



## 2019-2020 TOURNAMENT FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

The Florida B.A.S.S. Nation (hereinafter referred to as "FBN") presents the FBN High School (HS) Tournament Series, which is a Team versus Team format. This format shall be effective in all FBNHS Tournaments, including but not limited to Regional Qualifying and Statewide Tournament Trails.

### MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENTS AND DUES

Anglers participating in the FBNHS Tournament Series will be required be a member of an affiliated High School club. If a High School does not recognize or support the High School Club, then anglers may join/start a Community Club (requires at least two (2) members to start a High School Club and six (6) members to start a Community Club). A denial letter will be required from all High Schools that do not support the High School fishing program before an angler can join a Community Club. The Community Club advisor/faculty member must collect denial letters annually and keep on file and available during the tournament year. Copies of denial letters should be sent to B.A.S.S. and the FBN.

Clubs are responsible for collecting the annual membership dues for the state of Florida and B.A.S.S., which amount to \$35.00 and cover the following:

B.A.S.S. Nation National Dues	\$10.00
Florida B.A.S.S. Nation State Dues	\$25.00

Every angler is required to pay the annual B.A.S.S. Nation National and FBN State dues as well as any dues associated with their club. Club fees may vary and may be collected in addition to the annual membership dues above. Every angler must be in good standings with their club, FBN, B.A.S.S. Nation, and B.A.S.S. to compete in the FBNHS Tournament Series.

The FBN will only accept the State and National Nation dues from a club advisor/faculty member. Checks shall be made payable to the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation. **No dues will be collected by the FBN on an individual basis from the anglers or parents.**

Denial Letters and dues can be mailed to the following address for the FBN: Florida B.A.S.S. Nation, 5400 Turin Street, Orlando, FL 32807.

**ALL DUES MUST BE PAID PRIOR TO THE FIRST EVENT OF THE SEASON.**

### TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION

**Upon registering and paying for an event, tournament anglers and boat captains agree they have read all tournament rules and understand to its entirety.**

All tournament entries and fees must be submitted by the deadline posted on the FBN website at [www.floridabassnation.com](http://www.floridabassnation.com). The entry fees for all FBN Regional Qualifying and Statewide Tournaments will be \$55.00 per team (\$50 Entry Fee and \$5.00 Processing and Administration Fee). Teams have until Thursday at 6:00 pm EST, prior to each event, to register to avoid paying a late fee. Any Team registering after 6:00 pm on Thursday will be charged a \$15.00 late fee and will not be included in the random boat number draw. Teams registering late will be assigned the next available boat number after the random draw is done (in other words, teams will be added to the end of the list of boat numbers). No entries will be accepted after Friday at 6:00pm EST prior to each event. No registrations will be accepted the morning of the event. NO EXCEPTIONS. Online registration is considered an Official Entry Form of the FBN.

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.

## INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS

All boat captains operating a boat on tournament waters during the actual competition days of an FBNHS 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 boater 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 the FBN. Tournament officials at any time may randomly request a copy of a boater's insurance policy during the tournament. Failure to produce an active policy could result in a loss of that day's weight.

## HIRING OF GUIDES OR FISHING WITH GUIDES

No competitor can hire or have fished with a local guide on tournament waters 1-month (30-days) prior to tournament (DEFINITION OF LOCAL GUIDE – A person that gets paid to take others fishing for any species on that particular body of water).

If a potential boat captain is a local guide, then they will be ineligible to boat captain on the waters which they are a guide. Exception to the rule, will be a parent (not best friend, aunt, uncle, grandparent, niece or nephew) of an angler participating in a trail(s) that will boat captain for the team all season.

FBN Tournament Officials reserves the right to deny any Boat Captain.

## QUALIFYING FOR THE STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The FBNHS Tournament Series will include four (4) tournament trails during the year. There will be a North Trail and a South trail, with each hosting four (4) Regional Qualifying Tournaments, which will all be 1-day events (Saturday); and the FBN will offer a Fall (September 2019 thru December 2019) Statewide Tournament Trail and a Spring (January 2020 thru April 2020) Statewide Tournament Trail, both consisting of four (4) tournaments, which will be 1-day events (Sunday).

**EACH ANGLER must also compete in at least two (2) Regional Qualifying Tournaments and two (2) Statewide Tournaments to be eligible to compete in the FBN State Championship Tournament.**

### Regional Qualifying Tournament Trails

The North and South Regional Qualifying Tournament schedule will be posted on the FBN website at [www.floridabassnation.com](http://www.floridabassnation.com).

Teams are encouraged to compete for the Team of the Year in both Regional Qualifying Tournament Trails, but it is not required. Each Region's Team of the Year Award will go to the team with the highest points using three (3) out of four (4) of each Regions Tournaments. In other words, teams get to drop their lowest points/tournament in each Region. Points will be determined using the Points System listed below. Teams may not count tournaments from multiple regions for the Regional Team of the Year Award. **The Team of the Year in each region will get a free entry in the FBN State Championship Tournament.** If a team wins one or more Regional Team of the Year Awards, as well as a Statewide Tournament Trail, they will get the free entry for the first Regional or Statewide Trail Team of the Year they win. The next placing team in the Statewide Team Trail will get a free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament.

**Example:** *Should the Team that wins the Fall Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year Award in November 2019, also win the North Regional Trail Team of the Year Award in February 2020, they will get the free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament for winning the Fall Statewide Tournament Trail, and the team that ends up in second in the North Regional Trail will get the free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament.*

Should a tie exist between multiple teams for any of the Regional Team of the Year Awards, and neither team wins any of the other Regional Team of the Year Awards, both teams will advance to the State Championship Tournament and the highest placing team (of the teams tied) will be awarded the Regional Team of the Year for that Region.

## Florida B.A.S.S. Nation Statewide Tournament Trails

The schedule for the Fall and Spring Statewide Tournament Trails will be posted on the FBN website at [www.floridabassnation.com](http://www.floridabassnation.com).

