

Rules for TBFNC Team Tournaments

1. Interpretation & Enforcement: All TBFNC events will follow the rules as stated. Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery. Failure to report violations (Boater or Co-Angler) may be cause for disqualification. Protests should be in writing within 30 minutes of final flight check-in time of each tournament day.

2. Participation

A) Participation is open only to chapter members of The North Carolina Bass Federation (TBFNC) who are 16 years of age or older. Any person entering a tournament under the age of majority must also have the signature of their parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the entry form. All contestants must have in their possession a valid fishing license, dues must be paid up to date for TBF National, TBFNC, and be a member of an affiliated TBFNC Chapter with at least 6 members.

B) All Registrations must be made online and entry fees must be paid by the deadline stated on the website for that event, Boater must register with a co-angler.

C) Each Team will each have to fish a minimum 3 of qualifying events and finish in the top 10% to be eligible to compete in the District 2 National Simi Finals. Boater and Co-Angler may be allowed to fish a maximum of 1 tournament alone.

D) In the event a Team has pre-paid for a tournament and cannot make the event due to unforeseen circumstances they will both be counted present for that event.
This will only be allowed for 1 tournament

E) Each tournament will have a total field of no more than 100 boats (unless state law mandates a smaller number of boats due to ramp size).

F) Boat numbers will be selected by a random sorting algorithm

3. Pre-tournament practice

There will be no official off limits period, but anglers must be off tournament waters by 5pm the day before the tournament. No contestant may be on tournament waters for the purpose of locating bass or potential fishing waters during this time. The purchasing of information or the hiring of services will not be permitted after the entry deadline for each qualifying tournament.

4. Safety

Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each contestant is required to wear a fastened, U.S. Coast Guard approved, personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from boat check until weigh-in. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition kill switch device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation.

5. Sportsmanship

A) All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to MLF, TBF, TBFNC, the sport of fishing and our sponsors. Examples of conduct not complying with those standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1)** Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the official rules for the 2025 TBFNC Tournament trail or TBFNC By-Laws
- 2)** Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration, the pre-tournament meeting or during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure.
- 3)** Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.
- 4)** Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months.
- 5)** Suspension/disqualification from any tournament or fishing organization.
- 6)** Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set forth in the TBFNC By-Laws.

B) In case of any conduct not complying with the standards, TBFNC officials shall have the right to refuse any application, or to deny a confirmed application, by returning the entry fee of a previously accepted application, or to disqualify a contestant.

8. Boat operation

A) Boaters will fish from the front deck of the boat only if they choose and have full control of the boat although when fishing as a team boaters may allow the co-angler to fish from the front of the boat and operate the trolling motor, co-angler may also drive the boats if the boater chooses to allow.

B) During tournament hours contestants may not obtain or receive assistance from non-competitors, follow a non-competitor's boat or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" or the placing of markers by anyone.

C) 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 tournament director.

9. Boat and horsepower regulations

A) All boats must be propeller driven.

B) All boats must be a minimum of 16 feet in length and have a rear deck.

C) All boats must be equipped with wheel steering; no other steering device will be permitted.

D) No barges or similar cumbersome crafts will be permitted.

E) Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment.

F) Boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain, alive, a limit catch of bass by both contestants.

G) Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition shall not to exceed the horsepower capacity set forth on the “Maximum Capacities” placard described below.

H) Each boat must have a clearly legible “Maximum Capacities” (or comparably titled) placard that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer.

I) Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competition.

J) All anglers entering a TBFNC tournament as a boater must present satisfactory documentation showing proof of ownership of the boat they are competing in, proof of insurance listing that angler as owner or an operator of the boat in question, or a current insurance policy that states, specifically, that operators other than the owner are covered fully under this policy. Judgment of the Tournament Director and/or Tournament Committee will decide the angler's eligibility.

10. Permitted fishing methods

A) All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner.

B) Only artificial lures may be used, with the exception of pork trailers.

C) Only one fishing rod may be used at a time.

D) Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited.

E) When angling for bedding bass, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth.

11. Permitted fishing locations

A) Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as “off limits” or “no fishing” by local, state, or federal officials or within 50 yards of a competitor’s boat that was first to arrive at the location.

B) All angling must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

C) Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat.

