

Maryland BASS Nation Standing Rules

(12/9/2021)

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Section I: AMENDMENT OF STANDING RULES

The Standing Rules of this Federation were adopted by rule of the majority. At any meeting of the Board of Presidents or any Executive Board meeting where the chapters have representation by their Region Director, standing rules may be suspended, modified, or rescinded by a 2/3 vote, with a quorum present, without the delay incident to giving previous written notice.

Section II: DISTRIBUTION OF THE STANDING RULES

A copy updated through the previous calendar year will be distributed to all Club Presidents and Board Members each year. New clubs will get a copy along with a set of the bylaws as they become chartered.

Section III: MEMBERSHIP

A. AFFILIATION:

1. Clubs having less than 100% affiliation with BASS will have sixty days to rectify the situation. A club would be in forfeiture of membership status until rectified. The club must notify the membership chairman as to any dropped members.
2. That each case of putting a club in "forfeiture of membership" status and subsequent appeal should be handled on an individual basis.
3. The cut-off date for club affiliation is July 1st for the following year's Mr. Bass tournament.
4. Established that MBN rosters and B.A.S.S. rosters must match club membership (expiration dates now included on rosters).

B. DUES:

1. Club affiliation dues are \$50/club charter; Member dues are \$20/member.
2. That membership dues are not transferable from an existing affiliated club to a non-affiliated club for the purpose of obtaining new MBN club affiliation.

C. REGIONAL PLACEMENT:

1. A club will not be assigned to a region until after the Nation has received their charter from B.A.S.S. At which time the Executive board will review the roster for determination as to which region they are to be placed. Assignment of clubs will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
2. Procedure for clubs requesting to move chapter clubs memberships from one region to another:
 - a. contact the region director of the region in which the club currently resides.
 - b. then contact the region director in the region that they are requesting to be placed.
 - c. the club must send a representative (or letter) before the executive board with the request.
 - d. the decision, as to placement, will be made by the two region directors that this matter would involve.

D. MEMBERSHIP MAILING LISTS: Our membership mailing list will only be considered for distribution to organizations which are non-profit, and only if the Executive Board feels that it would benefit the members of the Maryland Bass Nation. Also these organizations must guarantee that this list only be used for the purposes decided by them and the Maryland Bass Nation and would not be given out to others.

E. OFFENSES AND PENALTIES: Each region is to administer the appropriate step in the "5-Step Plan" and a keep record of any club so affected. In addition, the Regional Directors are to inform the MBN Secretary for entry into the official records. The Secretary will inform all appropriate people.(i.e. Membership Chair and Tournament Director).

5-Step Plan (from 1st offense)

1. Infraction Definitions:

- a. Minor:
 - Clubs paying dues late (either region or MBN).
 - Clubs not working an assigned tournament (not an already assigned penalty working tournament).
- b. Major:
 - Clubs not making 50% of region meetings within a calendar year.
 - Clubs not complying with administered penalties.
 - Clubs violating the MBN Bylaws.
 - Clubs showing conduct that puts the MBN in bad light with B.A.S.S. or in the public eye.

* Any infractions not covered in this plan will be decided on by the appropriate region or by the MBN Executive Board.

2. Infraction Penalties:

- a. Minor:
 - 1st Offense
 - Pay a fine to be determined at time of offense (for financial offenses).
 - Work one MBN event (for non-financial offenses).
 - 2nd Offense -- Pay a fine and work one MBN event.
 - 3rd Offense -- Move to 1st offense for major offenses.
- b. Major:
 - 1st Offense -- Work two MBN Events.
 - 2nd Offense -- "Non-Affiliated" for the year.
 - 3rd Offense and thereafter - "Non-Affiliated" for the year and must work two MBN events.

* The MBN Tournament Director and Regional Director will determine all work penalties.

** For all worked tournaments either 50% of the club or 8 members, whichever is the lesser of the two, must show up in order to count. For individuals who are from disbanded clubs that were or would have been on the "5-Step Plan", the work penalties will follow them as individuals as long as they are in the MBN or until the work penalties are fulfilled.

