

Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Weekend Series operated by American Bass Anglers
Regional Championship Official Rules - Midwest
Kentucky/Barkley Lakes, Gilbertsville, KY – October 18-19, 2008

RULE CHANGES: These rules will remain unchanged throughout the 2008 Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Weekend Series operated by American Bass Anglers Regional Championship tournament. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left exclusively to the tournament director or his/her designee at the tournament. In the event of a rule violation, the tournament director or a rules committee may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate by them, including, without limitation, disqualification, and forfeiture of prizes, and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the tournament director, his/her designee, or the rules committee shall be final in all matters. Rules violations must be reported to the tournament director on site within 15 minutes of the official announcement of the scales are closed.

Penalties for rules violations may include the following:

1. Loss of catch for the day of the violation.
2. Disqualification from the tournament in question.
3. Disqualification from future American Bass Anglers (ABA) events which may be from a specific number of events or for a specific period of time or may be a lifetime disqualification.
4. Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director.

1. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:

i.) This tournament is open only to current members of both BASS and ABA who possess a valid fishing license for tournament waters, qualified from their respective divisions and accepted the invitation to attend. Any candidate for competition who, in the judgment of the tournament director, is disabled in such a manner as to unfairly hinder their partner or endanger the safety and well-being of their partner or them self shall not be eligible. Excluded participation; – Professional anglers who have fished two or more tournaments with an entry fee of \$1250 or more in the previous six months.

ii.) During the official practice and competition days of any Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Weekend Series operated by American Bass Anglers tournament, no competitor may operate a boat unless that contestant has documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 per occurrence boating liability insurance (see Participant Release of Liability on the Official Entry Form) covering the boat being used in the tournament. Proof of insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover the competitors using that boat. Random checks will be conducted and any competitor who does not have proof of in-force insurance with \$300,000 coverage may be disqualified.

iii.) A properly completed and signed official entry form must be received by the ABA tournament department prior to the official entry deadline. The tournament director reserves the right to discontinue acceptance of applications prior to the official registration deadline. **THE ENTRY DEADLINE DATE FOR THIS TOURNAMENT SHALL BE 5:00 PM Central time zone MONDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2008.** Late fee of \$25 will be charged for registrations after the deadline date. **EXCEPTION**, anglers notified from the stand-by list will be required to register as soon as possible after being notified they have earned a slot in the regional event.

iv.) The preferred method for tournament registration is on-line at www.americanbassanglers.com

2. 2008 ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT

Anglers participating in any ABA sanctioned event shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the specific event in which he/she is participating. Anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves

in a manner becoming professional anglers that will not reflect unfavorably on BASS, ABA, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors.

To this end, anglers shall use their best efforts to demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler who violates any of the provisions of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to fines, forfeiture of tournament winnings, suspension from competing in individual ABA sanctioned events, permanent ban from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by ABA .

MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS

The favorable public reputation of BASS and ABA as a sanctioning organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets *and tangible benefits for BASS and ABA*. Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers or the BASS and ABA organization. Competitors are encouraged to express themselves and have the right to question the rules officials. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with BASS and ABA policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of BASS and ABA , ABA officials or sponsor shall be considered conduct unbecoming a professional and will result in disciplinary action.

3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION: The official practice days for this event will be safe daylight, Thursday, 16 October 2008 until dusk and Friday, 17 October 2008 from safe daylight until 3:00pm. Beginning at safe daylight October 16, 2008, continuing through the final weigh-in of the Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Weekend Series operated by American Bass Anglers Regional Championship, October 19, 2008, other than using publicly-available information (e.g. newspaper and Internet reports) contestants cannot solicit, receive, or gather any information via phone, electronic communication devices (to include GPS Units or Chips) or any other means about locating or catching fish on Championship waters unless that information comes from another contestant in the 2008 Midwest Regional Championship. **NO EXCEPTIONS.** During official practice an angler may practice alone, with a family member, another registered competitor, or a member of the ABA staff. Once the competition begins, contestants are expected to compete every day for which they are qualified. Failure to do so may result in ineligibility to compete in future ABA tournaments.

