



The Ontario B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Rules The Hank Gibson Provincial Qualifier

The following rules shall apply to the Ontario B.A.S.S. Nation Hank Gibson Provincial Qualifier (the “Qualifier”) and are specified by the Ontario B.A.S.S. Nation (the “OBN”) Board of Directors. Individuals, if successful, shall qualify for one of the positions afforded to Team Ontario as a ‘Boater’ or ‘Non-Boater’, and be afforded the opportunity to compete in successive tournaments held within the B.A.S.S. Nation. Those who qualify for Team Ontario with the ‘Boater’ designation, through success in B.A.S.S. Nation sanctioned event(s), may become eligible to compete in the B.A.S.S. Classic. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his/her designee at the Qualifier. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director or Tournament Committee may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate by them, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, entry fee, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Subject to the appeal process set forth in *Section 21: Rules Violations and Appeals*, the decision of the Tournament Director, his/her designee, or the Tournament Committee, shall be final in all matters.

Penalties for rules violations may include the following:

- a) Reduction of competition hours as determined by the Tournament Director;
- b) Loss of one or more fish in question. All such fish must be marked and verified by either your partner or observer. If not verified, the entire catch may be disqualified;
- c) Loss of catch for the day of the violation;
- d) Disqualification from the Qualifier in question;
- e) Disqualification from future Qualifier events, and/or other events sanction by the OBN;
- f) Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director, including but not limited to penalties specified within a specific rule.

1. Participants and Eligibility

- (i) This tournament is open only to current members of the OBN who have been reported to be a Member In Good Standing by their OBN Chapter and are 16 years of age or older. Proof of age to the satisfaction of the Tournament Director or his designee is the responsibility of the Competitor.
- (ii) All candidates who enter the Qualifier must do so on the Official Entry Form, and designate all required information for the position of entry. The positions of entry are classified as ‘Boater’ or ‘Non-Boater’. Further requirements regarding the Official Entry Form are described below.
- (iii) Any competitor who, in the judgement of the Tournament Director, is disabled or impaired in such a manner as to unfairly hinder their partner or endanger the safety and well-being of their partner or themselves may be deemed ineligible to compete at any time, and shall forfeit their entry fee, as well as be subject to potential further discipline as determined by the OBN Executive Committee.
- (iv) During the Official Practice and Competition days, no ‘Boater’ or ‘Non-Boater’ may operate a boat unless that contestant has documented proof of a minimum of \$1,000,000.00, per occurrence, boat owner’s liability insurance covering the boat in practice or tournament. Checks will be conducted at the discretion of the Tournament Director, and any competitor who does not have proof of in-force insurance containing the required coverage may be disqualified. Proof of insurance coverage must show an effective start and expiration date. The Tournament Director, his/her designee, or tournament officials have the sole authority to determine if the insurance coverage documentation provided by the competitor meets the OBN requirements. It is recommended each ‘Non-Boater’ contestant have an endorsement of having passed a boating safety course. Failure to have proof of completion of such a course by a competitor entered as a ‘Boater’ shall result in disqualification and forfeiture of the entry fee.
- (v) A properly completed pre-printed and signed Official Entry Form, adequately endorsed by the OBN Chapter President, must be provided to the OBN, along with payment in full of the entry fee by the OBN Chapter by the published due date. The published due date shall be sent by the OBN Executive Committee, and posted on the OBN Website, and on the Official Entry Form for the applicable year of the Qualifier. The OBN Executive Committee, by way of the Tournament Director, reserves the right to discontinue the acceptance of Qualifier Entry Forms prior to the published due date.

2. Angler Code of Conduct

Anglers participating in any OBN sanctioned Qualifier shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates integrity, honour, and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament officials, and the general public and does not reflect unfavourably on the OBN or B.A.S.S., its members, Officers, tournaments, or sponsors.

To this end, anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of bass fishing. Any angler who violates any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to sanction by the OBN or the Tournament Director, which may include but are not limited to, suspension of membership, suspension of fishing eligibility in

Nation sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition in OBN sanctioned tournaments or events, forfeiture of membership, penalties of weight or catch, disqualification and forfeiture of entry fee, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by the OBN Executive Committee, or Tournament Director in the case of the application of penalties.

