

MAINE BASS NATION TOURNAMENT RULES

1. **RULES & REGULATIONS:** The tournament committee members are designated judges and are responsible for the interpretation and enforcement of the tournament rules. THEIR DECISIONS ARE FINAL. The judges are eligible to compete for all prizes.

1A) all rules within this document will pertain to all ME BASS opens with specific rules applying to the State Fish Off outlined in appendix A of this document or not otherwise covered by the annual **Fish Off Plan**.

2. **LAUNCHING and REMOVING BOATS:** All boats must go through an inspection to include a live well check and weed inspection prior to the tournament and after the event has completed. Tournament angler boats removed from the tournament waters with fish in the live well will result in immediate disqualification. Anyone leaving the event early is required to conduct their own weed inspection.

3. **INSURANCE:** It is the sole responsibility of the boat owner to carry and have proof of adequate public liability insurance covering them and passengers. All boat owners must carry insurance liability \$300,000 or greater to participate. Tournament staff has the right to ask for proof of insurance at any time and all teams will be required to present their insurance information when they initially register. All contestants are required to sign the application absolving the tournament organizers, tournament sponsors, co-sponsors, and their employees from any responsibility for any damage or personal injury sustained because of their participation in the tournament or related activities. Contestants are required to have in their possession and provide proof of insurance on demand by the tournament director. All participants agree to hold harmless Maine Bass Nation, officers, directors, and agents.

4. **PROTEST:** Protests must be filed in writing prior to the official close of scales.

5. **TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION:** All teams are required to register or check-in with tournament staff prior to the pre-tournament meeting. Only two contestants allowed per boat. Contestants under the age of 16 must be teamed with an adult (18 or older). Note: All MEBASS affiliated contestants must have a BASS waiver on file with their club or sign a waiver (One Time) at the beginning of an MEBASS sanctioned tournament.

6. **REFUNDS:** There will be no refunds.

7. **OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:** There will be only one designated check point at the close of the tournament. Any contestant late for the weigh in will be penalized one pound per minute up to fifteen minutes, at which time the contestant will be disqualified.

8. **SAFETY:** Safe boating must always be observed. Life vest must be worn and fastened any time the combustion engine is running and is in gear. Failure to comply may result in disqualification.

9. **SPORTSMANSHIP/ CODE OF CONDUCT:** All participants are required to comply with all Fish and Wildlife regulations of the State of Maine and this tournament. Any team ticketed will result in disqualification. ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES WILL NOT BE ALLOWED IN A TOURNAMENT BOAT, AT THE OFFICIAL WEIGH – IN, OR THE AWARDS CEREMONY. Violators of this rule will be disqualified. All contestants are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsman like manner at all times.

CODE OF CONDUCT: ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT: Anglers participating in any B.A.S.S.-sanctioned event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Anglers and family members of anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates integrity, honor and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament staff and the general public and does not reflect unfavorably on B.A.S.S., its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors. Anglers are frequently in the public eye and are considered role models by young people; therefore, it is imperative that tournament competitors demonstrate good sportsmanship in fishing. Sportsmanship is defined as fair play, respect for opponents and polite behavior while competing in the sport. (i) Following are examples of unacceptable behavior by competitors or family members of competitors in B.A.S.S. events that will be cause for penalties as outlined in this document. • Heated public disagreements with B.A.S.S. officials, other competitors and fans and volunteers during an event. • Public attacks through media, including social media, upon the integrity of B.A.S.S. rules or officials. • Public comments that an angler or family member knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of B.A.S.S., B.A.S.S. officials or its sponsors • Displays of anger and displeasure for reasons related to fishing competition where members of the public, including other anglers, spectators and the media, are present. • Publicly questioning or criticizing a tournament official or official decision, ruling or penalty except through the proper channels. • Abuse (physical, verbal, threatening or slanderous) of tournament officials, volunteers, fellow competitors or others connected with a B.A.S.S. event, including on social media. • Offensive or slanderous comments with racial, cultural or sexual overtones regarding event officials, event personnel or fellow anglers. • Intentionally interfering with a fellow angler's ability to compete. Any disqualification, suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by any tournament or fishing organization may result in disqualification from competition and rejection of an application for participation in a B.A.S.S. tournament.

