

ARTICLE 8 ADMINISTRATIVE RULES AND REGULATIONS
BASS NATION TOURNAMENT RULES – Updated February 2026

1. BASS TOURNAMENT DEFINED: Bass tournament shall be defined as a competitive event in which the practices collectively known as fishing are skillfully applied by participants to catch bass and present them for scoring by weight, length or other criteria to determine a winner or winners who receive certain awards and/or other recognition.

2. PURPOSE OF TOURNAMENT RULES: Tournament rules are adopted for the express purposes of providing equal opportunity for all participants to successfully apply their fishing skills and abilities, of improving the safety of both participant and non-participant users of the tournament area resources, and of providing for proper handling of the fish.

3. AMENDMENTS AND INTERPRETATIONS: Only the Tournament Committee of the B.A.S.S. Nation of Virginia Inc. shall amend the Tournament rules. They are subject to interpretation only by the Tournament Committee, under the coordination and supervision of the Chairman. Decisions of the committee approved by the chairman shall be final. All tournament rules will be recommended to the Board for their approval or disapproval.

4. BASS DEFINED: Bass shall be defined as any of the species known as large-mouth bass (*Micropterus Salmoides*), smallmouth bass (*Micropterus Dolomieu*), spotted bass (*Micropterus Punctulatus*), suwannee bass (*Micropterus Notius*), redeye bass (*Micropterus Coosae*), and guadalupe bass (*Micropterus Treculi*), all of which are of the genus, *Micropterus*, in the family, Centrarchidae, the fresh water sunfish.

5. ENTRY FEES: Applications from otherwise qualified members; clubs of regions to enter and compete in tournaments shall be acceptable only when accompanied by the fee established by the tournament committee with approval of the Board. Fees shall not be refundable to individual, team or regional applicants once the fees have been accepted by the Nation except in extenuating circumstances approved by the board.

6. ELIGIBILITY: Fixed teams of clubs in good standing whose official application and entry fee are received by the secretary/treasurer prior to the published deadline for the Mr. BASS/Qualifier#1, Chapter Team/Qualifier#2, Spring-Summer/Qualifier#3, Fall Classic/Qualifier#4, and/or the State Championship shall be eligible to compete, conditional upon acceptance by the Tournament Committee. Clubs in good standing are those clubs who submitted an official roster and respective National and State dues no later than February 15th. Thereafter, clubs in good standing may accept new members until June 30th. In order to be eligible to participate in a state qualifier, the team members must be in good standing and listed on that club's official roster at the time of registration for that qualifier. Any team member whose name is not present on the official roster submitted to the Nation Board will not be allowed to participate.

7. TOURNAMENT CHECK-IN: Each team must check-in in person at the tournament site on the morning of the tournament at the times designated by the tournament committee. Participants will verify their boat numbers, flight times, rules and completion of liability waivers at check-in.

8. ETHICS~ SPORTSMANSHIP AND PERSONAL CONDUCT: All participants shall observe high standards of ethics, sportsmanship and personal conduct. They shall obey all the laws, and the authorities having jurisdiction in the tournament area. They shall keep themselves informed and aware of the rules, laws and conditions applicable to the tournament. They shall yield to all other recreational users of the Tournament resource, sufficient distance or other courtesy to avoid interference with their activities. Drunkenness during the practice, competition and scoring activities will be cause for immediate disqualification. No alcoholic beverages shall be permitted in competition boats during competition hours. Participants shall yield to inspection by tournament officials at any time during the tournament.

9. PRACTICE DAYS AND COMPETITION: Tournament waters are open at all times, to all competitors. However, during any Nation sponsored tournament, no competitor may hire, buy or barter the use of a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day. Failure to comply with the rules will result in disqualification from the tournament.

10. TOURNAMENT WATERS: Tournament waters shall be defined as all public waters which are accessible by boat excluding such off limits areas as may be designated and announced at registration time by the Tournament Committee. All fishing by participants shall be done from a boat on tournament waters and all participants and competition boats shall remain on tournament waters throughout the competition hours. Violators shall be disqualified for that day's competition.

11. COMPETITION HOURS: Competition hours shall be determined by the Tournament Committee and announced at registration. The hours may be changed by the committee as necessary because of changing conditions and with reasonable notice to participants during the tournament. Late arrival at the check-in point at the end of competition hours shall not be excused. No make-up time shall be granted for any reason to any participant who has been unable to compete during any part of the tournament.

