

TEAM TOURNAMENT FORMAT

The Florida B.A.S.S. Nation (hereinafter referred to as FBN) Team Tournament format shall be Team vs. Team. This Format shall be effective in all Florida B.A.S.S. Nation Team Tournaments, including but not limited to Regional Qualifying Team Tournaments, 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event), and the TEAM State Championship Tournament. Anglers participating in the FBN Team Tournament Series will be required to pay an annual \$10.00 B.A.S.S. Team membership fee at the first event. Anglers are required to be members of the same club to participate in the FBN TEAM Tournament format.

REGIONAL QUALIFYING TEAM TOURNAMENTS

In this inaugural season, the FBN's Northeast, Central and Southern Regions conduct two (2) 1-day Regional Qualifying Tournaments to qualify FBN members for participation in the TEAM State Championship Tournament.

QUALIFYING FOR THE TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The FBN offers three methods for its members to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament.

The first method allows members to qualify by participating in any of the two tournaments in the sponsored Regions. Teams must finish in the top 70% of the field in any one tournament. You must catch at least one legal size fish to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament.

The second method allows Teams to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament by participating in any of the Regional Qualifying Team Tournaments being offered around the State. Any Team fishing a Regional Tournament of another Region must finish in the top 70% of the field.

The third method allows members to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament by participating in the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event). Any team fishing the 4-Man Team Tournament must finish in the top 70% of the field on either day of the two-day event to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament. During the 4-Team Tournament, members may fish with the same partner both days of the event or they may choose to swap teammates on the second day so long as they are within original 4-man team. The anglers must inform the tournament staff they are swapping teammates on the second day to be eligible to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament with the second day partner.

TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The FBN will conduct a two-day TEAM State Championship Tournament after all Qualifying Tournaments have been completed. The location and date of the TEAM State Tournament will be established by the Tournament Officials of the FBN.

The results of the Team State Championship Tournament will establish the overall Team of the year for the State of Florida, and the TEAM State Tournament Champion. Additionally, the State Championship Tournament will determine the Team(s) Florida will advance to the B.A.S.S. Team Championship Tournament. For every 20 teams or 40 members signed up through the FBN, one team will advance to the B.A.S.S. Team Championship Tournament.

OFFICIAL PRACTICE DAYS

The FBN will recognize two Official Practice Days immediately preceding each Regional Qualifying Tournament, the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event), and the TEAM State Championship Tournament. It is the responsibility of every competitor in a FBN Tournament to know and observe the tournament rules during Official Practice Days.

PAYBACKS

There will be an 80% payback in all Regional Qualifying Team Tournaments, the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event), and the TEAM State Championship Tournament. One place will be paid for every five team entries received.

TEAM ENTRY RULES AND REGISTRATION

All entries must be submitted on the official FBN 2-Man Team Tournament Entry Form along with the appropriate fees and a copy of the current boat insurance. The official entry forms are available on the FBN website. The entry fees for all FBN Regional Qualifying Team Tournaments will be \$120.00 per Team. The entry fee for the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event) will be \$240.00. The entry fee for the FBN TEAM State Championship Tournament will be \$150.00 per Team. Tournament Officials reserve the right to suspend the acceptance of Official Tournament Entry Forms prior to established deadline, as well as the right to extend the acceptance date deadline. All checks or money orders should be made payable to the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation, Inc. or FBN, Inc. Any checks returned for any reason will result in a \$50.00 fee plus the amount of the original check to cover any bank fees.

It is mandatory members pre-register for all FBN tournaments. Registration for all tournaments will close at 5:00 pm the day before each scheduled event. There will be NO registrations accepted the morning of the tournament. Members may pre-register online by going to the FBN website (www.floridabassnation.com) and using the Online Entry form (there is a \$5.00 processing fee for all online registrations) or downloading the 2-Man Team Tournament Entry Form and mailing it to the **Florida B.A.S.S. Nation, ATTN: Tom Bateman, 1912 Cascades Cove Dr., Orlando, FL 32820.** (Please do not mail entry forms within 7-days of tournament.). As long as the Tournament Officials are aware an angler is fishing an event before registration closes at 5:00 pm the day before the scheduled tournament, the angler may elect to pay the entry fee at the ramp the morning of the tournament during check-in.

The FBN will not hold a team meeting the night before the tournament. Teams will be informed of their launch order, when boat check will begin, and blast off time no later than 7:00 pm the night before the tournament. This information will be sent to the anglers through text messaging, and/or emails. It will be the responsibility of the anglers to provide cell phone numbers and email to obtain this information or to contact the Tournament Officials.

