



Official Tournament Rules of the  
California BASS Nation Open Tournament

Effective January 1, 2019

1. RULES AND PENALTIES

The following rules shall apply to all California BASS Nation Opens and State Team Qualifying Tournaments. These rules may be changed by the California BASS Nation immediately upon notice by the California BASS Nation to its members, which notice may be published on the California BASS Nation internet site at [www.calbn.com](http://www.calbn.com). Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his/her designee at a tournament. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director or a rules 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 paragraph 22 below, the decision of the Tournament Director, his/her designee, or the rules committee, shall be final in all matters.

Except for very serious rules violations, as determined by California BASS Nation Board of Directors, such as the no-information and off-limits rules and any rules that might lead to disqualification of an angler from participation in the California BASS Nation Open tournaments or other California BASS Nation circuits, rules violations must be reported to tournament officials within 30 minutes of the final flight check-in on the day of the alleged violation.

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 caught in potential violation of rules or regulations. All bass under question must be marked and verified by your Partner. If not verified the entire catch may be disqualified.
- . (c) Loss of catch for the day of the violation
- . (d) Disqualification from the tournament in question
- . (e) Disqualification from future California BASS Nation events, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period of time, or may be a lifetime disqualification.
- . (f) Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director including but not limited to monetary fines and/or reduction of Angler of Year points.

## 2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

(i) California BASS Nation Open Tournaments are open to **Boater participants who are 18 years of age or older** and to **Non-boater participants who are 16 years of age or older**, who meet one of the following requirements: are a current member of a California BASS Nation affiliated club, or are an eligible Open Member participating in California BASS Nation Open events. Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of the potential competitor. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is disabled in such a manner as to unfair-

ly hinder his/her partner or endanger the safety and well-being of his/her partner or themselves may not be eligible.

(ii) DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY CALIFORNIA BASS NATION OPEN TOURNAMENT, NO BOATER OR NON-BOATER COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT CONTESTANT HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM OF \$300,000, PER OCCURRENCE, BOAT OWNERS LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERING THE BOAT BEING USED IN THE TOURNAMENT. PROOF OF INSURANCE MUST BE WITH THE BOAT BEING USED AND MUST COVER ALL PASSENGERS IN THAT BOAT. RANDOM CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED AND ANY COMPETITOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF IN-FORCE INSURANCE WITH \$300,000 COVERAGE MAY BE DISQUALIFIED. EACH POLICY MUST SHOW AN EFFECTIVE START AND EXPIRATION DATE. Tournament officials have sole authority to determine if insurance policies meet California BASS Nation requirements.

(iii) **A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY THE CALIFORNIA BASS NATION NO LATER THAN 11:59 PM ON THE SATURDAY PRIOR TO THE START OF COMPETITION DAY.** Upon winning any funds each competitor agrees to complete a W-9 and when required a FORM 590, or W-8 BEN provided by the California BASS Nation. If tax status or address changes occur, new forms must be submitted prior to participation in the next California BASS Nation event. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and also the right to extend the acceptance date. As a participant in California BASS Nation tournaments, you agree to allow your name, photographs, images and likeness to be used by the California BASS Nation at any time.

### 3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:

(i) Off-limits period, if any, shall be published prior to deadline date for any tournament as specified by the Tournament Director.

(ii) There will be an official practice period immediately prior to the first day of competition. One official practice day will begin at 12:01 am the Friday

prior to the start of competition. **During practice and competition all competitors must abide by official tournament rules and regulations, including life vest and kill switch rules. All competitors shall be off the water no later than 5 pm on the day prior to the start of competition days,** unless by prior approval by the Tournament Director. Unless otherwise specified, all official times are time zone specific to local host community. The competitor must know and observe these dates. During practice and competition a competitor can only have the assistance or advice of another competitor for the purposes of locating or catching bass on tournament waters. **Competitors may only fish with other competitors during practice and competition.** Flying over tournament waters, other than a ticketed commercial airline, is prohibited during official practice and competition unless approved by the tournament director. The use of drones for the purposes of locating or catching fish or to gain a competitive advantage is prohibited in both official practice and competition. During the official practice competitors are not allowed to live well or keep any bass unless they have permission from the Tournament Director.

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.

(iii) Competitors renting boat slips may launch boats and proceed immediately to slip location. Testing of engines after the weigh-in is only allowed with permission from the Tournament Director. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** During the official practice and during the tournament, a competitor may not snorkel, “skin dive” or “scuba dive” in the tournament waters.