D) The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day.

E) No tournament boat may be loaded on the trailer before the weigh-in except with the permission of the tournament director when trailering is allowed.

F) In the event of equipment failure or an emergency, there will be only two permitted methods of returning to the official check-in:

1) By both partners remaining in their boat and being towed by water, or

2) By both partners entering the boat of another tournament contestant.

G) Under these two conditions, the contestants’ catches may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Contestants who elect to return to the official check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day’s catch to that point in time of the tournament day.

H) Any contestant returning to the check-in point will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the tournament director or his designated tournament official. It is the sole responsibility of contestants to locate the tournament director to request a restart.

I) Partners must remain together at all times and within sight of each other until the weigh-in slip is signed in order for their catch for that day to be counted. The momentary condition of being out of sight of each other for restroom breaks is permitted. If a contestant must violate any part of this rule due to an emergency or for any other reason their catch for that day will not be counted.

12. Official checkpoints

There will be one official checkpoint for boat check in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check and checkout in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point will result in disqualification. All fishing must cease upon check-in. Our best effort will be given to allowing for at least eight hours of fishing time.

13. Late penalty

Contestants who are not at the official check-in area at the appointed time will be penalized 1 pound per minute deducted from the total weight including any weight to be counted toward a big bass award. Any contestant more than 15 minutes late will lose credit for that day's weight.

14. Dead fish

Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. TBFNC recommends the use of live well additives that promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat.

8 ounces (.50) will be deducted from the total weight for each dead bass presented for weigh-in.

15. Scoring

A) The total weight of each team's catch will determine scoring. Points are awarded as follows: 100 points for first place with 1 point less for each successive place. Teams with no fish will all receive 50 points until such time that there is 50 boats in the tournament then teams with no fish will receive 1 point less than the last place team that weighed fish. AOY points will be based on the 5 best of the 6 tournaments.

B) Only largemouth, spotted, and smallmouth bass are accepted species.

C) The limit will be five fish per day per team. Contestants possessing more than the tournament limit will have his/her catch for that day disqualified.

D) The official length limit for bass will be the same as North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission Regulations. A contestant presenting a short fish at weigh in will be penalized that fish plus 1lb off of the total creel weight. (Courtesy measurements are allowed but must ask before handing over the bag of fish.)

E) Each contestant's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag .

F) The official measuring board will be a Golden Rule.

16. Ties

In case of ties, positions will be resolved by Largest Fish, Total number of fish, Then The tournament director may decide to flip a coin

18. Polygraph

Each contestant agrees to submit, by his or her 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 TBFNC's sole discretion and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by TBFNC.

19. Insurance

Any participant in a TBFNC tournament must have a 300,000/100,000 amount in boat liability insurance in their name on board with them and be able to present it to the Tournament Director during any random checks.

20. Launching

A) Boaters and Co-Anglers are to meet in the parking area of the ramp before the launch of the partners boat or at a pre-arranged location. Co-Anglers should help their boater partner in any way possible the morning of the tournament.

B) After the launch of the boat, Boaters should proceed to the Co-Anglers pick up location. Co-Anglers should park their Boaters tow vehicle and proceed to their meeting point immediately.

C) After both parties have boarded, the boat will proceed to the check boat awaiting them at the specified area given to you at check-in. When you reach this boat, you are to have your livewell lids open.

D) After checkout, proceed to the staging area and begin lining up for ease off. Ask the boaters around you for their numbers, and arrange yourselves accordingly.

E) There will be a launch boat at the head of the staging area to direct ease-off/launch procedures from this point on. There will be a specific geographic location that you will be allowed to go on plane.

21. Weigh In

A) When you come in, you will be off plane at the same location you were allowed to go on plane. By off plane at that point we mean at idle speed when you pass that landmark.

B) The Co-Angler should check in on the way to get the vehicle and trailer

C) After parking the boat keep fish in the live wells with aerators running until you are told the scales are open, no more than 10 teams should be in line at a time.

Once again, other than emergencies, there will be no excuses for being late. We will allow plenty of time for you to get to the scales. We want you to use it wisely. Again, once we start we will not stop or wait for anyone. After last call for fish for your group, we will move on and all people having not weighed will be given a zero for the day.