

TOURNAMENT RULES

Revised 03/13/2023

1. Interpretation of these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director and/or the Assistant Tournament Director. Any member who has a disagreement with a decision of the Tournament Director may appeal the decision to the club's Executive Board. Appeals made more than thirty (30) minutes after completion of the weigh-in will not be considered.
2. Participation is open to any member of Berrien Bass Busters in good standing. Family member guests are allowed under the following conditions. No other guest will be allowed.
 - Must be a family member of a Berrien Bass Busters member in good standing.
 - All Berrien Bass Busters members must be able to fish, with no more than (2) persons per boat, prior to including a family member guest.
 - Family member must have a valid fishing license.
 - All Berrien Bass Busters rules to apply to the family member guest
 - Family member guest can fish as a guest for only (1) tournament in a fishing season.
 - Family member's fish can count for Big Bass for a monetary winnings for the tournament, but not for Big Bass for the season.
3. Lake Selection and Tournament Date Selection Process
 - The members at the November meeting will nominate a list of potential tournament lakes. Proposed tournament dates will be selected by the appointed committee and presented at the December meeting.
 - For purposes of voting for the number of tournaments, tournament dates, and tournament lakes, each member will have one vote per proposal. For purposes of the away-two day tournaments, each member will have one vote for the weekend (i.e., one vote for Saturday and Sunday combined).
 - At the December meeting, the first proposal and vote will be to approve the total number of tournaments for the year. The second proposal and vote will be for the tournament dates. Once the dates are selected, the voting will move to lake selection for each tournament date.
 - When selecting tournament dates, consideration will be given for holidays and other tournament trails in which Berrien Bass Busters members also compete.
 - There will be one vote for the entire schedule after discussion of the proposed tournament dates. In the case of a tie vote on any proposal in this section, the top two finishers in the proposals will be put to a re-vote. If this results in a tie, the top two finishers will be placed on pieces of paper and the President will draw one from a hat to determine the winner.
 - Any member may nominate any lake(s) from the list of lakes selected at the November meeting for any tournament date. However, for the away-two day tournaments, all nominations must be for both days (i.e. Lake St. Clair both days or Charlevoix/Walloon Lake, etc.).

4. Tournament Fees/Paybacks

The cost of participation in each tournament is \$35.00, whether boater or non-boater. (See additional fees and penalties below). \$5.00 of every entry fee is reserved for Big Bass for the tournament. Only the first Big Bass will receive a prize for the tournament. If there are eight (8) or more anglers in the tournament, 4th place overall will receive \$30. The remaining payback will be split for each respective place as follows:

- 1st 50% of remaining entry fees
- 2nd 30% of remaining entry fees
- 3rd 20% of remaining entry fees

5. Tournament partners will be drawn at the general meeting prior to the tournament date. Anyone entering the tournament after the draw may be assessed a \$10.00 late fee. All fishermen must pay or commit to pay their tournament fee prior to the tournament draw. There will be no exceptions. All tournament fees are non-refundable. If a participant is a no-show, their tournament money will not be refunded. If the no-show is a non-boater, he/she will still owe the boater the non-boater fee and it must be paid prior to the next tournament. If the no-show is a boater, he/she may be liable for the non-boater's fees if the non-boater is not paired at the ramp by the Tournament Director. **ALL NO-SHOW FEES MUST BE PAID PRIOR TO FISHING ANY FUTURE TOURNAMENT.** Emergency conditions are not normally considered a no-show. In such cases proper notification must be made to the Tournament Director or Executive Board and boater/non-boater prior to the tournament start time and in as much advance notice as is practical. Tournament pairing in emergent conditions, carryover of fees, and no-show status are determined at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director and the decisions are considered final.

6. Any member who wishes to be included in a tournament draw, but cannot attend the tournament draw, must contact either the Tournament Director, a member in attendance of the meeting, or the club President to have his/her name included in the draw. It is always the absent member's responsibility to make sure his/her tournament fee will be paid before the draw.

7. No two (2) members should fish together in more than one (1) tournament per year, except when necessary due to the lack of available combinations. In no circumstances will the same two (2) members fish together in consecutive tournaments.