Upon signing the Official Tournament Entry Form, each competitor agrees to submit to a polygraph examination for verification of tournament results or inquiries, if deemed necessary by Tournament Officials. The administration of the polygraph examination shall be the responsibility of the FBN, and it shall be administered at their discretion by a credible firm. The date, time, location, and the scope of the questions to be asked during the polygraph examination, will be determined by the FBN. Any competitor summonsed to take a polygraph examination agrees to be available for the examination at the selected date and time. Failure of the competitor to cooperate completely in this matter is grounds for immediate disqualification, forfeiture of all FBN Tournament winnings, and/or other sanctions or penalties determined by the FBN.

All winners will be required to fill out an IRS Form W-9 prior to receiving their check and will receive an IRS Form 1099 at the end of the year if their total winnings for the year total \$600 or more.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All competitors operating a boat on tournament waters during the Official Practice Day(s) or during the actual competition days of a FBN Tournament must submit a current copy of their boat insurance policy as proof of insurance to the Tournament Officials. The policy must contain coverage of at least \$300,000 combined limited liability boating insurance, specifically name the boat owner/driver as an "insured user", and have the expiration date printed on the policy. If entering more than one tournament, a copy of the valid insurance policy must be on file with FBN.

TEAM RULES AND ENTRY FEE FOR OPTIONAL SIDE POTS

The FBN recognizes side pots for Big Bass.

BIG BASS SIDE POT

A Big Bass side pot of \$20.00 per boat will be awarded for the largest bass caught among the participants in the tournament.

If a tie should occur between two or more Teams for the Big Bass, the tie breaker will be the Team with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the tournament. Should a tie still remain, then the Team with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the tournament will prevail. In the event a tie still remains, the big bass side pot will be split.

TEAM TOURNAMENT RULES

GENERAL

1. The following Team Tournament Rules were developed for the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation (hereinafter referred to as the "FBN") and approved by the Board of Directors. These rules shall apply to all FBN Qualifying Team Tournaments, the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament (Wild Card Event) and the TEAM State Championship Tournament.
2. The interpretation and enforcement of these rules is the responsibility of the State Tournament Director and the tournament staff (hereinafter referred to as "Tournament Officials") of the FBN, which may impose appropriate sanctions for rules violations that may include but are not limited to disqualification, forfeiture of prizes or prize money or suspension from participation in future FBN Tournaments. Decisions of the tournament director are final and are not subject to appeal.
3. A team shall consist of no more than two (2) anglers, except for the 4-Man Team Club Shootout Qualifying Tournament, which a team shall consist of no more than four (4) anglers and two (2) boats.
4. Anglers may fish the one-day qualifiers with different partners during the year to qualify for the TEAM State Championship Tournament.
5. Competitors are expected to obey all applicable Florida Boating or Fishing and Wildlife Statutes and Rules. Violation of such statutes or rules may result in your disqualification from tournaments and being banned from future participation in FBN Tournaments. All local, state, and federal laws supersede FBN Tournament Rules and By-laws, should there be a conflict.
6. It is the duty and responsibility of every competitor in a FBN Tournament to report any violations or infractions of these Team Tournament Rules to the Tournament Officials. Failure to report violations or suggestions to violate these rules is cause for disqualification.
7. Competitors, who wish to lodge a protest concerning a "rules violation" during an FBN Team Tournament, must do so within fifteen (15) minutes after the tournament weigh-in has been

completed, but prior to the presentation of the awards. All protest must be presented in writing to a Tournament Official.

8. Falsifying any official weigh-in form or any other official FBN Team Tournament document will be cause for disqualification.
9. The decision of the Tournament Officials shall be final in these and all tournament related matters.

SPORTSMANSHIP

1. Competitors in FBN Team Tournaments are expected to follow the highest standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infractions of these basic and fundamental sporting principles may be cause for disqualification,
2. The use of alcohol or illicit drugs by a competitor during an Official Practice Day or an FBN Team Tournament will not be tolerated and will be cause for automatic disqualification from the current tournament and future FBN Tournaments.
3. It is the duty and responsibility of all FBN Team Tournament competitors to show extreme courtesy toward non-competitors who may be angling or boating on the tournament waters. Any actions of tournament competitors that may reflect unfavorably on the FBN's efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, courtesy and safety are grounds for disqualification from the tournament.
4. Alcoholic beverages, illegal stimulants or depressants will not be allowed in a competitor's boat during an Official Practice Day or an FBN Team Tournament. This rule shall apply to the weigh-in area as well.
5. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of any felony, crimes involving moral turpitude, or any other conduct that may reflect unfavorably upon the FBN and its efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair and healthy competition, or inhibit compliance with these tournament rules will be grounds for rejection of an application for participation in a tournament or disqualification.