Media Comments, Public Attacks: The favourable public reputation of the OBN and B.A.S.S. as sanctioning organizations in the sport of fishing, the integrity of their Officials, and the reputation of their media properties or rights are valuable assets and tangible benefits for the OBN. Accordingly, it is an obligation of all competitors to refrain from comments to the news or by way of social media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of the Qualifier, OBN or B.A.S.S. tournaments, Tournament Officials, Sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers, the OBN or B.A.S.S. organization and their media platforms. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with OBN and/or B.A.S.S. policies are encouraged; however, attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials will not be tolerated. Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of the OBN or B.A.S.S., their officials or sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming a member of the OBN and may result in disciplinary action.

3. Practice and Competition

(i) There shall be no off-limits period for any tournament unless specified by the Tournament Director, or unless fishing periods and locations for bass are specified by a Provincial Statute or Regulation. Special off limits for practice and competition periods, when set, shall be published on the OBN Website, or announced by the Tournament Director at the Qualifier meeting should the need to set a location limit after the commencement of the official practice period.

(ii) The official practice period commences at 30 minutes after sunrise on the 5th day (i.e. the Monday before the scheduled Day 1 blast off) and ends at 3:00 pm on the day before the scheduled Day 1 blast off (i.e. Friday). Thus, all competitors must be off the water. Unless specified, all official times are Eastern Standard Time.

No practicing at night, defined as beginning at 30 minutes after local sunset and ending 30 minutes before local sunrise, to include running to and from a fishing location. In practice and competition, when running in low light conditions, running lights should be in operation.

The competitor must know and observe these times. During the competition, competitors shall be paired with another competitor, unless otherwise stated by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director has the right to extend the time for being off the water to accommodate OBN sanctioned events taking place on the Friday for those competitors volunteering or assisting in the event. Flying over tournament waters, other than a ticketed commercial airline, is prohibited during the official practice period. The use of drones for the purposes of locating or catching fish or gain a competitive advantage is prohibited in both the official practice period and the competition. During the official practice, competitors are not allowed to live well or keep any bass unless they have permission from tournament officials, otherwise the competitor shall be considered transporting bass for the sole purpose of stocking an area for use during the tournament, which is prohibited. Any competitor who is participating in an OBN sanctioned event on the last day of the official practice period (e.g. Take a Soldier Fishing Event) is deemed to have permission from the tournament officials to live well bass.

(iii) During the official practice period and competition, no competitor may snorkel, "skin dive", or "scuba dive" in the tournament waters.

(iv) No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor or third party (i.e. any other person) for use during the official practice period or competition.

(v) During the official practice period and competition, a competitor may not make cell phone calls or transmit text messages or emails for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Competitors are allowed to use smart phones for global maps or weather charts/forecasts. However, using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs, online bulletin boards, or social media is prohibited.

(vi) A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during the official practice period or competition. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.

(vii) Each competitor, by entering the tournament, agrees to report to the Tournament Director, or his/her designee or other tournament official, immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, or suggestions to another competitor that they violated these rules may be cause for disqualification or other penalty as assessed by the Tournament Director. Official protests must be filed in writing, and all parties of interest will be provided a copy. Official protests found to be frivolous or vexatious may result in penalty assessment of the protester by the Tournament Director, or subject to further discipline by the OBN Executive Committee.

(viii) By his or her signature on the Official Entry Form, each competitor agrees to abide by all rules established by B.A.S.S. subsequent to this tournament, if the competitor qualifies to become a member of Team Ontario. As such, the competitor acknowledges they could become subject to a truth verification test during any step of the tournament process successive to this Qualifier, and that such tests are administered at the discretion of B.A.S.S., with the test questions, date, time, and location subject to B.A.S.S. requirements. The costs associated with such tests will be established by B.A.S.S. within its rules for any event.

(ix) Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, or suggestions to another competitor that they violate these rules, or false verification of weigh-in forms, may be cause for disqualification. OFFICIAL PROTESTS MUST BE FILED WITH 24 HOURS OF THE INFRACTION. ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST WILL BE PROVIDED A COPY.

By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion. The OBN Tournament Director, rules committee, or such person designated by the Tournament Director, shall have the discretion to determine the need for a truth verification test. The OBN Tournament Director or his/her designee shall be responsible for selecting an independent expert to administer and interpret the results and establishing, in consultation with the expert administrator, the scope of the questions which may be asked during the test. The B.A.S.S. Tournament Director or his/her designee shall have sole responsibility selecting the location, date, and time of the test nearest B.A.S.S. headquarters with respect to all concerned parties schedule and travel cost. The competitor shall make himself/herself available at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such test. Anglers taking a truth verification test may be responsible for any and all costs incurred.