12. WEATHER CONDITIONS: Tournaments shall proceed as scheduled regardless of weather conditions, except that competition may be suspended or terminated by the Tournament Committee whenever it finds weather conditions to be hazardous. Competitors shall not fish during periods of suspension or after termination of competition. They may decline to compete without penalty only after the Tournament Committee has accepted their notice, given prior to withdrawing, that they believe weather conditions to be hazardous.

13. SAFETY AND INSPECTION: Safety shall be the concern of first priority to all participants. All competition equipment shall be presented for inspection before the beginning of competition and all participants shall yield to inspection upon the request of tournament officials during the entire tournament event including scoring, award ceremonies, and the protest period and during the deliberation of any protests that may be registered by participants. Competition equipment found to be unsafe or unseaworthy by the Tournament Committee shall not be used in the tournament.

14. SAFETY EQUIPMENT: Participants, throughout the official practice and competition hours, shall whenever their primary propulsion engine is in gear, wear a vest type personal floatation device, or life jacket, which is approved by the United States Coast Guard. Each tournament boat shall be equipped with a functional device, known as a kill switch, which will terminate the operation of the primary propulsion engine when the operator leaves the controls. The kill switch shall be attached to the operator whenever the engine is in operation. Each tournament boat shall be equipped with a functional power operated pumping device, which will remove water from the boat effectively, and in a manner acceptable to the Tournament Committee. Violators will be disqualified for that day's competition.

15. BOAT REQUIREMENTS: The maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and in tournament competition will be 250 horsepower. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard. When required, each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must NOT exceed the rating specified on this plate nor the horsepower maximum set by B.A.S.S. Each competitor agrees to submit, by their signature on the official entry form, Angler Participation agreement and rules, the boat, electronics data and outboard motor used in the tournament, to an inspection by factory-trained personnel if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance of engines is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of a competitor's engine to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating is forbidden and will result in disqualification. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine is also cause for immediate disqualification from B.A.S.S. tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by B.A.S.S. must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits may result in penalties.

15A. BOAT AND MOTOR: At any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats that are 16 feet or more in length may be used and must be equipped with wheel steering. No other steering device will be permitted. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Each competitor's boat shall be restricted to one (1) electric motor to be mounted at the bow of the boat. Electric motor(s) mounted at the stern of the boat are prohibited. Each competitor may keep a spare trolling motor in the boat in case one malfunctions. Trolling motor brackets and electronics are not considered "raised platforms." Standing on the outboard engine or seats while fishing is not allowed. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. However, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. The "long lining" or "strolling" technique is

NOT allowed in either practice or competition and is defined as intentionally using a trolling motor or outboard to mechanically extend a cast. NO EXCEPTIONS. Only gas tanks that are installed by the boat manufacturer are allowed. No portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor. No “barges” or similar craft will be permitted. Jet drive engines, surface drive engines and tunnel hull boats are not allowed during both official practice and competition. Any boat/hull designs other than standard mass-produced units are only allowed with the written approval of tournament officials.

16. OFFICIAL INSPECTION OF BOAT AND SAFETY EQUIPMENT: Boats will be checked at tournament start for lights, life jackets, kill switch and live wells. Any non-operating equipment will send the boat to the end of the tournament launch line and must be corrected prior to release. Prior to being allowed to compete in a tournament each boat must be checked and approved by the Tournament Committee. Each boat must meet all guidelines specified in Regulation #14 and Regulation #15. Ample time prior to the tournament will be designated and announced for boat inspections. It is the responsibility of each competitor to make sure that his boat has been registered and officially approved prior to beginning the tournament. Any competitor who competes without an official boat inspection will be disqualified.

17. FISHING TACKLE: Use of grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition. During practice and competition no more than one artificial or biodegradable artificial lure may be attached to a line at one time. One lure is defined as a single manmade device designed to attract and/or catch one fish at a time. Adding trailer hooks, plastic trailers, blades, etc., to a single lure is acceptable. If multiple fish are caught on a single manmade lure, on a single cast, all fish are considered legal and may be added to the daily catch. No “live bait,” “dead bait,” or “prepared bait” will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. Any umbrella-type rigging, harness, or other device designed to hold more than one lure at a time with or without hooks –is not allowed. Such rigging, harness, or device cannot be added to a single lure as described above. Traditional twin arm spinnerbaits or buzzbaits are allowed. Trailer hooks and plastic trailers must be on the main hook of the bait; only spinner blades can be affixed to the arms. The head on the main stem may be hinged. On these twin arm spinnerbaits or buzzbaits, no more than two wires, with a maximum length of 6 inches, may extend off the main arm or body of the lure at the line tie point. The “head and hook” portion of the lure must be even or trail behind where the blades attach to the wires. B.A.S.S. officials have the sole authority to determine whether a lure is considered a single lure as defined above. Only ONE casting, spin casting or spinning rod (10-foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. A hung or snagged lure that is not in or on the water is not considered in use and may be set aside while another is in use. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use; however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. If a competitor breaks his line while setting the hook or retrieving a fish, he is allowed to make an attempt with the rod being used or with his hands to secure the visible line and land the fish for it to be counted as legal. He may NOT hook the line with another lure, rod and reel, or other device. No competitor may intentionally snag or foul hook a bass to be counted in their daily catch. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish

