

Greater Chicago Bassmasters Tournament Rules **Amended: 1/2/2015)**

The following rules will be used for the six regular season tournaments and the Classic. The Board, President, and/or the designated Tournament Director will interpret the rules.

Participation in any Greater Chicago Bassmasters (further known as GCB) event is at the sole risk of the participant. The Board, all officers, members, and sponsors are held free of any liability for any injuries, damage to property, any thefts, or losses while participating in, traveling to, traveling from, and staying at a club event.

PARTICIPANT'S ELIGIBILITY: All participants must be 21 years of age, unless the Board would vote to make an exception, a current member of GCB, a paid up member, and a member in good standing. All members must be current members of Bass Anglers Sportsmen Society (further known as BASS). A BASS ID number must be provided when applying for or renewing membership in the club. Good standing is determined by the Board. At the discretion of the Board, a guest(s) may be invited to complete a team. The guests(s) must pay the full tournament fees and are eligible to win any cash awards. This would only be used to allow a member(s) a chance to fish in a tournament and to complete a team. A guest boater must have and prove the minimum requirement of insurance for BASS. The Board will select and/or approve the guest(s).

PARTICIPATION: There are two, primary, over-riding goals of this club. The first is to fish. This second is to have fun in a safe manner. Interpretation of these rules will have these two goals in mind. The single best way to achieve these goals is to make participation paramount. GCB is looking for members that can fish four of six tournaments and make five of six meetings at a minimum. It is expected that members will fish all tournaments and make all meetings. Participation insures that the maximum number of members can fish and have fun at each tournament. The Board will do its best to make sure that no member gets left behind.

INTENT: It is the intent of the GCB with these rules that conflict be minimized so that all can fish and have fun in a safe manner.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS (known as Board): The Board is made up of the President, Treasurer, Tournament Director, Webmaster, and Conservation/Youth Director. Actual roles will depend on member's strengths in any given year.

SPECIES & LIMITS: All black bass species including largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass will be counted. Total stringer weight will determine place. To be counted, a bass must be 14 inches long or longer, which is subject to change depending on particular lake size limitations. Any bass not meeting this requirement will be removed with no penalty. Members are expected to comply with DNR and local limit restrictions. Only a legal limit of five bass may be weighed in per contestant, depending on particular lake number limitations. The GCB bump board and scale is the official gauge of

measure. In the event this board or scale is not available, the official bump board and scale will be that supplied by and/or approved by the Tournament Director. Weight and measurement decisions are final and not subject to protest. Each contestant is expected to take the utmost care of his fish to insure that living fish will be returned to the tournament water.

BOATERS: All boaters must provide a certificate of boat insurance to the Tournament Director before being eligible to enter or fish a tournament. A Certificate of Insurance will be provided by the boater and stand-by boater when applying to the club. Certificates of Insurance will be held on file during the season, on behalf of the Tournament Director, by the Treasurer. If policies expire mid season, it is the responsibility of the boater or stand-by boater to submit an updated and current policy. The limits of insurance must meet or exceed the limits required by BASS and the Illinois BASS Nation (further known as IBN). Stand-by and guest boaters must meet the same requirements as member boaters. Tournaments are usually held on large bodies of water. Due to the time of year of some tournaments, varying weather conditions, and varying boating skills; it is impossible for GCB to fully understand what is “safe” for every member. While GCB will do its best to avoid, move, or cancel a tournament due to conditions; the boater is ultimately responsible for the safety of himself and his non-boater. GCB, it’s Board, and any other member is not responsible for losses as a result of participating in a GCB event. Should an event take place and a boater not feel comfortable with the conditions, it is that boater’s responsibility to drop out. Boaters must know their limitations. If a boater does decide to drop out, each teammate will get Place Points under the “less six” rule.

TOURNAMENT FEES: Fees are \$60 per man per tournament, which includes the Big Bass pay out, but does not include the optional Lunker Pool pay in.

CLASSIC TOURNAMENT FEES: Classic Fees are \$100 per man, which includes the Big Bass payout, but does not include the optional Lunker Pool pay in. Classic payouts are in the same percentages as regular season tournaments. Additional monies will be added from raffle proceeds, \$150 per tournament roll over, and other activities as where possible, with Board approval. A contestant must QUALIFY to enter the Classic.

TOP TEAM AWARDS: The heaviest combined total weight of both team members determines the winners (winners also known as those that place). Awards are an engraved plate for plaques and are awarded to both members of the team.