3. **Accusations Against Members:** The following is the procedure for handling allegations made against any MBN member other than tournament rules violations or tournament protests (paragraphs 1,2, and 3 come from "Robert's Rules of Order"):

4. First Step:

- a. If evidence of misconduct by a member is reported, a committee will be assembled to investigate the validity of the report to see if charges should be formalized. The members of this committee should be chosen for their integrity and good judgment. To establish such a committee requires that a resolution should be made (a motion in writing), seconded, discussed, and voted on. The resolution should avoid as much detail as possible to protect the parties, who may be innocent.
- b. All allegations shall be brought to the Executive Board, by way of the region director. If the region director is one of the accused, then the highest ranking non-accused region officer will present the allegation. If all region officers are accused, then the allegation may be presented by any non-accused MBN officer other than the accuser. The allegation must be in written form with the name of the accuser and the name of the defendant and reasonable cause for the action.
- c. The committee should be made up of nine members: a committee chair who is a member of the board; eight other members who are selected two from each region. None of the committee members can be the accused or the accuser.
- d. Once it is brought forth to the board in the new business portion of the meeting, the committee chair sets a date, not to exceed forty-five days, to have a closed committee session to address the matter. There will be no more discussion about the matter at any board meeting until a final conclusion of the allegations are completed.

5. Second Step:

- a. The committee should quietly conduct its investigation and make a sincere effort to get the facts. Any information collected is confidential. The committee should also talk with the accused to hear his or her side of the story. If the committee members find that the reports of misconduct are untrue, they should prepare a report and resolution clearing the accused. If they find substantial evidence that the report of misconduct is true, the next step is to report the findings and prefer charges.
- b. All evidence must be brought to the closed session and must be shared with the defendant within one week after said session so that each party involved has equal time to prepare their case.
- c. The committee will also have the right to consider the context of the accusation to determine if it is a malicious act toward the defendant.

6. **Third Step:**

- a. The investigating committee prepares several resolutions. The first resolution includes setting a date and time for the trial meeting. It states that member "X" is to appear to show why he or she should not be expelled from the organization; it also states the specific charges. A second resolution establishes the trial committee and its members. The trial committee should have different members than the investigating committee*.
- b. The trial meeting date is not to exceed ninety days from the original date that the accusation was brought before the board.
- c. The makeup of the Trial Board:
 - 1) The trial board will be the Executive Board of the MBN. In the event that there are not at least seven eligible board members (see 2 below and * above) then those remaining will choose members from membership to bring the total to seven. No more than one per region unless each region is represented and no more than two per region.
 - 2) The person or persons who bring forth the allegation have no vote in the matter, nor do any of the accused.
- d. If the committee finds no evidence to support the allegation and determines it is just a malicious act then the board reserves the right to revoke the membership of the accuser.
- e. The decision of the board will be final.
- f. The outcome of the hearing will be in written form and given to the region directors to have as public record of the matter.

Section IV: EXECUTIVE BOARD OPERATIONS

A. ELECTIONS: (every "even" year)

1. In order to accept officer election votes, they have to be by individual club member votes, not merely a club total vote.
2. "No return" of ballots sent to clubs indicates a vote of abstention (except for Bylaw changes).
3. To have the secretary record ballots by name on all motions to be voted on by the board.
4. In dealing with elections of officers for the Maryland Bass Nation Executive Board there shall be committee made up of official "ballot representatives" picked by each region director (these people cannot be people that are listed on the ballot), plus a committee chairman appointed by the Maryland Bass Nation President. These representatives will collect each club's ballot in sealed envelopes for their region. On each sealed envelope shall have two signatures across the seal, one by the ballot representative and one by the region director. These envelopes will then be placed in a larger envelope, sealed and brought to the December board meeting where at that time the chairperson will coordinate the counting of those votes by the region "ballot representatives".

B. DISTRIBUTION OF PAPERWORK:

1. To have a rough draft of the board meeting minutes sent to all directors as soon as possible after the meeting.
2. The MBN approved Executive Board minutes are to be distributed to the Region Directors for re-distribution to individual clubs.
3. A complete Treasurer's Report will be distributed to executive board members.
4. All of the MBN officers should have a copy of the bylaws.

C. EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS: The Executive Board meetings will be held on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00pm.

Section V: MISCELLANEOUS FINANCIAL

A. PAYMENT PROCEDURES:

1. Checks for MBN related affairs go through the MBN Treasurer in order to provide a paper trail.
2. Checks will be mailed after an expense report with receipts has been turned in to the MBN Treasurer.

