

- 1.) **RULES:** These rules shall remain unchanged throughout 2024 season. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the tournament director. Federal, state, local and lake laws and rules must be obeyed at all times and shall supersede these rules when in conflict. Local divisions' rules may differ from these rules at the discretion of the tournament director.
- 2.) **PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:** Membership is required to participate in all AC tournaments. One team member must be at least 18 years of age. No membership required for youths under age 18. AC Tournaments reserves the right to decline any membership or entry that it feels is not in the best interest of AC Tournaments and its teams.
- 3.) **ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES AND DRUGS:** During tournament hours no alcoholic beverages or narcotic drugs may be consumed or allowed in the boat while on the water.
- 4.) **SPORTSMANSHIP:** Displaying of poor sportsmanship and bringing unfavorable publicity to the sport of bass fishing shall be grounds for team disqualification.
- 5.) **BOATS & MOTORS:** There is no horsepower limit; however, no engine may exceed the horsepower rating for the boat in use. All boats must meet US Coast Guard and state regulations. All boats must have an emergency kill switch. All boats must have a functioning aerated livewell suitable to sustain a healthy tournament limit. Standing on seats, or motor or the use of ladder or raised platform for the purpose locating or fishing for bedding fish is not permitted. Boats used must have an insurance policy in effect with a minimum of \$300,000.00 liability coverage.
- 6.) **SAFETY:** Boating safety must be observed at all times during practice and competition. A US Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver (PFD) must be worn and properly fastened any time the combustible engine is operative and the kill switch must be attached to the driver with a lanyard no longer than 48 inches.
- 7.) **TACKLE & EQUIPMENT:** Intentional snagging of fish will not be allowed. Trolling with the aid of combustion or electric motors is not permitted. Only artificial lures may be used. No live bait or prepared bait permitted with the exception of pork rinds and liquid fish attractants. Only one (1) rod may be used at any one time. Other rods may be in the boat and ready for use, however, every cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is made. Rods may not exceed ten feet in length. The use of underwater cameras is not allowed during competition. Use of a CB, VHF marine band radio, cellular phone, texting, or any electronic communication device for the purpose of locating or catching bass during tournament hours is prohibited.
- 8.) **PROTESTS:** All protests must be submitted in writing prior to the official closing of the scales.
- 9.) **POLYGRAPH:** All contestants are subject to a polygraph testing, failure to submit is grounds for disqualification. Any contestant who has failed a polygraph test for cheating in a bass tournament or whose results are found to be inconclusive shall not be eligible to compete in AC Tournaments. Polygraph and voice stress testing are performed at the discretion of the tournament director and all participants are bound by the findings and any penalties resulting from a failed test. Including but not limited to disqualification and forfeiture of prizes.
- 10.) **SCORING FISH:** Each team may weigh-in five-5) fish per day, a minimum of 12 inches in length unless state or lake limits are greater, measured on a flat board with mouth closed and tail compressed. Any team weighing-in a fish shorter than the legal tournament length will be assessed a one-1) lb. penalty plus the loss of the short fish. Any team bringing more than five-5) will have their largest fish removed down to 5 fish. A penalty of 1 lb. per dead fish will be deducted from the total weight. Any big bass brought to the scales deceased, will be directly subject to the 1 lb. penalty. Any team returning to the checkpoint late will be disqualified.

11.) **BREAKDOWNS:** Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. In the event of equipment failure, there shall be two permitted methods of returning to the check-in and weighing fish. (1) By both partners remaining in their boat and being towed by water, or (2) By one partner entering the boat of another contestant or staff member along with the days catch. Team's fish must be kept separate.

12.) **CULLING FISH:** It is the responsibility of each team to keep no more than 6 fish in the live well. Dead fish may not be culled. No culling is allowed in the host marina.

13.) **PERMITTED FISHING WATERS:** No fishing is allowed inside the host marina. No fishing is allowed within 50 yards of another anchored or tied tournament boat with trolling motor out of the water. Having anyone hole-sit for anyone shall be grounds for disqualification. Contestants cannot leave the boat to land a fish or gain access to a fishing area. Restricting natural movement of fish by any means is automatic disqualification.

