

# WISCONSIN B.A.S.S. NATION TOURNAMENT RULES AND REGULATIONS

The following rules and regulations apply to ALL tournaments sponsored by the Wisconsin Bass Nation (hereafter referred to as WBN**)**. All competitors are required to know the tournament rules that all WBN events will be conducted by. The WBN definesa tournament as any organized, prearranged fish‐off between skilled anglers to determine the most skilled angler or anglers.

**RULES INTERPRETATION:** The WBN Board (hereafter referred to as The Board) and Tournament Committee formulated the following rules and regulations. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the WBN Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may, after a formal review with all involved parties, impose such sanctions, as he/she deems appropriate, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes**,** and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Any complaints must be filed with the Tournament Director within 30 minutes of the completion of the tournament. The decision of the WBN Tournament Director and appointed tournament officials shall be final in all matters. While given this authority, the Tournament Director will be accountable to The Board for his/her decisions.

**PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:** Participants in the WBN tournaments must be members of the WBN, Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (hereafter referred to as B.A.S.S.), and must be at least 16 years of age. Eligibility to participate in the WBN tournaments must be determined by the individual clubs holding at least one annual youth or conservation project, and a minimum of six tournaments in which the contestant must have registered at least one legal bass during one of those tournaments. Determination of eligibility for the youth and conservation projects to be determined by The Board. The number of members on each club’s roster at the January Reps meeting will determine the size of the club’s team to the next qualifying tournament. It is mandatory that a club's participants be determined from the prior year's tournaments, excluding the BASS Masters Classic. Individuals that have multiple WBN club memberships, will need to declare their primary club prior to the start of that club’s tournament season. \*\* Should any club allow a member to compete in a WBN tournament, who has not properly qualified, the entire club will be disqualified from that tournament and all remaining WBN tournaments of that year and the year immediately following. In special circumstances, The Board may modify the timelines of participation eligibility, but any and all changes will relate to all affiliated clubs.

\*\* Any changes of the primary club is done via the internet and will require the member to contact the secretary of the new primary club, the President of the WBN, and the Secretary of the WBN.

**TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION:** All fees for WBN tournaments must be made payable to the **Wisconsin**

**B.A.S.S Nation**. Fees are paid to the treasurer and are nonrefundable, unless approved by the board prior to the start of the tournament. All entry fees are to be sent as a club on the forms provided. All instructions will be clearly stated on entry forms.

**TOURNAMENT FEES:** WBN State Tournament Fees are due to the Treasurer by published deadline, with tournament entry forms and boat insurance copies. The Treasurer will take all fees and forward all tournament entry forms to the Tournament Director. The amount of these fees will be published in advance for each event.

**BOAT INSURANCE:** During the official practice and competition days of any WBN tournament, contestants may not operate a boat unless that contestant has submitted documented proof of a minimum of $300,000 boating liability insurance to the Tournament Director. This documented proof must show an effective date, expiration date, and must be received by the designated entry form deadline. If it should expire between the deadline and the tournament, also submit an updated document as soon as possible. No boater will be allowed to participate with expired insurance.

**SAFETY:** Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times**,** by all tournament competitors. Each competitor must properly wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved**,** chest‐type**,** life preserver any time the combustion engine is operating. The preserver must be strapped, snapped, and/or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Also when the internal combustion engine is in operation, all participants shall be seated so that their feet are resting on the main floor of the boat. Contestants are required to operate their boats at speeds which would not be considered dangerous or excessive.

**TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:** Only artificial lures may be used and no "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only one casting, spin casting**,** or spinning rod (8foot maximum length from butt to tip) and reel**,** may be used at any one time. All other types are prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use, however only one is permitted to be used at any given time. All bass must be caught alive and in a conventional sporting manner. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Only nets may be used to boat bass, NO grippers or gaffs are permitted to be used.

**HORSEPOWER:** The horsepower of the outboard combustion engine must be a minimum 25 HP and must not exceed the rating specified on the rating plate attached to each boat manufactured after November 1, 1972. Any boat manufactured prior to that date, must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Maximum outboard combustion engine size on any boat, regardless of U.S. Coast Guard ratings, shall not exceed 250 horsepower. The tournament staff will make final decisions whether a boat is overpowered or unsafe.