i.) During competition a competitor can only have the assistance or advice of another competitor for the purposes of locating or catching bass on tournament waters.

ii.) Testing of engines after the weigh-in is only allowed with permission from the tournament director and all rods/reels must be stowed away in rod lockers while testing. No Exceptions. During the official practice and during the tournament, a competitor may not "SKIN DIVE" OR "SCUBA DIVE" in the tournament waters.

iii.) Competitor may not buy or barter a fishing location from any other competitor for use during any competition day.

iv.) 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 telephone only in the event of an emergency. If so

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equipped, competitors may listen to the marine-band weather information.

v.) A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during competition. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.

vi.) Each competitor agrees to report to the tournament director any violation or infraction of any Tournament Rules. Failure to report violations, or suggestions to another competitor that they violate these Rules, or false verification of weigh-in forms will be cause for disqualification.

By his/her signature on the official tournament entry form, each competitor agrees to submit to a polygraph examination/truth verification method or any other type examination as determined by ABA, and abide by its conclusion should he/she be accused of any rule violation. The ABA tournament director or rules committee, or such person designated by the tournament director shall have the discretion to determine the need for a polygraph/truth verification method examination. The ABA tournament director or his/her designee shall be responsible for selecting an independent expert to administer and interpret the results and establishing, in consultation with the expert administrator, the scope of the questions which may be asked during the polygraph/truth verification method examination. The ABA tournament director or his/her designee shall attempt to have the location of such polygraph/truth verification method examination as close in proximity to the angler's permanent address or such other mutually convenient as possible. The competitor shall make himself/herself available at the location selected by the tournament director and shall cooperate in all respects with such examination. Anglers taking a polygraph/truth verification method examination may be responsible for any and all cost incurred.

4. REGISTRATION AT EVENT: Each competitor must register in person with official ABA staff at the Ken-Bar Lodge, 7711 U.S. Highway 641 North, Gilbertsville, KY 42044. The use of the ABA Bass Pass is not allowed for the regional or national championship tournaments. Anglers must personally check-in. ON-SITE REGISTRATION is Friday, October 17, 2008 between the hours of 3:00 pm – 5:00 pm (local time). MANDATORY TOURNAMENT BRIEFING to include; rules, safety briefing and partner pairing will be Friday, October 17, 2008 beginning at is 6:00 pm (local time) at the Ken-Bar Lodge. Contestants are not allowed to practice on the water after the closing of on-site registration.

5. SAFETY:

i.) Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by competitors. During the official practice and competition, each competitor must wear a US Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver. This preserver must be worn at all times the combustion engine is in gear. This preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine no longer in gear. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification.

ii.) 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.

iii.) ABA reserves the right to impose boat speed limits during 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.

iv.) IN THE EVENT OF AN EMERGENCY SITUATION, COMPETITORS SHOULD CALL 911 FIRST AND THEN NOTIFY TOURNAMENT OFFICIALS.

v.) COMPETITORS 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.

6. SPORTSMANSHIP: Competitors in ABA 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.

i.) Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the official practice or during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future ABA tournaments. No alcoholic beverages other stimulants or depressants or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, or in the weigh-in area.

ii.) 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.

iii.) All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish.

iv.) 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/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the tournament director. Any disqualification suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in a ABA tournament and/or disqualification from an ABA tournament after circumstances are reviewed by the tournament director.

7. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited. Only artificial and biodegradable lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted during official practice and competition, with the exception of pork strips or rinds. 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. 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 visible fish will have their catch disqualified. When visually fishing a bed or for bedding bass to be counted as a legal fish, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked.

8. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: Maximum horsepower for all outboard motorboats used in official tournament practice and in tournament competition will be 250 HP. Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard or the manufacture rating plate. 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 plate nor the horsepower maximum set by ABA. Each competitor agrees to submit, by their signature on the official entry form, the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament, to an

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inspection by factory-trained personnel, if there is any reason to suspect the horsepower is in excess of the rating. Normal maintenance of engines is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of a competitor's engine 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 engine is also cause for immediate disqualification from ABA tournaments. Posted speed limits must be observed and all boats must be operated in a safe manner.