Random truth verifications tests may be administered on site during the course of a OBN Event.

4. Registration/Attendance

Each competitor must register in person with tournament officials at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. The schedule of events (inclusive of locations) shall be published on the OBN Website, and distributed to each Chapter or designated Chapter Captain by way of email prior to the start of the official practice period. The OBN reserves the right to alter the schedule and provide the changes to each Chapter or designated Chapter Captain by way of email or telephone call; it is the responsibility of each competitor to maintain contact with their Chapter or designated Chapter Captain. Failure to register in person with the tournament officials during the prescribed times may result in disqualification. The OBN Executive Committee, by way of its Tournament Director, reserves the right to adjust registration times for individuals where it is found to be in the best interest of the event. COMPETITORS MAY BE REQUIRED TO SHOW PROOF OF B.A.S.S. MEMBERSHIP, THE APPROPRIATE PROVINCIAL OR STATE FISHING LICENSE(S) TO COVER THE TOURNAMENT WATERS, AND BOAT OPERATORS CERTIFICATION CARDS, AT THE DISCRETION OF THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.

5. Safety

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed, by all competitors, at all times. During the official practice period and competition, each competitor must wear a Coast Guard approved chest-type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is in operation. This preserver must be strapped, snapped, or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Automatic inflatable life vests are eligible, and vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification or other penalty deemed appropriate by the Tournament Director. If a competitor is found to be in violation of this rule, the infraction shall also be reviewed by the OBN Executive Committee and may result in further sanctions. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH COMPETITOR TO SUPPLY A COAST GUARD APPROVED CHEST-TYPE PRESERVER FOR THEMSELVES, AND THE OBN IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR SUPPLYING SUCH RULES ELIGIBLE PRESERVERS.

It is recommended the 'Boater' competitor perform a safety check with each different 'Non-Boater' prior to launch to ensure both competitors are familiar with all safety equipment on board.

(ii) When boating in low visibility situations (i.e. fog, heavy rain etc.), during both the official practice period and competition, competitors must operate their boats at a safe speed and in a safe manner as determined by tournament officials.

(iii) The OBN, by way of its Tournament Director or designated officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel any part of the official practice period or competition, restrict or limit the size of tournament waters because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Weather delays resulting in half of the tournament day being lost shall result in the cancelation of the day. COMPETITORS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BOAT AND SEEK SAFE SHELTER IN BAD WEATHER WHERE DANGER MAY BE IMMINENT.

(iv) The OBN Executive Committee, by way of its Tournament Director, reserves the right to impose boat speed limits during any or all official practice periods and competition days. Unless imposed by the OBN Executive Committee, the discretion to impose a speed limit, the area covered by the speed limit, and/or the actual speed limit imposed, rests with the Tournament Director.

(vi) IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, COMPETITORS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST, AND THEN NOTIFY THE TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. THE SAFETY OF ALL COMPETITORS AND ON-THE-WATER TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS IS PARAMOUNT.

6. Sportsmanship

Competitors in all OBN and B.A.S.S. sanctioned events are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed a cause for disqualification.

(i) Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor, during the official practice period or during the competition will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future OBN and B.A.S.S. sanctioned tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or drugs shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice period or competition, or when in the weigh-in area. ALL COMPETITORS ARE REMINDED THAT *SECTION 1: PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY* (iii) EQUALLY APPLIES TO ANY COMPETITOR UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ANY PRESCRIBED DRUG, SUBSTANCE OR OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICATION.

(ii) 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 unfavourably upon the OBN's efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy may be reason for disqualification or other penalties.

(iii) All competitors are bound by the Statutes and Regulations established by the Province of the tournament location, and Canada. Competitors are responsible to ensure compliance with all

Statutes and Regulations established by any and all levels of government, regardless of origin (this includes those waters governed by aboriginal treaty rights and non-Canadian jurisdictions).

(iv) The OBN Executive Committee, on behalf of the OBN Board of Directors, reserves the right to delay (pending a review) or reject the submission of any Official Entry Form. If an Official Entry Form is rejected, the entry fee shall be refunded to the Chapter. Reasons for review or rejection of an Official Entry Form include, but are not limited to, substance abuse, any criminal conviction that could prevent a competitor from competing in a B.A.S.S. sanctioned event, any suspension or disqualification from a non-B.A.S.S. affiliated event, tournament or association deemed to apply by the OBN Executive Committee, or any conduct reflecting unfavourably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules.

