



~ 2025 NBAA Local Division Tournament Rules ~ (All Local Divisions, Overtime & Weekend)

1. OFFICIAL RULES & SAFETY REGULATIONS: These rules and safety regulations will remain unchanged except for special events. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to Tournament Officials. In the event of a rule violation, officials may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate including, without limitation, fines, forfeiture of prizes, disqualification and prohibition from participation in future events. Official's decisions shall be final in all matters and will not be subject to appeal. **Be sure to check each individual events fact sheet for any rules / regulations specific to that particular event.**

2. PARTICIPATION/ELIGIBILITY: Only NBAA members are eligible to compete, this includes any substitutes. Anglers may join at any time. At least one team member must be 18 years of age or older (19 in Alabama and Nebraska) to participate, however, if someone under the ages listed wish to participate, they must present written permission and official release of liability from a parent or legal guardian. **EVERY INDIVIDUAL MUST COMPLETE AND AGREE TO A MEMBERSHIP FORM AND A NBAA LIABILITY RELEASE BEFORE BEING ALLOWED TO COMPLETE, THIS INCLUDES DIRECTORS, NO EXCEPTIONS.** All members must carry liability insurance of reasonable amounts on any boat used during an NBAA event. **Proof of insurance must be with the boat at all times. Random checks may be conducted at events.** Failure to do so or reporting of false information will result in disqualification. We reserve the right to refuse participation in any event, to anyone, for any reason including, but not limited to, suspension, disqualification or banning from this or other events, criminal behavior, violation of game laws, or any unsportsmanlike behavior that would reflect dishonorably on our sport.

3. ENTRY: Local NBAA divisions have entry fees and requirements, check with the director. **Substitutes** - Up to 2 substitutes in a 5 event weekend division and up to 4 substitutes in a 12 event overtime division may be used during the regular season by any team as long as one team member fishes with the sub, Division Director can limit subs to less than 2 or 4 subs defined above as long as it is done

before the season starts and in writing. Sub is allowed to participate in the Championship provided that they had previously fished at least 50% of the regular events. Teams with a member who unexpectedly cannot attend the National Championship may utilize a sub from the division qualified from. Exceptions to this rule maybe made by the tournament officials in cases of death, disability, employment status, or military duties.

4. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE, COMPETITION:

Tournament waters are **off-limits** the day of except during the tournament hours, with pre-fishing allowed until 11:59 p.m. the day prior to local NBAA division events. Special events may have different off limits.

5. SAFETY & TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY: 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.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP: Participants will conduct themselves in a 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 or possession in the boat of alcohol or marijuana/cannabis products, ("medical" or otherwise) or any drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any participant during the official event or tournament days or in our weigh-in process area and/or any use by the final day designated "leaders" until any polygraph examinations are complete will not be tolerated and shall be cause for 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.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: NBAA participants must possess all necessary licenses/permits 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 a courtesy board will be available which will be the same as the official board used for the event.

8. 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 public retail facility open and available to all contenders.

9. 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 fob/bouy 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.

10. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters shall be established by the Officials. Each competitor must obtain this information from NBAA officials. Fishing on Tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: No

fishing is allowed within 50-yard circle of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or tied, with its trolling motor out of the water. NO boat is 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 tied off or by a pole anchor and with the trolling motor out of the water. Absolutely no hole-setting or holding of a fishing spot. 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.

11. BREAKDOWN INSTRUCTIONS: Contestants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. 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. Arriving late, even with the aid of an official boat, as the towed boat or the towing or rescue boat is still late and all late penalties will apply. No exceptions.

12. OFFICIAL SAFETY CHECKPOINT: There shall be an official safety checkpoint for checkout in the morning/check-in in the afternoon and this point shall be designated at the tournament briefing. At the time of check-out all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with all safety and tournament rules set forth by officials. At check-in all boats shall identify themselves to the check in official and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. YOU MUST CHECK-IN EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FISH.

Failure to check in at the end of the day could result in a \$50 fine or prohibition from future participation. It is each angler's responsibility to know what time they are due in.

13. LATE PENALTY: Anyone not at the official safety check in point as described above at the appointed return time shall be disqualified.

14. 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, 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".

15. 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. A "protest committee" consisting of three (3) fellow anglers, randomly drawn by the tournament director will address all protests. 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, their decision of rules or conduct of the event is final.

16. CATCH & RELEASE: 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 maintain, in a healthy condition a limit catch by competitors using the boat. NBAA recommends the use of livewell additives such as G-Juice and Ice, in warmer weather to promote a healthy release of fish into 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/weighed in at an NBAA event must be released at the official weigh in location. Failing to release your fish at the release location will result in an automatic disqualification.

17. TIES: In the event of a tie at the event, big bass will be the deciding factor. In cases of a big bass tie, then the money will be split. In the event that big bass and total weight are the same for two or more teams then both (all)

teams shall be awarded the same amount of points. At the end of the season if there is a tie between two or more teams in equal points, then overall weight of the teams will be the deciding factor.

18. STANDINGS, AWARDS & QUALIFICATIONS:

TEAMS: Teams must be declared at the first event fished in any one division by either member of the team. If both members of the team are present for any event in a specific division that they have declared themselves as a team they must fish as a team for their points to count towards their total team points otherwise no points will be awarded to the original declared team.

ADVANCEMENT QUALIFICATION:

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, each NBAA Division will crown a "Team of the Year" (TOY) Points Champion, based on the number of points each team accumulated during the year. Weekend Challenge Divisions will be required to drop their (1) one "lowest score" from each team's final points. Overtime Challenge Divisions will be required to drop their "two lowest scores" from a team's final scores. All TOY

Division Points Champions or that divisions highest finisher who attends the NBAA National championship will compete for a separate "Cash Pot" at the National Championship.

19. BUY IN's & EMERGENCY DRAWINGS: Anglers and teams will be allowed to buy into any NBAA event during the regular season. This does not include championships, classics and other special events. Entry fees must be given to the director before the start of the event to be counted. These entry fees will go into the tournament payout. Anglers/teams who buy into an event will receive show up points. If a NBAA major tournament is unable to happen due to weather, safety concerns or circumstances beyond NBAA's control it may be rescheduled or a drawing/raffle may be held in lieu of the event to award the guaranteed prizes. Conditions to warrant the implementation of this rule will be determined by the tournament director. The location, time and method of the drawing will be determined by the tournament director and explained in detail to all participants. All participants may be required to be present for the drawing or raffle. All attempts will be made to avoid the implementation of this rule and will only be used as a last resort.

21. PRO/GUIDE EXCLUSIONS: Anglers who entered more than two 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 amateurs in pro/am events) OR individuals' serving as guides or who 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 1st Place prize in excess of \$2,500.00.