

Tournament Rules

Kentucky Bass Federation, Inc.

2025 OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

1. RULES CHANGES: 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 as he deems appropriate. Including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director shall be final in all matters.

2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY: All KBF Divisional Tournaments are open events. You must join KBF in order to fish these events. Only members of the KBF who are 16 years of age or older and/or who are active members of a TBF Inc. affiliated club may fish these events. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the Tournament Director, is handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his partner or endanger the safety and well being of his partner or himself shall not be eligible.

3. PRE TOURNAMENT PRACTICE: During all KBF sanctioned Tournaments such as Divisional Tournaments, State Championship, And Angler Of The Year Tournament there is no restricted practice period. (During TBF sanctioned Tournaments see TBF rules)

4. REGISTRATION FOR DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENTS: Divisional events will be as follows: Registration will end in the early morning no less than 30 minutes before starting time of the tournament. This will give ample time for Tournament Director to draw for the Co-Angler pairing and all the contestants to have their boats in the water ready for the take off. Boaters (Anglers) will receive a starting position via how they sign up at the morning registration. (Example: If you are the 1st person to sign in that morning, you will receive boat position 1 and so forth). After all Anglers and Co Anglers have registered, the Tournament Official will call all Co Anglers up and they will draw a number from a bucket of random numbers. Whatever number the Co Angler draws will signify what boat he/she fishes from that day. Most tournaments have more Boaters (Anglers) then Co-Anglers fishing, therefore any Boater (Angler) who is not paired with a Co-Angler will fish alone. If there is a trend of a Boater (Angler) that shows up close to the 30 minute sign in cut off time regularly hoping to fish alone in the pairings, it will be at the Tournament Directors discretion to pair up that contestant with a Co-Angler. There are no late fees at Regional events. You must be signed in before the 30 minute cut off time in order to fish in that tournament. Interpretation of these rules will be at the Tournament Directors discretion.

* If you show up to fish an Open Divisional Tournament and your name is not on the current KBF Membership List sent out to the Tournament Director the day prior to the tournament you can not fish that tournament unless you pay your \$70.00 dues at the ramp. This can happen due to an oversight from your mother club or a problem with the mail. If your dues show up later you will be refunded the total amount you had to pay. If you bring a new KBF member to a Divisional Event you may choose to have that person fish with you for that event. This is an effort to gain more Co-Anglers to fish our events. Pairings at the State Championship will remain unchanged.

5. BUYING A DIVISIONAL TOURNAMENT AND TOURNAMENT POINTS: Methods to qualify for the State Championship, Angler Of The Year, & Divisional Winners are listed below.

* Buying of the Divisional Tournament must be done at least 5 days prior to the tournament date. The Tournament Director for that tournament must have your cash money in his hand to be included in the payouts or your buy in won't count.

At all Divisional Tournaments: All Boater & Co Anglers Must fish or pay for, a Minimum of 4 events to Qualify for the KBF State Tournament. To Cover Sickness or Work-related circumstance, a Boater or Co Angler will be permitted to Buy events to reach his/her total of 4 events. {Should you Buy In at any event, the Entry Fee MUST be in the hands of the Divisional Director before the start of the Tournament.}

* Division 1st Place Winners Angler And Co-Angler: At the end of the year the overall 1st place winners for each Division in both the Angler and Co-Angler categories are determined by fishing any or all tournaments within that Division and finishing with the most points accumulated by fish weights for that Division only. (A Tournament that is bought and not fished will not be eligible for points toward the Divisional 1st Place winners).

* Angler and Co-Angler Of The Year Tournament: This will be held in conjunction with the State Championship. There will be a total of 18 Anglers and 18 Co-Anglers eligible to fish this tournament. To qualify for this tournament the KBF takes the 1st place finisher in points from each of the 8 divisions in both the Angler and Co-Angler divisions. In addition, the top 10 Anglers and Co-Anglers with the overall point totals for the year accumulated from all Divisions will also be eligible. The 10 Anglers and Co-anglers does not include the 1st place divisional Anglers and Co-Anglers winners already eligible. You may fish as many of the Divisional Tournaments available and acquire points from each one that will count towards your total points for the year. (Points from your top 4 tournaments will be added together to get your best score) (A Tournament that is Bought and not fished will not accumulate any points towards the top 18 eligible for Angler or Co-Angler of the year). The two-day State Championship will accrue points for each day. These points will be added to the total points described above to determine the Angler and Co-angler Of the Year.

