

## **BATTLE OF THE BASS FISHING TOURNAMENT RULES**

### **Charity Tournament benefitting Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay**

**Tournament Director: MLF Big 5 Tour Pro Angler Darrell Davis**

**Event Date: June 5, 2021**

**Location: Camp Mack Resort, Lake Wales, Florida**

The following rules shall apply to the *Battle of the Bass Fishing Tournament* (the "Tournament"). These Tournament Rules may be changed by the Tournament Director at any time and will be effective immediately following posting on the online Tournament Registration website. Interpretation and enforcement of these Tournament Rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director or his designee. In the event of a Tournament Rule violation, the Tournament Director will impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and/or entry fee, probation and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director will be final in all matters. Each Tournament participant shall immediately report to the Tournament Director any violation or infraction of any Tournament Rules. Failure to report violations or suggestions to another Tournament participant that they violated these Tournament Rules will be cause for disqualification. All protests must be reported to the Tournament Director on site and in writing within 15 minutes after the announcement "the scales are closed".

**Penalties** may include, but are not limited to the following:

- (a) Loss of fish in question;
- (b) Loss of catch for the day;
- (c) Disqualification from the Tournament;
- (d) Disqualification from future fishing tournaments, which may be from a specific number of events, a specific period of time, or may be a lifetime disqualification.

**Participation, Eligibility & Boats:** Anyone may participate in this Tournament who is not otherwise prohibited by these Tournament rules. Specifically, employees, vendors or customers of any Tournament Sponsor may participate as well as the employees, vendors and volunteers of Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay. However, any minor entering this Tournament under the age of 18 years must be paired with a parent, legal guardian, Big Brother or Big Sister and have the signature of his or her parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the official entry form. Tournament Director reserves the right to refuse Tournament registration to any individual or team. Each Tournament participant must provide their own boat that is acceptable to the Tournament Director; no john boats or pontoon boats will be allowed.

**Federal, State and Local Laws:** All teams must have a valid fishing license for Tournament waters and are required to obey all federal, state and local laws and regulations at all times.

**Registration:** 100 teams of two anglers each will be considered a full field for this Tournament. **The entry fee for this event is \$200 per team of two. Boat numbers will be assigned by date/time of registration. Online registration closes June 2, 2021, or when the Tournament is sold out, whichever occurs last. The registration fee is non-refundable. However, a Tournament registration can be transferred to another angler/team prior to the start of this Tournament, subject to the approval of the Tournament Director.**

**On-Site Check in and Meeting:** Onsite check-in is the morning of the Tournament. It is mandatory that one member of each team register in person at the designated site during onsite registration and be present for the Rules and Safety briefing. Live wells must be checked before your boat is cleared to take off.

**Safety:** Safety is paramount and Tournament participants must recognize that fishing from an open boat is inherently dangerous, and as a result the Tournament organizers and the Tournament Director seeks to limit and minimize those hazards with reasonable safety rules.

1. Safe boating conduct must always be observed by all Tournament participants. During the official practice and competition, each Tournament participant must wear a US Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver. This life preserver must be worn at any time the combustion engine on their boat is in gear. This life preserver must also be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine of your boat is no longer in gear. Violation of this rule shall result in immediate disqualification. "Fanny Pack" preservers are not allowed. In the event a boat is being towed, all passengers in the towed boat must wear a life preserver.
2. The Tournament Director or his designee may delay, shorten, or restrict Tournament waters or cancel the start of the Tournament because of bad weather or other factors that would compromise the safety of Tournament participants.
3. In the event of an emergency, teams should call 911 immediately and then notify the Tournament Director or one of his designees.
4. Tournament Teams are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather when danger may be imminent, at which time all fishing must cease.

**Permitted Fishing Methods:** Only artificial lures may be used at this Tournament with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only one fishing rod per Tournament participant may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is attempted or rod is used. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Switching or sharing fish with other teams or individuals will result in immediate disqualification from the Tournament. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional and sporting manner. When sight fishing, all fish must be hooked inside the mouth to be counted as a legal fish. All angling must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a Tournament participant leave the boat to land a fish, or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

**Sportsmanship and Conduct:** All Tournament teams are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles will be deemed cause for disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may also be on Tournament waters. Any act of an angler which reflects unfavorably upon effort to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, shall be reason for disqualification from this Tournament.

The following conduct will not be permitted and cause for disqualification:

1. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs of any kind during Tournament hours.
2. Any previous conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation for a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude, or a crime related to, arising out of, or involving any fishing tournament or event.
3. Actions or words which reflect unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, and fair competition;
4. Disqualification from any fishing organization resulting from alleged rule violations and/or the questioning of an angler's honesty, integrity and character.

