

INDIANA BASS FEDERATION INVITATIONAL TRAIL RULES 2017

1. RULES CHANGES: The Indiana Bass Federation (IBF) Invitational Tournament Trial Director shall be responsible for making any changes in these Rules. The following rules will remain unchanged from March through the conclusion of the tournament season each year except for special tournaments conducted by the IBF. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. The decisions of the Tournament Director are final in all matters and not subject to appeal. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions as he deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibited from participation in subsequent tournaments.

2. MEMBERSHIP: The Anglers and Co-Anglers will need to have Standard Competitor level membership with FLW Outdoors. If not a member of the IBF, there will be a \$10.00 one time fee each year. In the event that a competitor is only a member of the FLW and not a member of an IBF club with participates in the current year's IBF Top-8 Program, that competitor shall not qualify to fish in the state finals as described below.

3. MEMBERSHIP and ELIGIBILITY: Participation is open to Anglers who are 18 years of age or older and Co-Anglers 16 years or older. All Co-Anglers under the age of 18 will require written permission from a legal guardian. An Angler who enters by the entries by the entry deadline and provides a Co-Angler (who also enters by the deadline) will receive guaranteed entry status and will be drawn with a Co-Angler. Co-Anglers who enter by the entry deadline with an Angler (who also enters by the deadline) will receive guaranteed entry. All others will be taken in order of entry (first come first served). A completed entry from with entry fee must be received by the tournament director no later than the published entry deadline for each tournament or it will be considered late. Late entries will be accepted, except tournament with a full field. All late entries must be accompanied by a \$10.00 non-refundable service fee and submitted no later than the beginning of registration the day before the tournament. Refunds or transfers must be required no later than 5:00 pm Friday before each tournament. Refunds and transfers may be granted with a \$10.00 service fee. Anyone with a returned check will be charged an additional service fee of \$35.00. By signing the entry form, each competitor agrees to abide by all rules and also submit to a Polygraph or Truth Verification test. Administration and interpretation of the test shall be the responsibility of the Tournament Director or his agents.

4. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE: Official Practice will be two days prior to the tournament, ending at the start of the pre-tournament meeting at 5:00 pm on Saturday. You may practice on Friday and Saturday preceding the Sunday tournament. Monday thru Thursday is off limits. See the entry form for specific off limit dates. No competitor may be on the water for the purpose of locating bass or potential fishing water after 5:00 on the Saturday before the tournament. Competitors may NOT purchase information or hire services designed to assist them on tournament waters after the entry deadline. ON THE TWO DAY TOURNAMENT WEEKEND PRACTICE IS ON FRIDAY ONLY.

5. REGISTRATION: Each Competitor must register in person or have a substitute during the official registration hours. Failure to register prior to 5:00 pm will result in a 2 pound penalty from the competitors catch. Failure to register by the start of the pairing will result in not being allowed to participate.

6. SUSSTITUTES FOR REGISTRATION: A registered competitor may have a substitute sand in for them at the Registration, Meeting and Pairings. That substitute must be at least 16 years of age and will have the same responsibility as the angler, sign, pay for big bass, meet the partner, arrange for meeting the partner the morning of the tournament, exchanging telephone number and relaying times such as boat check, take off, return, off limits, etc. A substitute may be another competitor but they may not substitute for more than one person.

7. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS: Two competitors will be assigned to each boat. Announcement of the fishing partners will be made at the pre-tournament meeting, which must be attended by each competitor or their substitute. Any competitor who refuses to fish with their drawn partner will be immediately disqualified and their entry fee will be forfeited. It is each partner's responsibility to get checked in and started on time. Each partner will be responsible for understanding their take off position, take off and return times and designated Off Limits areas. Tournament Officials are not responsible for missing partners. If more Anglers than Co-Anglers are entered in the tournament, excess Anglers will be paired together. They both fish as Anglers. It shall be their responsibility to determine whose boat shall be used and will be resolved with the flip of a coin if agreement can't be reached. Each will be able to fish from the front of the boat an equal amount of time and each must allow the other to go to their water an equal amount of time. If more Co-Anglers are entered than Anglers, the excess Co-Anglers may switch to Angler status by paying the Angler entry fee or have their entry fee refunded with out a service charge. The selection of Anglers and Co-Anglers will be by guarantee status and then time of entry.