(iv) No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day.

(v) During the official competition days of the tournament a competitor may not make cell calls for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Cell phones may be used for emergency situations. Competitors are allowed to use smart phones for global maps, weather, power gen-

eration, tidal charts, notes, etc., however using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs or social media is not permitted.

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

(vii) 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 entry or weigh-in forms, may be cause for disqualification. OFFICIAL PROTESTS MUST BE FILED IN ACCORDANCE WITH RULE 1.

By his/her entry via the official tournament entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion. The California BASS Nation 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 California BASS Nation 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 California BASS Nation Tournament Director or his/her designee shall have sole responsibility selecting the location, date, and time of the test 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.

#### 4. TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION and PRE-TOURNAMENT BRIEFING:

Each competitor must register via the official California BASS Nation entry form. **A roll call will be taken at the Pre-tournament Briefing, location and time designated by the California BASS Nation. All competitors must check-in, in person,** with official California BASS Nation staff at the time and place designated for that event. **Failure to check-in and attend the pre-**

tournament briefing, in person, at the prescribed time, will result in a 1/4 pound penalty, per occurrence, for that event. Any competitor who has not contacted the California BASS Nation Tournament Staff 15 minutes after the closing of the on-site pre-tournament briefing period, may be disqualified from participating in the tournament, without a right to refund of fees. It shall be each competitor's responsibility to check the schedule of events for registration deadline and pre-tournament briefing time and location, or obtain times from the California BASS Nation Tournament Department.

Competitors are required to enter the California BASS Nation Open events with another contestant counterpart, (one boater and one non-boater,) to guarantee a spot at this event. **No boater shall be allowed to participate in the event alone.** Any unpaired entrant shall be paired with a counterpart, when available, on a first-come, first-served basis. Once paired, changes to who you sign-up with are only allowed if both counterparts agree. Should one of the sign-up partners withdraw before or during the event, the counterpart shall also be removed without right-of-refund of entry fees. (Note: if a boater withdraws from a tournament for any reason, the corresponding non-boater sign-up will be withdrawn as well, and vice versa.) All effort will be made, when appropriate and available, to pair unpaired anglers as determined by the Tournament Director, including the possibility of an observer/pairing exception on Day 2 only.

## 5. SAFETY:

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the official practice 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. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may be reason for disqualification. Inflatable PFD's are allowed as long as U.S. Coast Guard regulations are met. The Coast Guard requires that inflatable PFD's must be worn at all times unless there is an equal number of non-inflatable Coast Guard approved PFD's on board.

It is suggested the Boater competitor have a safety check with the Non-Boater each day prior to launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.

It is recommended each contestant successfully complete a boating safety course. Boating safety courses are available online and should carry an endorsement by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators or NASBLA.

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

(iii) Radar units permanently mounted in the boat, subject to approval by the Tournament Director, may be approved for competition.

(iv) Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel any part of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time by the Tournament Director.

(v) The California BASS Nation reserves the right to impose boat speed limits during any or all tournaments. Whether or not to impose a speed limit, the area covered by the speed limit, and/or the actual speed limit imposed, shall be left exclusively to the discretion of the Tournament Director.

(vi) IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, COMPETITORS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND THEN NOTIFY TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

(vii) COMPETITORS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BOAT AND SEEK SAFE SHELTER IN BAD WEATHER WHERE DANGER MAY BE IMMINENT.

## 6. SPORTSMANSHIP:

Competitors in California BASS Nation 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.

(i) Use of alcohol AND marijuana, or the use of drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor, during the official practice or during the tournament, will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future California BASS Nation tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, marijuana or prohibited drugs shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, **or when in the weigh-in area.**

(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 unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters and courtesy, may be reason for disqualification.

Courtesy must be practiced at all time in regards to fellow contestants. At no time is a competitor to allowed to interfere with another competitor's line and casting across and catching another competitor's line will result in a penalty.

**A 50 yard encroachment rule is in effect at all times.** Sportsmanship dictates respecting others on the water whether in the tournament or not. No contestant's boat may move within 50 yards of another contestant's boat at any time for the purpose of fishing without the consent of all involved, and if allowed, must be allowed to all contestants. **A boat may not block access to a larger area.** A boat moving from one area to another may infringe upon this zone if it can be done safely, without fishing, and without intentionally disturbing the area, to access an area beyond the zone. Judging distance on the water can be difficult. A general rule of ethics is that all anglers should give others enough room to make a reasonable casting distance from a boat. An exception to this rule is while fishing docks or piers, in which case no contestant's boat may "protect" more than a single dock at a time regardless of distance.