**Remember, this Tournament is a charity event. We are all coming together to raise funds and awareness for the Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring programs which benefit kids in Polk County, some of whom may be present during portions of our Tournament.**

**Assistance:** During the hours of Tournament competition, teams may not follow a non-competitor's boat; participate in the placing of markers by non-competitors or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. Buying or bartering for fishing locations is prohibited. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., to communicate fishing information or contact with anyone during Tournament hours is strictly prohibited other than contacting the Tournament Director or 911 for emergencies. In the event of an emergency, competitors should call 911 first and then notify the Tournament Director.

**Boat Regulations:** 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 cannot not exceed the rating specified on this plate. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine is cause for immediate disqualification. Posted speed limits must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks.

**Permitted Fishing Locations:** Tournament waters include all lakes and rivers connected on the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes. No locking below Highway 60. Specifically, any water within 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 Tournament Briefing. Only that water open to all public fishing will be considered tournament waters. All angling must be done from the boat.

**Official Checkpoints:** There will be only one official check-out point for boat inspection in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check-out in the morning or failure to officially check-in in the afternoon will result in Tournament disqualification from such event. It is the sole responsibility of each team to arrive at the designated check-in location on time. Regardless of what you are told or understand, it is the angler's responsibility to verify their flight time. All fishing must cease upon check-in.

**Prize Purse:** This Tournament offers a guaranteed \$8,000 purse (with minimum 30 boats) or a \$10,000 Purse (with minimum of 50 boats) pursuant to the scoring and other Tournament Rules. These cash prizes will be distributed by the Tournament Director as follows:

<u>30 boats – guaranteed \$8,000 Purse</u>	<u>50 boats – guaranteed \$10,000 Purse</u>
1st Place - \$4000	1st Place - \$5000
2nd Place - \$1500	2nd Place - \$2500
3rd Place- \$1250	3rd Place- \$1250
4th Place - \$750	4th Place - \$750
5th Place Bass - \$500	5th Place Bass - \$500

**(Optional Contest) Prize for Largest Bass:** Each Tournament team/boat who pays an extra \$20 will be eligible to participate in this optional contest for the largest bass caught pursuant to the Tournament Rules and using the scoring rules detailed below. The full proceeds (100% payout) will be awarded for the largest bass caught, under this optional contest.

**SCORING:** Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pounds-and-hundredths weight of each team's catch during the Tournament competition. Only Largemouth bass will be weighed. The limit for each team shall be five (5) fish. Upon catching a 6<sup>th</sup> fish the team must immediately cull to the Tournament limit. In the event Tournament officials observe a team with more than the allowable limit in their position (in live-well) or if angler presents more than the allowable limit at weigh-in, he Tournament Director or his designee will cull down to the prescribed limit beginning with the largest fish. The official length

for bass shall be 14 inch minimum. 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 minimum official length, shall result in a penalty of 1 pound for each short bass and that bass will not be weighed. Once a team's catch is presented to a Tournament official, that team may not add additional fish to the catch. 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. Bass must not be placed on a stringer at any time during the tournament. Culling tags or clips are allowed. In the event of a mechanical failure (boat is inoperable) teams may have their catch of the day weighed and counted by one of the following methods ONLY: 1) Boat is towed to the weigh-in site by another boat; 2) One team member may take catch and board another competitors' boat only for a ride to weigh-in. A team must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another team. In such a case, both teams will be disqualified from this Tournament and from all future Tournaments conducted by us. Mechanical failures do not extend established weigh-in times.

**Catch and Release:** CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. A penalty of 4 ounces (.25 pounds) for each dead fish will be assessed and deducted from the total day's weight. In the event the anglers' big fish is dead, a penalty of one (1) pound will be deducted from the big fish total weight. The Tournament Director or his/her designees shall have sole authority to assess dead fish penalties and for assessing penalty weight.

**Late Penalty:** Teams who are not at the official check-in point at the appointed time will be assessed a one (1) pound per minute penalty and the penalty weight will be deducted from their total weight including any weight to be counted toward a Big Bass award. Any Contestant more than 15 minutes late will forfeit that day's catch.

**Ties:** In the event of a tie for first place, the heaviest bass presented by either team will be the tie breaker. If there is still a tie, cash prizes will be split equally among the teams involved.

**Waiver and Release:** As a condition of participation in this Tournament, each Tournament participant must execute a waiver, release of liability, indemnification and a name and likeness release for the benefit of all sponsors of this Tournament, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Tampa Bay, the Tournament Directors, any and all volunteers at this Tournament and their employees, board members and family members.