7. Tackle and Equipment

Use of landing nets and grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition. During the official practice period and competition, no more than one (1) 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, subject to scoring rules. No "live bait", "dead bait", or "prepared bait" will be permitted during the official practice period 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 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. The "head and hook" portion of the lure must trail behind the blade or blades. The Tournament Director has the sole authority to determine whether a lure is considered a single lure as defined above.

Only one casting, spin casting, or spinning rod (8 foot maximum length from the butt of handle to the 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. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their catch disqualified.

Competitors are allowed to share baits and tackle at all times with one another, provided:

- The sharing of the bait or tackle is not "boat to boat" during the competition hours; or
- If during competition hours, the competitors are competing from within the same boat at the time the bait or tackle is shared.

8. Horsepower Regulations

The maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in the official practice period and competition will be **250 HP**. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by Coast Guard Standards. When required, each boat must have a 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 the OBN. Each competitor agrees to submit, by their signature on the Official Entry Form, the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament, to an inspection by the tournament officials, or individuals designated by the OBN Executive Committee, including qualified third persons of mechanical practice, at the cost of the competitor. This inspection will take place if there is reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance 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 Official Entry Forms, or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine, is also cause for immediate disqualification from OBN and B.A.S.S. tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by the OBN must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits shall result in a penalty by the Tournament Director, which may include disqualification.

9. Boat and Motor

THESE RESTRICTIONS APPLY TO THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE PERIOD AND COMPETITION. For the safety of all competitors, all boats must be equipped with an approved type of operable ignition kill switch and lanyard. Only one (1) manufactured lanyard may be used and it must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating and in gear. Any time the combustion engine is in operation 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. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Standing on the outboard 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 strolling or long line technique is only allowed with the trolling motor. No exceptions. All bladder tanks, and any other type of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer, are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options, installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer, are

permitted. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 68 litres (18 US Gallons) of gasoline, in tanks that meet Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be secured or strapped in a boat. 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. No boat equipped with "stick steering" shall be permitted to be used by any competitor. The Tournament Director shall define "Stick steering".

10. Basic Boat Equipment

DURING OFFICIAL PRACTICE SESSION AND COMPETITION, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment and a functional bilge pump. DURING THE COMPETITION, every boat must have live-well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive, a limit catch of bass by both competitors using the boat. 'Boater' competitors must make a back seat available for the 'Non-Boater' competitor each competition day. Additional information about livewell management can be found in *Section 17: Fish Care and Catch Management*.

11. Boat Identification

Prior to each day's start, each boat must be given to an inspections check by a tournament official or officials, as determined by the Tournament Director. Each day, each boat may be given a number, which must remain with the boat. When assigned, this number must be displayed in accordance with the Tournament Director's direction (i.e. on the motor cowling or approved and designated location on the boat). A separate identification piece (i.e. paint stick) for return at check-in or weigh-in may also be utilized at the discretion of Tournament Director. Instructions relating to the use of such additional identification pieces will be communicated by the Tournament Director at the Tournament Meeting.

12. Boat Operation and Expense

During competition, 'Boaters' will fish from the front deck, and 'Non-Boaters' from the rear deck. NO EXCEPTIONS. The 'Non-Boater' may leave the rear of the boat to land a fish, and vice versa. There is not a line drawn across the mid point of the point, or at the console(s). Anglers should respect each other at all times, ensuring each other has a fair opportunity to cast to avoid the crossing of lines.

During the competition, 'Non-Boaters' are only allowed to drive the 'Boater's' boat in emergency situations, with the exception of loading and unloading from trailers. During the official practice session, 'Non-Boaters' not practicing with a 'Boater' may practice, drive, and fish from the front deck of the boat. ANY 'BOATER' THAT, IN THE JUDGMENT OF THE TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS, OPERATES THE BOAT IN SUCH A MANNER AS TO UNFAIRLY HANDICAP THEIR 'NON-BOATER' PARTNER SHALL BE DISQUALIFIED. AT NO TIME MAY A 'BOATER' COMPETITOR REQUEST THAT THE 'NON-BOATER' COMPETITOR NOT FISH. In view of the large expense involved in operating and maintaining a tournament bass boat, it is suggested that the 'NON-BOATER' partner share in the cost of gas and oil for the competition day. **The OBN recommends a full discussion be held between the two partners prior to the morning departure and post weigh-in to ensure costs for the day have been appropriately determined and equalized between the two competitors.** In OBN events where Observers replace 'Non-Boaters' as the official rider, OBSERVERS CANNOT ASSIST THE 'BOATER' IN ANY WAY OTHER THAN TO LAND A NET IN THE FASHION OF A 'NON-BOATER'. Also, Observers are not required to help with the expense of gas and oil.