(iii) All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the tournament location in which they fish. Some regulations may differ



from these rules resulting in fines, citations or other penalties at the discretion of law enforcement and may result in tournament penalties including disqualification. Any infraction resulting in a fine or citation by law enforcement during tournament hours must be reported to the Tournament Director by all contestants involved and/or a witness to such event immediately upon that day's check-in. Competitors are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations.

## 7. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT:

Anglers participating in any California BASS Nation-sanctioned event 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, honor and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament staff and the general public and does not reflect unfavorably on the California BASS Nation, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

Anglers are frequently in the public eye and are considered role models by young people; therefore, it is imperative that tournament competitors demonstrate good sportsmanship in fishing. **Sportsmanship is defined as fair play, respect for opponents and polite behavior while competing in the sport.**

(i.) Following are examples of unacceptable behavior by competitors in California BASS Nation events that will be cause for penalties as outlined in this document.

- Heated public disagreements with California BASS Nation officials, other competitors and fans and volunteers during an event.

- Public attacks through media, including social media, upon the integrity of California BASS Nation rules or officials.

- Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of the California BASS Nation, California BASS Nation officials and/or its sponsors.

- Displays of anger and displeasure for reasons related to fishing competition where members of the public, including other anglers, spectators and the media, are present.
- Publicly questioning or criticizing a tournament official or official decision, ruling or penalty except through the proper channels.
- Abuse (physical, verbal, threatening or slanderous) of tournament officials, volunteers, fellow competitors or others connected with a California BASS Nation event.
- Offensive or slanderous comments with racial, cultural or sexual overtones regarding event officials, event personnel or fellow anglers.
- Intentionally interfering with a fellow angler's ability to compete.

Any disqualification, suspension or other disciplinary action imposed by any tournament or fishing organization may result in disqualification from competition and rejection of an application for participation in a California BASS Nation tournament.

(ii.) Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or crimes involving moral turpitude, may be grounds for disqualification from competition and for rejecting any application for participation. Any angler who violates any of the provisions of the Sportsmanship Rules or the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to fines, reduction of points, forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual California BASS Nation sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by the California BASS Nation.

## 8. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:

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 subject to scoring rules (17). No "live bait," "dead bait," or "pre-

pared 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. California BASS Nation 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.

Competitors only are allowed to share baits and tackle with one another at any time.

## 9. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS:

Maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and in tournament competition will be 250 HP. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard. Minimum horsepower is 60 hp. 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 the California BASS Nation.

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 factory-trained personnel, if there is 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 California BASS Nation tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by the California BASS Nation must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits shall result in penalty which could include loss of competition hours and/or disqualification.

## 10. BOAT AND MOTOR:

These restrictions apply during official practice 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 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 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 with in length with a minimum 60 hp motor**, 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. 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 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 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. "Stick steering" shall be as defined by the Tournament Director. Jet drive engines are not allowed during both official practice and competition.

#### 11. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT:

During official practice and competition, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment and a functional bilge pump. **All boats must have operating lights and live wells prior to launching on competition days.** During official 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. California BASS Nation recommends live wells be maintained at full level and aerators/re-circulators on manual. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate. Boater competitors must make a back seat available for Non-Boaters each competition day.

#### 12. BOAT IDENTIFICATION:

Prior to each day's start, each boat must be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Each day, each boat may be given a number or means of identification, which must remain on/with the boat.

This number or means of identification must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials, and at each check-in.

#### 13. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE:

During competition, **in pro-am type events, Boaters will fish from the front deck, Non-Boaters from the rear deck, NO EXCEPTIONS.** Non-boaters may operate the electric motor only when asked to do so for the purpose of maintaining the safety of the boat and is not allowed to fish while on the front deck. During both official practice and competition, Non-Boaters are only allowed to drive (outboard engine) the Boater's boat in emergency situations with the exception of loading and unloading from trailers. During official practice, Non-Boaters not practicing with a Boater competitor, may practice, drive, and fish from the front deck of the boat. Any Boater that, in the judgment of the 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.

