

## Official Rules of Competition

**C1.** The following rules shall apply to all Bassmaster Elite and Bassmaster Classic events except that (i) rules for special tournaments may differ from those contained herein and (ii) these rules may be changed by BASS immediately upon notice by BASS to its members which notice may be published on the BASS Internet site at [www.espnoutdoors.com](http://www.espnoutdoors.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 rules committee may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate by them, including, without limitation, disqualification, and 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.

Elite Series Pros are required to police themselves each competition day and must sign a Rules Adherence Form. If a pro has a concern regarding his catch he should not sign off on rules adherence, weigh his fish, and consult with rules officials immediately after weigh in. Anglers who sign off to full adherence and later found guilty of a rules violation **MAY BE DISQUALIFIED** from the tournament. Anglers not signing official score card will not start next official competition day unless directed by tournament officials.

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 marshal/camera operator. 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 BASS events which may be from a specific number of events or for 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.

### **C2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:**

(i) This tournament is open only to current members of BASS who are 16 years of age or older. However, employees, officers and directors of BASS or its parent, subsidiary and affiliated companies and members of their immediate families (spouse, parents, children and siblings, regardless of where they live) are ineligible. 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 unfairly hinder his/her partner or endanger the safety and well-being of their partner or themselves shall not be eligible. To be eligible for the 2010 Bassmaster Classic Elite Pro anglers must participate in all 2009 Elite Series events in which they are eligible unless approved by the Tournament Director.

(ii) DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY BASS TOURNAMENT, NO COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT CONTESTANT HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM OF \$300,000 PER OCCURRENCE BOAT OWNERS LIABILITY INSURANCE (SEE PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT FOR FULL DETAILS) 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.

(iii) ELITE Pros will be provided a payment schedule. Bassmaster Elite Series Marshals must provide a properly completed and signed official entry form and the deposit must be received by the BASS Tournament Department on or before the deposit deadline date. All competitors must complete a W-9 and when required a Form 590, or W-8 BEN provided by BASS (one time). Marshal BALANCE DUE DATE WILL BE 30 DAYS PRIOR TO THE FIRST OFFICIAL COMPETITION DAY. Any balances or new entries received after the balance due date will be subject to a \$50 late fee. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and also the right to extend the acceptance date. DEPOSITS ARE NON-REFUNDABLE AND NON-TRANSFERABLE REGARDLESS OF DATE OF CANCELLATION. While a sponsor may pay the entry fees, competitors agree to use any and all official equipment provided by BASS in Elite Series and the Bassmaster Classic®. Competitors may miss an event in cases of dire emergency only on approval from the Tournament Director. Elite Pro Angler entry fees for the Elite Series are paid for the entire series, not on an event-by-event basis. While a competitor may miss an Elite Series event in case of a dire emergency, fees for the Elite Series have to be paid on schedule in full and there will be no refund for a missed event. Elite Pro anglers will be furnished a payment schedule with penalties for late payments.

(iv) The required method for Marshal Registration is online at [www.bassmaster.com](http://www.bassmaster.com).

### **C3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION:**

(i) Tournament waters shall be off-limits to all Pro contestants 27 to 30 days prior to the first practice day in all Elite Series events unless otherwise notified by BASS. Off limits for Elite Series tournament waters will start at 12:01 am local time the Monday falling in the 27 – 30 days prior to first practice day. Special off limits and practice period for the Bassmaster Classic will be announced by BASS. During the off limits periods, other than using publicly-available information (e.g. newspaper and Internet reports) Pro competitors cannot solicit, receive, or gather any information via phone, electronic devices, or any other means about locating or catching fish on tournament waters. THERE SHALL BE NO EXCEPTIONS. All information must be opened or accessed prior to official off limits periods, no exceptions. For a first offense, the competitor will be disqualified from the tournament. For a second offense, the competitor will lose his eligibility for the following year's Elite Series events. During practice and competition Pro anglers cannot solicit, receive, or gather any information from anyone other than another competitor in the tournament. NO EXCEPTIONS.