6. ENTRY FEE BREAKDOWN, PAYOUT SCHEDULES, AND AWARDS: Entry fees and entry fee breakdown as well as the payout schedules for each Regional Tournament is available on the KBF web site. Highlight Tournaments then click on Schedule / Results at the bottom of the 2023 Tournament Schedule. The Payout Schedules and Entry Fee Breakdown is available.

In addition to tournament payouts, awards will be presented at the end of the year for the following:

* State Champion Angler.

* State Champion Co-Angler.

* Angler Of The Year.

* Co-Angler Of The Year.

7. SAFETY: Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament competitors. During the tournament, each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver. This preserver must be worn anytime the combustion engine is operating during tournament hours. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification. The Tournament Director has the right to delay 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.

8. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in KBF 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. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the tournament, pre-tournament meeting or in the weigh in area will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future KBF tournaments. 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 the KBF's effort to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. No alcoholic beverages, CBD products, Marijuana or other stimulants or depressants, (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) shall be allowed in the boats during competition days or in 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 KBF's efforts to promote SAFETY, sportsmanship and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification. 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. Competitors are permitted to transmit by radio or cellular phone only in the event of an emergency, for employment related activities, contacting lockmasters or marinas for refueling purposes. If so equipped, competitors may listen to the marine-band weather information.

9. 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, 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. All other types prohibited. Other rigs as specified above may be in boat ready for use; however, only ONE is permitted in use at any given time. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging fish on spawning beds will have their day's catch disqualified. **When fishing for bass you can see with the naked eye, with glasses or via visual aids such as electronics, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner (or yourself if fishing alone) before being unhooked to be counted as a legal fish.** No gaffs may be used to boat bass nor be permitted in boat at any time. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited.

10. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: MAXIMUM HORSEPOWER FOR ALL OUTBOARD MOTORBOATS USED IN TOURNAMENT COMPETITION WILL BE the horsepower limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard in their ruling of Nov. 1.1972. 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 rating plate. Any boat manufactured prior to Nov. 1. 1972 must adhere to the ratings set by the U.S. Coast Guard for similar boats. 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 tournament officials, if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance to increase the performance of your engine is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of your motor 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 motor would also be cause for immediate disqualification from the tournament.

11. BOAT AND MOTOR: For the safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH. This ignition kill device must be attached to the driver's body anytime the combustion engine is operating. When the combustion engine is operating and in gear, there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats may be used that are 15 feet or more in length. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. A small electric trolling motor may be used for slow maneuvering; however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. 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 legal. 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. No "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted. NO BOAT EQUIPPED WITH "STICK STEERING" SHALL BE PERMITTED TO BE USED DURING THE TOURNAMENT BY ANY COMPETITOR. The definition of "stick steering" shall be made by the Tournament Director.

12. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and LIVWELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED, TO ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE A LIMIT CATCH OF BASS BY BOTH FISHERMEN USING THE BOAT. The Tournament Director shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether the aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate".

13. BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Each boat MUST be given prior to each day's start, an inspection check if requested by a tournament official, and a numbered item which MUST remain in your boat until turned in each day at the check in point. This numbered item must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials.

14. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE: Boaters will fish from the front deck of the boat only. Co-anglers will fish from the back deck of the boat only. Boaters will have complete control of boat operation and waters to be fished. Any Boater Angler who, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in a manner that unfairly handicaps their Co-Angler partner will be disqualified for that day. In multi-day tournaments, Co-Anglers who share their Boater Angler partner's fishing locations with other competitors will be disqualified along with the person utilizing this information. Any contestant who, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap his partner shall be disqualified. In view of the large expense involved in operating and maintaining a tournament bass boat, it is suggested that the Co-Angler partner share cost of gas and oil for the competition day. If at any time the Boater Angler becomes sick and cannot operate the trolling motor in a safe manner or continue fishing, the Boater Angler may allow the Co-Angler to operate the trolling motor and continue fishing, as long as the Boater Angler ceases all fishing at such time. Once the Boater Angler relinquishes control of the trolling motor he may not fish or run the trolling motor any more that day.

15. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters will be established by the Tournament Director for each tournament. 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. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50 yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor. Any water within boundaries posted Off-Limits or No Fishing by state or federal agencies will be OFF LIMITS. Also, the live-bass release area established by the Tournament Director will be OFF LIMITS and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to ALL public fishing will be considered tournament waters. Any waters closed to public fishing will be closed to tournament contestants. All angling must be done from the boat. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations. Buying or Bartering of fishing locations from any person for use during any competition day is strictly prohibited. Penalty for such occurrence shall be Disqualification from all Regional Qualifying Events during the upcoming year and that event.

16. CONTESTANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT. Contestants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Contestants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. Both competitors must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. (See Rule 28) In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boat to: A boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat. Partners 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. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions (to contact a tournament official by phone or other means or to report an emergency or breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point, and their catch must be verified by a tournament official or another competitor in order to be counted in the tournament. If after the emergency situation is resolved by the tournament officials and enough time is left for the competitors to resume fishing, a RESTART will be allowed and the competitors will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations. Trailing of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials.

17. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINTS: Checking in will be at the KBF Trailer for the State Championship and at the Ramp Designated For Each Regional Tournament. The end of tournament time, check in point, and check-in method will be announced by the Tournament Director for that tournament. At the time of check in all competitors and their boats shall be in full compliance with all KBF Tournament Rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At the end of the tournament check in all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbered buttons and place them in the designated bucket before the official end of tournament time. Then proceed immediately to the designated weigh in area. Partners must stay together until their fish have been weighed.

18. SCORING: Tournament standing, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound and hundredths weight of each competitors catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Spotted, Red Eye or Smallmouth bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day, unless the state limit is less than 5, or a special limit is established for a particular tournament by the Tournament Director, in which case the state limit, or special limit, shall be the tournament limit. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. At no time shall a competitor have reduced to possession more than the limits described above. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of this provision, and in the event a competitor has reduced more than the above-described limits to possession, the Tournament Director shall cull the largest bass first, down to the limit described. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the Tournament Briefing. 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 in. Bass presented for weigh in which fail to measure the official length shall, accrue penalties at the rate of 1 pound for each such bass. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of the Tournament Director. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint he MUST present all LEGAL fish in his possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. His catch must be certified by the signature of his partner of that day. Once a competitors catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that contestant may not return to his boat until his catch has been weighed and recorded. Weigh in bags will be furnished by the Tournament Director, and only

these bags may be used for the weigh in.

19. DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH: Each competitor is expected to keep his bass alive by use of a properly aerated live-well. Culling Clips

The following will be in effect for all KBF events.

Only Non-Penetrating culling clips are allowed for use. Any clip or device that penetrates the skin or mouth of a fish is not allowed. This also applies to culling beams and weigh scales.

20. PENALTY POINTS: For each legal dead bass presented to weigh in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 50/100's (.50) per dead fish, (8 oz or ½ lb.) to be deducted from his daily score. **A dead fish may not be weighed as big fish.** The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points. Bass presented for weigh in which fail to measure the official length shall, accrue penalties at the rate of 1 pound for each such bass and the bass is not weighed. A contestant must not allow any bass caught by him to be counted in the score of another contestant. In such a case, both contestants shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future KBF tournaments.

21. LATE PENALTY: Competitors who are not at the official checkpoint as described in (Rule17) at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of 1 pound per minute to be deducted from the total weight of their catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a lunger award, for each one (1) minute he is late. Any competitor more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for that days catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case shall a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time". After proper recognition at the check in point, 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 the tournament waters is prohibited except during the tournament hours. Exact starting and check in times will be announced at the Pre-Tournament Briefing.

22. TIES: In case of a tie for the Divisional Qualifiers, State Champions, State Team Members, or Angler Of The Year the following tie breakers will be used in order: (#1) The individual with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the competition; (#2) The individual with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed in during the competition; (#3) The individual with the heaviest single day's catch during the competition; (#4) The individual with the second heaviest single day's catch during the competition. In the unlikely event that they remain tied after these four tie-breakers are employed, then a flip of a coin will be used to determine the winner(s) and the money, if any, will be equally split. Ties for lesser positions shall be resolved by means selected by the Tournament Director.

