

## ~ 2020 NBAA NATIONAL EVENT Tournament Rules ~ (All Local Divisions, Overtime & Weekend)



**1. RULES CHANGES:** These rules & safety regulations have been "time tested" in over years of history and represent great effort, study and research in their formulation. These rules shall remain in effect and unchanged throughout the current tournament year unless superseded by law. In the event of a rule violation, Tournament officials may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in future events. The decisions of NBAA Officials shall be final in all matters.

**2. PARTICIPATION/ELIGIBILITY:** Only current members of the NBAA are eligible to fish in any NBAA division qualified event. Anglers wishing to participate in NBAA events may join at any time prior to the start of an event. At least one team member is suggested to be 18 years of age or older (19 in Alabama and Nebraska) to participate, however, if one or both anglers or anyone under the listed ages above participate they must present written permission and official release of liability from a parent or legal guardian. **EVERY INDIVIDUAL MUST COMPLETE AND SIGN A MEMBERSHIP FORM AND A NBAA LIABILITY RELEASE BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO COMPLETE, NO EXCEPTIONS.** All NBAA members receive FULL NBAA member benefits. Check out the member benefits on [nbba-bass.com](http://nbba-bass.com) NBAA does not discriminate based on race, creed, color or gender. We specifically reserve the right to refuse participation or entry to anyone for any reason. This includes any discipline or punishment from another tournament organization. All members must carry liability insurance of reasonable amounts on any boat they might use during an NBAA Tournament Event. Failure to do so or reporting of false information will result in disqualification. Anglers must provide proof of insurance upon request.

**3. OFF-LIMITS:** Tournament waters and off limits are announced prior to each event. It is the competitor's responsibility to know them. However, a NO INFO Rule goes into effect on Sunday, prior to the first tournament day of the National Championship event. Beginning on that Sunday you may only fish with your registered partner, you may NOT fish with a guide and you may only talk "Fishing" with other NBAA contestants in this event.

**4. SAFETY:** Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors. Participants must abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas at all times. All participants are required and agree to wear a Coast Guard-approved type III or greater chest type personal floatation device anytime the combustion engine is running. Tournament officials have the right to delay 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. In the event of a thunderstorm, lightning, severe weather or any unsafe condition, participants should remove themselves from the competition and seek safety or shelter until it is safe to continue fishing. Participants may not leave their boats during tournament hours except in case of emergency. The horsepower of the engine must not exceed the US Coast Guard rating plate for that boat. All NBAA qualifying tournaments will have published days of competition, unless delayed or shortened due to weather or unforeseen circumstances. Tournament boundaries or restricted fishing zones will be announced at the rules meeting and may be further restricted if needed.

**5. SPORTSMANSHIP:** Participants will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner at all times maintaining professional

demeanor in public and in communication with tournament officials. Any unfavorable conduct, criminal behavior, speech or action by a participant in our efforts to promote sportsmanship, clean waters and conservation could be grounds for disqualification or rejection of entry application. Every competitor is expected to participate in the marshaling of the field in order to maintain the highest integrity to the competition. Use of alcohol of any kind or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the tournament or use of alcohol until after you have weighed in will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification. Any incidents observed during tournament hours should be reported to tournament officials for further investigation. Any violation of these basic sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification.

**6. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:** NBAA participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses and commit to following regulations. All state rules regarding fishing will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified at the rules meeting. Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of bio-soft baits and pork strips, etc. Only ONE (1) fishing rod (8-foot maximum length from butt of the handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types prohibited. Other rigs as specified may be in the boat ready to use, however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional and sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. When fishing for bass you can see, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth to be counted as a legal fish. No gaffs OR "GRIPPERS" may be used to land bass, Nets are allowed. After checking in and near the weigh in location, a courtesy board will be

provided which will be the same as the official board used for the event.