14.) **GUIDES:** Paid guides are prohibited via verbal information or on the water information at the Championship. They may not be used during the 7 day Championship practice period or the 7 day Championship off limit days. Check with your director for local trail rules.

15.) **OFF LIMITS PERIOD AND FEE DEADLINES:** Each tournament director at their discretion may do so. Clarify this rule with your local tournament director. Late Fees may apply. There will be a 7 day off limits period prior to 7 days of practice at the Championship.

16.) **CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS:** Qualifying will be based on a points and pound format beginning with 100 points for first place and descending down by one 1) point per place. In each event " First Place " will receive 100 points plus their weight, e.g., 1st Place = 100 points + 20.50 lbs. = 120.50 points. This procedure will be followed for all teams weighing fish. The lowest team having weight will be the last points given based on the point's structure. All remaining teams that fished but did not weigh fish will receive one-half (½) of the next possible points based off the point structure. Example: The last team weighing fish in a 45-boat field ended at 40th place with 2.0 lbs. They would receive 60 points + 2.0 lbs = 62 points. The remaining 5 teams without weight would receive 29.5 points each ($59/2 = 29.5$). No points shall be awarded to contestants that pay but do not fish.

17.) **CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFYING:** You must fish a minimum of 5 regularly scheduled team tournaments during the year to qualify for a championship berth based on the 7 event point system. In a regular division the top 40% of the division average will qualify for the Championship. (Wild Cards): An additional 10% of the trail average can gain a classic berth via the Wild Card Tournament providing they have fished 7 events in the division. The Wild Card tournament will be the final tournament of each division and qualifiers will be selected by how they finish in that event after regular qualifiers are removed from the standings. The Choice Division will qualify the top 30% of the division after regular division qualifiers have been removed. AC Tournaments reserves the right to allow additional teams to participate to ensure full fields.

18.) **PARTNERS:** A team member may fish one event alone per division and accrue team points. Any team may use a substitute if one member cannot fish a given tournament. Two substituted events will be allowed per team, per 7 event average. In the event a partner is unable to make the TOC for some unforeseen reason, two qualifying members can join up to fish the Championship. This can only take place if both teams have qualified for the championship based on the qualifying rules laid out above and is approved by the home office.

19.) **CHOICE DIVISION:** Teams may fish an unlimited number of tournaments across multiple divisions in order to qualify for the Championship in the "Choice Division" but only their best 7 point events will be calculated. A team that fishes in 2 or more divisions automatically accumulates points in the "Choice Division". A team can qualify for a championship via more than one-1 division. However the division in which a team accumulates the highest

ranking will be the division they represent at the championship. A Team may also win more than one division. To win the Choice Division Championship you must fish a minimum of two events outside a single division. Two events outside the division must be included in your best seven and each trail applied must have a yearend minimum average of 15 boats. Points in the Choice Division are only for place finished. Weight is not calculated in the Choice Division Standings.

20.) PRACTICE PERIOD FOR CHAMPIONSHIP: Begins 7 days prior to the event. During Championship practice only your team member, another competitor or a member of your immediate family is allowed in the boat. Failure to follow these rules during the pre-fish period will result in disqualification from the event.

21.) DIVISIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP PROGRAM: At the conclusion of each division's tournament year the team with the most points shall be deemed the division champions. This shall also include the Choice division. As division champions, those teams will then advance to the Championship and fish against all other divisional champions. The top 5 divisional champions at the event shall be awarded the following prizes.

1st Place \$1,000.00 in Cash and, or Prizes plus 7 Entries for the following team season

2nd Place \$750.00 in Cash and, or Prizes plus 7 Entries for the following team season

3rd Place \$500.00 in Cash and, or Prizes plus 7 Entries for the following team season

4th Place \$250.00 in Cash and, or Prizes plus 7 Entries for the following team season

5th Place 7 Entries for the following team season

These prizes shall be independent of the regular Championship prizes and the divisional champions shall be fishing for both prize pools.