B. TAX STATUS:

1. The MBN is a non-profit tax-exempt organization (C4)
2. Appropriate tax filing should occur before the official IRS deadline.

C. FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: Under "no circumstances" would the MBN assume any financial responsibility for any club or member during any MBN sponsored activity.

D. INSURANCE: MBN shall maintain appropriate insurance coverage to protect assets and liabilities.

E. CHECK REGISTER: The President will receive a copy of the check register monthly to review.

Section VI: YOUTH & HIGH SCHOOL

A. YOUTH PROGRAM:

1. Age Requirements: Youth must be 7-13 years of age.
2. Club Registration: Youth clubs must register by December 31st of each year.
3. **TOURNAMENTS:**
 - a. Format: Team tournaments
 - b. There will be one tournament per year to determine a Jr. State Championship team.
 - c. All Youth club members are eligible to compete in the Jr. State Championship team tournament.
 - d. Each youth competitor in the Jr. State Championship team tournament will pay \$10.00 (totaling \$20.00 per boat) toward reimbursing their boat captain for travel expenses. The MBN would, in addition, contribute \$30.00 from the "General Fund" toward each youth boat captain's travel expenses.

B. HIGH SCHOOL PROGRAM: The MBN will sponsor an annual High School Team Championship.

1. High School Team Member's annual MBN dues will be \$20.00 per team member
2. High School teams are responsible for providing a Boat Captain at the MBN State Championship.

Section VII: AWARDS

A. AWARDS PROGRAM: The MBN will have an "Awards Program".

B. AWARD CATEGORIES:

1. "Club of the Year"
2. Butch Ward "Man of the Year"

C. AWARD CONSIDERATIONS:

"Club of the Year" considerations and Butch Ward "Man of the Year" nominations must be submitted by January 31st.

D. RECOGNITION: Individuals or groups may be recognized for contributions and achievements by approval of the Executive Board.

Section VIII: PRESIDENT'S CONFERENCE

A. DATE: The President's Conference will be held the 2nd Sunday in March.

B. GUESTS: Presidents may bring one guest to the President's Conference and they must be a member of their club.

C. 50/50 RAFFLE: The President of the MBN will determine at each year's President's Conference where the proceeds will be allocated.

D. AUCTION: Proceeds will be allocated to the Youth program.

Section IX: WEBSITE/BULLETIN BOARD

A. WEBSITE:

1. The MBN will maintain a website for its membership.
2. Website content should include the following sections:
 - a. tournaments
 - b. membership
 - c. conservation
 - d. youth
 - e. bulletin board

B. BULLETIN BOARD:

1. Bulletin Board registration will be limited to MBN members only.
2. A "Members Only" forum will be maintained as part of the Bulletin Board.

Section X: MARYLAND BASS NATION OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

***The following rules shall apply to all Maryland Bass Nation (MBN) tournaments except:**

1. Rules for special tournaments (not to include the SQT and, Mr. Bass) may differ from those contained herein.
2. These rules may be changed by the MBN immediately upon notice to its members; such notice may be published on the MBN internet website at <http://www.mdbass.com>.

A. TOURNAMENT STAFF:

1. The tournament director and the Tournament Committee have the responsibility to determine how the MBN tournaments will be administered.
2. The tournament director has the responsibility to run the tournaments on tournament day. The tournament director may consult with available tournament committee members and others to render a final rule decision.
3. Helpers:
 - a. #1 and #2 boaters and riders are to provide helper support for the tournament.
 - b. If the designated boater and rider helpers fail to provide support at the weigh-in without permissible cause granted by the Tournament Director, they will be disqualified.
 - c. If for some reason Boat #1 or Boat #2 helpers cannot fulfill this obligation, the helper duties will be assigned to the next boats available according to the launch order.
4. Mr BASS: Central and Southern regions will share hosting responsibility for Potomac River tournaments. The Western Region will host Deep Creek Lake Mr. BASS tournaments. The Northern Region will host Upper Bay Mr. BASS tournaments.

B. TOURNAMENT FOLDER:

The Tournament Director will maintain a file pertaining to all MBN tournaments.