Teams are encouraged to compete for the Team of the Year in both Statewide Tournament Trails, but it is not required. The Fall and Spring Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year Awards will go to the team with the highest points using three (3) out of four (4) Statewide Tournaments in the respective trail. In other words, teams get to drop their lowest points/tournament. Points will be determined using the Points System listed below. A Team may NOT count Regional Qualifying Tournaments toward the Statewide Team of the Year Award. A Team may NOT count tournaments in one Statewide Trail with the other Statewide Trail for Team of the Year Award. **The Team of the Year for the Fall and Spring Statewide Tournament Trails will get a free entry in the FBN State Championship Tournament.** If a team wins one or more Regional Team of the Year Awards, as well as a Statewide Tournament Trail, they will get the free entry for the first Regional or Statewide Trail Team of the Year they win. The next placing team in the Statewide Team Trail will get a free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament.

**Example:** *Should the Team that wins the Fall Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year Award in November, 2019, also win the Spring Statewide Trail Team of the Year Award on April, 2020, they will get the free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament for winning the Fall Statewide Trail, and the team that ends up in second in the Spring Statewide Trail will get the free entry to the FBN State Championship Tournament.*

Should a tie exist between multiple teams in either Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year Awards, and neither team wins any of the Regional Team of the Year Awards, both teams will advance to the State Championship Tournament and the highest placing team (of the teams tied) will be awarded the respective Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year.

### STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

The FBN will conduct a two-day State Championship Tournament after all Regional Qualifying and Statewide Tournament Trails are complete. The location and date of the State Championship Tournament will be established by the Tournament Officials of the FBNHS Tournament Series. A separate set of rules will apply for the FBN State Championship Tournament and will be available/published before the annual event.

As previously stated, **EACH ANGLER must compete in at least two (2) Regional Qualifying Tournaments and two (2) Statewide Tournaments to be eligible to compete in the FBN State Championship Tournament.**

The results of the State Championship Tournament will determine the FBNHS State Championship Tournament winner, which will earn a berth to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament, as well as a scholarship amount to be determined before the State Championship.

Also determined at the State Championship Tournament will be the Team of the Year Award. The Team of the Year Award will go to one of the four (4) teams representing the Regions or Statewide Tournament Trails. These teams will compete in a "Shoot-out Tournament" within the State Championship Tournament. The highest placing team over the 2-day event will be awarded the Team of the Year Award and earn a scholarship, which the amount will be determined before the State Championship.

### QUALIFYING FOR THE B.A.S.S. HIGH SCHOOL NATION CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT

**ALL TEAMS ARE REQUIRED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE FBNHS STATE CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT TO BE ELIGIBLE TO QUALIFY FOR THE B.A.S.S. HIGH SCHOOL NATION CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT.**

Every trail is allocated one (1) berth to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship. Once 50 unique teams or 100 individual anglers participate in a trail, that trail will earn one (1) additional berth to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship. After that, each trail will earn one (1) additional berth to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship per 50 unique teams or 100 individual additional anglers who participate in at least one (1) event in each trail.

The first berth in each of the FBNHS Regional Qualifying Tournament Trails will be awarded to the Regional Team of the Year. If multiple berths are earned in a Regional Qualifying Tournament Trail, the berths will be awarded to the next highest placing team and continue in consecutive order until no berths remain for each trail. Should a team earn a berth through a Regional or Statewide Tournament Trail and then wins a Regional or the Statewide Tournament Trail Team of the Year Award, that team will then represent the trail as the Team of Year and the next team from previous trail will earn a berth to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament.

The State Championship Tournament will advance two (2) teams to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament. The two teams to advance will be the 1st and 2nd place winners of the FBNHS State Championship. If one or both teams have already qualified for the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament through one of the FBNHS Regional Qualifying Trails or the Statewide Tournament Trail, the berth(s) will be awarded to the next highest placing team(s) and continue in consecutive order until no berth(s) remain.

All teams/anglers that qualify for the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament will be expected to sign an agreement acknowledging the anglers will participate in all functions/events/meetings leading up to and during the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament. Failure to submit the agreement by the specified deadline will result in the team not participating in the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament or receiving any travel assistance that may be offered by the FBN. Failure to comply with the agreement during the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament will result in the team/anglers not participating in any FBNHS Tournament Trails the following season. If the team/anglers happen to be Seniors and will be aging out of the program and choose not to comply with the agreement, the anglers will not be eligible to participate in any FBN Tournaments Series, including but not limited to the College, Pro/Am, and Team Series offered by the FBN.

#### **SCHOLARSHIPS**

Scholarship checks will be awarded to FBNHS teams based on an 75% payback for all Regional Qualifying and the Statewide Tournament Trails. The number of scholarship checks to be awarded will be based on one (1) place for every seven (7) boats in a tournament.

#### **CONTINGENCY PROGRAMS**

Contingency programs are sponsor-funded programs developed to reward teams based on a predefined set of criteria. Participation in contingency programs is at the teams' discretion.

## POINTS SYSTEM

The following points system will be used to determine the High School Regional and Statewide Teams of the Year and the overall placement in the trails. The points system will start with the first- place finisher in each tournament receiving 200-points and will reduce in increments of 1-point through the 200th place finisher. The table below lists the points a team can expect to receive if they finish within the top 200 of the High School Regional and Statewide Trails. A team must fish tournament day to receive points.