9. BOAT AND MOTOR: For the safety of all competitors, during competition all boats must be equipped with an approved type of operable ignition kill switch and lanyard. Only one manufactured lanyard may be used and must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Any time 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 that are less than 16 feet in length may not be used. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnels of the boat. Fishing while standing on the outboard motor or boat seats is not allowed. An 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 permitted. 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 portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor. No "barges" or similar craft will be permitted. No boat equipped with "Stick Steering" shall be permitted to be used during official practice or during the tournament by any competitor. "Stick steering" shall be as defined by the tournament director.

10. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: During competition every boat must have all required US Coast Guard safety equipment as well as a functional bilge pump. During competition every boat must have live well space, properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive a limit catch of bass by both competitors using the boat. ABA recommends live-wells are maintained at full level and aerators/recirculators on manual. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is proper and adequate. Boaters must make a back seat available for co-anglers each competition day.

11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Prior to each day's start, each boat must be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Each day, each boat will be given a number, which must remain with the boat until turned in each day at the check-in. This number must be displayed upon the request of tournament officials, and turned in to the officials at each check-in.

12. BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE: In boater/co-angler type events, boaters will fish from the front deck, co-anglers from the rear deck, no exceptions. Co-anglers are only allowed to drive the boat in emergency situations in competition with the exception of loading and unloading from trailers. Any boater, who, in the judgment of the officials, operates the boat in such a manner as to unfairly handicap their co-angler partner shall be disqualified. At no time may a boater competitor request that the co-angler competitor not fish. In view of the large expense involved in operating and maintaining a tournament bass boat, it is suggested that the co-angler partner share, at minimum, the cost of gas and oil for the competition day. In ABA events where an observer replaces a non boater as an official rider, the observer cannot assist the boater in any way. Observers are not required to pay for gas and oil expenses.

13. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Kentucky/Barkley Lakes and the tributaries are the official tournament waters for this event. Locking will not be allowed. Any water within these 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. 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.

14. COMPETITORS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT: During competition days, competitors 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 hours. Competitors must leave from and return to official checkpoints by boat. Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times except in case of dire emergency or with permission from the tournament director. In such an emergency or with the permission from the tournament director competitors may be removed from their boat to either a boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat designated by the tournament director. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch, except as cited above, in order for their catch of that day to be scored in the tournament. If after the emergency situation is resolved by 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 as determined by the tournament director or his/her designee. Towing boats on trailers during tournament hours is prohibited, except by the direction of tournament officials. In the event of a needed restroom break, contestants are allowed to leave the boat upon which time all fishing must cease until partners are back together in the boat.

15. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be only one official point for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon, these points shall be designated at the tournament briefing. At the time of check-out, all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformity with all rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in, all boats shall identify themselves by means of the numbers described in Rule 11 and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners must stay together through the weigh-in process if both are weighing bass. Once bass are bagged for weigh-in, anglers that are not weighing bass do not need to accompany their partner through the weigh-in process.

16. SCORING: Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound-and-hundredths weight of each competitor's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted, Redeye, or Shoal bass will be weighed. The limit for boaters shall be 5 fish and 3 fish for co-anglers of the above species and varieties per day, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials. At no time shall a competitor have in their possession more than the tournament limit. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a competitor has in his/her possession more than the above-described limits, tournament officials shall cull down to the limit described, beginning with the largest bass. Minimum length for this event is 15 inches measured on a flat board. 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. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the official length, shall result in a penalty of 1 pound for each such bass, which 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 tournament officials. After competitors check in at the official checkpoint they must present all legal fish in

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their possession to a tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a competitor's catch is measured, counted and verified by a tournament official, that competitor may not return to the boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Bass must not be placed on a stringer at any time during the tournament. Culling tags or clips are allowed. Specially designed bags which increase survival rate will be furnished by the tournament director and must be used for the weigh-in.