NINE TEAMS OR MORE: First through Fourth Place members win a plate

EIGHT TEAMS OR LESS: First through Third Place members win a plate

TOP TEAM PAYOUTS: The heaviest combined total weight of both team members determines the winners. All remaining monies will be paid out after each tournament after the Big Bass payout, \$150 Classic roll over, and other expenses, such award plaques and plates. Payouts are won as a team and split between the team members.

NINE TEAMS OR MORE: First Place is 50%

Second Place is 30%

Third Place is 20%

EIGHT TEAMS OR LESS: First Place is 60%
Second Place is 40%

BIG BASS PAYOUT: The largest bass of each day for each official tournament pays \$25, whether caught by a boater or non-boater. “Big Bass” will be added to plates for those that place. Note that the Lunker Pool is a separate optional program collected and paid out of a separate fund.

TIES: Ties are settled on (1) the most legal fish caught and (2) the largest single fish, and (3) the next largest single fish on down the line until the tie is broken. Reference the “Dead Fish Penalty” for details on largest single fish. See also “Determination of Winners.”

LUNKER POOL: The Lunker Pool is an optional \$10 per tournament per man pay in. This pool is paid out for the first 5.0 pound plus bass weighed in and then resets. If no such bass is weighed in after the Classic, the pool is paid out for the largest bass of the year after the Classic. The Lunker Pool includes the Classic. In the event of a tie, the pool will be split. A plate will be awarded.

CLASSIC TOURNAMENT: The Classic is the Superbowl of the GCB. It is our Bassmaster Classic. It is the seventh official tournament of the year, but is not considered a regular season tournament. The Classic is a buddy tournament of members only, where boaters ask non-boaters to be teammates. All standard rules apply to this tournament. At the end of the regular season, all remaining money in the general club account, which includes the \$150 per regular season tournament roll over and Raffle profits, less end of year expenses and start up fees for the next year (also called hold back), are added to the Classic Fund. To be eligible, or QUALIFY, for the Classic, a contestant must have (1) paid his yearly dues, (2) be in good standing, and (3) fished at least four of six regular season tournaments. Buy-ins may be allowed by the Board giving priority to (a) make sure a qualifying member has a boater or non-boater to complete a team, (b) those that have fished three regular season tournaments, and (c) case-by-case situations. Buy-ins mean that a Classic contestant must pay for a tournament(s) that they missed if less than four regular season tournaments were attended by that contestant. An example of a Board-approved buy-in would be a member who expected to make all six regular season tournaments, but had a baby, funeral, or other personal crisis that prevented such member from making four of six tournaments. Classic results are not counted in the Angler of the Year Scoring (further known as AOY Scoring).

REPORTING IN: If you blank or skunk out, you will still receive Place Points, provided that you personally report in at the weigh in. It is each member’s responsibility to report your catch or lack thereof to the Tournament Director, Tournament Statistician, or Board Member. Your team member may not register your information. Leaving a tournament without registering or reporting in is cause for disqualification or other penalties. This is for safety reasons, so that GCB knows that you made it back safely. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Tournament Director and/or President. Breakdowns are the only likely

cause for exception provided that one team member is in contact with the Tournament Director, Tournament Statistician, or Board Member by the end of the weigh in or within a reasonable time after the weigh in. At a minimum on larger bodies of water, a Marine Radio is strongly recommended for when cell service is not available. It is highly recommended that all members carry their cell phones and have a directory of phone numbers programmed in for safety reasons. When on the water or driving, contact a Board Member or other participant of an emergency or breakdown sooner rather than later.

ANGLER OF THE YEAR/TOP GUN POINT SYSTEM (AOY Scoring): Individual standings are maintained during the regular tournament season. Points will be kept on an individual basis to determine the member's placement within the club membership. Points are awarded on a monthly basis from April through September, which include (1) Meeting Points, (2) Place Points, (3) Weight Points, and (4) Big Bass Two Point Bonus. Deductions from this total will be for one dropped meeting and two dropped tournaments beginning after the fifth regular season tournament. This amounts to making five of six monthly meetings and making four of six regular season tournaments. The Board feels that this is a fair balance between participation and real life. Those that fish all six regular season tournaments will simply have better odds of becoming Angler of the Year or Top Gun.

ANGLER OF THE YEAR: The Angler of the Year (further known as AOY) is the top point winner for the regular season after drops. This could be a boater or non-boater.

TOP GUN: This is the top point winner for the regular season after drops in the boater/non-boater category which is opposite of the AOY.

MEETING POINTS: Ten meeting points are awarded for every regular season meeting from April through September. Five of six meetings are counted in the AOY Scoring, which means that you are allowed to miss one meeting in a season without losing AOY Scoring ground.

