



ALABAMA STUDENT ANGLER BASS FISHING ASSOCIATION OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

1. RULE CHANGES: The following rules have been set forth by the Board of Directors of the Alabama Student Angler Bass Fishing Association (ASABFA) for the 2017 "ASABFA Classic Qualifiers" and the "ASABFA Classic." Rules shall remain unchanged with the exception of any inadvertent error or omission. Should such an error or omission occur the error or omission shall be rectified. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director, his/her designee or tournament committee. In the event of a rules violation, the Tournament Director, or his/her designee, may impose such sanctions, as they deem appropriate, including disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decisions of the Tournament Director or his /her designee and tournament officials shall be final in all matters.

2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY: Tournaments are only open to Association members or individual members in good standing with an ASABFA affiliated student angler Team or under special invitation. Age, grade, class, and eligibility requirements as set forth by the following: Participants must meet the following requirements to compete; anglers must have started the 7th grade but not yet started their first semester of their freshman year of college with the exception of dual enrollment students. Students graduating after their first semester of their senior year may fish the spring events including the ASABFA Classic, as long as they have met all requirements of the ASABFA and their Team. Entry fee per boat must be paid as posted for each tournament. Each student angler must maintain a grade point average of 2.0 or higher. It is the responsibility of the competitors to enter proof of grade level, age, and eligibility to the satisfaction of tournament officials, if requested. All participants must have, in their possession, a valid fishing license covering the waters to be fished, where required by law. **A PROPERLY COMPLETED AND SIGNED ENTRY FORM MUST BE RECEIVED AT THE ADDRESS SPECIFIED ON THE ENTRY FORM, ON OR BEFORE THE 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. Each affiliated ASABFA Team may enter up to 5 team boats in each Classic Qualifying Tournament. The number of boats entered by an affiliated ASABFA Team in the Classic Tournament will be based on the point schedule as approved by the Board of Directors each year at the Annual Meeting of ASABFA. Each boat will be comprised of 2 qualified team members, or an observer whom is a member of the ASABFA, as well as a boat captain. All tournaments are open to ASABFA affiliated Teams in the Classic Qualifying Tournaments. All team members must be students of the same high school or feeder school in the district they are representing. Homeschooled students may participate in ASABFA events, provided they are members of the school team for which they are zoned. To further clarify, if the angler chooses to participate in a private school team, the private school must be in their school zone. Otherwise, they should participate in the public school's team. During the competition and practice days, no boat captain may operate a boat unless they have documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 boating liability insurance (subject to verification by the Tournament Director or other tournament officials). In the event there are anglers with special needs, the captain (with prior approval of the Tournament Director) may assist the angler with preparation but may not cast or fish. The boat containing the special needs angler will have a marking on the boat flag which signifies there is a special needs angler onboard.

3. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE: The event waters **may** be placed on OFF-LIMITS by the Tournament Director as published for the particular tournament event. No competitor may buy or barter a fishing location from guides or other participants for use during any competition day. A boat captain may not participate in a tournament if they have been a guide on that particular tournament water within the last 30 days. During competition days of the tournament, team members may use any type of communication device to communicate with others from their team. Each contestant agrees to report, in a timely manner, to the Tournament Director any violation or infraction of these Tournament Rules. The failure to report violations or suggestion to violate these Rules, or false verification of weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification. Sundown, the Sunday prior to the ASABFA Classic Tournament until the official blast off on the Friday of the Classic Tournament will be dead water. No fishing by anglers, boat captains, or their representatives/affiliates will be permitted during the dead water period.

4. REGISTRATION: This is a "team" event consisting of two student anglers and one (1) non-fishing boat captain. Each team, participant, and boat captain is required to pre-register and return completed entry forms to the ASABFA on or before the deadline date. Registration and entry fees must be received in the mail or by email by the **SATURDAY BEFORE THE TOURNAMENT DATE.** If the entry form is mailed, the entry fees must be included. Should a team decide to pay their fees online, the entry form may be emailed to the location listed on the entry form. Any entries received after the deadline will be assigned a late penalty (see rule 18). Boat numbers will be determined by random draw and provided to the team at the end of the pretournament meeting. Once the boat numbers are assigned, they will not be changed. Therefore, boat numbers cannot be traded amongst team members.

5. SPORTSMANSHIP: Participants in the Association Classic Qualifier or Classic Tournament 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 contender during the official event or during the tournaments will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future ASABFA tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the Tournament or competition day, or when in the weigh-in area. 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. 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 for disqualification. Any disqualification or suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation.