Place	Points	Place	Points	Place	Points	Place	Points	Place	Points
1 <sup>st</sup>	200	41 <sup>st</sup>	160	81 <sup>st</sup>	120	121 <sup>st</sup>	80	161 <sup>st</sup>	40
2 <sup>nd</sup>	199	42 <sup>nd</sup>	159	82 <sup>nd</sup>	119	122 <sup>nd</sup>	79	162 <sup>nd</sup>	39
3 <sup>rd</sup>	198	43 <sup>rd</sup>	158	83 <sup>rd</sup>	118	123 <sup>rd</sup>	78	163 <sup>rd</sup>	38
4 <sup>th</sup>	197	44 <sup>th</sup>	157	84 <sup>th</sup>	117	124 <sup>th</sup>	77	164 <sup>th</sup>	37
5 <sup>th</sup>	196	45 <sup>th</sup>	156	85 <sup>th</sup>	116	125 <sup>th</sup>	76	165 <sup>th</sup>	36
6 <sup>th</sup>	195	46 <sup>th</sup>	155	86 <sup>th</sup>	115	126 <sup>th</sup>	75	166 <sup>th</sup>	35
7 <sup>th</sup>	194	47 <sup>th</sup>	154	87 <sup>th</sup>	114	127 <sup>th</sup>	74	167 <sup>th</sup>	34
8 <sup>th</sup>	193	48 <sup>th</sup>	153	88 <sup>th</sup>	113	128 <sup>th</sup>	73	168 <sup>th</sup>	33
9 <sup>th</sup>	192	49 <sup>th</sup>	152	89 <sup>th</sup>	112	129 <sup>th</sup>	72	169 <sup>th</sup>	32
10 <sup>th</sup>	191	50 <sup>th</sup>	151	90 <sup>th</sup>	111	130 <sup>th</sup>	71	170 <sup>th</sup>	31
11 <sup>th</sup>	190	51 <sup>st</sup>	150	91 <sup>st</sup>	110	131 <sup>st</sup>	70	171 <sup>st</sup>	30
12 <sup>th</sup>	189	52 <sup>nd</sup>	149	92 <sup>nd</sup>	109	132 <sup>nd</sup>	69	172 <sup>nd</sup>	29
13 <sup>th</sup>	188	53 <sup>rd</sup>	148	93 <sup>rd</sup>	108	133 <sup>rd</sup>	68	173 <sup>rd</sup>	28
14 <sup>th</sup>	187	54 <sup>th</sup>	147	94 <sup>th</sup>	107	134 <sup>th</sup>	67	174 <sup>th</sup>	27
15 <sup>th</sup>	186	55 <sup>th</sup>	146	95 <sup>th</sup>	106	135 <sup>th</sup>	66	175 <sup>th</sup>	26
16 <sup>th</sup>	185	56 <sup>th</sup>	145	96 <sup>th</sup>	105	136 <sup>th</sup>	65	176 <sup>th</sup>	25
17 <sup>th</sup>	184	57 <sup>th</sup>	144	97 <sup>th</sup>	104	137 <sup>th</sup>	64	177 <sup>th</sup>	24
18 <sup>th</sup>	183	58 <sup>th</sup>	143	98 <sup>th</sup>	103	138 <sup>th</sup>	63	178 <sup>th</sup>	23
19 <sup>th</sup>	182	59 <sup>th</sup>	142	99 <sup>th</sup>	102	139 <sup>th</sup>	62	179 <sup>th</sup>	22
20 <sup>th</sup>	181	60 <sup>th</sup>	141	100 <sup>th</sup>	101	140 <sup>th</sup>	61	180 <sup>th</sup>	21
21 <sup>st</sup>	180	61 <sup>st</sup>	140	101 <sup>st</sup>	100	141 <sup>st</sup>	60	181 <sup>st</sup>	20
22 <sup>nd</sup>	179	62 <sup>nd</sup>	139	102 <sup>nd</sup>	99	142 <sup>nd</sup>	59	182 <sup>nd</sup>	19
23 <sup>rd</sup>	178	63 <sup>rd</sup>	138	103 <sup>rd</sup>	98	143 <sup>rd</sup>	58	183 <sup>rd</sup>	18
24 <sup>th</sup>	177	64 <sup>th</sup>	137	104 <sup>th</sup>	97	144 <sup>th</sup>	57	184 <sup>th</sup>	17
25 <sup>th</sup>	176	65 <sup>th</sup>	136	105 <sup>th</sup>	96	145 <sup>th</sup>	56	185 <sup>th</sup>	16
26 <sup>th</sup>	175	66 <sup>th</sup>	135	106 <sup>th</sup>	95	146 <sup>th</sup>	55	186 <sup>th</sup>	15
27 <sup>th</sup>	174	67 <sup>th</sup>	134	107 <sup>th</sup>	94	147 <sup>th</sup>	54	187 <sup>th</sup>	14
28 <sup>th</sup>	173	68 <sup>th</sup>	133	108 <sup>th</sup>	93	148 <sup>th</sup>	53	188 <sup>th</sup>	13
29 <sup>th</sup>	172	69 <sup>th</sup>	132	109 <sup>th</sup>	92	149 <sup>th</sup>	52	189 <sup>th</sup>	12
30 <sup>th</sup>	171	70 <sup>th</sup>	131	110 <sup>th</sup>	91	150 <sup>th</sup>	51	190 <sup>th</sup>	11
31 <sup>st</sup>	170	71 <sup>st</sup>	130	111 <sup>th</sup>	90	151 <sup>st</sup>	50	191 <sup>st</sup>	10
32 <sup>nd</sup>	169	72 <sup>nd</sup>	129	112 <sup>th</sup>	89	152 <sup>nd</sup>	49	192 <sup>nd</sup>	9
33 <sup>rd</sup>	168	73 <sup>rd</sup>	128	113 <sup>th</sup>	88	153 <sup>rd</sup>	48	193 <sup>rd</sup>	8
34 <sup>th</sup>	167	74 <sup>th</sup>	127	114 <sup>th</sup>	87	154 <sup>th</sup>	47	194 <sup>th</sup>	7
35 <sup>th</sup>	166	75 <sup>th</sup>	126	115 <sup>th</sup>	86	155 <sup>th</sup>	46	195 <sup>th</sup>	6
36 <sup>th</sup>	165	76 <sup>th</sup>	125	116 <sup>th</sup>	85	156 <sup>th</sup>	45	196 <sup>th</sup>	5
37 <sup>th</sup>	164	77 <sup>th</sup>	124	117 <sup>th</sup>	84	157 <sup>th</sup>	44	197 <sup>th</sup>	4
38 <sup>th</sup>	163	78 <sup>th</sup>	123	118 <sup>th</sup>	83	158 <sup>th</sup>	43	198 <sup>th</sup>	3
39 <sup>th</sup>	162	79 <sup>th</sup>	122	119 <sup>th</sup>	82	159 <sup>th</sup>	42	199 <sup>th</sup>	2
40 <sup>th</sup>	161	80 <sup>th</sup>	121	120 <sup>th</sup>	81	160 <sup>th</sup>	41	200 <sup>th</sup>	1