**BOATS:** All boats used in WBN tournaments must be at least 16 feet in length. Pontoon barges and other cumbersome crafts will not be allowed. Bilge pumps are recommended on the larger units and it should be noted that in the National B.A.S.S. tournaments these are required. All boats, regardless of size, which are used in competition, must be equipped with a working lanyard type kill switch. This ignition kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the outboardcombustion engine is operating. Stick steering will not be allowed. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Each boat must be equipped with live well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain and keep alive, a limit catch of bass by both fishermen using the boat, with the minimum space being one gallon of water for every pound of fish. Absolutely no stringers or fish baskets will be allowed as a means of holding or carrying fish. The Tournament Director shall have sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate".

**INSPECTION:** Prior to each day's start, each boat will have an inspection check by a tournament official and will be given a numbered item, which must remain in the boat until turned in each day at weigh‐in. This item must be displayed at the request of tournament officials. A properly designated tournament official may approach or board any competitor's boat at any time during official practice or tournament hours.

**BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE:** All WBN events are PRO AM format. Boaters have full control of boat operation and all decisions/areas to be fished. Non-boaters are not to fish from the front deck for any reason, they may net fish from the front deck, Non-boaters are allowed to operate the boat only in emergency/safety situations. Sportsmanship must be shown between anglers. We suggest having the conversation before the tournament day begins regarding Non-boaters paying the boater.

**TOURNAMENT WATERS:** Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: within 50 yards of another competitor’s boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of another competitor. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants must not depart from the boat to land fish. Boats must remain in tournament waters during the tournament day. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat; both competitors must remain in the boat at all times, except in the case of dire emergency. In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boats to a boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat so designated by tournament officials. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other's catch, in order for their catch on that day to be scored in the tournament. The only exception to this rule will be one of the competitors leaving the boat at the end of the fishing day to retrieve the vehicle and trailer for removal of the boat from the water. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions due to an emergency, or any other reason approved by the tournament committee, his/her catch of that day will be weighed in at the weigh‐in site and counted in the tournament. A tournament official**,** or someone designated by the tournament committee**,** will then take the place of the contestant leaving the boat, and the remaining contestant may go back to fishing with his/her observer. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited. In the case of competitors staying on the water all boats must be tied off/anchored within 90 minutes of official practice ending or the scales closing for the day. The WBN tournament director must be notified of any reason causing the boat to be un anchored. Failure to do so will cause the days catch/participation in event to be disqualified.

**OFF LIMITS/SPECIAL RULES:** During official practice and tournament hours all rules will be followed. Official practice hours will end 2 hours prior to the tournament meeting. A competitor may not have the assistance or advice of any one for the purpose of locating bass. They may also not consult a professional guide, state, or wildlife agency employee, WBN member, or any other person deemed a "local expert' on these tournament waters, by the Tournament Director, unless he/she is a contestant in the tournament. No WBN Club events are permitted on tournament waters 2 weeks prior to tournament days. Individual pre practice is permitted.

**OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:** There shall be only one official point for checkout in the morning, and check‐in in the afternoon. This point shall be designated prior to the tournament. At the time of check‐out, all competitors and their boats shall be in the full conformance with all rules set forth by the tournament committee. At check‐in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbered device and proceed immediately to the designated weigh‐in area. Partners must remain together with their device until weigh‐in.

**SCORING:** Tournament standings, auxiliary awards**,** and final winners shall be determined by the total weight of each competitor**’**s catch during the days of the tournament. The daily tournament limit for each competitor shall be five (5) fish, or another announced limit.Only largemouth and or smallmouth bass will be weighed. The prevailing statutes and regulations of the State of Wisconsin bind all competitors. The tournament committee will furnish specially designed bags, which increase the survival rate and must be used for weigh‐in. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint, he/she MUST present all fish in his/her possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. The signature of his/her partner of that day must certify his/her catch. None of the bass will be returned to the contestants once presented at weigh‐in. The few bass that do not survive will be given to charity or disposed of by some means designated by the tournament committee. Only bass which meet state length regulations, measured on the longest line with the mouth closed, shall be presented for weigh‐in. Any bass that appears to have been altered will not be weighed and credited. Final decision on “altered” will be at the discretion of tournament officials.