8. SAFETY: Safe boating must be observed at all time. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved life preserver anytime the combustion engine is in operation during tournament hours. All boats must be equipped with an emergency shut off devise that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation. All boats must always be operated in a safe manner.

9. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in IBF tournaments are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship. 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. Any act that reflects unfavorably upon the IBF tournament reputation for fairness, courtesy, safety and conservation shall be reason for disqualification from this and future IBF tournaments. Examples include but are not limited to 1) reported violations by the DNR, 2) failure to wear Coast Guard approved life preservers, 3) fishing off limits are or off limit times, 4) endangering the safety of others, 5) becoming abusive and or disrupting the harmony of the IBF tournaments, 6) any act of cheating, 7) drunkenness at the pre-tournament meeting or tournament. Alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs are prohibited in the boat, during the tournament or until completion of the tournament event. The practice of hole sitting or having a non competitor restrict an area is strictly forbidden. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie talkies, CB's, etc. to communicate fishing locations or information to gain an advantage or give another competitor an advantage during the tournament hours is strictly prohibited.

10. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: All bass must be caught alive in conventional sporting manner. Only artificial lures may be used with the exception of pork trailers. Only one fishing rod may be used at a time. Maximum rod length is 8 ft. Trolling is not permitted fishing method. Any fish caught while site fishing must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by the partner.

11. BOAT, MOTOR AND HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: All boats must be a minimum of 16 feet in length and equipped with wheel steering. No barge, pontoon or other cumbersome craft will be permitted. Each boat must have all the required Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must have two properly aerated live wells with space to maintain a limit of fish for each competitor. One large livewell with a divider that prevents the Anglers fish from being mixed with the Co-Anglers fish is acceptable. (See item 16 & 17 below). Maximum horsepower for all outboards will be 250 HP and may not exceed the limitations set by the Coast Guard for each boat. Each boat must have a horsepower rating plate attached to the boat as provided by the manufacture. Only fuel tanks designed for boats will be allowed. NO cans of fuel in unapproved containers will be allowed. No sitting fuel out on the bank will be allowed. You may not obtain fuel at any location where other competitors may not.

12. BOAT OPERATIONS AND EXPENSES: Anglers will fish from the front deck only. Co-Angles will fish from the back deck only. Co-Anglers may move to the front of the boat to land a fish or to assist the Angler in landing a fish, but may not fish from the front deck. The Co-Angler may assist in boat operation to help the Angler become unstuck etc. The Angler will have complete control of the boat operation and waters to be fished. Any Angler who, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in a manner that unfairly handicaps the Co-Angler will be disqualified. Anglers paired with another Angler are entitled to equal time in the front of the boat to operate the trolling motor, and an equal number of hours to fish their selected waters (number hours include travel time to fish location). In the view of gas prices and the large expense involved in operations and maintaining a tournament bass boat, it is suggested the Co-Anglers pay the Angler no less than \$25.00 towards the cost of gas and oil for the tournament day, even if less than \$25.00 in actual gas and oil expense is incurred by the Boater.

13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Competitors may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat except areas designated as off limits by the Tournament Director, State laws, DNR rules, or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which is first anchored with the trolling motor up. An anchored boat has the responsibility to inform another competitor when their boat has entered the 50 yard circle claimed by them. All angling must be done from the boat. Competitors must not leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to waters. The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. Competitors must leave and return to the official check point by boat.

Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times except in case of emergency (or nature calls). In case of an emergency, competitors may be removed from the boat to a boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat so designated by tournament officials. If a competitor is rescued or there is a emergency all fishing must cease until the tournament director is notified of the problem. Partners must remain together except in the event of boat malfunctions. If a boat malfunctions one competitor may stay with the boat. The other may catch a ride to weigh in with another boat in the tournament. The returning competitor may bring in both contestants fish but they must be clearly separated and the rescuing boat's competitors must witness any transfer of fish and must stay with those fish and their own throughout the weigh in procedures. When the stranded competitor is picked up all fishing for the rescued competitors must cease. The Tournament Director must be notified as soon as possible of the situation. Trailing of boats during the tournament hours is prohibited, except by directions of the Tournament Director. Partners must stay together and within sight of each other and each other's catch throughout the day, until the weigh in is complete. An Exception may be made for trailered weigh ins, in that case no fish are to be moved from the live well unless both Angler and Co-Angler are present.