PLACE POINTS: Place points are an individual rank after each tournament based on individual weight of bass after all other factors are considered. First individual place receives 100 points, and each place thereafter receives three less points up until those that do not weigh in a fish (also known as a "skunk"). Those that participate in the tournament but do not weigh in a fish will receive six less points than the last person that weighed in a legal fish. The "six less" scoring rule gives those that participate in a tournament a significant advantage over those that do not make a particular tournament.

WEIGHT POINTS: Weight points are awarded for each pound of bass caught, less any dead fish penalties. These points are given on a pound-for-point basis and are rounded to hundredths of a pound. If the only scale available gives weight in ounces, ounces will be converted to hundredths of a pound.

BIG BASS TWO POINT BONUS: Two points will be awarded to the single biggest bass of a tournament in AOY Scoring. There will only be two points awarded per tournament whether a one day or two day event.

SCORING EXAMPLE: After making the tournament meeting, Milt catches 32.48 pounds of bass over a two day tournament and ends up in third place by individual standings. Third place gives him 94 Place Points plus his 32.48 Weight Points plus 10 meeting points, which gives him 136.48 total tournament points.

SCORING JUSTIFICATION: This type of scoring effectively balances participation with performance with head-to-head competition on a given lake on a given day. Drops, either meeting or tournament dropped points, allow for a buffer for family, work, or other personal reasons, which give all members the best chance to be AOY or Top Gun. In short, this scoring system keeps it interesting for the maximum number of members.

BUDDY TOURNAMENTS: These tournaments have no point value as they are just for fun. They are, however, a great way for members to fish, have fun, learn, and teach.

PARTICIPATION NOTIFICATION: **It is assumed that all members will fish every monthly tournament and make all monthly meetings.** If you cannot attend the monthly, pre-tournament meeting, you are expected, out of courtesy for your team member and club, to notify a Board member at least 48 hours in advance of the meeting. It is also expected that you will pay your tournament entrance fees in advance of the meeting to guarantee that you will be included in the tournament draw and tournament. Payment in advance means that the Treasurer has received your fees prior to the meeting, assuming that you cannot make the meeting but can make the tournament. This allows the Tournament Director and Board time to make adjustments to insure that all members that want to fish an event can. If the numbers work out that a particular tournament has an extra person, the person that expects to pay at the tournament launch will be the person that cannot fish. Let it be known that payment at the launch is unacceptable and is allowed only with the permission of the Tournament Director and/or President under unique circumstances primarily to make sure that all can participate. If the Tournament Director and the applicable boater deems it safe, that boater may be allowed to fish alone if there is an extra boater or stand-by boater. Boaters cannot fish alone without Tournament Director approval.

DROPPED TOURNAMENTS: Your best four of six regular season tournaments are totaled for the AOY/Top Gun scoring. Drops are calculated after the fifth and sixth monthly tournament. You are allowed to miss two tournaments. This gives those that fish all six regular season tournaments a chance to throw out their worst two events. It also gives any member that has a wedding, funeral, or other significant life event, a chance to miss a tournament and not be out of the running. However, each member is still expected to fish every tournament to keep the club participation high. For the purposes of AOY Scoring, dropped tournaments means dropped Place Points and Weight Points for each dropped tournament.

IBN 6-MAN/STATE QUALIFIER TEAM: The club provides a 6-Man team to compete in the IBN 6-Man State Qualifier (State Championship Tournament). The top three boaters and top three non-boaters from the previous year's rank are the first to be selected by the Board. If any boater or non-boater cannot make it, the Board will continue down the scoring ranks in each category until a full team is reached. This is why GCB has the Pro-Am format. It insures that non-boaters get an equal opportunity to fish in this prestigious event. In short, non-boaters are equal members to boaters in this club. The IBFN does allow two teams per club, provided the club meets certain requirements. If there is enough interest, GCB will field a second team, so long as the first team is not penalized. The first team is allowed to draw from the second team at the last minute, if necessary, to field a full team.

DRAWING OF PARTNERS: Boaters and non-boaters will be selected by a drawing to determine a team at the meeting preceding the tournament. No member may fish with a boater more than one time in a regular single season without Tournament Director approval. If the drawing pairs up a non-boater that has already fished with the captain, a new name will be drawn and the non-boater's name will be redrawn again. If a non-boater gets bumped due to lack of available boats, he cannot be bumped again until every other non-boater has been bumped. If bumped, this miss will not be considered a missed tournament. He will receive Place Points "less six" for the event of a regular season tournament. The club will make every effort to prevent this from happening. If there are more boaters than non-boaters, the remaining boaters are allowed to decide if they will fish as a team or individually after Tournament Director approval. Special consideration toward safety will be a prime factor in this decision.

