

**The Bass Federation of Michigan
2009 State Championship - Official Rules**

- 1. Safety:** Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times by all tournament competitors. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver. **This preserver must be worn any time the combustion engine is operating.** The preserver must be snapped or zipped securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification.
- 2. Sportsmanship:** Competitors of our tournament are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infractions of the fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification for this and all future tournaments. 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 unfavorably upon our efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, may also be reason for disqualification. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise shall be allowed in the boats or at the weigh-ins. Any participant cited during tournament hours for a violation of State marine or fishing laws will be disqualified, if found guilty following due process of law.
- 3. Tackle and Equipment: Only artificial lures may be used. No "live Bait" or "prepared bait"** will be permitted with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only ONE casting or spinning rod (8 foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All others types prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use, however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught live in a legal conventional sporting manner.
- 4. Horsepower Regulations:** Your boat and motor must conform to B.I.A. Horsepower Ratings. Simply, your engine's horsepower is not to exceed the horsepower limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard horsepower rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard must NOT exceed the rating plate. Any boat manufactured prior to Nov. 1, 1972 must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Each competitor agrees to submit, by the signature on this document, the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament to an inspection by the factory trained personnel, and if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating.
- 5. Boat and motor: ALL boats must be equipped with some type of ignition kill switch. Kill switch must be in working order and attached to driver anytime the combustion engine is running.** Fishing boats may be used that are 14 feet or more in length. A small motor, gas or electric, may be used for slow maneuvering. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. No "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted.
- 6. Basic Boat Equipment:** Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and LIVE-WELL SPACE MOUNTED IN BOAT BY MANUFACTURER, PROPERLY AERATED TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE UP TO TWO LIMITS CATCH OF 5 BASS EACH FOR THE TWO ANGLERS USING THE BOAT. No coolers. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility of determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate".
- 7. Permitted Fishing Locations:** Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere **except within 50 yards of any marina gas pump or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat, which was first anchored.** A boat is considered anchored only if it is tied to an object or has anchor line over its side with trolling motor out of water. No such anchored boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within a 50-yard circle claimed by his to exclusion of any other competitor. **All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants must not depart to land fish. Boat must remain in tournament waters during the tournament day.** Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. If competitor must violate any of these conditions due to emergency, or any other reason, his catch of the day shall not be counted in the tournament. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by tournament officials. **Competitors must not leave their boat (both feet out) except in case of dire emergency.**
- 8. Official Check Point: there shall be only one official point for checking out in the morning, and check in at the end of the tournament day, and this point shall be designated at the tournament briefing.** At the time of morning check out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with the rules set forth by tournament committee. At the end of day check in all boats shall identify themselves by contacting the check in official at the designated check point, and proceed immediately to the designated weigh in area. You will be counted in if off plane and the check in official has noted that you are in. After proper recognition at the checkpoint, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site, however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After the tournament begins (you have registered in the morning), fishing is prohibited except during tournament hours. Any angler not checked out properly by the tournament director or designee shall be disqualified from participation. Any angler who fails to report to the official checkpoint shall be disqualified. The tournament director will designate whether the anglers can trailer their boat before weighing in their catch or not.
- 9. Scoring:** Tournament standings and auxiliary awards are determined by total pound and pound fractions of each angler's bass weighed in. Only **largemouth, spotted or smallmouth bass** will be weighed for each angler, up to the tournament limit of 5 bass each, unless local regulation requires the tournament director to change the limit to a lower number. Prevailing statutes and regulation of the various states within which they fish bind all competitors. **At no time shall a competitor have reduced to possession more than the 5 bass limit described above. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of this provision, and in the event a competitor has more than the 5 fish limit in possession, shall cut the largest first, down to the limit described. Competitors must present all bass in their possession for weigh in. The official length for bass shall be 14 inches unless local regulations require otherwise – tournament officials will announce any exceptions. Only bass measuring 14 inches or larger in length on the longest starting line, with mouth closed, shall be weighed-in.** Any bass that appears to have been mangled, hashed or mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed in and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. Bass must not be stringed at any time during the tournament. Bass must be caught using legal fishing methods. The tournament committee may furnish specially designed bags, which increase the survival rate, and these bags must be used for weigh in if provided. **Each angler's catch must be verified by signature of his/her day's partner.**
- 10. Dead Bass Penalty:** A penalty of 8 oz. for each dead bass weighed in will be deducted from the total weight of all legal bass in the sack. Only the tournament director/officials will determine if a bass is counted as live or not.