**The boater and non-boater pairing on each day of competition are required to share the cost of boat gas and oil for that day.** Each pairing must agree on a reasonable amount to determine that cost. Any disagreement to determine that cost may be brought to the Tournament Director whose decision in the matter will be considered final.

#### 14. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the California BASS Nation Tournament Department. Any water within these boundaries posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing" by state or federal agencies, as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director, will be OFF-LIMITS and will be announced at the Pre-tournament Briefing. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Waters deemed off limits by authorities or tournament officials should be treated like a wall. No boats or casting behind that boundary while fishing. All angling must be done from the boat. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations. Prior to the tournament registration, any questionable areas must be brought to the attention of tournament officials to be considered tournament waters and may be announced in the briefing for all to hear unless determined otherwise by

tournament officials. Tournament officials reserve the right to restrict or enhance tournament waters based on conversations with local authorities.

#### 15. COMPETITORS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT:

During the competition days, competitors must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Competitors may not shift a majority of their weight outside the boat and onto a dock or other object outside the boat for the purpose of landing a bass or accessing a fishing spot. A bass that cannot be landed without the angler leaving the boat or shifting his weight outside the boat must be released immediately. While keeping the majority of weight in the boat anglers are allowed for boat protection to push or shove off objects while landing a fish to be counted as legal. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until the competitor is back in the boat. Only then may another cast be made.

Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both anglers must remain in the boat at all times, except in case of dire emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director. Exceptions spelled out in rules 5, 15, and 18.

In such an emergency, or with permission of the Tournament Director, competitors may be removed from their boat to a boat operated by another competitor in the same event, or a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director and with prior Tournament Director approval. Boater may remain with the disabled boat and non-boater may return with both of the angler's catch as long as said catch is able to be maintained and marked separately for weigh-in.

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 fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat. If a competitor violates any of the above conditions (to contact a tournament official by phone or other means, or to report an emergency or breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point and their catch must be verified by a tournament official 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 or his/her designee. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials.

#### 16. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS:

There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning, and one official check-in point in the afternoon, which shall be designated at the tournament briefing. Failure to go through boat check and check-out in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point in the afternoon may result in disqualification. At the time of check-out, 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 described by the Tournament Director and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together through the weigh-in process unless prior approval has been given by the Tournament Director.

#### 17. SCORING:

Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound-and-ounce weight of each competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye or Shoal bass will be weighed. The Boater limit shall be 5, Non-Boater limit shall be 3, of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials (example – hot weather/fish care concerns).

At no time shall a competitor have in his or her possession more than the tournament limit. If a competitor determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce his catch to the tournament limit with a live bass of their choice from their catch. Each returned bass will result in a 2 pound penalty to be deducted from their daily score. In this case, competitors must attempt to notify tournament officials and if unsuccessful must notify officials at check in.



**Once a competitor checks in they must present all bass to tournament officials at the verification table.** If competitors at the verification table have 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, weighed and upon returning to the boat discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that were not presented to officials; he then must notify tournament officials within one hour of final flight check in to receive a 2 lb. penalty for each bass discovered.

The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the Pre-tournament Briefing. In most cases it will be the State governing authority's size limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, mouth closed and tail fanned, shall be weighed. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in the loss of the short fish and a penalty of 1 pound for each such bass, which 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.

After competitors check in at the official checkpoint they **MUST** present all fish in their possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a competitor's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that competitor may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded.

Bass must not be stringered at any time during the tournament. **Only non-penetrating culling devices are allowed. Only weigh-in bags provided by tournament staff may be used**, to control the flow of the weigh-in process and the health of the catch.

#### 18. CATCH AND RELEASE:

**CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED.** For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 4 oz. (1/4

lb.) to be deducted from their daily score. Competitors are allowed to ice a dead fish that is part of their daily catch. The Tournament Director, or his/her designees, shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points. In addition, the Tournament Director, or his/her designees, may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water; however they are not allowed to receive ice from non contestants. SMALL DIP NETS FOR CULLING PURPOSES ARE ENCOURAGED. It is recommended competitors keep all bass in live wells during the culling process. Placing bass on the boat carpet during culling is not advised. Learning how to safely perform a fizzing technique is suggested and instructions on acceptable fizzing practices are available on-line.

#### 19. LATE PENALTY:

Competitors who are not at the official check-in point as described in Rule 16 and at the Pre-tournament Briefing, at the appointed time, shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late; to be deducted from the total weight of his/her catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "big bass award". Any competitor more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness, and in no case, shall a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time." After proper recognition at the check-in point, 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, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the Pre-tournament Briefing. It is each competitor's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day with a tournament official.

