

TBF of CONNECTICUT -TOURNAMENT RULES (Revised January 2014)

This trail has been formulated for the grass-roots weekend angler. As such we are encouraging the participation of anglers who want once again to fish a tournament to learn and have a good time. Entry fees (and payouts) are relatively low and the tournament officials will work with the participants (whenever possible) so that all can have a good time. Unfortunately it is required to have some rules with which all must comply to insure fairness and safety. This trail has no interest in competing with others, only in helping to grow the sport and increasing participation for those who are currently left out.

TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION AND REGISTRATION: Participation in any federation event is open to all members of the organization. Each participant is required to fill out and sign an application for each tournament. Each boater will be required to submit a copy of their boat insurance (minimum \$300,000 liability) prior to fishing their first tournament of the year. Tournament entries must be postmarked ten (10) days prior to the tournament. (Tournament Director and committee may, at their discretion, allow late entries)

REFUNDS: People who chose to withdraw from a tournament on or prior to the Tuesday immediately before the tournament, will be automatically reimbursed their entry fees. People who choose to withdraw from a tournament after the Tuesday before the tournament will be reimbursed only after approval of the Board of Directors at the next regularly scheduled T.B.F, monthly meeting (contestant must petition for the reimbursement at this meeting). Any monies which are not reimbursed will be utilized (at the Board of Directors approval) for the tournament trail, and or trophies.

TOURNAMENT PAIRINGS: For all tournaments (trail events) there will be a random pairing of the contestants by the tournament committee. Clubs who wish to fish as a club event may pair within the club, if 50% or more of the club is fishing. Contestants will only be allowed to fish together two times during a tournament year. In each event the tournament committee will designate two boats as "open boats". These two boats will be left open (no non-boater) in case of emergency so that no non-boater is left on the shore. These boats will be picked at random and not more than one time during the tournament year. All other boats will have two contestants per boat.

BOAT EQUIPMENT: All boats must be in full compliance with state laws and Coast Guard regulations. All boats must have working kill switches (which must be worn at all times when the internal combustion motor is running). All boats must have a working mechanically aerated live well capable of holding and sustaining two limits of fish (Bass). Boats must be large enough to be safe and comfortable for two anglers and their equipment (as determined by the Tournament Director and committee). All boats must be equipped with a seat for the non-boater partner.

SAFETY AND SPORTSMANSHIP: Life jackets shall be worn by both competitors at all times when the internal combustion motor is running. The "kill switch" shall be affixed to the driver at all times when the internal combustion motor is running. All competitors shall comply with state laws (speeding etc.) at all times. When boating and fishing near other boats and people, maximum courtesy should be extended to all. Anglers in the same boat shall not fish or handle the boat in a method which will put the other angler at a disadvantage. Use of alcohol or illegal drugs during tournament competition hours, will result in immediate disqualification. Drunkenness and unsportsmanlike conduct at any tournament will be cause for disqualification and may result in disqualification from future tournaments (As determined by Tournament director, tournament committee and Board of Directors).

TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: All fishing shall be with artificial baits only. Prepared baits (real shiners, crayfish etc.) shall not be allowed. Rods over 8 foot (96") long are not allowed. Spinning, Bait-casting and Spin-casting are all allowable fishing techniques. Fly fishing is not! Fishermen are allowed to have a number of rods rigged and available for use but only one "wet-line" is allowed. Trolling (hands free fishing using only a motor to move the bait) is not allowed in any tournament. All fish must be caught in a legal sporting manner. While the presence of communication devices is recommended (for emergency purposes), they are not to be used to converse with other competitors except for emergencies, as deemed by the Tournament Director and committee. All tools of the boat used by the boat owner during the allotted time at the front of the boat will be available for use by the non-boater during their allotted time at the front of the boat (trolling motor, depth finder, anchor, anchoring poles etc.)

PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Fishing is allowed anywhere on the tournament lake (where legal), except within 50 feet of another competitor who's trolling motor is up and who is anchored in position. Anglers who feel that another boat is encroaching on the 50 foot rule must warn the offending anglers at that time. Anglers who allow one other person (within the tournament) to fish within the 50 foot zone are then obligated to allow any other boat or angler the same courtesy. No angler or boat may stop others from passing on otherwise navigable waters. Anglers may not leave the boat for the purpose of catching a fish, or fishing an area which is otherwise inaccessible by boat. Leaving the boat for dire circumstances (as determined by the Tournament Director and committee) is acceptable, but whenever possible the anglers should remain within sight of each other. All tournament boats must remain on the tournament water throughout the tournament day and all contestants must depart from and return to the check in point by boat (no trailering from other launch sites).

BOAT IDENTIFICATION AND CHECKPOINTS: Prior to the start of each tournament, there will be a check in for the contestants. At this point contestants will learn who their partners are (if they don't already know) and one contestant from each boat will draw a boat number (blind draw). These boat numbers are to remain with the boat throughout the day. All boats shall be in the water 30 minutes prior to the start of the tournament. Any boater who chooses to block the line and not launch their boat promptly will be sent to the back of the line - if the boater fails to comply he (she) will be disqualified and the entry fee will not be reimbursed. Boats will line up on the water and leave the launch site in numerical order. The first two boats and the last boat to leave will be Tournament Committee boats (the first two will be required to return to the ramp 15 minutes early to start the weigh in procedures). At the end of the day all boats must check in with the tournament committee, (regardless of whether they caught any fish) and return their boat number (more than anything else this a safety issue to make sure that no boats are left on the water, so full compliance is required). In the event that a boat has to leave the water prior to the end of the tournament day, contestants are required to notify another tournament angler or tournament official of their intent and return the boat number. It is the responsibility of the non-boating partner to remain with and help the boater at the end of the day until the boat is safely on the trailer and tied down (this does not apply if the boater chooses to launch at a different site and drive the boat to the tournament launch.) Failure of the non-boater to comply with this rule may result in disqualification from the current and future tournaments!!