C. CANCELLATION POLICY AND DELAYED STARTS:

1. If the Tournament Director cancels a regular scheduled tournament for any reason, it should be rescheduled by the Tournament Committee, including the Tournament Director, and approved by the Tournament Committee
2. In the event of a delayed start, all tournaments will keep the same weigh-in time.
3. Any tournament that is cancelled due to weather related issues will be cancelled the morning of the tournament. However, if there is a named weather event such as a hurricane, tropical storm, or there is flooding, the tournament may be cancelled up to 3 days prior to the tournament date.
4. If there is a 2-day tournament, and day 1 is cancelled then that event may still occur on Sunday making it a one day event. If the tournament is fished on Saturday and Sunday is cancelled, then Saturday's results will count and it will be considered a 1-day tournament.
5. Any tournament that is cancelled will be rescheduled within 7 days as long as the launch location of the event or another launch location on the same body of water is available.

D. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

1. Tournaments are open only to current members of the MBN who are 16 years of age or older with the exception of the SQT Trail (see 7). Proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of potential competitor. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is disabled in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his partner or endanger the safety and wellbeing of his partner or himself shall not be eligible.
2. *Eligibility:*
 - a. SQT eligibility will be limited to those chapters who are actively affiliated with the MBN, and who are in "good standing" with the MBN in accordance with the MBN Bylaws.
 - b. Mr Bass eligibility will be limited to those chapters who are actively affiliated with the MBN prior to July 1st of the year preceding the tournament, and who are in "good standing" with the MBN in accordance with the MBN Bylaws.
3. If a club's affiliation is not satisfied by the entry deadline date of a tournament, they are pulled from that tournament and cannot fish any other tournament until the club is back in good standing.
4. *Mr. Bass:*
 - a. Each eligible chapter is allowed to send two Mr. Bass participants, one boater and one non-boater.
 - b. Each boater participant is required to provide a boat for the tournament and will be paired by the tournament director with a non-boater from another club.
 - c. Each chapter's non-boater is required to provide their own PFD. The Tournament Director or his/her staff will not provide an observer for any reason. If a club's boater does not have a club non-boater, he/she will not fish the tournament.
5. *SQT; Entry Qualification:* All club members in good standing are allowed to fish in the SQT.
6. SQT Substitutes
 - a. Substitutes are permitted for the SQT
 - b. All substitutes must sign the Maryland B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Application.
 - c. Substitutes for any MBN member or Open participant fishing the SQT Trail do not have to be a member of BASS or Maryland Bass Nation.
 - d. Substitutes that are members of MBN in good standing are eligible for awards (plaques, money, etc.). However, they do not receive points for the Trail events.
7. The MBN tournament Trail will also have an Open Division to allow MBN members and non-MBN members the opportunity to fish any and all Trail events for 'payouts' only.

E. COMPETITION:

1. During the tournament, a competitor may not have the assistance or advice of anyone, for the purposes of locating or catching bass, who is not participating in the tournament.
2. During two-day tournaments, contestants or observers may not be on tournament waters outside of the tournament hours except to return to a launch site, or with approval of the Tournament Director (especially to show a friend spots learned during the first day of the tournament).
3. No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day.
4. During the official competition days of the tournament, a competitor may not use a CB radio, a VHF marine-band radio, a cellular phone, or any other type of communication device for the purpose of locating or catching fish. A cell phone or tablet may be used as a GPS and Depth Finder if so equipped.
5. A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during the competition. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.
6. Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director any violation or infraction of any tournament rules. Failure to report violations, or suggest to another competitor that he or she should violate these rules, or falsify verification on weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification.

F. PAPERWORK:

1. **Waiver and release:** A properly completed and signed official entry form and the entry fee must be received by the MBN Tournament Director or his designee on or before the entry fee deadline date. The Tournament Director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to deadline and also the right to extend the acceptance date. Entry fees will only be refunded if proper notification is made to the MBN Tournament Director prior to the entry fee deadline date.
2. **Insurance:**
 - a. During the official competition days of any MBN tournament, no competitor may operate a boat unless that contestant has documented proof of a minimum of **\$300,000** boating liability insurance covering the boat being used in the tournament. Proof of said insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover the competitor's use of that boat. Random checks will be conducted and any competitor who does not have proof of in-force said insurance may be disqualified.
 - b. Any boat operated by a non-boater owner must have a letter from the boat owner granting him/her permission to use the boat and a copy of the boat owner's insurance policy confirming coverage.
3. **Ramp Fee:** The contestants are responsible for paying ramp fees on tournament days.
4. **Lunker Pool:**
 - a. Mr. Bass/Weekend SQT: There will be an optional \$10.00 per contestant lunker pool for the entire tournament.
 - b. SQT Trail : There will be an optional \$10.00 per contestant lunker pool for each tournament day.
5. **Tournament Awards:**

Plaques will be awarded to the tournament winners.

