

Wisconsin Bass Federation Tournament Rules

The following rules and regulations apply to all tournaments sponsored by the Wisconsin Bass Federation (WBF). All competitors are required to know the tournament rules that will be in effect for all Federation sponsored events. The Federation's definition of a tournament: Any organized, prearranged fish-off between skilled anglers to determine the most skilled anglers in the WBF.

1. RULES INTERPRETATION: The following rules and regulations have been formulated by the Wisconsin Bass Federation Board and tournament committee. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions he or she deems appropriate, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director and/or other appointed tournament officials shall be final in all matters. While given this authority, the tournament director is, nonetheless, accountable to the Board for his/her decisions.

2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY: Participants must be a member of a WBF affiliated club and in good standing at the time of registration.

3. TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION: All fees for Federation tournaments must be made payable to the Wisconsin Bass Federation. Any refunds or late entries will only be allowed with special permission of both the State President and the Tournament Director, for very outstanding circumstances. Each club member is responsible for submitting a properly completed and signed official entry form to the Tournament Director by the designated deadline. No one will be allowed to compete unless an entry form has been properly received. By registering and entering your email address and phone number you agree to be contacted both by email & phone. Message and data rates may apply. **LATE ENTRY FORMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED!**

4. BOAT INSURANCE: During the official practice and competition days of any Federation tournament, contestants may not operate a boat unless that contestant has submitted documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 boating liability insurance to the Tournament Director. This documented proof must show an effective date and expiration date and must be received by the designated entry form deadline. If it should expire between the deadline and the tournament, also submit an updated document as soon as possible.

5. SAFETY: Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times by all tournament competitors. Each competitor is required to properly wear a U.S. Coast Guard approved chest-type life preserver any time the combustion engine is operating. The preserver must be strapped, snapped, and/or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Also, when the internal combustion engine is in operation, all participants shall be seated so that their feet are resting on the main floor of the boat. Contestants are required to operate their boats at speeds, which would not be considered dangerous or excessive.

6. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: Only artificial lures may be used, no "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted, with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only one casting, spincasting or spinning rod (8-foot maximum length from butt to tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types are prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in the boat ready for use, however only one is permitted at any given time. All bass must be caught alive and in a conventional sporting manner. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Any net may be used to boat bass.

7. HORSEPOWER: The horsepower of the outboard engine must be a minimum 25 HP and must not exceed the rating specified on the rating plate attached to each boat manufactured after November 1, 1972. Any boat manufactured prior to that date, must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. Maximum motor size on any boat, regardless of U.S. Coast Guard ratings, shall not exceed 250 horsepower. The tournament staff will make final decisions whether a boat is overpowered or unsafe.

8. BOATS: All boats used in Federation tournaments must be at least 15 feet in length. Pontoon barges and other cumbersome crafts will not be allowed. Functional bilge pumps are recommended on all units. All boats used in competition, regardless of size, must be equipped with a working lanyard type kill switch. This ignition kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Stick steering will not be allowed. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Each boat must be equipped with a properly aerated live-well capable of sufficiently maintaining, in a healthy condition, a live limit catch of bass by both fishermen occupying the boat; with the minimum space being one gallon of water for every pound of fish. Absolutely no stringers or fish baskets will be allowed as a means of holding or carrying fish. The Tournament Director shall have sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate".

9. INSPECTION: Prior to each day's start, each boat will have an inspection check by a tournament official and will be given a numbered paddle, which must remain in the boat until turned in each day at weigh-in. This paddle must be displayed at the request of tournament officials. A properly designated tournament official may approach or board any competitor's boat at any time during official practice or tournament hours.

10. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE: Boaters will fish from the front deck of the boat only. Co-Anglers will fish from the back deck or seating area of the boat only. Boaters will have complete control of boat operation and waters to be fished. For safety concerns in rough water or swift current, in the event of an outboard or trolling motor breakdown or during an emergency, Co-Anglers may operate the trolling motor or the outboard but may not fish anytime from the front deck. Boaters may NOT request that the Co-Angler not fish. Any Boater that, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in such a manner that unfairly handicaps his/her Co-Angler and any Co-Angler who unfairly handicaps his/her Boater may be disqualified. Co-Anglers are not allowed to record GPS waypoints or use any type of handheld GPS during any competition day nor share information about their Boater's location or tactics with any other Boater. Co-anglers are expected to contribute a minimum of \$30 to their boater for the day to help cover a portion of the expenses related to the operation of the boat.

11. TOURNAMENT WATERS: Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50-yard circle claimed by him or her, to the exclusion of another competitor. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants must not depart from the boat to land fish. Boats must remain in tournament waters during the tournament day. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat, both competitors must remain in the boat at all times, except in the case of dire emergency. In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boats to a boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat so designated by tournament officials. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other's catch, in order for their catch on that day to be scored in the tournament. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions due to an emergency, or

any other reason approved by the tournament committee, his catch of that day will be weighed in at the weigh-in site and counted in the tournament. A tournament official or someone designated by the tournament committee will then take the place of the contestant leaving the boat, and the remaining contestant may go back to fishing with his observer. The contestant remaining will have sole control of the boat and fishing locations after the observer enters the boat. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited.

12. OFF LIMITS/ SPECIAL RULES: During official practice and tournament hours, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of any one for the purpose of locating bass, nor consult a professional guide, state, or wildlife agency employee, Federation member, or any other person deemed a "local expert" on these tournament waters by the tournament director, unless he/she is a contestant in the tournament. Contestants wishing to bring a boat across tournament waters from another site (campground, etc.) must obtain permission from the tournament director. Federation members, who are not contestants, are not allowed on tournament waters during the official practice or tournament hours. Any infraction of this rule will be disqualification of that individual from his/her next qualifying Federation tournament.

13. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be only one official point for check-out in the morning, and check-in in the afternoon, and this point shall be designated prior to the tournament. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in the full conformance with all rules set forth by the tournament committee; at check-in all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbered paddle and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must remain together with their paddle until weigh-in.

14. SCORING: Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the total weight of each competitors catch during the days of the tournament. The daily tournament limit for each competitor shall be five (5) fish. Only largemouth, red eye or smallmouth bass will be weighed. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the State of Wisconsin. Specially designed bags which increase the survival rate will be furnished by the tournament committee; these bags must be used for weigh-in. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint, he MUST present all fish in his possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. None of the bass will be returned to the contestants once presented at weigh-in, except for a trophy bass. A competitor may keep a trophy bass weighing over seven pounds for mounting, if he so chooses, however the dead fish penalty will be imposed. The few bass which do not survive will be given to charity or disposed of by some means designated by the tournament committee. Only bass which meet state length regulations, measured on the longest line with the mouth closed, shall be presented for weigh-in. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled, or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials.

15. PENALTIES: Any short fish brought to the weigh-master will mean disqualification of that day's catch. Each dead fish, as determined by the tournament committee, brought to weigh-in will be penalized 4 oz. (.25 lbs). Dead fish may be weighed for "Big Bass" however 4 oz (0.25 lbs) will be subtracted from the weight of the fish.

16. LATE PENALTY: Competitors not at the official safety check in point as described above at the appointed check in time shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of their catch that day. Any competitors more than fifteen (15) minutes late shall lose all weight

credit for that day. Return time shall be defined as the time when the assigned floating keychain is returned to the tournament official located at the official check-in point. There shall be no excuses for tardiness, and in no case shall a competitor be allowed to make up for "lost time". After proper recognition at the check-in point, competitors will be allowed ample time to proceed to the weigh-in site; however, all fishing must cease upon check-in. After the tournament begins, fishing is prohibited except during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced prior to the tournament.

17. TIES: In case of a tie for any place in an individual event, the following tie breakers will be used in order;(1) the team or individual with the largest number of legal fish weigh-in during the competition, (2) the team or individual with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the competition. In the unlikely event that teams or individuals remain tied after these two tie breakers are employed, the tie will remain a tie and points, trophies, and prize money, if any, will then be equally split. In the event of a first-place tie, both first place finishers shall qualify for NSF. In case of a tie for any place in cumulative point standings, the following tie breakers will be used in this order, (1) the team or individual with the largest number of legal fish weigh-in during the competition, (2) the team or individual with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the competition, (3) the total weight from all qualifying events (excluding Mr. Bass). In the unlikely event that teams or individuals remain tied after these three tie breakers are employed, the tie will remain a tie and trophies and prize money, if any, will then be equally split.

18. PAIRING OF CONTESTANTS: All Boaters and Co-Anglers will be paired by random draw. All contestants must contact their assigned Boater or Co-Angler once they are notified of their pairing for the tournament. Partners should advise each other of their respective lodging and phone numbers and establish a meeting time and place AWAY FROM THE RAMP so you can be launched at least 30 minutes prior to the following morning's takeoff. The tournament director, at his or her sole discretion, may reassign partners at any time. Once you are paired by the draw you must inform Tournament Officials if you cannot fish or fines and penalties will apply. Event Boater and Co-Angler numbers will be even, no one can fish alone, if an angler does not show up or must withdraw and a Standby Angler\Observer cannot be found, Boaters or Co-Anglers will be removed based on those without a linked angler to even the field based on last registered/first out. Register early if you do not want the risk. When possible, contestants from the same Club will not be paired together until there are no other options left and nor shall two participants fish together more than one day in any single event. Tournament Officials shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. A contestant must not allow any fish caught by them to be counted on the score of another contestant. In such a case, both contestants shall be disqualified from this and all future tournaments conducted by WBF.

19. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in Federation tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Contestants are also responsible for their actions and conduct in and around the area of the event including motels, hotels, restaurants, etc. Good conduct and sportsmanship should also be exercised during all interactions taking place over the various social media platforms. Any act of a competitor which reflects unfavorably upon the Federation's efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification.

20. DRUGS AND ALCOHOL: Use of alcohol or illegal drugs by any competitor during the official practice or tournament hours will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from that and all future Federation tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, or illegal drugs shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days or at the weigh-in area. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon the Federation's efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation, or for disqualification.

21. RADIOS: During tournament hours, a competitor may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communications device for the purpose of communicating information related to locating or catching fish. If so equipped, contestants may listen to the marine band weather information.

22. TOURNAMENT HOURS: see trip sheet for each respective tournament.

23. AMENDMENTS: These tournament rules may be amended by resolution setting forth such amendment or amendments adopted at any meeting duly called for that purpose or at any regularly scheduled Board meeting. A statement of the nature of the proposed amendment should be included in the notice of the meeting when possible, but is not necessary. An amendment shall be adopted upon receiving at least two-thirds of the votes entitled to be cast by Board members present or represented by proxy at such meeting.

Date	Revision Summary
03/28/2021	Minor grammatical, formatting, and language changes. Late Penalty: updated from DQ to 1 lb/minute, DQ after 15 minutes. Tie Breakers: added clarification for single events and AOY- removed coin flip. Sportsmanship: added internet/social media to list of areas where good conduct is required.