ELITE SERIES PROS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HAVE ANYONE IN THEIR BOAT IN THE ACT OF FISHING DURING OFFICIAL PRACTICE. RIDERS ARE ALLOWED. PROS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO GET INFORMATION FROM A RIDER IN OFFICIAL PRACTICE FOR PURPOSES OF LOCATING OR CATCHING BASS ON TOURNAMENT WATERS. RIDERS MUST NOT BE ON TOURNAMENT WATERS DURING OFF LIMITS PERIOD UNLESS APPROVED BY BASS. MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES MUST SIGN MEDIA WAIVER OBTAINED FROM BASS COMMUNICATIONS. BASS RESERVES THE RIGHT TO ASSIGN PRACTICE RIDERS.

Sharing of baits and tackle by pro contestants is allowed.

(ii) There will be an official practice period immediately prior to the first competition day of the tournament. Bassmaster ELITE SERIES Official three day practice will be announced by BASS. No competitors will be allowed on Tournament waters after registration until the first day of competition, except under rule 3(iii). Unless otherwise specified, all official times are specific to local host community. The competitor must know and observe these dates. During both the official practice and the tournament, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone for the purposes of locating or catching bass, nor enter the tournament waters with anyone who has been on the tournament waters during the off-limits period including, but not limited to, a professional guide, state or federal wildlife agency employee, or any other person deemed an "expert" on these tournament waters by the Tournament Director, unless they are a competitor in the tournament. Marshals are not allowed to share information with Pro contestants. NO EXCEPTIONS. Flying over tournament waters during official competition is not allowed.

(iii) Anglers renting boat slips may launch boats and proceed immediately to slip location. Testing of engines during off-limits period is not permitted on tournament waters. 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 "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 use a CB radio, a VHF marine-band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communication device for the purpose of locating or catching fish. Competitors are permitted to transmit by radio or telephone only in the event of an emergency. If so equipped, competitors may listen to the marine-band weather information. Competitors are allowed to call lockmasters for locking purposes only.

(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 weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification. OFFICIAL PROTESTS MUST BE FILED IN WRITING AND ALL PARTIES OF INTEREST WILL BE PROVIDED A COPY.

By signature on the Elite Series participation agreement or the official entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a polygraph examination and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The BASS Tournament Director or rules committee or such person designated by the Tournament Director shall have the discretion to determine the need for a polygraph examination. The BASS 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 polygraph examination. The BASS Tournament Director or his/her designee shall attempt to have the location of such polygraph examination as close in proximity to the angler's permanent address or such other mutually convenient location as possible. The competitor shall make himself/herself available at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such examination. Anglers taking a polygraph examination may be responsible for any and all cost incurred.

#### **C4. REGISTRATION:**

Each competitor must register in person with official BASS staff at the time and place designated in the schedule of events. Failure to register in person during the prescribed hours shall result in a \$50 fine. NO EXCEPTIONS. Any competitor or marshal who has not contacted the BASS Tournament Staff 15 minutes after the closing of the posted on site registration, may be disqualified from participating in the tournament. IT SHALL BE EACH COMPETITOR'S

RESPONSIBILITY TO EITHER CHECK THE SCHEDULE OF EVENTS FOR REGISTRATION TIME AND LOCATION OR OBTAIN TIMES FROM THE BASS TOURNAMENT DEPARTMENT.

**C5. SAFETY:**

(i) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the official practice and competition, each boat passenger must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is operating. 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 shall be reason for disqualification. Pros must carry two Coast Guard approved chest type life preservers per boat.

**It is suggested the Pro competitor have a safety check with the Marshall each day prior to the launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.**

(ii) Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel the start 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 because of bad weather. Weather delays on full field days resulting in half of the tournament day being lost (first flight take-off and check in) may result in cancellation. Full fields may be carried over to cut days.

(iii) BASS 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. All boats used in Elite Series events must have a GPS unit on the console capable of displaying current miles per hour while on plane.

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

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

**C6. SPORTSMANSHIP:**

Competitors in BASS 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 or 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 BASS tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, 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, shall be reason for disqualification.

