

# OFFICIAL 2023 BIG BASS TOURNAMENT RULES

The following rules are for the 2023 Big Bass Tournament on Potholes Reservoir May 20th, 2023.

The following rules will remain unchanged throughout the event(s) unless State or local laws are in conflict. Interpretation and enforcement of rules will be left to the Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate including without limitation: disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, and/or entry fee, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. *Skeeter, Yamaha, Nixon's Marine and Northwest Bass reserve the right to refuse entry.*

**PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY:** Any person participating in the Big Bass tournament must submit a completed entry and a signed Release of Liability. Any person under the age of 18 must also have the signature of their parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the Release of Liability form. All Contestants must have a valid Washington fishing license.

**Registration:** Pre-registration is encouraged to ensure entry. For mailed entries a completed entry form and the entry fee must be received by Northwest Bass no later than the Thursday prior to the tournament. On-site registration will be Friday evening and Saturday morning up until the drivers meeting. On-site registration fees: Twenty (\$20) dollars on Friday and Forty (\$40) dollars on Saturday. No entries will be accepted from any angler that has not observed the official off limits period.

**Off-Limits:** Tournament waters are off limits Monday-Friday the week of the tournament. NO pre fish the week prior to the tournaments Saturday Blast Off.

**Permitted Fishing Waters:** No fishing is allowed inside the host marina area. Contestants cannot leave the boat to land a fish. Contestants must be able to navigate boat into fishing area without getting out of the boat. All fishing must be done from an inspected boat. No tube or wade fishing is allowed. Boats **may not** be trailered to and from weigh-in during tournament hours. If you are unable to return to the weigh-in site by boat your catch for the day will not be weighed. Team partners must fish from the same boat. Only the contestants may be in the boat during tournament hours unless specifically approved by the Tournament Director prior to the tournament. Having a non-contestant sit on a hole for you will be grounds for disqualification.

**Safety:** Boating safety must be observed at all times. During competition a US Coast Guard approved chest type life preserver must be on, fastened and the kill switch attached to the driver any time the combustion engine is operative. Inflatable PFDs are allowed as long as they are US Coast Guard approved and meet all US Coast Guard requirements. Boats must obey all state and local regulations including speed and no-wake zones.

**Blast Off:** Tournament registration will be halted prior to the start of the drivers meeting. Registration may resume after the blast off. Anglers not registered prior to the drivers meeting will not blast-off until the end of the last flight.

It is imperative that all boats have their livewells checked and be in the water before the start of the drivers meeting. The Tournament Director will not delay blast off due to anglers that have not had their livewells checked or have not safely launched their boats. In the event your boat is not in the water at the time your number is called you will blast off last.

**Culling Tags:** NON-PIERCING CULL TAGS ARE REQUIRED. The use of piercing cull tags are prohibited and will lead to disqualification.

**Relief Rule:** In the event that an angler must leave the boat during competition to use the restroom the other angler must remain in the boat.

**Protest:** All protests must be submitted to the Tournament Director in writing within 15 minutes of the weigh-in. Protests will be accepted from registered tournament anglers only.

**Awards:** Out of sportsmanship and respect for other anglers. Skeeter, Yamaha and Nixon's Marine appreciates those who stay for awards presentations. For those unable to attend awards ceremonies, Skeeter, Yamaha and Nixon's Marine reserves the right to forfeit claim to merchandise and prize money.

**Alcoholic Beverages and Drugs:** At no time during tournament hours are any alcoholic beverages or drugs, other than prescription, allowed in the boat or to be consumed.

**Sportsmanship:** Each team is expected to follow a high standard of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any team failing to do so may be disqualified.

**Tournament Protection Rule:** Any act or inflammatory statement by any contestant that, in the opinion of the Tournament Authority, is detrimental to the operation of the tournament, damaging to organized bass fishing, to Northwest Bass or any of its sponsors, or to permitting agencies or their officers (such as rangers, fishery biologists, etc.) during any official practice round or tournament may result in temporary or permanent suspension from all future Nixon's Marine and Northwest Bass tournaments.

**Boats and Motors:** There is no horsepower limit, however; no engine may exceed the BIA horsepower rating. All boats must meet US Coast Guard and State regulations. All boats must have an emergency kill switch attached any time the combustion engine is running and an aerated livewell large enough to sustain a tournament limit in releasable condition.