8. Tournament Drawings

Boaters and non-boaters are paired by draw until all names are drawn. In the event there are more non-boaters than boaters, the remaining non-boaters are in standby status until: 1) Tournament Director can identify an available boater to fish; or 2) a paired non-boater decides not to fish. All pairings done in this manner are at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director. If the boater/non-boater is a youth, both the youth sponsor and the respective boater/non-boater must agree to the pairing or names are redrawn/reassigned at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director. Persons entering a tournament draw as a "non-boater" are requested to pay the boater a fee to help defray the boat and towing expenses. This fee is \$30, plus one half of the launch fees.

9. There will be two (2) fishermen in each boat in every tournament, with the following exceptions.
- A. If the draw produces a boater without a partner.
 - B. B. If a boater's partner is unable to participate, doesn't show up in time for the tournament take-off or must leave during a tournament.
 - C. For a non-boater, in the event his/her boater breaks down during a tournament, with acceptance of another participating boater AND non-boater, three (3) persons are allowed to complete the tournament in one boat.
 - D. For cases where more boaters exist than non-boaters, boaters may decide to fish as a non-boater and be paired, however, no boater is required to fish as a non-boater to make even pairings

10. Legal Fish

Largemouth or smallmouth: minimum size is determined by the state's fishing regulations. All members are expected to only record the weights of legal size fish.

11. Weighing Fish

Paper/Electronic Tournament Weigh-in Procedure

- This type of Berrien Bass Buster tournament was devised because of Michigan's closed bass season. Utilizing this type of tournament is to eliminate live well usage, alleviate stress on the fish, and simplify the weigh-in. Unless approved by a vote of the membership, all Berrien Bass Buster tournaments will be paper/electronic tournaments.
- Each boater is required to have a scale that weighs in pounds by a 2-place decimal (X.XX). Prior to each tournament each scale will be checked by the Tournament Director with the club's one pound weight. Any deviation must be entered in the scale tare area of the weigh sheet.
- Upon landing each legal size bass, weigh it, verify the weight with the other member in the boat, if present, release the bass, write the weight down on the weigh sheet or record it electronically, and circle L for largemouth or S for smallmouth or note the species electronically. For purposes of weighing bass, all weights will be pounds in a decimal format (X.XX). If a back-up scale is used and it is only capable of measuring in pounds and ounces, then the angler will use the weight measurement as it appears on the screen. The person calculating the tournament score will convert the weight to the nearest decimal equivalent
- At the end of the tournament total your weight (up to five fish) and write the total on the appropriate line and then turn the weigh sheet into the Weighmaster. If more than five fish are caught circle the five fish that you are counting. Alternatively, text and email a photograph of the weigh sheet, or details of the top five fish and total weight, to the Weighmaster within one (1) hour of the tournament end time. All late-submitted weigh sheets will result in disqualification unless due to lack of cellular service.

12. Scoring

Scoring is determined by one point per ounce of fish weighed in.

- Ten (10) tournament points shall be awarded for each meeting attended.
- Ten (10) points shall be awarded for each chapter tournament attended.
- Ten (10) tournament points will be awarded for each non-boater abandoned by a no-show boater.

Social events are not considered as club functions.

Each member, if participating, will select 1 fish to be weighed for Big Bass.

13. Ties

Big bass weight will break all ties for total weight for the tournament. If first big bass does not break the tie, go to the next biggest bass and so on. Second big bass weight will break all ties for big bass for the tournament. If second big bass does not break the tie, go the next biggest bass and so on. Big bass for the year will break any ties for end of season standings.

14. Tackle and Equipment

With the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc., only artificial lures may be used. Only one spinning, spin-cast or casting rod and reel shall be used at any one time. Flipping rods are considered as casting rods. All other types are prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use. All bass shall be caught live in a conventional sporting manner.

An angler will be allowed to utilize a second line once per tournament day. When utilizing a second line an angler must employ a "cast and retrieve" method. Working bottom baits very slowly is considered a "cast and retrieve" method. Dragging a line from a stationary rod is not permitted.

15. Check-in Time and Location

- If approved by the Tournament Director, anglers may launch from any launch on the tournament lake, or any connected body of water. The Tournament Director will set the start and stop times for the tournament. No angler may put a lure attached to line in the water (i.e., begin fishing) prior to the start time. All lines must be out of the water at the stop time. All weights must be reported to the Weighmaster as set forth in Section 11 above.
- If the Tournament Director elects to use a single launch site, check-in time will be from ½ hour before the start of the event determined at the previous general membership meeting prior to the tournament. Check-in location will be a predetermined launching site. The Tournament Director's watch is the official time. All watches should be synchronized to the Director's watch. Late arrival at the tournament site is strongly discouraged. At the sole discretion of the Tournament Director, violators will be penalized by losing one (1) tournament attendance point and an 8-ounce penalty. All participants must be at the check-in point at a time designated by the tournament director. A party who is a late show, will be required to check in with the Tournament Director in a manner required by the Tournament Director prior to beginning to fish. Participants must leave and return to the check-in point by boat. Participants must remain in the boat at all times, except for emergency and personal sanitary needs.