11. **Short Bass:** Deduction will be made for short bass as well as dead bass. Any bass presented for weigh-in by contestant that fails to measure 14 inches or more, according to the method described above, will be removed from the sack and disallowed. In addition, the largest bass of the sack will be culled. The total responsibility for having short bass in possession at any time will be that of the contestant.
12. **Late Penalty:** competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described previously by the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch that day, for each one (1) minute late. Any competitor more than 10 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuses for tardiness, and in no case shall a competitor be allowed to make-up lost time.
13. **Standings:** Final standings for each angler will be determined by total weight of all bass legally weighed in after penalties are applied and barring protest. The top 6 anglers in order of highest weight will be designated as boaters on the TBF of MI state team. Seventh through 12th place will be designated nonboaters on the TBF of MI state team. TBF of MI will determine Alternate(s). In the event a competitor cannot participate on the state team, prior to the start of the TBF Northern Divisional, the next highest finisher will replace that person. Once the Northern Divisional begins, alternates will be taken from the alternates and TBF of MI representatives present at the event location.
14. **Ties:** In the event of a tie for first place, the angler with the biggest single bass will be declared the champion. In the event of a tie for 6th place, the angler with the biggest single bass will be declared the final boater and the other angler will get 7th place. In the event of a tie for 12th place, the angler with the biggest single bass will be declared the final state team member and the other angler will get 13th place. Trophy positions among the other state team places, if tied, will be determined by big bass first and then a lottery among the tied anglers. In the event of a tie for any big bass award, big bass money will be split among those anglers and any plaques will be awarded by lottery among those tied. If a tie exists after comparing big bass weights for any of these places, the tie will be broken by lottery among those tied or a fish-off at the discretion of the tournament director.
15. **Rulings:** The tournament director (or tournament officials) and his/their designated appointees shall reserve all rights for rule interpretation and rulings thereof. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Furthermore, the tournament committee reserves the right to change the date of or the site of any given tournament. Protests must be in writing signed by the protester and filed within 20 minutes of the conclusion of the weigh-in. The tournament director has sole authority to deny the eligibility of any person at any time to participate in the tournament.
16. **Pairings:** Partners will be paired by draw. All anglers must meet with their assigned partners during pairings at the pre-tournament meeting. A discussion should occur as to the fishing locations and running the front of the boat (see Boat Operation). The tournament director, at his sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning takeoff. If more boaters than nonboaters are entered in the tournament, excess boaters will be paired together. If the number of nonboaters exceeds the number of boaters, excess boaters may choose to change to boater status or have their entry refunded with no service charge. The selection of nonboaters in this situation will be determined by date and time of entry beginning with those nonboaters who entered the tournament individually. If a TBF of MI club presents a boater and nonboater who signed up together, they can guarantee each other.
17. **Boat Operation:** Boaters and nonboaters each are entitled to equal time in the front of the boat to operate the trolling motor, and an equal number of hours to fish their selected waters (number of hours includes travel time to fishing locations). A discussion should take place before the tournament begins as to a schedule and locations. Boaters will have complete control of driving their boat with the combustion motor unless the anglers mutually agree on another arrangement. Any angler who, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in a manner that unfairly handicaps the other angler will be disqualified for that day. During tournament hours contestants may not obtain or receive assistance from noncompetitors, follow a noncompetitor's boat or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" or the placing of markers by anyone else. The use of mobile communication devices, including, but not limited to, cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., during tournament hours is strictly prohibited except in an emergency (severe weather, etc.) or to communicate with lockmasters. Contestants are expected to compete every day for which they are qualified; failure to do so may result in ineligibility to compete in future TBF of MI events.
18. **Courtesy Board:** Please measure all bass before they come to the scales. A courtesy board will not be provided. Any bass that are doubtful of making the legal length will be measured. Once bass are presented at the weigh-in tables, only TBF of MI tournament officials will be allowed to handle bass.
19. **Eligibility:** Participation is open to all participants 16 years of age or older. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of the potential contestant. Persons 16 years of age but not having reached the age of majority must also have a signed authorization slip from a parent or legal guardian. **Entry fees are NON-REFUNDABLE after the entry deadline except in the case of an emergency as determined by the tournament director.**
20. **Registration:** Every angler must be present for the registration. A representative will not be satisfactory. Each angler must register at the time and place designated. Failure to register during the prescribed hours shall result in mandatory disqualification. **NO EXCEPTIONS! There will be a mandatory pre-tournament meeting following registration that each angler must attend.**
21. **Pre-Tournament Practice:** There will be no practice period off-limits.
22. **Liability Insurance:** Liability insurance, with coverage in reasonable amounts, is required of all contestants in TBF of MI tournaments.
23. **No Wake Zones:** All legal no wake zones and areas are **NO PASS** unless the boat being passed is fishing or gives you verbal permission to pass. This applies to all boats in the same navigation channel. It is the responsibility of each angler to know the local laws and regulations.
24. **Polygraph Test:** Each contestant agrees to submit, by their signature on the official tournament entry form, to a polygraph examination and abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification. Polygraphs will be used at TBF of MI's sole discretion and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by TBF of MI.