**Tackle and Equipment:** All fish must be caught in a legal and sporting manner by casting, flipping or pitching. Intentional snagging of fish will not be allowed. Using the electric motor only to stroll or troll is permitted as long as the angler maintains contact with his or her fishing rod. Setting the rod down or in a pole holder while moving the boat with the electric motor is not permitted. Only artificial lures may be used. No live bait or prepared bait is permitted with the exception of pork rinds. Liquid fish attractants are allowed. Only (1) rod may be used at one time. Other rods may be in the boat and ready for use, however, every cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is made. Nets are allowed and Nixon's Marine and Northwest Bass encourages the use of catch and release style nets.

**Conservation:** Adequate livewells are mandatory on each boat and must provide aeration to maintain fish in good condition.

**Equipment Failure or Emergency:** There will be only two permitted methods of returning to the official weigh-in site: (1) by both partners remaining in their boat and being towed by water, or (2) by one or both partners entering the boat of another tournament contestant and returning to weigh-in site. If one partner remains with the troubled craft, he cannot continue to fish. Under these two conditions, the contestant's catch may be counted. Teams who elect to return to official check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit that day's catch.

In case of a mechanical breakdown that requires a team to swap tournament boats, that team will be eligible to resume competition only under the supervision of a Tournament official. Both team members must be present for a boat inspection before a restart will be granted. It is the sole responsibility of contestants to locate a tournament official to request a restart.

**Insurance:** A minimum of Three Hundred Thousand (\$300,000) liability insurance is required of all contestants utilizing their boats in Northwest Bass tournaments. All contestants must sign a waiver absolving the tournament sponsors, co-sponsors and their employees from any responsibility for any damage or personal injury sustained as a result of their participation in the tournament or related activities. Contestants are required to have proof of insurance at each tournament.

**Information Sharing and Communications:** During the off-limits period and during competition, anglers may not solicit and/or receive fishing information from anyone other than the partner they are fishing with or Big Bass tournament competitors. Information gathered through publicly available sources, i.e. Google Earth, published maps, etc. is permissible. Involuntary violation of this rule should be reported to the Tournament Director. Appropriate action will be taken on a case by case basis. The purchasing of or bartering for information or the hiring of services will not be permitted after the start of the off-limits period. The sharing of tournament winnings in exchange for fishing information is strictly prohibited and will lead to disqualification. Further, during competition, the use of electronic communications devices

**SCORING:** Only Largemouth or Smallmouth Bass are accepted species. Only one bass per team, per hour, may be submitted for the hourly payout. There is no limit on the number of hours a team may submit their catch to the scales. Bass entered in the Big Bass Tournament of the Hour contest do not carry forward from hour to hour.. No team may possess more than 3 bass at any time during the tournament. Any team that possesses more than the tournament limit (3) at any time will have their catch disqualified. It is the responsibility of each team to immediately cull their limit to Three (3) fish throughout the tournament. No culling is allowed within the host marina. Contestants may present only one fish per hour. Switching or sharing fish with other contestants is a violation of these rules and will result in immediate disqualification. Any artificially weighed, preserved, or altered bass will be disqualified and that contestant

will be subject to prosecution under federal laws. All boat numbers must be turned in at weigh-in. Boat numbers must be returned even if no fish are weighed

**LIVE FISH:** Only live bass will be weighed-in during the event. Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. The use of chemical live well additives which promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat are recommended. No dead bass will be weighed.

**HOURLY WEIGH IN TIMES:**

**Hour #1.....8am -- 8:59am**

**Hour #2.....9am – 9:59am**

**Hour #3....10am -10:59am**

**Hour #4....11am -11:59am**

**Hour #5....12pm-12:59pm**

**Hour #6.... 1pm – 1:59pm**

**Hour #7.....2pm – 2:59pm (Final Hour)**

**Boats not checked in by 2:59pm will not be allowed to weigh their fish for the final hour.**

**TIES:** If there is a tie for the hourly big bass, the angler that weighed their fish first will win that hour

**Polygraph:** To assure sportsmanship and angler confidence polygraph testing will be enforced. All contestants, winners and non-winners, are subject to a polygraph. Failure to submit to or pass a polygraph test will result in immediate disqualification.

Random tests may be conducted at tournaments without prior notice.

**Rules are subject to change without notice at any time prior to the start of a tournament.**

Reviewed: 10-22-2022