## **PARTICIPATION POINTS**

Every team participating in an FBN tournament will receive 20-participation points for fishing a tournament, regardless if the team weighs-in a fish or not. Teams must fish the tournament day to receive participation points. Teams will retain the participation points when dropping a tournament.

If extenuating circumstances exist that prohibit an angler from having a partner in a tournament, the team may or may not receive points for fishing the event depending on the circumstances.

If a tie should occur between two or more teams, the tie breaker will be the team with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the tournament. Should a tie 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 exists, both teams will receive the same points for the tied position.

## **AWARDS**

If extenuating circumstances exist that prohibit an angler from having a partner in a tournament, then the team may or may not receive the entire prize package being awarded for fishing the event. If an angler only receives half of the prizes being awarded, the additional prizes will be retained by the FBN for a future use or event.

### **REGIONAL TEAM OF THE YEAR**

Using the point system above, the North and South Regional Trail's Team of the Year honors will be awarded to a team in each Regional Trail with the highest points from 3 of the 4 Regional Tournaments. To be eligible for the Regional Team of the Year honors, teams may only count points received for participating in tournaments of the Region, North or South. Teams must fish at least 3 of the 4 tournaments offered within the same Region with the same partner. Teams that participate in all four Regional Tournaments will only count the best three tournaments within the same trail.

### **STATEWIDE TRAIL TEAM OF THE YEAR**

Using the point system above, the Fall and Spring Statewide Trail's Team of the Year will be awarded to a team in each Statewide Trail with the highest points from 3 of the 4 regional tournaments. To be eligible for the Statewide Team of the Year honors, teams may only count points received for participating in tournaments of the Statewide Trail, Fall or Spring. Teams must fish at least 3 of the 4 tournaments offered within the same Statewide Trail with the same partner. Teams that participate in all four Statewide Tournaments will only count the best three tournaments within the same trail.

Anglers are encouraged to fish with the same partner in the Regional and Statewide Trails during the year but are not required. The FBNHS Tournament Staff also encourages anglers to switch partners and fish the Regional or Statewide Tournament Trails so they are double qualified with multiple partners. Anglers may not be eligible to participate in the State Championship, if they have not qualified with their partner during the season. If tournament officials do allow teams that are partially qualified or non-qualified to fish the State Championship, these teams will not be eligible to advance to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament and will only compete for partial monetary funds or non-monetary prizes.

### **HIGH SCHOOL/CLUB OF THE YEAR AWARD**

Using the point system above, a High School/Club of the Year Award will be awarded the school/club with the highest points over the 16-tournament season. There will be no drop tournaments. Points will be based on the two highest placing teams from each school/club in each tournament. If a school/club only has one team participating, then they will only receive points for the one team. Schools/clubs are encouraged to have as many teams as possible compete for the High School/Club of the Year Award.



## OFFICIAL RULES

(Effective September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020)

The following Tournament Rules were developed for the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation High School Tournament Series (hereinafter referred to as the “FBNHS”) and approved by the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation (hereinafter referred to as the “FBN”) Board of Directors. These rules shall apply to all FBNHS Qualifying and Statewide Tournament Trails.

### RULES AND PENALTIES

1. The interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the FBNHS State Tournament Director and the FBN tournament staff (hereinafter referred to as “Tournament Officials”). 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.

**Any rules violations must be reported to tournament officials immediately for the appropriate penalties to be applied.**

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 verified by either your partner or boat captain. 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 B.A.S.S. events, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period, or may be a lifetime disqualification;
  - f) any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director.
2. A team shall consist of no more than two (2) anglers that must be a member of the same High School or Charter (Community) Club in the High School Division.
  3. Teams 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 FBNHS Tournaments. All local, state, and federal laws supersede FBNHS Tournament Rules and By-laws.
  4. It is the duty and responsibility of every angler in a FBNHS Tournament to report any violations or infractions of these Tournament Rules to the Tournament Officials. Failure to report violations or suggestions to violate these rules is cause for disqualification.
  5. Teams, who wish to lodge a protest concerning a “rules violation” during an FBNHS 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 on an Official Protest Form.
  6. Falsifying any official weigh-in form or any other official FBNHS Tournament document will be cause for disqualification.

7. If a potential boat captain is a local guide, then they will be ineligible to boat captain on the waters which they are a guide. Exception to the rule, will be a parent (not best friend, aunt, uncle, grandparent, niece or nephew) of an angler participating in a trail(s) that will boat captain for the team all season. FBN Tournament Officials reserves the right to deny any Boat Captain.
8. The decision of the Tournament Officials shall be final in these and all tournament related matters.