14. OFFICIAL CHECK POINT: There will be one official check point for checking boats in the morning and one official check point for checking in at the end of the tournament. Failure to go through Boat Check in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point in the afternoon will result in disqualification. All fishing must cease upon check in. **ALL BOATS MUST BE CHECKED IN AT LEAST 15 MINUTES BEFORE THE START OF THE TOURNAMENT.**

15. LATE PENALTY: Competitors who are not at the official check-in point at the designated time will be disqualified.

16. CARE OF FISH: Each competitor is expected to keep their bass alive by use of properly aerated livewell. One large livewell divided by a fixed divider will be considered two livewells. At no time shall there be more than the limit (5) fish be in a contestant's livewell. Culling must be done at the time of any catch. At no time shall the Co-Anglers fish be mingled with the Anglers fish. Co-Anglers should mark or pin their fish with culling tags before they are placed in the livewell. During weigh in all fish should be kept in fresh clean aerated water as long as possible. For each legal bass weighed in dead, eight ounces (8 oz, ½ pound, .50) will be deducted from the weight of that fish. This also includes Big Bass. Decision of what is considered dead is up to the tournament officials, it may include a bass that is likely not to survive after being released.

17. SCORING: Tournament standing, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound and hundredths weight of each competitor catch the day of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Spotted and Smallmouth bass are accepted for weigh-in. The limit will be five (5) fish unless state or lake limit is less. The minimum length is twelve (12) inches unless the state or lake minimum is more than twelve (12) inches, in which that minimum will prevail. No fish which appears to have been mutilated or altered will be weighed. Bass presented for weigh in that fail to measure will be penalized at a rate of one (1) pound for each such non-legal fish plus that fish being removed from the total catch that day. Any contestant presenting more than five (5) fish at weigh-in will have their catch disqualified.

18. TIES: In the event of a tie for first and second place, first and second place money will be added together and split between the tied competitors. Both competitors will be deemed tournament winners. Ties for lesser positions will be resolved in the same manner.

19. POINT SYSTEM: Anglers and Co-Anglers will be scored separately. The point system used will have a maximum of 100 points. Points will be awarded at each tournament. First place will receive 100 points, second place 99, third place 98, etc. on down to 100th place 1 point. After the six invitational tournaments the Angler accumulating the most points will be Angler of the Year. If there is a tie, the tie breaker will be the number of fish weighted over the year. Co-Angler of the Year will be determined in the same fashion. The TOP 40 ANGLERS AND TOP 40 CO-ANGLERS in point standings will be invited to fish the annual Classic, known as the Forrest L. Wood Classic.

The pro-rated entry fee into the classic will be determined by the finishing position in points, not by the invitation position. The finisher in position 1-10 will not pay an entry fee into the Classic. Finishers 11-20 will pay 1/3 of the normal entry fee. Finishers 21-30 will pay 2/3 of the normal entry fee and finishers 31-40 will pay the full tournament entry fee.

In addition, the top two finisher of each of the Top-8 Program tournaments conducted by each Zone or District of the State Federation who do not otherwise qualify for the Forrest L. Wood Classic shall be invited to fish the Forrest L. Wood Classic. The top finisher in each Top-8 Program tournament shall be granted an Angler spot in the Forrest L. Wood Classic and would pay the entry fee equal to the 40th Angler spot. The second place finisher in each Top-8 Program tournament who does not otherwise qualify for the Forrest L. Wood Classic would be granted a Co-Angler spot in the Forrest L. Wood Classic and would pay the entry fee equal to the 40th Co-Angler spot.

20. QUALIFICATION FOR IBF STATE FINALS: The top eight Anglers in points at the end of the IBF Invitational Trail's six tournaments are invited to fish the following year's IBF State Finals as a Boater as long as they are a member of an IBF club that fished the Top-8 program in the prior year and they are a member of an IBF club in the year that they are eligible to fish in the IBF State Finals. The top eight Co-Anglers in points at the end of the IBF Invitational Trail's six tournaments are invited to fish the following year's IBF State Finals as a Co-Angler as long as they are a member of an IBF club that fished the Top-8 program in the prior year and they are a member of an IBF club in the year that they are eligible to fish the IBF State Finals.

21. CANCELLATIONS: Tournament days may be cancelled due to unsafe weather or water conditions. The decision to cancel will be left to the discretion of the Tournament Director.

22. INSURANCE: All boats used in IBF Tournaments must carry a minimum of \$300,000 liability insurance and must have proof if requested by the Tournament Director.