6. SAFETY: In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should call 911 first and then notify tournament officials and coaches. All persons in a tournament boat shall remain seated in a recommended on-plane seating location when the combustion engine is running. Sitting on pedestal seats while the combustion engine is in gear is not permitted. Student Anglers are NOT permitted to operate the main engine or drive the boat with the one exception to load the boat on the trailer. Operators of motors or engines must have in their possession a valid vessel license. Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by tournament participants, observers, and boat captains. During the tournament, each competitor, observer, and boat captain is required to wear a Coast Guard approved life preserver anytime the combustion engine is operating. The preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the competitors reach their fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. The boat captain must have the kill switch connected and operational anytime the combustion engine is operating. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification or delayed blast off. 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; ASABFA reserves the right to impose 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, or his/her designee.

7. 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 ft. max. length from butt of handle to rod tip) and reel may be used at any one time. All other types are prohibited. Only one rod and reel outfit as described is permitted in use per angler at any given time. All bass must be caught alive and in a conventional sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. When visually fishing for bass, to be counted as legal fish all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and **must be verified** by your adult Boat Captain before being unhooked. Gaffs may not be used to boat bass nor be permitted in the boat at any time. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited. Dip nets will be allowed. Current rules allow for "A" rigs and similar outfits are permitted but may be subject to change based on the Tournament Director discretion.

8. BOAT AND MOTOR: Each team is to provide their own boat and adult boat captain that is at least 21 years of age, properly licensed by the State of Alabama to operate the combustible engine, and a member of the ASABFA. The boat captain is "chosen" by the team and cannot fish during the event, but each team agrees and understands that any infractions or rule violations by the boat captain can be applied to the team. For the safety of all participants, boats will be equipped with some type of U.S. Coast Guard approved ignition/engine stop/shutoff device. The engine stop switch device must be attached to the boat captain's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Anytime the combustion engine is operating and in gear, the boat captain must be the driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. An electric trolling motor may be used for maneuvering; however, trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All boats must be propeller driven, a minimum of 16 feet in length. All boats must be equipped with wheel steering for the drive engine; no other steering device will be permitted. No barges or similar cumbersome crafts will be permitted. Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment.

Boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain alive a limit catch of bass by both participants. No portable container or cooler with aeration is permitted for keeping fish. Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition will be 250 horsepower, not to exceed the horsepower capacity set forth on the "Maximum Capacities" plate described below. Minimum horsepower allowed is 40 horsepower for all ASABFA tournaments. Each boat must have a clearly legible "Maximum Capacities" (or comparably titled) plate that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must not exceed the maximum horsepower capacity specified on this plate or a 250 horsepower maximum. By signing the entry form, each contestant agrees to submit his/her boat and/or motor to an inspection by tournament officials or manufacturers personnel. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating plate will be cause for disqualification from the tournament and may result in ineligibility to compete in future ASABFA sanctioned events. Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competition. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed and/or recommended fuel tanks. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public.

9. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: Every boat must have all required safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and live well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain a limit catch of alive bass by both competitors using the boat. ASABFA recommends the use of ice to cool live well water and improve oxygen levels during "summer" months. Leave your aerators on "recirculate" and running. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate."

10. BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Each boat MUST be given, prior to each day's start, a live well and SAFETY INSPECTION checks by a tournament official. Each boat will be assigned a tournament number. A boat is officially checked-in when the number is logged in. All fishing must stop after boat has been checked in.

11. BOAT OPERATION: In the event that neither student angler cannot nor wishes not to run the trolling motor the boat captain may run it for them. The boat captain has sole discretion to veto any selected location for safety reasons. Anyone operating the trolling motor must have a valid vessel license including launching the boat as per State law.



12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director for each event. Each competitor must obtain this information from ASABFA staff. Any water within these boundaries posted Off-Limits or No Fishing by state or federal agencies will be **OFF-LIMITS**. Also, any live bass-release area established by the Tournament Director will be **OFF-LIMITS** and will be announced by the Tournament Director. Only that water open to **ALL** public fishing will be considered tournament waters. All angling must be done from the boat. No boat may pass through any lock from one body of water to another.

13. PARTICIPANTS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT: Participants and boat captain 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. Participants must leave and return to official checkpoint by boat. Participants must remain in boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. Participants are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather where danger may be imminent, at which time all fishing must cease. In an emergency, both competitors may be removed from their boat to: A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT so designated by the Tournament Director. If after the emergency situation is resolved by tournament officials and enough time is left 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. Trailering of boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of the Tournament Director.

14. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be an official checkpoint for checkout in the morning and check-in in the afternoon and this point shall be designated by the Tournament Director or his/her designee. At the time of check-out all competitors and their boats shall be in full compliance with all Safety and Tournament rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves and proceed immediately to the designated check-in area. Partners must stay together, through check-in and weigh-in, until weigh-in slips have been signed. **YOU MUST CHECK-IN EVEN IF YOU DON'T HAVE ANY FISH.**

15. SCORING: Tournament standing, awards, and final standings shall be determined by a method of scoring set forth and announced by the Tournament Director or his/her designee. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Red Eye or Shoal Bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day 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. At no time shall a competitor have, in possession, more than the tournament limit. Tournament Officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a competitor has in their possession more than the stated limit, shall cull, starting with the largest bass first, etc., down to the stated limit. The official length for bass shall be decided by Tournament Officials and announced by the Tournament Director. Only bass 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 non-legal bass. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the boat. Any bass that appears to be mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of tournament officials. After a competitor's check in at the official check point, the must present all legal fish in the possession to the tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a boat's catch has been measured, counted or verified by a tournament official, the competitors may not return to their boat until their fish have been weighed and recorded. Each boat's catch must be presented in an official ASABFA weigh in bag, provided by tournament officials.

16. CATCH-&-RELEASE: THE DEAD FISH, NO CULL RULE APPLIES.

17. DO NOT KILL YOUR CATCH: Each competitor is expected to keep their bass alive by the proper use of the boat's live well system and ice. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh in officials, the competitor shall be penalized eight (8) ounces of weight from their daily score. The Tournament Officials shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points.

18. LATE PENALTY: Entries which are received after the deadline will be allowed to participate in the tournament. However, those boats will be last to blast off and first to check in. Check-in time for the boats entered late will be 2pm, unless otherwise instructed. Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 14 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. 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." 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. Fishing the tournament waters is only permissible during tournament hours. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. It is the angler's responsibility to confirm check-in times each day on the daily pairings.

19. TIES: In case of a tie for champions, awards, prizes or cut positions the following tie-breakers will be used in order: (1) The team with the largest number of legal fish weighed in during the official event; (2) Largest Bass. If individuals remain tied after these tiebreakers are employed, the tie shall be resolved by means selected by the Tournament Director will be used to determine the winner(s), and the awards. Ties for lesser positions shall be resolved by means selected by the Tournament Director.

20. PAIRING OF PARTICIPANTS: Whenever possible, one - (2) two person team of participants will be in each boat, with one boat captain. If, for any reason only one student angler is available to participate, an observer must be utilized to ride in that boat with them. The observer must be provided by the angler's team and follow the same rules as the boat captain. ASABFA will not provide an observer. A participant must not allow any bass illegally caught by their team to be counted in their weight. In such cases, both participants and the boat captain will be disqualified from this and all future ASABFA sanctioned events.

21. TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS: None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated tournament official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat at any time during the event.



22. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE: Anglers are encouraged to wear their own clothing, which may bear patches, logos and other signage promoting the anglers' sponsors. The Association may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are in ASABFA's sole judgment, in poor taste. The Association will provide as much advance notice as possible to the competitors in such instances. Team jerseys will have included the ASABFA logo.

23. BOAT CAPTAINS: Boat Captains will serve as "officials" in the event and will not be allowed to fish or handle any fishing equipment during tournament days. They are there to act as boat captains, mentors and observers. They may assist the Student Anglers in a manner as to coach or mentor them only. They may suggest fishing areas or techniques, baits, etc., but the final decision, as long as safety is not a factor, on where to fish or fishing methods will rest with the Student Anglers. **Boat Captains are not allowed to be a tournament Boat Captain if they have guided on the tournament lake in the past 30 days on the tournament waters they are serving as a boat captain.** They may pre-fish (non-tournament dates) if your team permits. The intent of the Boat Captain role is not to give the student anglers an edge. Preferably, Boat Captains should be from the team's own area and used in the team's fall events. Not for hire, but reimbursement for gas expenses, is okay. The boat captains MAY NOT tie knots, cast lines or lures, set the hook, play fish to the boat or take any fishing action with a rod or reel. They may operate the dip net if they so choose. Boat Captains will have complete control of the boat and outboard engine at all times. The student anglers may not drive the boat (other than loading on the trailer). Student anglers may run the trolling motor if properly licensed by the state of Alabama; however, the Boat Captain has the right to take control of the trolling motor at any time, if safety or equipment is at risk. Boat captains are subject to the same rules as the anglers, and penalties if any can be applied to the team in your boat. Boat Captains are subject to polygraph tests or truth verification tests. A completed entry form and event waiver must also be submitted for each boat captain. Exceptions can be made prior to the tournament for anglers with special needs, (see Rule 2).

24. SOCIAL NETWORKING: (Facebook, Twitter, Snapchat, etc.) ASABFA is aware that social media web sites have become increasingly popular, not only among students, but among adults, as well. While these sites have the potential to offer both social and professional benefits, they have equal potential to cause disruption to the team environment. Anglers and parents should be mindful that the information posted on these sites is public and can be accessed and shared by others. For this reason, anglers and their families/friends should refrain from posting statements or material that reflects poorly on ASABFA, their team, school, or an angler's character. To do so, will only hurt your credibility and effectiveness with teammates, parents, and associates of the team. Such posts will be removed from the site and the poster could possibly be banned from the site permanently.