13. Permitted Fishing Locations

Tournament waters, when not established by the OBN Board of Directors or the OBN Executive Committee, shall be established by the Tournament Director. It is the responsibility of each competitor to obtain this information from the Tournament Director. Any water within these boundaries posted "Off Limits", "No Fishing", or "Restricted to Non-Motorized Boats" by Provincial, State, or Federal Regulators, as well as any other area designated by the Tournament Director will be OFF-LIMITS and will be announced at the Tournament Meeting. Only water that is open to ALL PUBLIC fishing will be considered tournament waters. Boats and casting is not permitted in OFF-LIMITS areas while fishing. All angling must take place from within the boat. Competitors MAY NOT change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters during the Official Practice Session or the Competition. Prior to the tournament registration, any questionable areas must be brought to the attention of the tournament officials to be considered for tournament waters, and may be announced in the Tournament Meeting for all to hear, unless determined otherwise by tournament officials. The OBN, by way of its Tournament Director, reserves the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on safety or conversations with local authorities.

14. Competitors Must Remain in Boat

During the official practice session and the competition, competitors must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times, except in case of dire emergency, or with permission from a tournament official. Exceptions are listed in Rules 5, 14, and 17. In such an emergency, or with permission of the Tournament Director, competitors may be removed from their boat, either to a boat operated by other competitors, or a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch, under the conditions cited above, in order for the catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. In the event of a needed restroom break or refueling situation at a marina gas pump, contestants are allowed to leave the boat, at which time all must cease fishing until partners are back together in the boat. If a competitor violates any of the above conditions (i.e. to contact the Tournament Director by phone or other means, or to report an

emergency or breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point and a tournament official must verify their catch in order to be counted in the tournament. If, after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials, and enough time is left for the competitors to resume fishing, a RESTART will be allowed, the competitors will continue, and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations as determined by the Tournament Director. Towing boats on trailers during competition hours is prohibited, except by the direction of the tournament officials.

Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until back in the boat before making another cast.

15. Official Checkpoints

There shall be only one official checkpoint for checkout in the morning, and one official check-in point in the afternoon, which shall be designated at the Tournament Meeting. Failure to go through boat check and checkout in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point in the afternoon may result in disqualification. At the time of checkout, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbers described in Rule 11 and may proceed to the designated area for their turn to weigh-in. Partners must stay together, through the weigh-in process if both are weighing in bass. Once bass are bagged for weigh-in, anglers that are not weighing in bass do not need to accompany their partner through the weigh-in process.

16. Scoring

The weigh scale designated by the Tournament Director shall determine tournament standings, contingency awards, and final winners. The read-out may be in pounds & ounces (e.g. 9 lbs. 15 oz.), or pounds & decimal pounds (e.g. 9.82 lbs.), and shall be consistent over the two competition days. Only Largemouth or Smallmouth bass will be weighed. The 'Boater' limit shall be 5, the 'Non-Boater' limit shall be 3, of the above species, per day, unless otherwise specified by the OBN Board of Directors, OBN Executive Committee, or Provincial, State, or Federal Regulators (i.e. Largemouth only or Smallmouth only), by way of the Tournament Director. At no time shall a competitor have in his/her possession more than the tournament limit, plus 1 bass. If a competitor determines they are over the limit, they must immediately reduce their catch to the tournament limit with a live bass of their choice from their catch. Each returned bass would result in a 2-pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. In this case, competitors must notify the Tournament Director, and if unsuccessful, must notify the Tournament Director after checking in, but before weighing in. Once a competitor checks in, they must present all legal bass to tournament officials by way of the process established at the Tournament Director. If a competitor checks in, and his/her catch is verified, and the competitor has more than the tournament limit, the competitor will reduce with live bass to the tournament limit and each returned bass will result in a 2 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. If a competitor has his fish verified and weighed, and upon returning to the boat discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that were not presented to tournament officials; he/she must immediately notify tournament officials and will receive a 2 pound penalty for each fish over the limit, and the penalty shall be applied to their daily catch.