will have their catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, to be counted as a legal fish, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked. With the mouth closed naturally, you must not be able to see where the hook point enters the fish to be considered hooked inside the mouth.

18. FISHING METHODS: Trolling as a method of fishing shall be prohibited. Participants shall hook, play and land any fish they catch in competition, using no devices other than a landing net, tackle as provided in section 8.1 - 17, and that participant partners or observers may assist in landing and bringing them into the boat. All fishing must be done from the boat. Contestants must not depart from the boat to land the fish. Boats may not be trailered during tournament hours.

19. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Fishing on tournament waters is permitted anywhere except where posted or otherwise stated by the Tournament Director or President as otherwise specified by the Tournament Committee within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored. Any such anchored boat shall have its trolling motor retracted from the water. No such anchored boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor. Violation will result in disqualification for that day's competition. It is the responsibility of the anchored boat to make other competitors aware that he is anchored.

20. FISHING PARTNERS: BASS Nation of Virginia tournaments will be conducted as teams with the total weight of each two man team determining the final standing for each tournament. Teams are FIXED (same partner) for the purpose of state championship qualifications and for accumulation of points for final team standings. NO SUBSTITUTIONS are allowed. Teams must fish at least ONE tournament with BOTH anglers fishing together. Either member of the team may fish a maximum of TWO tournaments by themselves, but must register for the tournament as a team. To qualify for the two day state championship tournament a team must fish a minimum of THREE tournaments and finish in the top 50% of ONE of those tournaments. Any team that fishes ALL FOUR of the qualifying tournaments is eligible to fish the state championship tournament. Teams will accumulate POINTS based on their finish at each qualifying tournament. Final points standings will be based on ALL FOUR tournaments. The team with the highest total points for the year will be considered the BASS Nation of Virginia Team of the Year. The top 3 teams in the final points standings will be eligible to advance to the Bassmaster Team Trail Championship.

21. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSES: Participants in the Mr. Bass, Chapter Team, Fall Classic, and State Championship tournaments compete as teams and shall share all boat expenses and operations as determined by that team.

22. CONTACT WITH OTHER BOATS: No fishing shall be permitted within fifty yards of the anchored boat of another participant. Anchored boats shall not restrict navigation through narrow channels to or from other tournament waters. Anchored shall mean trolling motor is

raised and a deep or shallow anchor (power poles included) is in place. Participants shall not approach closer than necessary or otherwise make physical contact with other boats or persons during competition hours for reasons other than emergencies. Any competitors' boats seen in physical contact on the lake without the existence of an emergency will be disqualified from that day's competition.

23. EMERGENCY CONDITIONS: Emergency conditions are defined as conditions which subject persons or property to imminent danger or conditions which are deemed by the Tournament Committee to be of emergency nature. Only under emergency conditions, or in cases where boats are disabled, may participants leave their boats. Under such conditions, they may ride in another boat and bring their fish to the tournament headquarters for scoring subject to all requirements otherwise applicable. Otherwise, they shall remain in sight of each other at all times until their fish are turned over to tournament officials. In such cases, both partners, or the non-boating partner alone may take their fish to the weigh-in in another contestant's or official's boat. Except for this emergency situation partners must remain in sight of each other's catch for the catch to be scored. Violators are subject to the penalties provided in Regulation #30.

24. HANDLING OF FISH DURING COMPETITION: Competition boats shall be equipped with a functional, adequately aerated fish holding device, known as a live well, sufficient to maintain live bass of average size. All fish caught and retained in possession of participants shall be segregated for identification and kept in a live well. No stringers, ropes, or other devices, which would injure fish or subject them to unnecessary stress, shall be used. Dead fish large enough for scoring shall be kept by participants and submitted for scoring. Fish too small for scoring shall be returned to the water. No more fish than may be scored may be held in captivity at any time during competition hours. Fish shall not be mutilated or otherwise intentionally injured or mistreated. A swallowed single hook shall be cut free of other tackle and left in place whether the fish is to be kept or released. Lures may be extracted in the least injurious manner available.