23. STATE CHAMPIONSHIP PAIRINGS OF CONTESTANTS: Pairings will be conducted at the Pre-Tournament Meeting. Two contestants will be assigned to each boat, whenever possible. Contestants from the same Club may be paired together. Announcement of your 1st day and 2nd day fishing partner shall be made at the Pre-Tournament Sign In Meeting. No Boater Angler will be paired with the same Co-Angler on the second day of the State Championship. Boater Anglers that do not draw a partner the first day will fish alone but will have a Co-Angler partner on the second day. If possible, no boater Anglers will fish 2 days alone. It shall be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed upon location with sufficient time remaining to be at the official take off point before the official starting time. Tournament officials shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. The Tournament Director at his sole discretion may reassign partners prior to the morning take-off if a Co-Angler is left stranded because his Boater Angler partner has not shown up. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation to depart to the take off point. When two contestants take off at the beginning of the day, they must stay together and within sight of each other and each other's catch throughout the day, until the weigh in is completed except in case of dire emergency (see Rule 28).

*If the number of Co-Anglers exceeds the number of Boater Anglers at the State Championship the excess Co-Anglers can fish only if another KBF member not in the tournament will provide and drive the boat for them. Or if the Co-Angler owns a boat they would need to get a KBF member not in the tournament to drive the boat for them. As long as the KBF member driving the boat does not fish the Co-Angler can run the trolling motor (see Rule 17). The pairing of Anglers with Co-Anglers is determined by the computer draw. Efforts will be made to try to accommodate Co-Anglers but no guarantees can be made. (It is possible the Co-Angler would be paired with a Boater Angler on the second day.)

24. SEMI-FINALS SELECTION:

The KBF will support the TBF Semi-finals by sending as many Teams as we have co-anglers in the State Championship. The rule states that we may send 10% of our annual in-state participation for the current year. KBF participants will qualify based upon their best 4 events in the AOY points standings plus the State Championship for the current year. If there are additional openings available for the TBF Semi-finals then Anglers from the State Championship who did not make the top qualifying list may contact other Anglers from the State Championship who did not qualify to team up as their Co-angler. It will be their responsibility to contact the TBF Secretary to add their names to the list. KBF will not be making those calls.

The Angler and Co-Angler Division winners will receive an automatic invitation to the TBF Semi-finals.

The KBF will not refund entries for the State Champion Angler and Co-Angler for the TBF Semi-final.

If a SEMI-FINAL Member must drop out in either the Angler or Co-Angler division of the SEMI-FINAL QUALIFIERS before the SEMI-FINAL cut-off date, the next highest finishing competitor from the Angler of the Year list will move up 1 place.

25. STATE CHAMPIONSHIP NO-SHOW PENALTY: A no-show penalty loss of entry fee will be applied to anyone who pre-enters the State Championship Tournament, and does not show up for the event and does not call a KBF Officer to give such notification 10 days before the Tournament date. No entry fee money will be refunded and it will be included in the tournament payouts. (Exceptions may be given for medical emergencies).

26. All protests must be submitted in writing Prior To The Closing Of The Tournament Scales.

27. NO HOLE SITTING: The definition of Hole Sitting shall be at the discretion of the Tournament Committee.

28. Dire Emergency/Breakdown: Dire Emergency/Breakdown: In the case of a dire emergency or breakdown competitors or observers may separate from one another while either returns to the weigh-in site with all legally caught fish in another competitor's boat. In this situation the fish must be clearly separated and verified during transfer and at the weigh-in site by the observer/non-boater of the rescue boat.

29. None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated Tournament Official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat.

30. POLYGRAPH TEST: A polygraph test may be implemented should a competitor be accused of a rule violation. The administration and interpretation of the polygraph test shall be solely the responsibility of the Tournament Director, and his agents, and shall be used (or not used) at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Without limiting the foregoing, the Tournament Director shall have sole discretion to select the place, at which such polygraph test shall be administered, the individual who administers such polygraph test, and the scope of the questions, which may be asked during such test. The Participant shall be available, at his expense, at the location selected by the Tournament Director and shall cooperate in all respects with such examination.