SAFETY

1. Safe boat operation is the responsibility of all tournament competitors on an Official Practice Day and during an FBN Team Tournament.
2. All competitors are required to wear a Coast Guard approved "chest-type" life jacket anytime the boat's combustion engine is operating. The life jacket must remain securely fastened until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. A violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification.
3. Tournament Officials may delay or cancel the start of an FBN Team Tournament for inclement weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Additionally, tournament waters may be restricted because of inclement weather or other safety reasons during the event.

PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

1. Anglers are required to be members of the same club to participate in the FBN TEAM Tournament format.
2. Any angler entering an FBN Team tournament who is under 18 years of age also must have a signature of a parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the Liability Release form.
3. Participation in FBN Team tournaments is by Team and is open to "members in good standing", who are sixteen (16) years of age or older, and who are active members of an FBN affiliated club.
4. Affiliated club members must be eighteen (18) years of age or older to participate in any FBN Team Tournament as a boat driver. It is the responsibility of the competitor to provide

Tournament Officials with the appropriate documentation to satisfy any “proof of age” concerns or discrepancies.

5. A candidate for competition in a FBN Team Tournament who, in the judgment of the Tournament Officials is handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder or endanger the safety and well-being of other competitors shall not be eligible to participate.
6. Disqualification, suspension or any other disciplinary action taken against an angler by any other fishing organization shall be grounds for rejection of an application for participation in an FBN Team Tournament.

LAUNCH ORDER

1. Launch order will be determined by random selection generated by the computer program for the tournament.
2. Once a boat leaves the launch area at the start of the tournament, the two anglers must stay together and within sight of each other, and each other’s catch, throughout the day until weigh-in is completed, except for “natures call” or a credible emergency. A competitor will not allow any bass caught by him to be counted on the score (weight) of another competitor. In such case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by the FBN.

BOAT AND MOTOR

1. All boats must be equipped with all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment.
2. The maximum horsepower rating for all outboard motors used in FBN Team Tournament competition shall be 250 hp and a minimum 40 hp. Additionally, the maximum horsepower of an outboard motor shall not exceed the rating set by the U.S. Coast Guard for the particular boat it is mounted on and listed on a “manufacturers” plate attached to the boat. At the start of an event all outboard and trolling motors must be in good operating conditions.
3. Any boat manufactured prior to November 1, 1972 must adhere to the rating set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Upon signing the FBN Official Team Tournament Entry Form, all competitors agree to submit to a boat inspection and have the outboard motor checked by factory trained personnel, if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower of the outboard motor exceeds the maximum rating (250 hp) or exceeds the listed boat manufacturer’s plate attached to the boat.
4. Normal maintenance to increase the performance of an outboard motor is authorized, however, changing or altering standard factory parts of an outboard motor to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating is forbidden, and will result in disqualification.
5. For safety reasons, ALL boats must be equipped with an operable ignition “kill” switch that must be attached to the driver’s body anytime the combustion engine is operating.
6. Anytime a boat is “under way” with the combustion engine running, a driver/boat operator must be in the driver’s seat and in full control of the craft.
7. Fishing boats seventeen feet or more in length may be used in an FBN Team Tournament.
8. Boats with “Raised Platforms” higher than the “gunnels” of the boat will not be allowed.
9. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. The use of the electric controlling motor or the combustion engine for trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited.
10. Bladder tanks and other types of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional “factory options” gasoline tanks that are installed by a manufacturer’s authorized dealer are allowed. Boats that do not have factory installed gasoline tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in portable tanks, which must meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations, and must be properly secured in the boat.
11. No portable tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline may be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline, for use by tournament competitors during an Official Practice Day or during an FBN Team Tournament.

12. Barges or similar cumbersome water crafts are not permitted for use in an FBN Team Tournament. Tournament boats must be capable of reaching all tournament waters and return in a reasonable amount of time, so as not to handicap any contestant.
13. Boats equipped with "Stick Steering" shall not be permitted to be used by any competitor during an Official Practice Day or during an FBN Team Tournament.
14. No air boats may be used to fish during an Official Practice Day or during an FBN Team Tournament.
15. All boats must have a functional "bilge pump" and live-well, properly aerated to adequately maintain alive, a limit catch of bass in the boat. The Tournament Officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate."
16. None the aforementioned rules shall prohibit a properly designated Tournament Official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat at any time during the Official Practice Day(s) or during the actual FBN Tournament competition for the purpose of inspecting the boat for violations of these rules. A Competitor who refuses to allow his/her boat to be inspected by a FBN Tournament Official shall be disqualified from the tournament and all entry fees and prizes or prize money shall be forfeited. The Tournament Director, at his discretion, may impose additional sanctions regarding future FBN Tournaments.