G. REGISTRATION

1. The Tournament Director will determine the method for pairing partners.
2. No partners will be paired from the same club.
3. Pairings will be announced prior to the tournament.
4. Notification to occur via the website and email (or mailings if requested).

H. PRE-TOURNAMENT CHECK-IN:

1. Each competitor must check-in with official MBN staff at the time and place designated.
2. A "Pre-tournament Meeting" will be held the morning of the event. This meeting is mandatory. During this pre-tournament meeting there needs to be silence to allow clear communication to the competitors from the tournament director and staff.

I. TOURNAMENT PROCEDURES:

1. Pairings: Every boater and non-boater is paired up with each other as a guaranteed link before tournament pairings are established in any tournament. If a boater or non-boaters guaranteed link does not show-up at the start of the tournament, the linked boater or non-boater does not fish unless a substitute can be found.
 2. Official Checkpoint:
 - a. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the "Pre-tournament Meeting". It is the angler's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day on the daily pairings.
 - b. There shall be only one official point for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon. These points shall be designated at the "pre-tournament" meeting.
 - c. Prior to each day's start, each boat will be given an inspection check by a tournament official, and will be given a number, which must remain with the boat. This number must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials.
 - d. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director to include, but not limited to, Live-wells must be on, running, and fully operational; Kill switch must be pulled and fully operational; Life Jackets must be on and fully buckled or zipped, and Navigation running lights must be on and fully operational.
 - e. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves to the check-in official by displaying the number described in "part b" above and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together and numbers must be turned in at check-in.
 - f. The boater and non-boater must leave from and return to the official checkpoint by boat. 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. They must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch, under the conditions cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. A competitor must not allow any bass caught by him to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by the MBN.
Note: As needed, when directed by the tournament director, to use a trailered weigh-in, the partners are able to separate to allow for boats to be pulled.
 - g. In all two-day tournaments, the second day's launch sequence will be the reverse of the first day (ie: the last boat the first day will be the first boat on the second day). If more than one flight is required, flights and contestants both will be reversed.
 - h. Mr. Bass; Failure to Check In: For any contestant that fails to check-in at the official checkpoint, his/her club shall not be allowed to fish the following year's Mr. Bass tournament.
 3. Fishing and Boating Considerations ("boater/non-boater" type tournaments):
 - a. Mr. Bass & SQT: It is at the sole discretion of the boater to decide on fishing locations.
 - b. Riders are not allowed to take control of the front of the boat, nor fish from the front of the boat. The Rider can only operate the trolling motor if there is a safety concern or an emergency situation.
 - c. The non-boater should assume at least half the cost of gas and oil for the competition.
 - d. Competitors must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.
 - e. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days.
 4. Emergency Situation:
 - 1) The boater and non-boater must remain in the boat at all times except in case of emergency. In such an emergency, they may be removed from their boat to either a boat operated by other competitors or to a rescue boat designated by the Tournament Director.
 - 2) If an emergency occurs, both competitors must cease fishing at this point, and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament.
 - 3) In the event of a mechanical breakdown or equipment failure the competitors must call the tournament director first and cannot receive help by anyone outside the tournament entrants unless approved by the tournament director.
 - 4) If after the emergency situation 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 to fish and their catch will be counted.
 - 5) In the event of a needed restroom break contestants are allowed to leave the boat, at which time all fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat.
 - f. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials.
 - g. Posted speed limits must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner.
 - h. All angling must be done from the boat.
 5. Permitted Fishing Locations:
 - a. Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the MBN Tournament Director. Any water within these boundaries posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing" by state or federal agencies as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director will be "off-limits" and will be announced at the "pre-tournament" meeting. Only that water open to all public fishing will be considered tournament waters.
 - b. Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: within 25 yards of any other contestant's boat. No such boat shall permit selected contestants to fish within the 25 yard circle claimed by him to the exclusion of any other contestant. In order to have a claimed area, the trolling motor must be up and the boat must be anchored or tied to a fixed object.
- NOTE: The following exceptions will govern all MBN tournaments at the following locations:**
- a. **Smallwood State Park**: Off limits inside the no-wake zone to include all docks and bulkheads adjacent to the ramp area. And any posted restricted areas designated by the DNR.
 - b. **Dundee Creek Marina**: All areas inside the no-wake zone at the ramp area, including the creek beside the ramp area. Any posted restricted areas designated by the DNR.