**7. BOATS, MOTORS, SAFETY EQUIPMENT:** All tournament boats are required to have in their possession all Coast Guard-required safety equipment, including but not limited to approved chest type personal flotation devices, a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher, distress horn/flag/whistle, a bailing device and display tournament decal/credentials (if so supplied by NBAA). Great Lakes and Canadian border water tournaments require flares. In addition, a functioning bilge pump or bailing device is required. All tournament boats must be cleaned of all harmful exotic aquatic species prior to entering the water and upon departure from infected waters. All tournament boats must also be equipped with an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver. The horsepower of the engine must not exceed the US Coast Guard rating plate for that boat. Anytime the combustion engine is operating and in gear, there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Tournament boats will be inspected for functioning and empty live-wells and operating emergency ignition stop switch. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. Trolling as a method of fishing is strictly prohibited. Trolling is defined as operating any combustion engine to extend a cast or lengthen a retrieve or using any mechanical propulsion device to move the boat as the sole means of imparting action to the lure. Any 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 an authorized dealer are legal. 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. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open and available to all contenders and the public.

**8. BOAT IDENTIFICATION:** All angling activities must be done from a previously inspected boat. Each boat MUST be given, prior to each day's start, a livewell and SAFETY INSPECTION check by a tournament official, also a boat board or marker MAY be given which MUST remain in or on the boat and be turned in during check-in at the end of each day. Tournament officials reserve sole discretion to assign boat numbers in any manner.

**9. PERMITTED FISHING WATERS:** Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Officials. Each competitor must obtain this information from the NBAA official. Fishing on Tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: No fishing will be allowed within 50-yard circle of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or tied, with its trolling motor stowed out of the water. NO boat maybe allowed with-in 50 yard circle to the exclusion of another boat if you let one boat fish within your 50-yard circle you must let everyone. An anchored boat is a boat held in a fixed position by a line attached to a weight or by a Power-Pole with the trolling motor in the up position. Absolutely no hole-setting or holding of a fishing spot, this will not be tolerated. Any water within these tournament boundaries posted "off-limits or no fishing" by state or federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS. Also, any live fish release off-limits area established by the Tournament Director will be Off-limits and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. Competitors may not exit their boat in order to gain access to fishable waters. The use of cables, ropes, chains or any type of block-and-tackle to access fishing waters, other than when first launching prior to take-off, is forbidden. No contestant may "Buy" or "Barter" a fishing location. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Any water closed to public fishing will be closed to these tournament contestants. All angling must be done from the boat.

**10. SUBSTITUTIONS:** A sub is allowed to participate in the national events provided that they had previously fished at least 50% of the regular events. Teams with a member who unexpectedly cannot attend a national event

may utilize a sub from the division qualified from. Exceptions to this rule maybe made by the executive director in cases of death, disability, employment status, or military duties.

**11. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS:** Teams must depart and return from a specified point by boat unless otherwise noted. Teams arriving late will be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late up to 15 min at which point their days catch is disqualified. In case of an emergency/breakdown a team may bring their fish back in a competitor's boat but there must be at least one member from each team present when checking in with their clearly marked fish. All fishing must cease upon checking in, disqualification will result for fishing after checking in.

**12. NO-WAKE:** Boats will not pass another's competitor's boat in any no-wake zones at any time during tournament hours except for boats that may be changing course within the zone, boats which have stopped or are engaged in fishing activities

**13. SCORING:** Scoring shall be determined by the pound weight of each team's catch during the tournament. Each team's total weight will determine the final standings. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth and Spotted Bass, Red Eye or Shoal Bass will be weighed where permissible by state law. Length and bag limits of eligible fish will be set for each tournament and will be announced at each event. All fish weighed must be kept in aerated livewells to keep fish alive and as fresh as possible for release. Any fish mauled, mashed, frozen, stringered, injected with fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight or showing white gills, soft flesh or other signs of decomposition (as per an NBAA official) could result in disqualification. At no time shall a competitor have in possession more than the stated tournament possession limit. Tournament Officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a competitor has in their possession more than the stated limit, shall cull, starting with the largest fish first, down to the stated limit. Fish will be measured by a tournament official with fish's mouth closed and longest

straight line. Only fish which measure the official length(s) on the longest straight line shall be weighed-in. Any fish presented for weigh-in which fails to measure the official length limits shall accrue penalties at the rate of one pound for each non-legal fish plus loss of the fish. Once a competitor's catch has been presented to tournament officials, that team may not return to their boat until his catch has been counted, weighed and recorded. Competitors may choose only one bass out of their bag as an entry into the "big bass side pots".