BOAT OPERATION

1. 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.
2. The use of mobile communication devices, including, but not limited to, cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CB radios, etc., during tournament hours, is strictly prohibited except in an emergency (severe weather, disabled boat, etc.) or to communicate with lockmasters.
3. Contestants are expected to remain on tournament waters and compete until the official end of the tournament, emergency situations notwithstanding. Failure to do so may result in ineligibility to compete in future FBN Tournaments.
4. A competitor may not leave the boat to land a fish.
5. In a credible emergency situation, such as an inoperable boat, one or both competitors may transfer to another tournament boat, or a rescue boat, for immediate return to the weigh-in site.
6. A competitor who chooses to remain with the disabled boat to await rescue, waives the right to protest or challenge the official weight of his catch. All competitors involved in the rescue must cease fishing at this point, and their catch must be verified by a Tournament Official in order to be counted in the official tournament weigh-in.
7. If after the emergency situation is resolved by the Tournament Officials and enough time is left for the anglers to resume fishing, a "restart" will be allowed and the competitors may continue fishing and their catch will be counted. The aforementioned procedure applies only to a credible emergency.
8. Failure of a competitor to render assistance to another competitor in a credible emergency situation, when requested, may be cause for immediate disqualification.
9. A boat must remain in tournament waters at all times during tournament hours. Contestants must leave and return to the official check-in point by boat, and both competitors must remain in the boat at all times except in the case of "natures call" or a credible emergency.
10. No Trailing: Loading a boat onto a trailer and driving to a ramp other than the official tournament launch site, during tournament hours, is strictly prohibited, except under the express direction and authority of the Tournament Officials.

TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT

1. Competitors in a FBN Tournament may use only artificial lures as bait. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc.

2. Only one casting, spin-casting or spinning rod (maximum length eight feet) and one reel may be used by a competitor at a time. Other similar types of rigs may be in the boat, ready for use, however only one (1) rig is permitted to be used at a time.
3. All bass must be caught alive, and in a conventional sporting manner. A competitor who is guilty of “snatching” or “snagging” fish on spawning beds will have their day's catch disqualified. When visually fishing for “bedding bass”, all bass must be hooked inside of the mouth to be counted as a legal fish.
4. The use of “grippers” to land a bass is prohibited.

PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS

1. The Tournament Officials shall establish any boundaries on the tournament waters for all FBN Team Tournaments. It is the responsibility of each competitor to obtain this information from the Tournament Officials prior to Official Practice Day(s) and tournaments.
2. Only that water open to all public fishing will be considered “Tournament Waters”. Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except:
 - (a.) Within 50-yards of any marina gas pump.
 - (b.) Within 50-yards (150-feet) of another angler’s boat which is first anchored or secured in a fix position. Competitors are not permitted to allow select competitors to fish within the 100-yard circle and exclude other anglers.
 - (c.) Any water within these boundaries posted “Off-Limits” or “NO Fishing” by state or federal agencies will be off limits. This includes positioning boats outside areas posted “Off-Limits” or “NO Fishing” and casting into the posted areas. This action is strictly forbidden and any competitor violating this rule will be disqualified from the tournament.
 - (d.) The live bass release area established by Tournament Officials will be off limits and will be announced at the tournament briefing.
 - (e.) Any waters closed to public fishing will be closed to tournament anglers.
3. All fishing must be done from the boat.
4. During an Official Practice Day, or the FBN Team Tournament, a competitor may not "SKIN DIVE" or "SCUBA DIVE" on tournament waters during an Official Practice Day.
5. A competitor may not buy or barter for “fishing locations” from other competitors for use during a competition day.

OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT

1. The Official launch site and “check-in” points will be established by the Tournament Officials for each FBN Team Tournament.
2. At each Tournament meeting, the Tournament Officials will announce a blast off time, otherwise tournament hours are safe daylight until 3:00 p.m. Tournament hours can be increased or decreased by the Tournament Officials.
3. Prior to launch time, all competitors’ boats will be inspected by a Tournament Official for compliance with tournament requirements.
4. Prior to the start of a FBN Team Tournament, each boat operator will be assigned a boat/Team number. At the end of the tournament day, all competitors will “check-in” with this assigned boat/Team number before proceeding to the weigh-in area. This includes boats with no fish. Any boat that fails to “check-in” at the end of the tournament day may be subject to disqualification. Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification from the tournament and all future FBN Tournaments.
5. After proper recognition at the check-in point, all fishing must cease and competitors should immediately proceed to the weigh-in area.
6. Upon the commencement of the two-day FBN TEAM State Championship Tournament, fishing or being on the tournament waters is prohibited except during the tournament hours.

SCORING AND FISH CARE DURING TOURNAMENTS

1. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Red Eyes, Shoal and Suwannee Bass will be weighed at FBN Team Tournaments.
2. The tournament limit for each Team shall be five (5) bass. A Team may not have more than the tournament limit of bass in the "live well" at any given time during the tournament. Any Team bringing in more than five (5) bass will be penalized that days catch.
3. The pound and ounce weight of each Team's catch during the tournament shall determine the tournament standings, auxiliary awards, and final winners of all FBN Team Tournaments.
4. The Official Tournament length for bass shall be fourteen (14) inches, unless the state limit is different, in which case the state limit will prevail. Only bass described above that measure 14 inches or more in length on an "Official Golden Rule" with mouth closed will be weighed. The exception to this rule occurs when "exemption" cards have been made available by the Tournament Official to each Team prior to the start of the tournament. A "short" fish brought to the scales for weigh-in shall result in the loss of that fish and the Team's big fish of that day's catch. No courtesy measurements will be permitted at the weigh-in station.
5. Don't Kill Your Catch! A Team should make every effort to maintain the welfare of its catch throughout the day.
 - (a.) Each Team is expected to keep his bass alive by use of a properly aerated live well.
 - (b.) A bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered may, at the Tournament Officials discretion, not be weighed-in.
 - (c.) The culling of a "dead" fish is strictly prohibited.
6. Each Team must present their catch to the weigh-in official. Partners should stay together until their fish are weighed.
7. All fish will be weighed based on boat number order or launch order. Tournament Officials will announce the boat numbers being weighed and only those Teams with fish from those boats will be permitted to approach the scales. Anyone bringing fish to the scales before their boat number has been called will not be permitted to weigh their fish.
8. Penalty Points: Tournament Officials shall have the sole authority for assessing penalty points.
 - (a.) Dead fish will be determined at the scales by the Tournament Official. For the purpose of this rule only, a "Dead Fish" will be considered any fish that is not moving. For each legal dead fish presented at weigh-in, the Team will be penalized a quarter of a pound of weight (4 ounces).
 - (b.) Teams will be penalized 1 pound for each minute they are late checking in at the official check point designated by Tournament Officials. After 15 minutes, the Team's catch for that day will be disqualified.
9. The Tournament Officials may make available special weigh-in bags that are designed to help increase the survival rate of the bass. These bags will be available to all competitors in the weigh-in area. No other bags are to be used to bring fish to the weigh-in area when these bags are in use. These weigh-in bags are the property of the FBN and must be returned. Anyone caught with an FBN weigh-in bag in their possession after a tournament is over may be disqualified from future FBN tournaments.

Special Exception: If special weigh-in bags are not in use, competitors may bring their fish to the scales in their own bags and only when instructed by Tournament Officials.

10. Ties: In case of a tie, the following measures should be employed in this order to break the tie.
 - (a.) The Team with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the competition.
 - (b.) The Team with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the competition.
 - (c.) The Team with the heaviest single day's catch during competition.
 - (d.) The Team with the second heaviest single day's catch during competition.
 - (e.) In the unlikely event that there is still a tie, a "coin toss" will be used to determine the winner, and the monies for tied places shall be evenly split between the two Teams.

TEAM AWARDS

TEAM STATE TOURNAMENT CHAMPIONS

The Team with the heaviest weight at the TEAM State Championship Tournament will be recognized as the TEAM State Championship winners and will be the first team to advance to the B.A.S.S. Team Championship Tournament. Additional teams will be eligible to advance to the B.A.S.S. Team Championship Tournament, beginning with the second place team for every 20 teams or 40 members signed up through the FBN to fish the B.A.S.S. Team Championship Series.

BIG BASS AWARDS OF THE TEAM STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The team catching the Big Bass each day of the 2-day TEAM State Championship Tournament will be recognized and awarded with the allocated monies for the Big Bass that day.