10. PERMITTED FISHING WATERS

All fishing must be done from a previously inspected boat. Boats may not be trailered to and from weigh-in during tournament hours unless under the direction of the tournament director. No fishing is allowed within 25 yards of a non-anchored tournament boat without that boat's permission unless specified during the tournament meeting by the tournament director. No fishing is allowed within 50 yards of another anchored or tied tournament boat with the trolling motor out of the water without the anchored boat's permission. Both team partners must fish from the same boat. Only contestants may be in the boat during the tournament hours unless arranged with the tournament director prior to the start of the event. Having a non-contestant sit in a hole for you (save your spot) will not be tolerated. Contestants cannot leave a boat to land a fish. Navigable waters are the only waters to be fished during the tournament. Contestants must be able to drive the boat into the fishing area without getting out of the boat. The practice of restricting the natural movement of fish by any means such as, but not limited to, the use of nets, tanks, or dams will not be tolerated and will result in disqualification. Restricting the access to waters normally accessible by all anglers, by any means such as, but not limited to the falling of trees or the construction of obstructions will not be allowed and will result in disqualification.

11. TACKLE PERMITTED: Only spinning, casting, or spin casting rods will be approved for this tournament. All bass must be caught on artificial lures in a sportsman like manner. No live or prepared baits except for pork rinds, etc. are allowed. A contestant may fish with only one rod at a time. However, he or she may have other rods prepared.

12. BOATS AND MOTORS: All boats must have approved coast guard equipment on board including fire extinguisher, working kill switch, working navigation lights and working live wells.

Electric motors and small gasoline engines may be used to maneuver a boat while fishing. TROLLING is NOT permitted. Combustion engines shall not exceed 250 H.P.

13. FISHING TIME: Tournament hours will be pre-determined and may be subject to change, weather dependent. Starting positions will be determined by draw prior to blast off.

14. **SCORING:** Only smallmouth and largemouth bass caught on tournament waters on tournament day will be scored. The minimum length limit shall be 12 inches, mouth closed. An 8oz. Penalty will be imposed for the weighing of a dead fish and a one-pound penalty for a short fish with the weight of the short fish not counting. Big fish must be marked prior to approaching the weigh in sink. It is the angler's responsibility to ask to weigh a big bass at every event. To qualify as lunker, a fish must be weighed alive and released alive at the weigh-in site. No one other than the weigh master or tournament official may handle the fish after the bag is handed to the weigh master

15. **TIES:** In case of a tie, the contestants with the largest live weighed fish shall be declared the winner. The second tiebreaker will be the most live fish weighed. If at this point the teams are still tied the prize money will be split accordingly.

16. **FISH CARE:** It is the responsibility of the tournament anglers to assure all fish caught are cared for properly, prior to being returned to the tournament waters. This includes venting a fish's bladder if required. It is also an expectation that anglers maintain their catch in an adequate weigh bag to protect their catch during the weigh in process. Anyone observed releasing an improperly cared for fish or releasing fish in a non-designated area are subject to disqualification. All dead fish weighed must be returned to the lake and sunk to the bottom and not remain visible to the public. **Only non-penetrating cull tags are permitted**

17. **LIVEWELLS:** All fish must be kept in a continuous flowing aerated live well, pumping fresh water in, except that you may put your live well in recirculation mode when the outboard is in gear. OUR GOAL IS A 100% LIVE RELEASE.

18. **AWARDS AND PRIZES:** Contestants may get winnings at the event or have them mailed to them. Lunker pool will be divided evenly between largest largemouth and largest smallmouth (The amount to be determined by the number of contestants in the pool). Ties will split the pool money evenly in each category.

19. **TAXES & TOURNAMENT WINNINGS:** All taxes of tournament winnings are the responsibility of the winning anglers.

Tournament Director: Ben Hilfrank @ 207-671-2996

Appendix A – State Fish Off

- 1) Boat Control:** The Boater has 100% control of the boat for the day. At no point except for emergencies is the non-boater to take control of the boat from bow or wheel. The exception to this is to help land a fish. The non-boater is not responsible for refunding any monies for gas, etc., to the boater. Each angler is competing against their respective angler group (boater / non boater).