J. SAFETY:

1. Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the competition, each competitor must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest type life preserver. This preserver must be worn at all times the combustion engine is operating. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification.
2. 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 competitors. Tournament waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather.
3. The MBN reserves the right to impose boat speed limits on 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.
4. In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should call **911** first and then notify tournament officials. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather.
5. Do not bring the boat to a plane position until you are past the point designated by the Tournament staff.

K. SPORTSMANSHIP:

1. Competitors in MBN 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.
2. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future MBN tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the competition days, or in the weigh-in area.
3. 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. Any act of a competitor which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters and courtesy, shall be reason for disqualification.
4. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish.
5. 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. Any disqualification, suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in a MBN tournament and/or for disqualification from a MBN tournament.
6. Dead fish may not be culled and must be delivered to the weigh-master for weighing and proper disposal.
7. Participants may be penalized for not showing up at a tournament without prior notice to the Tournament Director. The penalty, in such a case, will be forfeiture of the entry fee, show-up points, weight, and ineligibility for the next tournament.
8. Any individual that fails to show up, without proper notification to the Tournament Director, for the second day of a two-day tournament will be disqualified from next year's tournament.

L. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:

1. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited.
2. Only artificial lures may be used.
3. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted during the competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds.
4. Only ONE (1) casting, spin casting or spinning rod (8 foot maximum length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. Other rigs as specified above may be in boat ready for use; however, only one is permitted in use at any given time.

M. FISHING METHOD RESTRICTIONS:

1. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have his or her catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bedding bass, in order to be counted as a legal fish, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked.
2. An electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering. However, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited.

N. BOAT & MOTOR REGULATIONS:

1. **Horsepower:** MAXIMUM HORSEPOWER FOR ALL OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS USED IN OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT PRACTICE AND IN TOURNAMENT COMPETITION WILL BE 250 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 MBN. Each competitor agrees to submit, by his 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 any 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 competitor'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 MBN tournaments.
2. A boat equipped with "stick steering" may be used if the motor horsepower does not exceed the stick rating.
3. **Safety Features:**
 - a. All boats must be equipped with an approved type of operable ignition "kill" switch. This ignition-kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. 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.
 - b. Fishing boats that are 16 feet or more in length may be used.
 - c. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat.
 - d. Standing on the outboard or seats while fishing is not allowed.
 - e. All BLADDER tanks and any other type of AUXILIARY gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer are permitted. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat.
 - f. Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment as well as a functional bilge pump and livewell space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive a limit catch of bass by both competitors using the boat. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate. Boaters must make a back seat available for non-boaters each competition day.

O. SCORING:

1. After competitors 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. Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound-and-hundredths of an ounce weight of each competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament.
Only when a boat's competitor's catch is counted, measured, weighed and verified by a tournament official may the competitor/competitors return to the boat.
2. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye or Shoal bass will be weighed.
3. The limit for competitors shall be a combination of the above species not to exceed five (5) for the boater and three (3) for the non-boater, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials. At no time shall a competitor have in his or her possession more than the tournament limit. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a competitor has in his possession more than the above-described limits, tournament officials shall cull down to the limit described, beginning with the largest bass.
4. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the "Pre-tournament Meeting". In most cases it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in a penalty of loss of largest bass plus the short fish, which penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor.
5. 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.
6. Bass must not be on a stringer at any time during the tournament.
7. **Dead Fish Penalties:** For each legal, dead bass, presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized the following, to be deducted from their daily score: 1 dead fish – 0.25 lbs., 2 dead fish – 0.75 lbs., 3 dead fish – 1.25 lbs., 4 dead fish – 1.75 lbs., 5 dead fish – 2.50 lbs. The Tournament Director or his designees shall have sole authority for Assessing penalty points.