**14. PROTESTS & TRUTH VERIFICATION TESTS:** Any tournament official or participant has a right to protest another team. Directors must be notified of all protest before close of scales. Protests also, must be submitted in writing within 10 minutes of the closing of the scales. National staff will handle protests at championship or national events. All participants agree to submit to a polygraph or voice stress analyzer, I.E. truth verification test if they are so requested. Truth verification tests may be applied either for cause or randomly, interpretation of any truth verification testing shall be at the sole discretion of NBAA tournament officials. Refusal to submit to or failure to pass the truth verification test shall result in disqualification. The tournament officials will interpret these rules according to the spirit and intent of the rule and their decision in any matter of rule or conduct of the event is final.

**15. CATCH & RELEASE:** All NBAA tournaments will be conducted as catch-and-release events. An 8-ounce (1/2 pound) deduction will be made for each legal fish presented to the bump master for weighing that is determined to be dead. Every boat must have adequate livewell space, properly aerated, to sufficiently maintain, in a healthy condition a limit catch by competitors using the boat. NBAA recommends the use of livewell additives to promote a healthy release of all fish to their natural

habitat. Further NBAA recommends the use of ICE to cool livewell water and improve oxygen levels during "warm water" months. Tournament Director shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate". Tournament Officials shall also have sole authority for assessing penalty points. All fish caught and weighed in at an NBAA event must be released at the official weigh in location. Failing to release your fish at the official release location will result in an automatic disqualification.

**16. TIES:** In the event of a tie at a national event the tie breakers are as follows. Most number of fish, most number of fish alive, heaviest single days catch, second heaviest single days catch, means selected by the tournament officials. In cases of a big fish tie, then the money will be split.

#### **17. STANDINGS, AWARDS & QUALIFICATIONS:**

**Overtime Challenge Events** – NBAA anglers that fish 10 of 12 events or 5 of 6 in any Overtime division AND who finish in the top 20% (or top 10 teams whichever is greater) of that divisions standings automatically qualify for the NBAA National Championship.

**Weekend Challenge Events** – NBAA Anglers who fish at least 4 of 5 events in any Weekend Challenge Division AND finish in the top 20% (or top 10 teams whichever is greater) of that divisions standings automatically qualify for the NBAA National Championship.

**Division Points Champions (TOY):** At the completion of each fishing season, every NBAA Division will crown a "Team of the Year" (TOY) Points Champion, based on the number of points each team has accumulated during the year. Weekend Challenge Divisions will be allowed to drop "one lowest score" from each team's final points. Overtime Challenge Divisions will be allowed to drop "two lowest scores" from each team's final scores. The TOY

Division Points Champions will then compete for a "Special Cash Pot" at the National Championship event.

**18. Buy In:** No buy-ins are allowed at national events unless they are open events or special events conducted by NBAA.

**19. EMERGENCY CHAMPIONSHIP DRAWINGS:** In the event that NBAA is unable to conduct a planned major tournament due to weather, safety concerns or circumstances beyond NBAA's control, a drawing or raffle may be held in lieu of the scheduled competitive format to award the guaranteed prizes. The conditions to warrant the implementation of this rule will be determined by the tournament director. This rule is designed for major tournament events with guaranteed prizes including, but not limited to the National Championship and other special NBAA and open events. The location, time and method of the drawing will be determined by the tournament director and explained in detail to all participants. All participants must be present for the drawing or raffle. All attempts will be made to avoid the implementation of this rule and will only be considered in the event of an emergency.

**20. PRO/GUIDE EXCLUSIONS:** Participants, who have fished two or more bass fishing events, in the preceding 12-month period, with an entry fee in excess of \$1,999.00 per event (does not apply to amateur participants in pro/am events) will not be eligible to participate in any NBAA event with an guaranteed 1<sup>st</sup> Place prize in excess of \$2,500.00. Individuals' serving as licensed guides, or are paid for guiding on tournament waters within the preceding 30-day period are not eligible to participate in events held on those waters for tournaments with a guaranteed 1<sup>st</sup> Place prize of \$2,500.00 or more.