

The Bass Federation of Michigan State Championship

2019 Lake St. Clair – Official Tournament Rules

- 1. Safety:** Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times by all tournament competitors. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver. **This preserver must be worn any time the combustion engine is operating.** The preserver must be snapped or zipped securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification.
- 2. Sportsmanship:** Competitors of our tournament are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infractions of the fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification for this and all future tournaments. 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 our efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, may also be reason for disqualification. No alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs shall be allowed in the boats or at the weigh-ins. Any participant cited during tournament hours for a violation of State marine or fishing laws will be disqualified, if found guilty following due process of law.
- 3. Tackle and Equipment: Only artificial lures may be used. No "live Bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only ONE casting or spinning rod (8 foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All others types prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use, however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught live in a legal conventional sporting manner.**
- 4. Horsepower Regulations:** Your boat and motor must conform to B.I.A. Horsepower Ratings. Simply, your engine's horsepower is not to exceed the horsepower limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard must NOT exceed the rating plate. Any boat manufactured prior to Nov. 1, 1972 must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Each competitor agrees to submit, by the signature on this document, the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament to an inspection by the factory trained personnel, and if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating.
- 5. Boat and motor: ALL boats must be equipped with some type of ignition kill switch. Kill switch must be in working order and attached to driver anytime the combustion engine is running.** Fishing boats may be used that are 16 feet or more in length. A small motor, gas or electric, may be used for slow maneuvering. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. No "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted.
- 6. Basic Boat Equipment:** Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and LIVE-WELL SPACE MOUNTED IN BOAT BY MANUFACTURER, PROPERLY AERATED TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE UP TO TWO LIMITS CATCH OF 5 BASS EACH FOR THE TWO ANGLERS USING THE BOAT. No coolers. Tournament officials shall have the sole authority for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate".
- 7. Permitted Fishing Locations:** Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere **except within 50 yards of any marina gas pump or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat, which was first anchored.** A boat is considered anchored only if it is tied to an object or has anchor line over its side with trolling motor out of water. No such anchored boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within a 50-yard circle claimed by his to exclusion of any other competitor. **Also, any off-limits area discussed at the pre-tournament meeting. All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants must not depart to land fish. Boat must remain in tournament waters during the tournament day.** Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. If a competitor must violate any of these conditions due to emergency, or any other reason, his catch of the day shall not be counted in the tournament. Tailoring of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by tournament officials. **Competitors must not leave their boat (both feet out) except in case of emergency.**
- 8. Official Check Point: There shall be only one official point for checking out in the morning, and check in at the end of the tournament day, this point shall be designated at the tournament briefing.** At the time of morning check out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with the rules set forth by tournament committee. At the end of day check in all boats shall identify themselves by contacting the check in official at the designated check point, and proceed immediately to the designated weigh in area. You will be counted in if off plane and the check in official has noted that you are in. After proper recognition at the checkpoint, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site, however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After registration begins fishing is prohibited except during tournament hours. Any angler not checked out properly by the tournament director or designee may be disqualified from participation. Any angler who fails to report to the official checkpoint may be disqualified. The tournament director will designate whether the anglers can trailer their boat before weighing in their catch or not. At this tournament you will be able to trailer your boat for weigh in.
- 9. Scoring:** Tournament standings and auxiliary awards are determined by total pound and pound fractions of each angler's bass weighed in. Only **largemouth, spotted or smallmouth bass** will be weighed for each angler, up to the tournament limit of 5 bass each, unless local regulation requires the tournament director to change the limit to a lower number. Prevailing statutes and regulation of the various states within which they fish bind all competitors. **At no time shall a competitor have reduced to possession more than the 5 bass limit described above. Competitors must present all bass in their possession for weigh in. The official length for bass shall be 14 inches unless local regulations require otherwise – tournament officials will announce any exceptions. Only bass measuring 14 inches or larger in length on the longest starting line, with mouth closed, shall be**

weighed-in. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, hashed or mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed in and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. Bass must be caught using legal fishing methods. The tournament committee will furnish specially designed bags, which increase the survival rate, and these bags must be used for weigh in if provided. **Each angler's catch must be verified by signature of his/her day's partner.**