### **PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY**

1. Anglers must be a student currently enrolled in high school, in good academic standing with a 2.0 grade point average or better (**maintained throughout the season**), and a member of a High School (Institution) fishing team or a Community Club affiliated with the FBN. Only one club from each institution is allowed.
2. The FBNHS Tournament Series is open only to current members of affiliated High School Clubs, recognized by said High School or an affiliated Community Club.
3. For those anglers that are home schooled, they may:
  - a) create their own charter (community) club so long as the requirements for starting a club are satisfied;  
or
  - b) join the high school club which they are required to attend/participate/zoned through by the local school district;
  - c) Should a club not exist in the local school or the local school district does not support the high school fishing club concept, the angler may join another charter (community) club that already exists in the area.
4. Certain schools allow 8th grade students to compete. If your institution/club allows 8th grade students to compete, a letter must be submitted with a faculty member's signature stating this permission. Competitors will be considered an "incoming student" into the next grade once they have completed their final exams in their current grade. They will then be able to participate in events once the aforementioned criteria have been met and they are in the admissible grade bracket to compete. Graduating seniors will be extended a grace period and allowed to compete in the summer months once their senior year has been completed. They will not be allowed to fish in any events that are qualifying for the next calendar school year. Proof of grade or graduation date, to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitor.
5. Only under extenuating circumstances will a student in 7th grade or less be allowed to compete in FBNHS tournaments but will not be eligible to advance to the B.A.S.S. High School Nation Championship Tournament.
6. This is a high school team event where both anglers are supposed to be from the same school or community club. You must have a partner and coach to compete. If extenuating circumstances exist that prohibit an angler from having a partner in a tournament, then a request must be submitted to the FBN in writing for approval. The FBN reserves the right to accept or deny such request. If an angler is granted permission to fish alone, the team may or may not receive points for fishing the event depending on the circumstances. The FBN also reserves the right to place an Observer/Marshal in the boat for those that have no partner.
7. A FBNHS Official must be notified when two anglers choose to partner up that are from separate schools or clubs, each angler will be entitled to count the tournament toward the qualifying requirements and will be entitled to any scholarship funds or prizes being offered for the tournament. The anglers will only be eligible to earn participation points (10-points/each angler). NO other points will be earned by the team for the event and NO team with anglers from separate Clubs will be eligible to participate in the FBNHS State Championship Tournament unless otherwise permitted within the rules for the State Championship Tournament.



8. Each participating team must have a Boat Captain. Boat Captains must be at least 18-years of age or older to operate a boat in a FBN Tournament. Boat Captains must be of the age that would place them out of High School and legally able and eligible to operate a boat. In Florida, anyone born on or after January 1, 1988, must have in his/her possession photographic identification and a boater safety identification card issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission while operating a vessel. Each tournament contestants will receive Boat Captain Rules. All the rules in this document and the Boat Captain Rules must be followed. Failure to following these rules may result in penalties as laid out in this document.
9. 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 wellbeing of his/her partner or themselves shall not be eligible.
10. Should a split occur between teammates, where one angler cannot or chooses not to finish (in other words "quits") out the season for reasons such as, but not limited to, "...can't get along with partner/boat captain", "...lack of interest in sport", "...grades", "...injury", or "...relocation", the other angler will be eligible to find another partner. An official of the FBNHS staff must be notified of the circumstances before a new angler can fish with the partner that chooses to remain fishing. Once an angler commits to a FBN Official to forfeit, leave or "quit" the program, the remaining angler will be entitled to any points the team earned toward the Angler of the Year in the Region or Statewide Trail. Should the partner that forfeit, left or "quit" the program, choose to return in a future event of the trail he/she previously participated, he/she will not be entitled to the previous points earned with previous partner.
11. In situations where there is a "Divorce" among teammates and both anglers choose to continue participating in a trail, both anglers will lose the points earned at the time of the "Divorce" and will start over earning points with new partners.

#### **BOAT INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS**

DURING THE COMPETITION DAYS OF ANY FBNHS TOURNAMENT, NO COMPETITOR OR BOAT CAPTAIN MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT COMPETITOR OR BOAT CAPTAIN 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 INFORCE 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 FBNHS Tournament requirements.

#### **SPORTSMANSHIP**

Teams in FBNHS 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.

1. Use of alcohol, tobacco, cigarettes (including vaping) or the use of drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any angler, during the tournament, will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future FBN tournaments. No alcoholic beverages, smoking/vaping, or chewing of tobacco other non-prescription stimulants or depressants shall be allowed in the boats during the competition days, or when in the weigh-in area.
2. Maximum courtesy must always be practiced, especially regarding boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a team or angler, which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters and courtesy, may be reason for disqualification.

3. All teams are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states in which we fish when participating in FBNHS Tournaments. Some regulations may differ from these rules resulting in fines, citations or other penalties at the discretion of law enforcement and may or may not result in tournament penalties. Regardless, anyone cited for a violation during a FBNHS tournament should report it to a Tournament Official. Teams are responsible for research of fishing and boating regulations.
4. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other 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 an FBNHS tournament, and/or disqualification from a FBNHS tournament, after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director.

### **ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Anglers/Boat Captains participating in any FBNHS sanctioned event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which they are participating. Anglers, parents and family members of Anglers shall, always, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of professional anglers that will not reflect unfavorably on B.A.S.S., the FBN, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

To this end, anglers, parents, coaches, faculty members, friends and family members of anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler, parents and family members of anglers who violate any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual FBN sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by the FBN.

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

Following are examples of unacceptable behavior by teams in FBN events that will be cause for penalties as outlined in this document.

- Heated public disagreements with FBN officials, other teams, fans, and volunteers during an event.
- Public attacks through media, including social media, upon the integrity of FBN rules or officials.
- Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of the FBN, FBN officials 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 teams or others connected with a FBN event.
- Offensive or slanderous comments with racial, cultural or sexual overtones regarding event officials, event personnel or fellow teams.
- Intentionally interfering with a fellow team/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 B.A.S.S. and/or FBN tournament.

## **MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS**

The favorable public reputation of FBN as a sanctioning organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets and tangible benefits for FBN. Accordingly, it is an obligation of teams to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers or the FBN organization. Teams, parents and/or family members are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with FBN policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials.

However, public comments that an angler, parents and/or family members knows, or should reasonably know, which will harm the reputation of FBN, FBN officials, or sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming of a professional and will result in disciplinary action.

