



# Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation TEAM TRAIL RULES

## 1. BOAT AND MOTOR

For the safety of all contestants, **all boats must be equipped with some type of operable ignition kill switch.** This ignition-kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Anytime 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 may be used that are 16 feet or more in length. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunwale of the boat. A small electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering, however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. 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 and are installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer are legal. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat. **No boat equipped with "stick steering" shall be permitted to be used during the official practice or during the tournament by any competitor.** The definition of "stick steering" shall be made by the Tournament Director.

## 2. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the Tournament Director. Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except within 25 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water. All such boats are required to advise any other competitor when such boat believes the competitor is close to being within this 50-yard radius. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish with the 50-yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor. Any water within these boundaries posted Off-Limits or No Fishing by state or federal agencies will be **off-limits** and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to **all** public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Any waters closed to public fishing will be closed to this tournament's contestants. All angling must be done from the boat.

## 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, spin 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 other types prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in boat ready for use; however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before unhooked to be counted as a legal fish. The use of gaffs or grippers in landing bass is prohibited.

## 4. OFF-LIMITS / OFFICIAL PRACTICE

Off-limits areas will be announced prior to the tournament. Regular season tournament off-limits period begins the Sunday at sunset prior to the regular season tournament. Then you cannot fish that body of water until official practice begins the Thursday at sunrise prior to the tournament. The TOY tournament off-limits and official practice periods will be announced prior to the TOY tournament.

## **5. AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES**

It is against the law for anyone to move AIS on roads or into public waters. Specifically, Minnesota statute 84D prohibits the transportation of aquatic vegetation or prohibited invasive species on any public road. This statute prohibits placing any watercraft or trailer into state waters that have any aquatic vegetation, zebra mussels or any prohibited species attached. Additionally, a person leaving waters of the state must drain boating-related equipment holding water and live wells and bilges by removing the drain plug before transporting the watercraft and associated equipment on public roads.

Recommended Actions: Draining boat livewells and bilges. Washing boats exteriors and interior areas and or flushing interior pumps and water lines is recommended. Fishing equipment also should be inspected, paying particular attention for spiny waterfleas, which commonly collect on fishing lines, poles, anchor ropes, etc.

## **6. SPORTSMANSHIP**

Competitors in Team Trail tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future Team Trail tournaments. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially regarding boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a competitor which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the state within which they fish.

## **7. CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT**

Contestants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. Both competitors must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. In such emergency, competitors may be removed from their boat to: A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT. Partners must always remain together, in sight of each other and each other's catch under the conditions cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions (to contact a tournament official by phone or other means or to report an emergency or break down. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited.

### **Boat Break Down Procedures Contact Tournament Official First**

1. May contact another competitor, cull tag your fish, put your fish in their boat and make it back to official check-in on time.
2. Be towed in by water to official check-in on time.
3. If you have a replacement boat available to you. It must be checked in by a MNBN tournament official at the official take off location. Then must travel by water from tournament take off location and return to check in by official check in time.
4. No trailering of fish is allowed. However, a competitor may dump fish and trailer back to official take off site, and have their boat checked by a MNBN tournament official and be granted a restart from the original take off site.
5. Any of these must first be approved by Tournament Director.

## **8. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT**

There shall be only one official point for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon and this point shall be designated at the tournament briefing. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director; at check-in, all boats shall identify

themselves and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together at check-in.

## **9. SCORING**

There will be a 5 fish limit per team with a minimum fish length of 12 inches (except when local body of water minimum length is greater).

Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length, shall accrue penalties at the rate of 1 pound for each such bass and fish will not be weighed in. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 4 ounces (.25 pounds) of weight, to be deducted from his daily score. If a team weighs in 5 dead fish that team will be disqualified for the tournament and lose participation points for the tournament. The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points.

## **10. LATE PENALTY**

Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described at the appointed time shall lose one pound for every minute late. Competitors will be disqualified when fifteen or more minutes late.

## **11. TIES**

Ties will be broken: 1) highest number of fish weighed in 2) largest fish weighed in 3) a coin toss.

## **12. PROTESTS**

Protests must be presented to the Tournament Director, in writing, within 30 minutes after closing scales..

## **13. INSURANCE**

Boaters must show proof of a minimum of \$300,000 boating liability insurance to the MN B.A.S.S. Nation upon request. This documented proof must show an effective date and expiration date and must be in boat and accessible to tournament officials.

## **14. TOY CHAMPIONSHIP “WIN AND YOU ARE IN” AUTOMATIC ENTRY**

During the 4-tournament regular season, the team who wins each tournament will receive an automatic invite to the TOY championship. Team must fish all 4 regular season tournaments and weigh a fish in each of the 4 tournaments to receive an automatic invite.

## **15. TOY CHAMPIONSHIP QUALIFICATION**

At the conclusion of the 4-tournament regular season, the top 33% teams (rounded up to next whole number) in points standings who fished all regular season tournaments will receive an invite to the TOY championship. For example, if 50 teams participated, then the TOY field will comprise of 17 teams. If one or more teams “double qualifies”, the next team in points standings will be invited until a full field is reached.

## **16. SUBSTITUTIONS**

Each team is allowed one person to serve as a substitute for the season who can fish a maximum of two regular season events. However, you may only fish the TOY Championship or B.A.S.S. National Championship with your original team.