SCORING AND PENALTIES: Tournament standings and final winners shall be determined by the weight of each anglers catch. Only Smallmouth and Largemouth Bass in compliance with state size limits may be weighed in. Any angler may request a "courtesy measure" to check a fishes compliance with size regulations and there will be no penalty (other than the loss of the questionable fish if it is short), however if an angler tries to weigh in a short fish the total catch will be disqualified. There will be a five fish limit for each angler (unless otherwise stated by the Tournament Director and committee prior to the start of the tournament). In the event that an angler has more than the prescribed limit in possession at any time, the Tournament Director and committee shall cull down to the prescribed limit starting with the largest fish and working down to the smallest fish. Any fish which appears to have been mangled, crushed or otherwise altered to give the appearance of being longer than 12 inches will be credited only at the discretion of the tournament committee. Any fish presented for weigh in which is dead or cannot be completely revived with a reasonable effort shall receive a 4 ounce deduction as a "dead fish" penalty. All fish weighed in by any angler must be caught during the specified tournament hours on the specified tournament waters by the specified angler - any deviation from the above shall result in immediate disqualification and removal from the organization. Any angler who returns to the weigh in site late shall receive a penalty of 1 pound for each minute that they are late. Anglers who are fifteen or more minutes late will have their total catch disqualified. Only live fish can be weighed in to qualify for the lunger award. In the event of a tie between two or more contestants, the winner will be determined by: 1. Total number of fish. 2. Big fish. 3. Coinflip.

ENTRY FEES AND PAYOUTS: There shall be two divisions in each of the trail tournaments as follow:
A. DIVISION -Entry fee 30.00 (For each tournament entry \$3.00 to lunger and \$27.00 to prize payouts.)
B. DIVISION -Entry fee 15.00 (For each tournament entry \$2.00 to lunger, and \$13.00 to prize payouts.)

Any checks written to members as payouts for tournaments awards must be cashed within 60 days. Checks which are not cashed within that time will be null and void.

TOURNAMENT TRAIL POINTS: Tournament trail points shall be awarded in the following manner: For each tournament the first place contestant (determined by total weight of fish caught) shall receive 300 points, second place shall receive 298 points and 3rd thru last place shall decline in 2 point increments with people who catch no fish receiving 50 points less than the last person who caught fish. There will be separate standings for the two divisions. At the end of the year the overall standings (for each division) will be determined by total points accumulated throughout the year. There will be a drop tournament this year so that the top 4 finishes of the 5 tournaments will be counted for total year end points.

BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSES: Each partner in the boat is entitled to 4 hours control of the boat. There should be a discussion and understanding prior to the start of the tournament. If a contestant does not choose to run the trolling motor, he (she) is still entitled to fish his (her) waters and to do so from the front of the boat. **DURING ANY CONTESTANTS TIME, THEY WILL HAVE FULL CONTROL OF WHERE THE BOAT GOES AND HOW THEY FISH THE AREA!!!** Failure to comply will result in immediate disqualification! Non-boaters are responsible to pay the boater to help offset some of the expenses of running the boat as follows: Boats under 100 horsepower -\$20.00. Boats over 100 horsepower -\$25.00. Failure to do so will eliminate the non-boater from fishing future tournaments until the situation is rectified.

PROTESTS: All protests must be filed with the Tournament Director prior to the closing of the scales. When a protest is filed the Tournament Director will choose a minimum of 3 uninvolved people (without ties to any of the parties concerned). These people will then listen to all sides of the story and make a determination as to the outcome.

STATE TEAM QUALIFYING MEMBERS FROM THE TRAIL:

Each year a number of anglers will be selected from the TBF tournament trail to be members of the State Team. Members who wish to advance to the State Team from the trail will do so in the following manner.

A. Members who wish to advance to the team must fish the trail as competitors in the A division.

B. Members who wish to advance from the trail must pay an added fee of \$75.00 prior to fishing their first qualifying tournament of the season.

One in five of the competitors who choose to fish in this manner to advance to the team will become members of the team. (1 thru 5 fishing will receive 1 spot, 6 thru 10 will receive 2 spots, Etc.), with a maximum of 6 members who can qualify thru the trail events. Positions on the State Team will be determined by the Board of Directors each year after we know how many participants are involved.

Members who qualify for the team through this trail event, and who choose not to try to increase their standing on the State Team (as described in the next paragraph) must pay the difference in the cost of participating in this event and participating in the Two Day Qualifier prior to the Two Day Qualifier.

Members who choose to fish this division will have their weights put in descending order, and the heaviest creel will be given 300 points. The next creel will get 298, and continue down to the last creel brought to the scales in 2 point increments. If you fish and do not weigh in a keeper you will receive 50 points less than the last person who caught fish. The total points to determine the qualifiers will be based on the top 4 finishes of the 5 qualifying tournaments. At the end of the tournament season the top 20% of those who fished to qualify for the team will be placed on the team as described above. If any of the members who fished and qualified for the State Team wish to better their position on the team, they can fish the Two Day Qualifier (pay the entry fee) and qualify in a higher position. If these anglers do not improve their position, they must pay the difference between the entry fee into the trail qualifier and the Two day Qualifier within ten days of the completion of the Two Day Qualifier in order to maintain their position earned from the trail.

In the year following participating in the Divisional Tournament the members of the State Team, who were qualified for that tournament at the end of the Two Day Qualifier the year before (team and two alternates) will be required to fish "A" division when fishing the TBF trail tournaments