## **COMPETITION DAYS**

1. There will be no off-limits period for any tournament unless specified by the Tournament Director. Special off-limits and practice periods for tournaments will be announced by the FBN and will be listed on the FBN website.
2. No teams will be allowed on Tournament waters once the tournament begins, except during the official tournament hours, see exception to under Rule 6 below.
3. Unless otherwise specified, all official times are time zone specific to local host community. The teams must know and observe these dates.
4. During competition, anglers cannot solicit, gather or intentionally receive any information from anyone other than another team in the tournament. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
5. The use of drones for the purposes of locating or catching fish or to gain a competitive advantage is prohibited in competition.
6. 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. Anytime during a competition day, when running in low light conditions, running lights should be in operation.
7. Anglers renting boat slips may launch boats and proceed immediately to slip location.
8. Testing of engines after the weigh-in is only allowed with permission from the Tournament Director. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
9. During the tournament, a team may not "SKIN DIVE" OR "SCUBA DIVE" in the tournament waters.
10. No teams may buy or barter a fishing location from any other team/competitor for use during any competition day. If the tournament is two or more days and a team chooses to drop out before the end of the tournament, that team is no longer considered in the tournament and other teams may not receive information under Rule 4 above.
11. During the official competition days of the tournament a team may not make cell calls for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Cell phones may be used for emergency situations. Teams can call lockmasters for locking purposes only. Teams can use smart phones for global maps, weather, notes, FBN updates, etc., however **using smart phones during competition to log into daily tournament blogs or participate in social media is not permitted.**
12. A designated tournament official must be granted access to the team's boat at any time during the competition day. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.
13. Each team agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, suggestions to another team that they violate these rules or false verification of weigh-in forms may be cause for disqualification. Official protests must be filed in accordance with Rule 5 listed under "**Rules and Penalties**". All parties of interest will be provided a copy.

14. By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each team agrees to submit to a truth verification test and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The FBN 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 FBN 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 FBN 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 team shall make themselves 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. Random truth verifications tests may be administered on site during a High School Series Event.

## **REGISTRATION AND MORNING CHECK-IN**

### **ALL DUES MUST BE PAID PRIOR TO THE FIRST EVENT OF THE SEASON.**

The FBN will only accept the annual membership dues for the State of Florida and B.A.S.S. from a club mentor/sponsor/coach/representative. Checks shall be made payable to the Florida B.A.S.S. Nation. **No dues will be collected by the FBN on an individual basis from the anglers or parents.**

A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED BY FBNHS TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS ON OR BEFORE THE APPLICATION DEADLINE DATE. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and the right to extend the acceptance date. As a participant in FBNHS Tournament Series, you agree to use during the FBNHS tournament, any and all official products and equipment so specified and provided by FBNHS Tournament Staff.

All anglers entering a FBNHS Tournament must sign a Liability Release Form when they register online. For those anglers that are under 18 years of age, a parent or legal guardian will need to sign the Liability Release Form using the space provided under the angler's name.

On the morning of a tournament, teams will be required to check-in in person at the designated time and place in the schedule of events, which will be posted on the FBN website. Failure to check-in during the designated time will result in a penalty, which will be a delayed launch time determined by the Tournament Director. The check-in process includes getting the boat inspected before take-off each morning of the tournament. Any team who has not contacted the FBNHS Tournament Staff within 15 minutes after the closing of the posted on-site registration period, may be disqualified from participating in that day's tournament. It shall be each team's responsibility to either check the schedule of events for registration time and location.

**Tournament Briefing:** The morning of the tournament there will be a short tournament briefing where Tournament Officials will cover key announcements, such as any fog delay, water hazards, shorten tournament day due to weather, start and check-in times, weigh-in procedures, rules, etc.

No refunds, credits, or roll-overs to future tournaments will be granted for teams that are disqualified for not properly checking in to fish on the tournament date for which they registered.

## **SAFETY**

1. Safe boat conduct must always be observed by teams. During the competition, each team must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest type life preserver anytime the combustion engine is running. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is out of gear or shut off. Inflatable life vest indicators should be checked daily. Violation of this rule may be reason for disqualification.
2. When boating in low visibility situations i.e. fog, heavy rain, during both practice and competition, teams must operate their boats at a safe speed and in a safe manner as determined by tournament officials.

3. Radar units (this does not include fish finders, geographical positioning systems (GPS) units, side imaging, etc.) permanently mounted in the boat are subject to approval by the FBN and may be approved for competition. The FBN's approval does not guarantee that B.A.S.S. will approve radar units in a future B.A.S.S. sanctioned tournament.
4. It is suggested the teams have a safety check with their partner each day prior to launch to familiarize the location of all safety equipment.
5. It is recommended each contestant successfully complete a boating safety course. Boating safety certification, or a "grandfathered" exception, may be required in certain states. Boating safety courses are available online and should carry an endorsement by the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators or NASBLA.
6. 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 teams. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather.
7. The FBN 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.
8. IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, TEAMS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND ONCE SAFE THEN NOTIFIES TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.
9. TEAMS ARE ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE BOAT AND SEEK SAFE SHELTER IN BAD WEATHER WHERE DANGER MAY BE IMMINENT.

#### **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 "nature's call" or a credible emergency. A team will not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score (weight) of another team. In such case, both teams shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by the FBN.

#### **HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS**

Maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and in tournament competition will be a **maximum of 250 HP and a minimum of 40 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 B.A.S.S. Each team 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 boat'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 FBN tournaments. Posted speed limits and those imposed by the FBN 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.

## **BOAT AND MOTOR**

**These restrictions apply during competition days.**

1. For the safety of all teams, 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.
2. Fishing boats that are 16 feet or more in length may be used.
3. 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.
4. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. However, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. The "LONG LINING" or "STROLLING" technique is NOT allowed in competition and defined as intentionally using a trolling motor or outboard to mechanically extend a cast. No exceptions.
5. Only gas tanks that are installed by the boat manufacturer are allowed. 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 team.
6. 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.