The official length for bass shall be 12 inches, unless otherwise specified by the Tournament Director, or Provincial, State or Federal Regulators, and shall be announced at the Tournament Meeting. All bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in a penalty of 1 pound to the competitor's catch, and removed from the competitor's catch prior to weighing in. Culling tags, clips, or culling bags are allowed. The OBN recommends the use of culling clips that clamp over a fish's lip, causing little damage to a fish's jaw or lip. The use of clips that puncture, pierce or damage a fish's lip is not recommended. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament. The Tournament Officials shall designate bags during the weigh-in. More information about recommended fish culling practices can be found at the following link:
http://www.bassmaster.com/sites/default/files/Imce/KBA_HookLandHandle.pdf

17. Fish Care and Catch Management

All OBN tournaments adhere to a strict Catch and Release policy. Responsible fish care from time of capture to time of weigh-in is a priority of the OBN at all times.

• **Livewell Management:** The OBN recommends livewells be maintained at full level and with aerators/re-circulators on manual. Tournament Officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate. The OBN recommends livewells be maintained at a full level. Running the livewell pumps continuously is recommended. Running the recirculating pumps continuously is recommended if you have more than 5 pounds of bass in the livewell. It is further recommended that half of the livewell water be pumped out and replaced every 3 hours. Avoid adding water from stagnant backwaters or shallow areas that may be extremely warm and low in oxygen. The use of frozen bottles of water to reduce livewell water temperature (if required) is also recommended. The use of cubed ice to reduce livewell water temperature is not recommended. Additional information about livewell maintenance can be obtained at the following link:
http://www.bassmaster.com/sites/default/files/Imce/KBE_LivewellManage.pdf

• **Dead Bass:** CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized **4oz** from their daily score. Competitors are allowed to ice a dead fish that is part of their daily catch. The Tournament Director shall have sole authority for assessing penalties. In addition, the Tournament Director may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. It is suggested in warm weather conditions; anglers keep frozen bottles of water or extra ice for fish care. Refer to Livewell Management (see above) for livewell management recommendations. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water from marina sites; however they are not allowed to receive ice from other competitors or non-contestants.

- **Weigh-in Scales:** Upon mutual consent of both 'Boater' and 'Non-Boater' paired together, for fish care concerns, the weigh-in scales shall be opened at a time designated by the Tournament Director, and the time shall be announced at the Tournament Meeting.
- **Fish Handling:** The use of small dip nets for culling purposes is allowed. It is recommended all competitors keep bass in livewells during the culling process.
- **Fizzing:** Fish caught from deep water, generally greater than 18-20 feet, can suffer from a hyper buoyant condition. This results from an over expansion of the swim bladder. Fizzing can help alleviate this condition. Fizzing is best performed at the time hyper buoyancy is observed. Fizzing is best performed by anglers who have received prior orientation in fizzing techniques. For more information about fizzing, please consult the following link: http://www.bassmaster.com/sites/default/files/imce/KBA_Fizzing.pdf
Generally, additional information on fish care can be found at the following link:
http://www.bassmaster.com/sites/default/files/imce/KeepingBassAlive_guidebook%20comp.pdf

18. Late Penalty

Competitors who are not at the official check-in point at the appointed time, shall be penalized at the rate of **1** pound per minute late; to be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch that day, including any weight to be counted towards a "big fish award". A DEAD FISH CANNOT BE USED TOWARDS A "BIG FISH AWARD". Any competitor more than **15** minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. THERE SHALL BE NO EXCUSE FOR BEING LATE. After proper recognition at the check-in point, all fishing must cease. During the official practice session and the competition, fishing is only allowed during the designated hours.

19. Ties

'BOATER' DIVISION:

In the case of a tie in the first 11 positions at the end of the tournament, the following tiebreak will apply:

- Tie for 1st PLACE i. The competitor with the least number of legal fish weighed in, with the most weight will be declared the winner; ii. If Point i. does not break the tie, the competitor with the largest bag of fish weighed in during either day, will be declared the winner; or iii. If Point i. or Point ii. does not break the tie, a coin toss will determine the winner.
- Ties involving 10th, 11th, or 12th PLACE i. The competitor with the least number of legal fish weighed in, with the most weight will be declared the winner; ii. If Point i. does not break the tie, the competitor with the largest bag of fish weighed in during either day, will be declared the winner; or iii. If Point i. or Point ii. does not break the tie, a coin toss will determine the winner.