10. **Dead Bass Penalty:** A penalty of 8 ounces for each dead bass weighed in will be deducted from the total weight of all legal bass in the sack. Only the tournament director/officials will determine if a bass is counted as live or not.
11. **Short Bass: Deduction will be made for short bass as well as dead bass. Any bass presented for weigh-in by contestant that fails to measure 14 inches or more, according to the method described above, will be removed from the sack and disallowed. In addition, a one pound penalty will be given to the overall weighed of the remaining 4 fish. The total responsibility for having short bass in possession at any time will be that of the contestant.**
12. **Late Penalty: Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described previously by the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute** to be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch that day, for each one (1) minute late. **Any competitor more than 10 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch.** There shall be no excuses for tardiness, and in no case shall a competitor be allowed to make-up lost time.
13. **Standings:** Final standings for each angler will be determined by total weight of all bass legally weighed in after penalties are applied and barring protest. **The top 6 Boaters and top 6 non-boaters in order of highest weight will be on the TBF of MI state team.** TBF of MI will determine Alternate(s).
14. **Ties: In the event of a tie for 6th place boater or non-boater, 1st tiebreaker is number of fish, 2nd tiebreaker is number of live fish, 3rd there will be a one hour fish off to determine the final boater or non-boater and the other angler will get 7th place. If there is still a tie after any fish off the winner will be determined by a coin flip. In the event of a tie for any big bass award or any other money prize, money will be split among those anglers and any plaques will be awarded by a coin flip among those tied.**
15. **Rulings: The tournament director (or tournament officials) and his/their designated appointees shall reserve all rights for rule interpretation and rulings thereof. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Furthermore, the tournament committee reserves the right to change the date of or the site of any given tournament. Protests must be in writing signed by the protester and filed within 20 minutes of the conclusion of the weigh-in.** The tournament director has sole authority to deny the eligibility of any person at any time to participate in the tournament.
16. **Pairings:** Partners will be paired by draw. All anglers must meet with their assigned partners during pairings at the pre-tournament meeting. Boaters are in control of fishing locations and running the front of the boat. (see Boat Operation). The tournament director, at his sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning takeoff. Each club president is responsible for sending the same number of boaters and non-boaters. If at the tournament the number of boaters and non boaters are not the same, that club's president or representative must decide who will not fish if the TD cannot make the pairings work. The TD will do what he can to make things work but if it cannot be fixed the club that is unequal will have to decide who will not fish.
17. **Boat Operation:** Boaters will fish from the front deck of the boat only. Co-anglers will fish from the back deck or seating area of the boat only. Boaters will have complete control of boat operation and waters to be fished. For safety concerns in rough water or swift current, in the event of an outboard or trolling motor breakdown or during an emergency, co-anglers may operate the trolling motor or the outboard but may not fish anytime from the front deck. Boaters may not request that the co-angler not fish. Any boater that, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in such a manner that unfairly handicaps his/her co-angler and any co-angler who unfairly handicaps his/her boater may be disqualified for that day. Boaters paired with boaters will receive equal time in the front of the boat to operate the trolling motor and equal time, including travel, to fish their selected waters. The use of mobile communication devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., during tournament hours is strictly prohibited except in an emergency, severe weather, breakdowns, to communicate with the tournament director, emergency personal or others strictly for assistance. If boat installed electronics fail, boaters may use cell phone GPS and mapping apps with approval from the tournament director. Co-anglers are not allowed to record GPS waypoints or fishing locations. If a special circumstance arises that inhibits a contestant's ability to compete, the tournament director may allow the contestant to withdraw from competition and maintain the weight caught to that point. During tournament hours contestants may not obtain or receive assistance from noncompetitors, follow a noncompetitor's boat or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" or the placing of markers by anyone else.
18. **Courtesy Board: Please measure all bass before they come to the scales. A courtesy board will be provided. Any bass that are doubtful of making the legal length will be measured. Once bass are presented at the weigh-in tables, only TBF of MI tournament officials will be allowed to handle bass.**
19. **Eligibility:** Participation is open to all participants 18 years of age or older. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of the potential contestant. Persons 18 years of age but not having reached the age of majority must also have a signed authorization slip from a parent or legal guardian. **Entry fees are NON-REFUNDABLE after the entry deadline except in the case of an emergency or as determined by the tournament director.**
20. **Registration: Every angler must be present for the registration.** Each angler must register at the time and place designated. **There will be a mandatory pre-tournament meeting following registration that each angler must attend.**
21. **Pre-Tournament Practice:** There will be no practice period off-limits. No fishing after the end of registration.

22. **Liability Insurance:** Liability insurance is required of all contestants in TBF of MI tournaments.
23. **No Wake Zones: All legal no wake zones and areas are NO PASS** unless the boat being passed is fishing, is on a different course or gives you verbal permission to pass. This applies to all boats in the same navigation channel. It is the responsibility of each angler to know the local laws and regulations.
24. **Polygraph Test:** Each contestant agrees to submit, by their signature on the official tournament entry form, to a polygraph examination and abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification. Polygraphs will be used at TBF of MI's' sole discretion and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely to TBF of MI.
25. **Post Tournament Meeting:** There will be a mandatory meeting for the top 6 boater and top 6 non-boaters to go over Semi Final Information and photos.
26. **The Tournament Waters Go Off Limits at the end of registration Saturday July 13, 2019.**