7. Jet drive engines and tunnel hull boats are not allowed during both official practice and competition. Any boat/hull designs other than standard mass-produced units are only allowed at the discretion of tournament officials.
8. No air boats may be used to fish during a FBNHS Tournament.

None of the rules shall prohibit a designated Tournament Official from approaching or boarding any team's boat at any time during the actual FBNHS Tournament for the purpose of inspecting the boat for violations of these rules. A team who refuses to allow his/her boat to be inspected by a FBNHS 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 FBNHS Tournaments.

## **BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT**

1. During competition, every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment and a functional bilge pump.
2. During official competition, every boat must have live-well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive, a limit of bass caught by the team. The FBN recommends livewells be maintained at full level and aerators/re-circulators on manual. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether live-well aeration and capacity is proper and adequate for use during tournaments.

## **BOAT IDENTIFICATION**

Prior to the start of every tournament, each boat must be inspected/checked by a Tournament Official. Each boat will be assigned a number on a token, which must remain with the boat. This number must be provided upon the request of tournament officials, and at each check-in at the end of the day. **Teams are not considered checked-in until their assigned token is "Hanging on the Board" at the official check-in location.**

## **BOAT OPERATION**

1. Anglers will NOT be permitted to operate the boat (main motor), only the Boat Captain. Anglers are only allowed to operate the trolling motor.
2. During tournament hours, teams 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.

3. 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 tournament officials.
4. 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 FBNHS Tournaments.
5. An angler may not leave the boat to land a fish.
6. In a credible emergency, 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. 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 teams 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. If a team's original boat becomes inoperable during a tournament and a replacement boat is available for the team to use, the boat must meet all criteria listed under, "Boat Insurance Requirements, "Horsepower Regulations", "Boat and Motor", and "Basic Boat Equipment" above, and the boat must be inspected/checked by a tournament official before it can be used.
7. IN THE EVENT OF AN ACCIDENT THAT INVOLVES ONE OR MORE BOATS, TEAMS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND ONCE EVERYONE IS SAFE THEN NOTIFY TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. ALL BOATS INVOLVED IN AN ACCIDENT, AS WELL AS ALL WITNESSES TO THE ACCIDENT MUST CEASE FISHING AND RETURN TO THE LAUNCH SITE, IF POSSIBLE.
8. If time remains after an emergency is resolved, the Tournament Officials may allow the anglers to resume fishing, a "restart" will be allowed, and the teams may continue fishing and their catch will be counted. This applies only to a credible emergency or accident.
9. Failure of a team to render assistance to another team in a credible emergency, when requested, may be cause for immediate disqualification.
10. A boat must always remain in tournament waters during tournament hours. Teams must leave and return to the official check-in point by boat, and both anglers must remain in the boat always except in the case of "nature's call" or a credible emergency.
11. No Trailering: 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. If a boat breaks down, the team's fish must be transported back to the weigh-in site by boat. No fish may be trailered back to the weigh-in site.

#### **TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT**

1. Teams in a FBNHS Tournament may use only artificial lures as bait. No "live bait," "dead bait," or "prepared bait" will be permitted during competition, except for pork strips or rinds.
2. Only one casting, spin-casting or spinning rod (maximum length ten 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. No competitor may intentionally snag or foul-hook a bass to be counted in his daily catch. Anyone guilty of intentionally snatching or snagging visible fish will have his catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, to be counted as a legal fish, each bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by the assigned partner or other observer before being unhooked. With the fish's mouth closed naturally, you must not be able to see where the hook point enters the fish for it to be considered hooked inside the mouth.
4. The use of "grippers" to land a bass is prohibited.

5. The Boat Captains are NOT ALLOWED TO FISH under any circumstances. Doing so will result in the disqualification of the team and boat captain from any future FBN events (Junior, High School, & Adult). NO EXCEPTIONS.

### **PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS**

1. Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each team must obtain this information from FBNHS Tournament Officials. Any water within these boundaries that are legally and obviously posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing," as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director, will be off-limits to tournament teams and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing.
2. All waters within 50-yards of any marina gas pump are off-limits.
3. 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 is permitted.
4. All angling must be done from the boat.
5. Anywhere a landowner may have the legal authority to claim private property, these areas must be posted, or they will be considered tournament waters unless instructed otherwise by tournament officials at any time during the event. If forced to leave, a team must report the incident to tournament officials as soon as possible. Any water to which a team is barred access becomes off-limits to all teams.
6. 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.
7. Moving structure to include sawing of logs or other obstructions in the water is only allowed if laws permit. No team may place any object that may impede or cause danger to boaters.

### **TEAMS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT**

1. During the competition days, teams must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.
2. 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. While keeping the majority of weight in the boat anglers are allowed for boat protection to push off or shove off objects while landing a fish to be counted as legal.
3. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Teams must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both competitors must always remain in the boat, except in case of dire emergency, or with permission from the Tournament Director.
4. In such an emergency, or with permission of the Tournament Director, teams may be removed from their boat, either to a boat operated by other teams, or a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director. Partners must always remain together, in sight of each other and each other's catch, under the conditions cited above, for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament.
5. In breakdown situations and with a tournament official's permission, teams may transfer their boat's fish to another competitor's boat and ride to check in, and they may leave their Boat Captain with the disabled boat. In such cases, the team must always stay with their catch and the assisting boat's Boat Captain should verify the 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. In the event of a needed restroom break or refueling situation at a marina gas pump, contestants can leave the boat, at which time all fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat. If, after the emergency 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.

## OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS

1. The Official launch site and “check-out/check-in points” will be established by the Tournament Officials for each FBNHS Tournament. 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.
2. At each Tournament, the Tournament will begin at safe daylight. Weigh-in time will be 3:00 pm in the time zone which the Tournament is held unless otherwise announced by Tournament Officials.
3. Prior to launch time, all teams’ boats will be inspected by a Tournament Official for compliance with tournament requirements. Boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. Failure to go through boat check and check-out in the morning may result in disqualification.
4. Prior to the start of a FBNHS Tournament, each team will be assigned a boat/Team number on a token. At the end of the tournament day, all teams will “check-in” with this assigned boat/Team number and token before proceeding to the weigh-in area. **Teams are not considered checked-in until their assigned token is “Hanging on the Board” at the official check-in location.** 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 and will not receive any points for participating that day.
5. After proper recognition at the check-in point, all fishing must cease, and teams should immediately proceed to the weigh-in area. Partners must stay together, through the weigh-in process if weighing fish.

Failure to comply with these requirements may result in disqualification from the tournament and all future FBNHS Tournaments.

## SCORING AND FISH CARE DURING TOURNAMENTS

1. Tournament standings, contingency awards and final winners shall be determined by using scales measuring in hundredths of a pound for each competitor’s catch during the competition days of the tournament.
2. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Red Eyes, Shoal and Suwannee Bass will be weighed. The limit shall be five (5), of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials (example – hot weather/fish care concerns).
3. At no time shall a team have in their possession more than the tournament limit. When one angler on the team is in the “act of culling”, the other angler may continue to fish. Should the second angler catch a fish while the first angler is “in the act of culling”, all fishing must cease until the additional fish are culled. If a team determines they have over the limit they must immediately reduce their 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 legal 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 team has their fish verified, weighed and upon returning to the boat discovers additional fish over the tournament limit that were not presented to officials; the angler must notify tournament officials before any awards are presented to receive a 2-pound penalty for each bass discovered.
4. Anglers who do not remove fin clips prior to fish check will be assessed a 4-ounce penalty per clip. No manmade or foreign object connected to a bass will be weighed and will be removed by tournament officials.

5. The Official Tournament length for bass shall be twelve (12) inches. Only bass described above that measure 12 inches or more in length on an "Official Golden Rule" with mouth closed will be weighed. Exemptions will be provided for exceeding State regulations. In the event exemptions are not provided, State Regulations will prevail. A "short" fish brought to the scales for weigh-in shall result in the loss of that fish and shall result in a penalty of 1-pound for each such bass, which penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Courtesy measurements will NOT be permitted at the weigh-in station; however, teams may check their boat rulers to the FBN board the morning of the tournament to make sure the boards are the same.
6. Don't Kill Your Catch! A Team should make every effort to maintain the welfare of its catch throughout the day. Any fish that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials.
7. After Teams 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 team's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that team may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Teams should stay together until their fish are weighed.
8. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the Tournament Director and must be used for the weigh-in. 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 HS 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.

#### **CATCH AND RELEASE: CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED.**

1. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized a quarter of a pound of weight (4-ounces), which will be deducted from their daily score. For the purpose of this rule only, a "Dead Fish" will be considered any fish that is not moving.
2. 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 can purchase ice on the water.
3. 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 an advised practice.
4. Bass must never be placed on a stringer at any time during the tournament.
5. Only non-penetrating culling clips are allowed. Any clip or device that penetrates the skin or mouth of a fish is not allowed.
6. Proper fizing technique is suggested when needed. For instructions on acceptable fizing practices please contact B.A.S.S. officials.

#### **LATE PENALTY**

Teams who are not at the official check-in point, as described under "Official Check Points", item #4, at the appointed time, shall be penalized at the rate of one (1) 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, teams 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 each Team's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day.

## **TIES**

In case of a tie, the following measures should be employed in this order to break the tie.

1. The team with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the competition.
2. The team with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the competition.
3. The team with the heaviest single day's catch during competition.
4. The team with the second heaviest single day's catch during competition.
5. In the unlikely event that there is still a tie, a "coin toss" will be used to determine the winner, and the monies for first and second place shall be evenly split between the two teams. Points will be awarded for the place of the tied position and each competitor will be awarded equal points. In the instance where merchandise is involved, it will be awarded as determined by tournament officials.

## **INAPPROPRIATE CLOTHING/SIGNAGE**

Anglers are encouraged to wear their own clothing FBN tournaments which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the angler's sponsors. The FBN may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are, in the FBN's sole judgment, in competition with the products or services of official sponsors, or which are, in the FBN's sole judgment, in poor taste. The FBN will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances.

For Regional and Florida B.A.S.S. Nation State Trail rules for 2019-2020 season, see [www.floridabassnation.com](http://www.floridabassnation.com).



## BOAT CAPTAIN RULES

(Effective September 1, 2019 through August 31, 2020)

Each participating team must have a Boat Captain. Boat Captains must be at least 18-years of age or older to operate a boat in a FBN Tournament. Boat Captains must be of the age that would place them out of High School and legally able and eligible to operate a boat. In Florida, anyone born on or after January 1, 1988, must have in his/her possession photographic identification and a boater safety identification card issued by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission while operating a vessel. All the rules in this document must be followed. Failure to following these rules may result in penalties and possible disqualification.

Boat Captains may only fall in the following criteria:

- Official faculty member of the student's institution
  - Close family friend/State Nation member
  - Parent of the student's High School B.A.S.S. Club
- **If a potential boat captain is a local guide, then they will be ineligible to boat captain on the waters which they are a guide. FBN Tournament Officials reserves the right to deny any Boat Captain.**

During Competition coaches MAY:

1. Coach
2. Offer advice (send in plays)
3. Verbally explain techniques, how to...
4. Assist with culling fish, if one angler is in the act of culling

During Competition coaches **MAY NOT:**

1. Fish
2. Teach by example
3. Run the trolling motor
4. Land fish with or without a net
5. Assist in removing backlashes
6. Assist in tying lures

Violations of the above rules will result in the disqualification of the team and boat captain from any future FBN events (Junior, High School, & Adult). NO EXCEPTIONS.

During competition, anytime the combustion engine is running, coaches **MUST** be seated in the driver's seat in full control of the boat.