25. CHECK IN AND LATE PENALTY: All competitors must check in with tournament officials at the official check-in site by the previously announced finish time. Failure to do so will result in a penalty of 1 pound per minute or portion of a minute deducted from the competitor's total weight of catch for that day. Any competitor who is more than 15 minutes late will lose all credit for that day's catch. There will be no acceptable excuses for tardiness.

26. HANDLING OF FISH AT CHECK-IN AND DURING THE WEIGH-IN: All fish present in a competitor's boat when he checks in at the check-in point become the property of the Tournament Committee. Discarding or transferring any fish will result in immediate disqualification. The practice of culling and measuring after check-in is prohibited. All fish shall be placed in containers supplied or approved by the Tournament Committee for transport to the scoring area. The containers may be placed in landing nets for added strength. Water shall be added to reduce injury. All fish that are alive at the completion of the scoring procedure shall be returned to the water by tournament officials except that the requests of governmental, education and research agencies may be honored, and trophy fish may be returned to the

participants who caught them when they request them for mounting and display. Fish not judged by tournament officials to be alive shall be protected from spoilage, and disposed of as food, or otherwise in a manner which complies with the law if; they are unfit for use as food.

27. TOURNAMENT CREEL AND SIZE LIMIT: At no time shall a team have more than five fish in the live well. Possession of more than five fish will result in disqualification. The minimum acceptable length of fish will be 12 inches with the exception of those bodies of water with a slot limit or a 14"/12" law (example 2 – 12" and 3 – 14"). Any fish which does not meet the minimum acceptable length will be removed from the competitor's catch and the competitor will be assessed a one-pound penalty for each short fish deducted from the total weight of his remaining legal fish. Any fish presented for weigh-in, which is judged to be dead will result in a four-ounce penalty for each such fish, deducted from the total weight of fish.

28. SCORING: For qualifiers, each team's score will be the weight of the legal bass, minus penalties, caught and kept during competition hours. The team with the greatest accumulated weight will be the winner of that tournament. Total weights will be arranged in descending order for other places. For team trail contract, if executed, each team's finish will receive points with the winning team receiving 200 points, second place receiving 199 points, third place receiving 198 points and so on. Any team participating without weighing in any fish shall receive 25 points for that event. There are no drops.

29. TIES: All ties will be determined first by the total weight, second by big fish caught and then by the flip of a coin.

30. VIOLATIONS. PROTESTS AND PENALTIES: Participants shall honor the letter and the intent of the Tournament Rules, or they shall be judged to have violated them. All judgments are reserved to the Tournament Committee. Participants who suspect that the Tournament Rules have been violated may protest to the Tournament Committee at any time during the tournament or within 15 minutes after arrival at the tournament sight followed with a written protest within 30 minutes after closing the scales. Protests shall be decided by the Tournament Committee through any means available within the Constitution and By-laws and Tournament Rules in consideration of the statements and other evidence presented by the concerned parties and witnesses. Polygraph examination, administered by a qualified examiner who is duly licensed by the Commonwealth of Virginia, shall be included among the methods available to the Tournament Committee for consideration in their deliberations. All participants shall be presumed to be familiar with the Tournament Rules and to have implied their consent and agreement to submit to polygraph examination when they affix their signatures to the official registration list. Polygraph examination may be requested only by the Chairman of the Tournament Committee and shall be provided under his supervision and at the expense of the B.A.S.S. Nation. Refusal to submit to such examination reasonably requested and provided may be considered during protest deliberations. Participants held by the Board of Directors to have violated the principles of fairness, sportsmanship and ethical conduct explicitly or implicitly included in the Tournament Rules may be declared ineligible to compete in present and future tournament events. Participants held by the Tournament Committee to be in violation of the

Tournament Rules shall be penalized as specified in the rules. When a penalty is not specified for a violator the Tournament Committee has the discretion of determining what degree of penalty is appropriate for the violation.

31. COMMUNICATION: During competition days of the tournament, a competitor may not use a cellular phone, a CB radio, a VHF marine band radio, or any other type of communication 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. Violators will be disqualified for that day's competition.

32. None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated tournament official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat at any time during the warm-up period or competition day.

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