'NON-BOATER' DIVISION:

In the case of a tie in the first 11 positions at the end of the tournament, the following tiebreak will apply:

- Tie for 1st PLACE i. The competitor with the least number of legal fish weighed in, with the most weight will be declared the winner; ii. If Point i. does not break the tie, the competitor with the largest bag of fish weighed in during either day, will be declared the winner; or iii. If Point i. or Point ii. does not break the tie, a coin toss will determine the winner.
- Ties involving 10th, 11th, or 12th PLACE i. The competitor with the least number of legal fish weighed in, with the most weight will be declared the winner; ii. If Point i. does not break the tie, the competitor with the largest bag of fish weighed in during either day, will be declared the winner; or iii. If Point i. or Point ii. does not break the tie, a coin toss will determine the winner.

20. Pairings of Competitors

Two competitors shall be assigned to each boat. Announcement of your first-day fishing partner will be made at the Tournament Meeting, which **MUST BE ATTENDED**, except with permission from the Tournament Director, by each competitor. It will be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed upon location, with sufficient time remaining to check out at the official checkpoint and start on time. Tournament Officials reserve the right to designate locations for partners to meet, depending on the tournament location. Tournament officials have no responsibility to locate missing partners. The Tournament Director reserves the right to reassign partners prior to the morning take off. When two competitors check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other and each other's catch, throughout the day, until the weigh-in is completed, except in the case of dire emergency or exceptions (i.e. see *Section 14: Competitors Must Remain in Boat*, *Section 15: Official Checkpoints*, & *Section 17: Fish Care and Catch Management*). A competitor must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament, and are subject to further sanctions to be determined by the OBN Executive Committee.

'Non-Boaters' cannot pass information about their Day 1 'Boater's' fishing locations to their Day 2 partner. If they are found to do so, the 'Non-Boater' shall be disqualified. If the 'Boater' is found to be knowingly accepting the location information, and uses it to their benefit, the 'Boater' shall also be disqualified.

21. Rules Violations and Appeals

APPEALS: Unless the OBN President designates a separate committee for the role, the OBN Executive Committee shall be considered the Appeals Committee. If a separate Committee is established by the OBN President to hear Appeals, it must contain an odd number of members, include at least 2 members of the OBN Executive Committee, and may include 1 member of the Board of Directors (i.e. a Chapter Rep) who did not compete in the event. The committee must be named prior to the commencement of the official practice session.

Appeals for penalties assessed under any Rule must be presented in writing (or by way of email) to the OBN President within 48 hours from the time and date of ruling by the Tournament Director. Appeals hearings must take place within 7 business days from the date of receipt of the appeal and all parties must make themselves available at the prescribed time and place of the hearing. The OBN Executive Committee, by way of the Appeals Committee, reserves the right to set the location of the Hearing. If competitors admit to a rules violation, they may not appeal the finding that they have violated the rules or the penalty imposed for the violation. Decisions of the Appeals Committee shall be final.

22. Patches and/or Signage

Anglers are encouraged to wear the official Chapter shirt of their individual Chapter, or if they are a member of the immediate past Team Ontario, to wear the Team Ontario Tournament Shirt. In the event a competitor is not wearing a Chapter or Team Ontario shirt, the competitor is eligible to wear clothing that may bear patches, logos, or other similar signage promoting the angler's sponsors. The OBN, however, restricts the use of patches, logos, signage that promote or advertise products which are, in the OBN's sole judgment, in competition with the products or services of official OBN sponsors, or which are, in the OBN's sole judgment, in poor taste. The OBN will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. By completing the Official Entry Form, each competitor agrees to wear an official patch or logo of the OBN on his or her shirt during the competition from checkout each day to completing the weigh-in process.

23. Team Ontario

Team Ontario is comprised of those who qualify from this Tournament. The Team shall consist of the following:

- a) Positions 1 through 10 of the 'Boater' division Tournament Results;
- b) Positions 1 through 10 of the 'Non-Boater' division Tournament Results; and
- c) Alternates shall be selected from Position 11 from each applicable division Tournament Results.