16. Anchoring

Fishing within fifty (50) yards of another competitor's boat that is anchored down (which includes all shallow-water anchors) and trolling motor up, is not allowed without permission from the first boat in the area. If you let one competitor fish within fifty (50) yards of your boat, you must let all competitors fish that area. When using "Spot Lock" you are required to notify anyone within the required distance.

17. Safety

- General boat safety must be practiced at all times, in accordance with the "Guide to Safe Boating in Michigan."
- All participants MUST wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved personal floatation device (PFD) when the combustion engine is in operation. The driver must have the kill-switch lanyard attached to his/her person while operating the combustion engine.

18. Disqualification

Any infraction of state fishing regulations, state law, Berrien Bass Busters by-laws, rules or these tournament rules may result in disqualification from the tournament. All boats are subject to inspection by the Tournament Director or Assistant Tournament Director prior to take off. Chumming will result in immediate disqualification.

Minimum Tournament Boat Requirements:

- Length - Fourteen (14) feet.
- Electric trolling motor.
- Kill switch for combustion motor.

19. Alternate Lakes

At the beginning of the season, during the selection of lakes, 3 or more predetermined lakes are to be chosen by the club to be used throughout the tournament trail for the year.

- If none of the predetermined alternate lakes selected during the beginning of the season provide a suitable option for the club's purposes, a specific alternate lake may be chosen at the regularly scheduled club meeting by a majority vote of the general membership on the day of pairing for that specific tournament.
 - i. A proxy vote may be counted provided the voting member will fish the tournament date in question.
 - ii. A proxy vote member is responsible for payment of the upcoming tournament fees in the unlikely event of a convenient change of intent to participate.
 - iii. A proxy vote must contact the Tournament Director or Executive Club member prior to the vote.

20. Alternate Lakes Use

A predetermined alternate lake selection may be invoked in such cases that warrant a change which may include safety concerns, inclement weather, or other tournament conflicts.

- In emergent conditions, the Tournament Director may invoke the selection of a predetermined alternate lake provided all tournament participants have been contacted a minimum of 2 days prior to the tournament date and without undue financial hardship on any participant (such as pre-fishing expenses, hotel fees, etc.).
- The tournament participants may pre-coordinate the need to use an alternate lake by unanimous vote of the boater participants, and invoke an alternate lake selection at any time prior to the start time of the specific tournament.
- In all cases, any change in the club tournament trail to fish an alternate lake must be approved by the Executive Board.
- An alternate lake may be properly motioned, with a second and the motion must carry at the preceding lake selection general meeting.
 - i. Only those members who intend to fish on the alternate lake motioned may vote.
 - ii. Only a 4 to 1 (80%) majority vote will change the selection of a tournament trail lake.
 - iii. By rule, tournament trail changes made by proper motion that carries with vote do not require Executive Board approval.

21. The consumption or public display of any alcoholic beverage during the tournament may result in immediate suspension by the Tournament Director and can result in removal of Berrien Bass Busters membership. This does not apply after the end of the tournament while putting away equipment, etc.

22. Final Standings Rules

- A portion of the membership fees will be retained annually to cover miscellaneous expenses for club business and to cover the costs of trophies. An agreed upon sum will be awarded at the Annual Awards Banquet to the top three (3) places on the following basis:
 - First Place – 100% of the entry fees paid by the first place angler of the year for that tournament year.
 - Second Place – 75% of the entry fees paid by the second place angler of the year for that tournament year.
 - Third Place – 50% of the entry fees paid by the third place angler of the year for that tournament year.
 - Big Bass for the year – 100% of the yearly Big Bass pot.
- Miscellaneous expenses for club business the costs of trophies will be approved at a previous general membership meeting in the Treasury Report.

23. Miscellaneous

- **REMEMBER.....ALWAYS CHECK THE RULES OF EACH TOURNAMENT YOU ENTER.**
- **DO NOT KILL YOUR CATCH.**

Good luck to all participants and remember to SHOW GOOD SPORTSMANSHIP AT ALL TIMES!!!