Culling of dead bass is prohibited. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 0.50 pound to be deducted from their daily score. If a dead fish is weighed in for "big bass award", the 0.50 pound will be deducted from the weight of this fish. 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. 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 advised. **Non-penetrating culling clips are required.** Proper fizzing technique is suggested when needed.

18) Late Penalty

- a) Competitors who are not at the official check point, as described in Rule 16, 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



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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

- a) In the case of a tie for State Champion, boater and non-boater, the following four (4) tie breakers listed below, will be used to break the tie between competitors.
 - i) The individual with heaviest single day catch during competition;
 - ii) If the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the second heaviest single day catch during competition.
 - iii) If the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest number of legal fish weighed during competition.
 - iv) If the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest number of legal live fish weighed during competition.
- b) If a tie is not resolved by the four (4) tie breakers, then a sudden death fish off between the tied competitors will be held under the direction and special rules established by the Tournament Director.

20) Pairing of Competitors

- a) Each non-boater competitor will be paired with a boater competitor through a random draw. Boaters may not fish alone. In the event of an uneven field between boaters and non-boaters on any team, the Tournament Director, through a random draw of alternates from all teams, will assign an alternate to fill the spot. In the event that the uneven field is a boater spot, the random draw of alternates, will only include those alternates that have indicated they are prepared to enter the tournament as a boater. The weight of any alternate assigned to fill a spot, will not count towards the team's total weight, but will apply to that competitor's own individual weight. In the case where alternates are not available, boaters may be paired with boaters and share time. Announcement of your first day fishing partner will be made at the Tournament Briefing, 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. The Tournament Director or staff 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 to depart to the checkout 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 Texas B.A.S.S. Nation.