(iii) All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. Competitors are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations.

(iv) Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. Any disqualification suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in a BASS tournament and/or disqualification from a BASS tournament after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director.

**C7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:**

Use of dip nets and grippers for landing bass is prohibited during tournament competition. Only artificial lures and biodegradable artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. 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. 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 catch disqualified. When visually fishing a bed or 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. Pro Competitors are allowed to share baits and tackle at all times including Pro Competitors who have been cut from competition.

**C8. 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. 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 BASS. Each competitor agrees to submit, by his 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 any 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 BASS tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by BASS must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Violations of speed limits shall result in loss of competition hours and not limited to disqualification.

**C9. BOAT AND MOTOR (during official practice and competition):**

For the safety of all competitors during official practice and competition, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH AN APPROVED TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH AND LANYARD. Only one manufacturer's lanyard may be used and must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. 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 in length may be used. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Standing on the outboard engine 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. 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 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. "Stick steering" shall be as defined by the Tournament Director.

**C10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT:**

During official practice and competition, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment as well as a functional bilge pump. During official competition every boat must have LIVEWELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED, TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE A LIMIT CATCH OF BASS. BASS 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. Pros must make a back seat available for marshals each competition day.

PROS ARE REQUIRED TO MAKE ONE DRY STORAGE COMPARTMENT AVAILABLE TO MARSHALS. PROS ARE REQUIRED TO PROVIDE MARSHALS AMPLE SPACE TO ICE FOOD AND DRINK.

**C11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION:**

Prior to each day's start, each boat MUST be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Each day, each boat will be given a number, which MUST remain with the boat. This number must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials and at each check-in.

**C12. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE:**

During competition Pros are allowed to fish from anywhere inside the boat. Marshalls should make every reasonable effort to not get in way of Pros when fishing. MARSHALS ARE NOT ALLOWED TO HELP PRO IN ANY WAY. MARSHALS ARE ALLOWED TO DRIVE BOATS ONLY IN CASES OF EMERGENCY OR WITH PERMISSION FROM TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS with exception of loading and unloading boats from trailers. All cost of boat operation is responsibility of Pro contestants.

MARSHAL OBLIGATIONS – Marshals are required to have knowledge of BASStrak operation. BASStrak operation to be explained in tournament briefing by tournament officials. Pros and marshals are to be honest and timely with catch and weight reports. Any pro who, in the judgment of tournament officials, advises marshals to neglect or false report catches or weights may be penalized. Marshalls are not allowed to carry GPS systems or use cell phones during competition unless directed by tournament officials. Marshalls are allowed to carry still cameras.

**C13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:**

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the BASS 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 Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. 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.

**C14. 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. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Pros 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 C5, C14, and C17. In such an emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director, competitors may be removed from their boat to either A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT DESIGNATED BY THE TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR. Pros and Marshalls must remain together at all times, in sight of the pro's catch, under the conditions cited above, in order for the pro's catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. In the event of a needed restroom break partners are

allowed to leave the boat upon which 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), 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 competitor to resume fishing, a RESTART will be allowed and the competitor will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations as determined by the Tournament Director or his designee. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials.

#### **C15. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:**

There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning, and one official check-in point in the afternoon, which points 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 of the numbers described in Rule C11 and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Pros and Marshals must stay together to the weigh-in process. Once bass are bagged for weigh-in marshals are not required to accompany their Pro through the weigh-in process.

#### **C16. 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 limit shall be 5 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. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of this provision, and in the event a competitor has more than the above-described limits in possession, shall cull down to the limit described, beginning with the largest bass first. Once tournament officials reduce catch to prescribed limit and time allows, contestants may resume their competition day. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the Tournament Briefing. In most cases it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in 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 LEGAL 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. Culling tags or clips are allowed. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the Tournament Director and must be used for the weigh-in.