#### 20. TIES:

At any California BASS Nation Open event, in the Boater or Non-Boater division, in case of a tie for first place that is not resolved by the four (4) tie breakers listed below, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the

tied competitors, under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials.

All other ties will be resolved in the following order: (1) individual with heaviest single day total catch during competition; (2) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the second heaviest single day total catch during competition; (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest number of legal fish weighed during competition; (4) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the largest number of legal live fish weighed during competition. If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie, and monetary prizes for each competitor will be awarded in an equal amount between the tied competitors. In the instance where merchandise is involved, it will be awarded as determined by tournament officials.

## 21. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS:

Two competitors will be assigned to each boat. **Boaters may not fish alone unless designated by the Tournament Director.** Announcement of your first-day fishing partner will be made prior to or at the Tournament Briefing, which must be attended 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 shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. The Tournament Director, at his/her sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning take-off. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation prior to the Pre-Tournament Briefing and to depart to the check-out point.

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 case of dire emergency or exceptions (see Rule 15, 16 & 18). 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 tour-

nement and from all future tournaments conducted by the California BASS Nation.

## 22. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE:

An appeals committee will be established by the California BASS Nation, which shall be comprised of the current California BASS Nation Executive Officers in attendance, plus two competitors at that event as designated by the State President and/or Tournament Director. Appeals for penalties assessed under Rule 1 (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) must be presented in writing 30 minutes from the time and date of ruling to the Tournament Director. Appeals hearings shall take place immediately after the completion of weigh-in, or, if necessary and only at the discretion of the California BASS Nation Executive Officers in attendance, within ten (10) business days from the date of receipt of the written appeal. All parties must make themselves available at the prescribed time of hearing. If competitors admit to a rules violation, they may not file an appeal of either the finding that they have violated the rules or the penalty imposed for the violation. Decisions of the appeals committee shall be final.

Competitors are allowed to compete under appeal. Final standings will not be official until all appeals hearings are final and ruled upon. However, all standings above that of any appealing angler, as well as any adjusted final standings may be declared official. Standings, including points and monetary awards, may be adjusted after appeals final ruling and all affected anglers shall comply with all details of the final ruling.

## 23. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE:

Anglers are encouraged to wear their own clothing which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the angler's sponsors. The California BASS Nation may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are, in California BASS Nation's sole judgment, in poor taste or reflects negatively on the organization as a whole. California BASS Nation will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances.

## 24. TAXES:

Competitors are responsible for all applicable taxes on both cash and merchandise awards.

## 25. WAIVER AND RELEASE\*:

Upon submitting your entry and as a condition of participation in each tournament, each competitor must execute a waiver and release of liability, and a name and likeness release. By entering California BASS Nation events all competitors agree to abide by these rules and all decisions made regarding these rules. \*See Waiver and Release Agreement detail at end of this document.

## 26. STATE TEAM Competitors:

All State Team competitors agree to abide by The Rules of State Team Membership with regards to further participation as a State Team Member and representation of the California BASS Nation at State Team Regional and National events, or any promotional events conducted as a State Team. This includes wearing of required Official State Team Apparel and participation in required State Team functions and responsibilities regardless of any other sponsor that a member may choose to affiliate with, especially when that affiliation conflicts with a California BASS Nation official sponsor or is deemed inappropriate by the California BASS Nation Board of Directors.

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\*WAIVER & RELEASE AGREEMENT: The undersigned understands and agrees that as consideration for being allowed to participate in any California B.A.S.S. Nation event, whether prior to commencement, during the actual event and/or during any post-event festivities, he or she is doing so at his or her own risk. California B.A.S.S. Nation and its owners, managers, employees, agents and sponsors (collectively "California B.A.S.S. Nation"), shall not be liable for any damages, claims or causes of action arising from personal injuries or property damage sustained in, on or about the premises or waterways used for any California B.A.S.S. Nation event, specifically including, but not limited

to, all boat launches, bodies of water, parking lots or other public or private areas used for any California B.A.S.S. Nation event. The undersigned assumes full responsibility for any injuries or damages which may occur during any California B.A.S.S. Nation event, however caused, regardless of whether such injuries or damages are caused by the negligence of California B.A.S.S. Nation or any of its employees or agents.