17. CATCH AND RELEASE: CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. A penalty of 1 pound will be deducted from the total weight for each short fish and a penalty of 4 ounces (.25 pounds) will be deducted from the total weight for each dead fish. In the event the anglers' big fish is dead a penalty of 4 ounces (.25 pounds) will be deducted from the big fish total weight. The Tournament Director or his/her designees shall have sole authority for assessing penalty weight. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water; however they are not allowed to receive ice from non contestants. Upon mutual consent of both boater and co-angler paired together for fish care concerns, the verification table will be open one hour prior to check in time of the first flight.

18. LATE PENALTY: Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 15 at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late to be deducted from the total weight of their catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "big bass award". No points are awarded if the net weight after penalties is zero or less. 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. After the tournament begins, fishing the tournament waters is prohibited except 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. AWARDS QUALIFICATIONS:

i.) Final place of finish will be based on the total accumulated weight an angler weighs during the competition days they were eligible to fish.

ii.) All anglers will fish the both days of competition. At the conclusion of day two weigh-in, the top twenty (20) percent of boaters and the top twenty (20) percent of co-anglers will earn an invitation to the Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Weekend Series operated by American Bass Anglers National Championship on Lake Norman, North Carolina.

20. TIEBREAKERS:

i.) Ties will be broken using the following criteria:

- largest number of legal fished weighed during the tournament
- largest number of legal live fish weighed during the tournament

If the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, place monies will be split evenly. Merchandise prizes will be awarded as determined by tournament officials. Standings will reflect ties starting at place closest to first.

ii.) A fish-off may be implemented if there is a tie for first place.

21. PAIRING OF COMPETITORS : Pairing of competitors will be by random computer draw. Two competitors (one boater and one co-angler) will be assigned to each boat. Announcement of your first-day fishing partner shall be made at the tournament briefing, which must be attended by each competitor. It shall be the responsibility of each partner to appear at a mutually agreed upon location with sufficient time remaining to check-out at the official checkpoint and start on time. Tournament officials shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. The tournament director, at his/her sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to the morning take-off. It is suggested that a minimum of 30 minutes is required for preparation to depart to the check-out point. When two competitors check-out 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 14 & 15). A competitor must not allow any bass caught by him/her to be counted on the score of another competitor. In such a case, both competitors shall be disqualified from this tournament and from all future tournaments conducted by ABA. Partner pairing for day two will be announced and posted at the weigh-in location for the second day of competition. At the conclusion of day two weigh-in, the top twenty (20) percent of boaters and the top twenty (20) percent of co-anglers will be required to attend a separate meeting to complete national championship registration.

22. CONTINGENCY PROGRAMS: These are sponsor based programs developed to reward competitors based on predefined set of criteria. Participation in Contingency programs is at the anglers' discretion. Should an angler elect not to participate in an ABA contingency program, the angler will be excluded from any benefits such as prize purse or qualification for supplemental tournament competitions associated with the respective contingency program

23. BASS and ABA Member Shield Logo. ABA encourages (not mandatory) the wearing of the BASS and ABA Member Shield and Bassmaster Weekend Series logo. Suggested placement for the BASS Member shield is on the right chest, the top of the patch should hit top center of the right collarbone. The suggested placement for ABA logo is centered on the left chest, the top of the patch should hit top center of the left collarbone. Patches can be ordered by contacting BASS and ABA Member services.

24. PATCHES AND/OR SIGNAGE: ABA encourages the use of patches, logos and other signage to promote the angler's sponsors. ABA may, however, restrict the use of patches, logos, signage, etc. that promote or advertise products which are in competition with the products or services of official ABA sponsors or which are, in ABA's sole judgment, in poor taste. In addition, if ABA provides any ancillary clothing or products (such as life vests) bearing the logos of ABA or the official sponsors of ABA, each competitor shall wear such clothing or utilize such products in a manner requested by ABA.

25. TAXES: Where and when state laws require income taxes be paid on cash awards to non-residents, the taxes will be automatically deducted prior to the awards being presented to the winners. Anglers are responsible for all applicable taxes and rules on both cash and merchandise awards.

26. WAIVER AND RELEASE: As a condition of participation in each tournament, each competitor must execute a waiver and release of liability and a name and likeness release.