8. **Late Penalty:** Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 1 of "Tournament Procedures" at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late to be deducted from the total weight of his catch that day. That weight will be deducted starting from the largest fish down. 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".
9. **Points (SQT Trail):**
Both the Boater and Rider Divisions will maintain separate point standings. The allocation of points applies to both Boater and Rider Divisions. Total points for the best 3 of 4 tournaments will determine final standings. A First place finish receives 200 points. Second place finish receives 199 with subsequent finishers dropping down by a one point margin. Any competitors not catching and weighing fish will receive 0 (zero). There will be no tie breakers during the four individual events.
Duplicate weights will receive duplicate points. (Example, if 2 anglers tie for second place each will receive 199 points with the next place receiving 197. If 3 anglers tie for 2nd place each will receive 199 points with the next place receiving 196). At the conclusion of all events, tie breakers, if needed, will determine State Team placement
10. **Tiebreakers:**
a. SQT Trail: SQT individual tournaments will not have a tie breaker; ties will result in competitors receiving equal points. In order to break a tie for accumulated points at series completion, the following criteria order will be used:
1) Total number of fish caught during all three events
2) Highest place finish during all three events
3) The largest stringer in the series
4) Total weight caught in all three events
b. Mr. Bass & Weekend SQT: Weight of the largest creel during the two competition days will break the tie.
11. Lunker Prize Money Tiebreakers: Prizes will be split between the winning anglers.

P. PROTEST PROCEDURES: Anyone who feels that he/she has witnessed an infraction of any tournament rule may submit a protest. The protest will then comply with the following outline for action:

1. The person wishing to make protest should immediately upon arrival at weigh-in notify the Tournament Director. The protest must be submitted in writing within 30 minutes of the official end of the tournament weigh-in procedure.
2. The Tournament Director will then make a determination of the validity of the protest.
3. All such valid protests shall then be considered. The Tournament Director after consultation with the Rules Committee shall determine possible action.
4. The use of a polygraph test will be made available and put to use if deemed necessary.

Q. RULE'S COMMITTEE:

1. The Rule's Committee shall consist of the MBN 1st VP as chairman, the Tournament Director and a representative from each region selected by the Region Director of that region.
2. All members of the Rule's Committee shall have a copy of, and be familiar with, the Tournament Rules.

R. RULES VIOLATIONS AND APPEALS COMMITTEE: An appeals committee will be established by the MBN, which shall be comprised of one Executive Board member and two other MBN members. Appeals must be sent in writing seven days from the date of ruling to the Tournament Director. If a competitor admits to a rule violation, he/she may not file an appeal on either the finding that he/she has violated the rule or the penalty imposed for said violation. Decisions of the appeals committee shall be final. Appeals of non-competition rulings will be handled as stated in other sections of this document.

S. DATES AND TOURNAMENT SITES:

1. Mr. Bass and SQT dates will be formulated by the tournament committee no later than September 30th of the previous year, and approved by the Board of Presidents by way of the Region Directors no later than the November executive board meeting.
2. Dates may be altered by the MBN due to conflicts of tournaments, weather or conditions sufficiently unsuitable to hold the tournament on the prescribed dates.
3. The tournament site selection for Mr Bass and the Weekend SQT will rotate through the regions in the following order:
Southern, Western, Central, Northern and so on.

T. STATE TEAM ELIGIBILITY AND QUALIFICATION (THE PATHWAY TO THE BASSMASTER CLASSIC):

1. Individuals who are vying for a position on the MBN State Team must first satisfy the membership eligibility requirements, then they must secure a position by winning a seat through tournament competition via the MBN Mr. Bass and State Qualifying Tournament venues.
2. There are twenty-three (23) seats on the State Team comprised of ten (10) boaters, ten (10) non-boaters, one (1) alternate boater, one (1) alternate non-boater and the MBN President or a designee. Only boaters will be vying for the opportunity to secure one of the three (3) Bassmaster Classic positions.
3. B.A.S.S. further stipulates:
 - a. No one can fish for two states in an attempt to qualify for two different state teams.
 - b. States cannot use buddy or team tournaments as qualifiers.
 - c. States must use "blind draw" tournaments or "solo" tournaments where there is an unbiased observer in each boat.

U. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS: In order to be eligible to secure a State Team position, the following requirements must be satisfied:

1. Membership with National B.A.S.S.
2. Membership with the Maryland Bass Nation
3. Membership with a Maryland Bass Nation chapter club.