**PENALTIES:** During days of competition each angler is allowed to have only their daily bag limit of 5 bass in their possession. In the case of having more than 5 in your possession you must contact the tournament director and then immediately release the number of fish of your choice needed to get to 5 bass limit. You will incur a 2lb per fish penalty at that days weigh in. There will a 4oz penalty for any fish determined to be dead by the tournament official running the bump station. Any on the water citation will result in disqualification of that days catch unless otherwise determined by the WBN Board.

**LATE PENALTY:** In the case of competitors being late to check in they will incur a 1lb per minute late penalty, with the total days catch to be disqualified after 15 minutes.

**TIES:** In case of a first place tie, the following tie breakers will be used in order; (1) the team or individual with the largest number of legal fish weighed‐in during the competition; (2) the team or individual with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed‐in during the competition; (3) the team or individual with the largest single bass weighed in during the competition; (4) the team or individual with the heaviest single day's catch during competition; (5) the team or individual with the second heaviest single day's catch during the competition.

In the unlikely event that teams or individuals remain tied after these four tiebreakers are employed, then a flip of the coin will be used to determine the winner(s). However, trophies and prize money, if any, will then be equally split. Ties for lesser positions shall be resolved by means selected by the Tournament Director.

**PAIRING OF CONTESTANTS:** Two contestants will be assigned to each boat prior to the tournament by tournament officials. No contestants from the same club will be paired, nor shall two competitors fish together more than one day. If the last pair drawn is from the same club, tournament officials will back up to the next pair available to switch partners. The non‐boaters will fish with a different boater each day of the tournament. Boater starting position will be drawn prior to tournament, by the tournament committee, for day one of the tournament. For day 2 the flights will be rotated, and a drawing will determine boater starting position, within the flight. Announcement of partners shall be at the kick‐off meeting, which must be attended by each competitor. It shall be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed location, with sufficient time remaining to checkout at the official checkpoint and start on time. Tournament officials are not responsible for finding missing partners. In the event that one of the partners does not show up before the start of the tournament, that person will be disqualified from that day's competition; and a substitute designated by tournament officials, will ride with the other contestant. Once two contestants checkout at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other's catch throughout the day until weigh‐in is completed. Exception to this rule can be found on the “Tournament Waters” paragraph. A contestant must not allow any bass caught by him/her to be counted on the score of another contestant. In such a case, both contestants will be disqualified from that tournament.

**SPORTSMANSHIP:** Competitors in WBN 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. 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. Contestants are also responsible for their actions and conduct in and around the area of the event including motels, hotels, restaurants, etc. Any act of a competitor, which reflects unfavorably upon the WBN’s efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, shall be reason for disqualification.

**DRUGS AND ALCOHOL:** Use of alcohol or illegal drugs by any competitor during the official practice or tournament hours will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from that and all future WBN Tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, or illegal drugs shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, or at the weigh‐in area. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon the WBN’s efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship**,** and compliance with tournament rules**,** shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation, or for disqualification.

**RADIOS:** During tournament hours, a competitor may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communications device for the purpose of locating or catching fish. Contestants are permitted to transmit by radio or telephone only in the event of an emergency. If so equipped, contestants may listen to the marine band weather information.

**TOURNAMENT HOURS:** The WBN State Championship and WBN Bass Classic will be three day tournaments, with the first day, being the designated a practice fishing day, and two(2) and three(3) as competition days. Maximum length of fishing time per tournament competition day will be eight hours. Any contestant not showing up the second day of the competition, without approval of the Tournament Director, will be disqualified from any remaining WBN tournaments of that year, and the year immediately following.

**RULES, POLICIES, AND PROCEDURES NOT SPECIFICALLY COVERED:** In the event that an issue arises not specifically covered in these tournament rules, B.A.S.S. documentation will be used to make the decision. If not covered in B.A.S.S. documentation, the decision will be made by WBN Tournament Director and appointed tournament officials. (See **RULES INTERPRETATION**)

# Revised 1/30/17 By Kyle Carpenter