#### **C17. CATCH AND RELEASE:**

**CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED.** For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 8 oz per dead fish, to be deducted from their daily score. The Tournament Director or his/her designees shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water from a retail store. However, they are not allowed to receive ice from non contestants. For fish care concerns, the verification table will open one hour before first flight check in time. **SMALL DIP NETS FOR CULLING PURPOSES ARE ENCOURAGED. DIP NETS CANNOT BE USED FOR LANDING BASS.**

#### **C18. LATE PENALTY:**

Competitors who are not at the official check in point, as described in Rule C15 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 to include points credit under rule C19. 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 Tournament Briefing. It is the angler's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day on the daily pairings.

#### **C19. 300 POINT SYSTEM FOR ALL BASS SERIES:**

At the conclusion of the tournament points will be awarded to competitors as follows:

- 1st - 5th five point increments
- 6th - 10th four point increments
- 11th - 15th three point increments
- 16th - 99th two point increments
- 100th - balance of field, one point each until end of field or points run out
- Bonus points – 5 per day for tournament leader
- Must weigh a legal fish per tournament to receive points for that event
- Ties – Refer to Rule # 20 below.

Standings will reflect ties starting at place closest to first.

- End of year point tiebreakers shall be total weights from full field days for season.

#### **C20. TIES:**

In case of a tie for first place weight in the Pro division at the end of the tournament, there will be a sudden-death fish-off between the tied competitors under the direction and special rules established by tournament officials. Ties for standard cuts and places below first at the end of the tournament will be resolved in the following order: (1) largest number of legal fish weighed during competition; (2) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the largest number of legal live fish weighed during competition; (3) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with heaviest single day catch during competition; (4) if the tie is not broken, the next tiebreaker will be the individual with the second heaviest single day catch during competition. If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie. Monetary prizes for each competitor will be awarded in equal amounts. Angler of the Year points will be awarded for the place of the tied position and each competitor will be awarded equal points. In BASS ELITE Events where weights are zeroed ties for cuts going into the final round shall be broken by Angler of the Year standings following most recent concluded Elite Series Event.

#### **C21. PAIRINGS**

Pros and Marshals may be assigned to each boat. Announcement of your first-day partner shall be made at the Tournament Briefing, which **MUST BE ATTENDED** by pros and marshals. It shall 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 to depart to the check-out point. When partners check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other and the pro's catch throughout the day until the pros fish are bagged for weigh-in except in case of dire emergency (see Rules C14, C15 & C17 for exceptions). A competitor must not allow any bass caught by him/her to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by BASS.

#### **C22. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE:**

An appeals committee will be established by BASS, which shall be comprised of one BASS employee not affiliated with the Tournament Department, and two anglers who are not competitors in the event in question. Appeals for penalties assessed under Rule C1 (b), (c), (d), (e) & (f) must be presented in writing 48 hours from the time and date of ruling to the Tournament Director. Appeals hearings shall take place within seven (7) business days from the date of receipt of the written appeal and all parties must make themselves available at 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. However penalties assessed under Rule C1 (b), (c), or (d) will remain until final ruling by Appeals Committee.

Competitors are allowed to compete under appeal for penalties assessed under Rule C1 (e) & (f) until final ruling by Appeals Committee.

Appeals of non competition rulings must be presented in writing to the Tournament Director within 48 hours from the time and date of ruling for review

#### **C23. BASS SPONSOR BOATS:**

When using BASS sponsor boats, anglers are responsible for physical care of the boat. Damage to the boat which is determined by the Tournament Director to be excessive or wanton shall result in the angler being responsible for all costs of repair.

#### **C24. TAXES:**

Where and when state laws require income taxes be paid on cash awards to non-residents, the taxes will be automatically deducted prior to the awards being presented to the winners. Participants are responsible for all applicable taxes, execution of all tax forms, and rules on both cash and merchandise awards. Various states require withholding tax on merchandise be paid upon the awarding of certificates and anglers awarded merchandise certificates in these various states are responsible for remitting this tax to BASS. Failure to meet those obligations may result in reduction of Angler of Year Points, fines, and/or disqualification from all future BASS Events.

#### **C25. WAIVER AND RELEASE:**

As a condition of participation in each tournament, each competitor and Marshal must execute a waiver and release of liability and a name and likeness release.

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