V. MBN QUALIFYING TOURNAMENT VENUES:

1. *The 22-man State Team will be drawn from:*

a. Mr. Bass Tournament (Positions: 4 anglers).

This is a statewide competition in which each club sends a Mr. Bass boater and non-boater Mr. Bass competitor to compete for spots on the State Team. The boaters compete for two boater positions on the State Team and the non-boaters compete for two non-boater positions on the State Team. The first place boater in the competition is the State Team Captain. Boater Entry Fee: \$200; Rider Entry Fee: \$100.

b. SQT Trail Tournament (Positions: 12 anglers, plus 2 alternates).

This is a statewide competition in which competitors fish 4 different venues on four 4 different dates. Only three of the event results will be used by each competitor to determine their final year end points total. The top 6 boaters and the top 6 non-boaters will advance to the MBN State Team. Boater Entry Fee: \$350; Rider Entry Fee: \$225.00 (\$150 of the Boater Entry Fee and \$100 of the Rider Entry Fee will be applied to separate cash payouts distributed across each event).

c. Last Chance SQT Tournament (Positions; 4 Anglers)

This is a state-wide competition in which competitors fish a one day shoot out. The top 2 boaters and top 2 non-boaters advance to the MBN State team. Entry Fees: If a competitor participated in either the Trail or Mr. Bass events for the current tournament year, the Boater fee is \$125 and the Rider fee is \$75. If a competitor did not fish the current tournament year Trail or Mr. Bass venues, the Boater fee is \$200 and the Rider fee is \$125. This tournament venue will rotate regions on a yearly basis.

2. Substitutions for qualifiers unable to fish the BASS Regionals will be "next in line", recruited from the same venue as the original qualifier.

3. Alternates:

- a. The two alternates will qualify from the SQT Trail Tournament. The first alternate will be designated as a boater. The second alternate will be designated as a non-boater. Alternates will travel with the 20 man State Team.
- b. The President or designee will become the twenty third member of the State Team.
- c. The State Team will compete in the BASS Regional Tournament.

Section XI: REGIONAL & NATIONAL TOURNAMENTS (B.A.S.S.)

A. EASTERN REGIONAL TOURNAMENT:

1. Should the MBN State Team win the Divisional State Championship, there may be a prize (e.g. Boat) awarded to the team. The prize will be claimed and may be sold at a fair market value. Proceeds from the award will be distributed as follows:

- a. The MBN share of the proceeds will be 30%. The remaining 70% of the proceeds will be distributed evenly among the competitors, including the alternates. There will be a 14 shares.
- b. Each youth member of that team will receive 10% of an adult share of that money which will come separately out of the MBN "General Fund".

2. All team members may bring their boats unless restricted by the hosting state.

3. Based on the funds available (raised) via the State Team qualification tournament venues, the President and the Treasurer will recommended an expense plan to be approved by the MBN Executive Board.

4. If a member of the State Team has to back out of the Regional Tournament for any reason, the person that finished in the next spot in that venue will take his position and the vacant spot will be filled with the next place finisher from the same venue. Once the State Team roster is submitted to B.A.S.S., vacancies will be filled by the alternates, starting with the SQT Trail alternate.

5. The 4th place finisher (non-boater 1) from the SQT Trail is designated as the alternate boater. This contestant will be required to bring a boat to the tournament and therefore will also receive boater's monies. Once the State Team is at the Regional Tournament, the contestant will only be entitled to use his boat if a fellow competitor boat breaks down and they are unable to find a replacement. If a boater cannot fish either day of the tournament, due to illness, disqualification, or any other reason, the replacement boater (SQT Trail 4th place finisher) will become the alternate boater. It is not required that the alternate boater lend his boat to another competitor unless he chooses to do so.

B. NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP TOURNAMENT: MBN funding for the B.A.S.S. National Championship competitors will include a \$1,200.00 basic expense allotment for the Boater, and an \$800 basic expense allotment for The Rider, plus a round-trip gas mileage reimbursement at the established MBN mileage rate for each competitor. Should the competitors opt to choose alternative transportation (e.g. air, etc.), the reimbursement will not exceed the cost of round-trip mileage.

Revised and Re-organized: 12/9/21

(Latest Updates Highlighted in Yellow)