BOATER/NON-BOATER STATUS: If a boater's boat breaks down and he needs to fish as a non-boater, or a stand-by non-boater should be needed to use their boat in a tournament, their stats and any win places remain in the category declared at the beginning of the season. Any exceptions or changes to boater/non-boater position would be at the discretion of the Board.

TOURNAMENT STARTS: A drawing is held at the meeting for the order in which boats are to leave from the starting point. Members will be given paper plates with the tournament information and their starting spot. This is to be held up, and everyone is expected to line up in that order. The designated starter will supervise and inspect the live wells if the Tournament Director deems it necessary. Boats will pull up along side the starter boat before being let go for the start. GCB does not allow shot gun starts. To that end, the following rules will be followed:

1. There will be at least a ten second separation between boats,
2. All boats must idle at least 25 yards past the starter boat before taking off, and
3. A tournament will not start until safe light (determined by the Tournament Director).

OFFICIAL TIME: The Tournament Director has the official time and will synchronize that time with the Board. It is the participant's responsibility to confirm the official time by checking with any member of the Board.

DETERMINATION OF WINNERS: The heaviest combined catch of team members determines placement of winners. In case of a tie, the team with the most fish breaks the tie. If a tie remains, then the team with the largest bass breaks the tie, provided that the largest bass falls within the "dead fish penalty" clause. If a tie still remains, then the team with the second largest fish breaks the tie, and so on. See also "Ties."

SEPARATION OF CATCH: Each contestant must keep their catches separated or tagged for identification as we keep individual statistics for each member. If one member has a limit, he must not give a keeper fish to his partner to be weighed in. Contestants are expected to check in at the tournament table prior to the weigh in to report fish caught and fish to be weighed. These fish must be reported to the Tournament Statistician to insure your Place Points. If you don't check in or leave early, you will not get credit for your tournament attendance points. Showing up to the weigh in is the best way to cheer for the winners and show your good sportsmanship to your fellow members.

LATE PENALTY: Late is late. If you arrive after the official tournament end time, you and your partner are disqualified. Anglers are responsible for seeking out a tournament committee member and getting the official tournament time. Enforcement of this rule is at the discretion of the Tournament Director, or in his absence, the President.

BREAKDOWN RULES: Contestants must leave and return to the official check point by boat. In the event of combustible engine failure, there shall be two permitted methods of returning to the check in and weighing fish.

1. By both team members remaining in their boat and being towed in.
2. By one partner entering the boat of another GCB member or Samaritan along with their day's catch. Teams and individuals of each team must keep fish separate.

Any team that has a breakdown will be given one additional hour to reach the weigh in site. In order to receive the additional hour, the team must immediately contact the Tournament Director or Board Member and inform him of the details of the breakdown and location. A broken down team must not fish after the end of the official tournament ending time if still in the water. Any team that assists another member WILL NOT be assessed any penalty regardless of the hour time frame and will be allowed to weigh in their catch. The assisting team does not have to check in at the weigh in site before helping the broken down team. They must notify the Tournament Director or Board member first. Voicemail with time is considered notification.

DEAD FISH PENALTY: Dead fish may be counted in the standings. There is a one pound per dead fish penalty for each dead fish brought to the scales. The Tournament Director has the final say if a fish receives the penalty. For purposes of Big Bass, Lunker Pool, and/or tournament weight, this one pound penalty applies to the fish that is dead. At the time of weigh in, any fish brought to the weigh in and found to be mutilated in any

manner will only be counted at the discretion of the Tournament Director. Mutilated fish could be prop-cut fish, snagged fish, etc.

SAFETY: Safe boating and fishing practices must be observed at all times. All boats must have the appropriate Coast Guard-approved safety devices. A Kill Switch is mandatory and must be attached to the operator's life jacket while the boat is in gear. Contestants are required to wear properly fastened Coast Guard-approved life jackets at all times when the boat is under main engine power. All boat motors must not exceed the B.I.A. Plate Rating. See "Reporting In" for additional safety requirements and recommendations.

SPORTSMANSHIP: Contestants are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principals will be deemed cause for disqualification or other penalties. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially to boating and angling in the vicinity of either contestants or non-contestants who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a contestant which reflects unfavorably upon GCB or the effort to promote fisheries, conservation, clean waters, and the sport of bass fishing shall be reason for disqualification or other penalties.

DRUG AND ALCOHOL POLICY (GCB has adopted the same policy as BASS, our insurer): Competitors in BASS 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 BASS [and GCB] tournaments. No alcoholic beverages or other stimulants or depressants, prescription or otherwise, shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days.** (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.

TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: Only artificial baits and lures may be used. No live bait or prepared bait may be used other than pork-type baits. Berkley Gulp baits are allowed. Trolling is not permitted. Only one rod may be used at one time. All bass must be caught on rod and reel. A landing net may be used to land fish caught with a rod and reel. All bass must be caught and landed from the boat. Boats may not be trailered during the tournament hours. Participants must not leave the boat to catch and/or land a fish. Exceptions may be allowed by the Tournament Director or the Board.

MINIMUM BOAT REQUIREMENTS: Boats must be at least 16 feet in length, have a minimum of a 25 horsepower main engine, have a front and rear casting deck, have a trolling motor, have an aerated live well, have a kill switch, have legal lighting, and have

all Coast Guard-required safety equipment. All boats must be approved by the Tournament Director for “boater” classification.

BOAT IDENTIFICATION: Each boat must be given an inspection check by a tournament official prior to the tournament start. Each boat will draw a starting number at the meeting prior to the tournament. For two day tournaments, take off order will be reversed on the second day.

BOAT OPERATION: GCB uses a Pro-Am format, where the boaters are competing against boaters and the non-boaters are competing against non-boaters for the AOY/Top Gun Award and the IBN 6-Man State Qualifier team. The teams are encouraged to work out a mutually agreed-to game plan. If a tournament plan cannot be agreed upon, the captain has the final decision in any game plan. Non-boaters need to be prepared to split the gas expenses for any long runs, whether they agree with the plan or not (see “Expense Sharing”). Any boater operating the boat in a manner to limit the ability of the non-boater to fish will be penalized, subject to an investigation by the Tournament Director. It is strongly suggested to work out a plan ahead of time to avoid any disagreements.

BOAT CONTROL: The non-boater does NOT have “rights” to operate someone else’s rig. Any non-boater who is given the control of the boat accepts financial responsibility to any damage incurred while they are in control. If a non-boater has any hesitation about this responsibility, it is suggested that he not take control of the boat or tow vehicle. This includes main motor operation, trolling motor operation, and tow vehicle operation. The non-boater must advise the boater ahead of time that he does not feel comfortable backing a boat into the water or other possible operation.

EXPENSE SHARING: For safety purposes, the non-boater is expected to meet and ride shot gun with his boater teammate to and from the tournament. Driving back from a tournament alone and tired can be very dangerous. The non-boater is expected to share 50% of all expenses incurred on the trip such as boat gas, tow vehicle gas, boat oil, launch fees, hotel fees, tolls, etc. Teammates may agree to a different arrangement in advance, as long as it is clearly understood in advance. **If you are not prepared to pay your share, you are not prepared to fish tournaments!** Violation of this rule, upon formal complaint to the Tournament Director, is grounds for dismissal from the club or other penalties.

PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS AND TIMES: Tournament times are determined by the Tournament Director and are the responsibility of each member to know. Fishing is permitted anywhere within the tournament lakes that are accessible to all contestants during tournament hours, except that no contestant is allowed within 25 yards of (a) the launch ramp, or (b) another contestant’s boat. Boats must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. The Tournament Director may have additional requirements for off limits, which are the responsibility of the boater and team to know and abide. Failure to observe a No-Wake area will be considered grounds for disqualification or other penalty. Teams are responsible to know and must follow all state and local laws, whether the Tournament Director clarified such rules or not.

PENALTIES: Penalties for infractions or sheer disregard for the rules can include expulsion from the club, disqualification from a day of a tournament or the entire event (if a two day event), loss of Place Points, loss of Weight Points, loss of Meeting Points, any combination of the above, or other option decided upon by the Board. Scoring programs may limit the number of options open to the Board. Penalties can occur as a result of an official protest by a member, but may also be invoked by the Board. The Board will do its best to have the penalty fit the offense, but will err on the stricter penalty provided the two primary goals of the club are considered.

PROTESTS: Any contestant wishing to protest the conduct or rule violation of a fellow contestant must do so by notifying the Tournament Director, President, or Board member within 24 hours of the official end of a tournament. The Tournament Director and President will investigate the member(s) alleged misconduct. They will take action appropriate for the circumstances. The Tournament Director, or in his absence, the President, has the final word in any tournament-related dispute. The Board has the final word in all other protests.

CANCELLATIONS AND CHANGES: Any major change in dates or locations will be made by the Board. Changes will be posted on the GCB message board and it is the responsibility of all members to check the website message board frequently for changes or announcements that may affect a tournament.

FINAL WORD: The final word on all rules is given by the Board. The Board will listen to all concerns and vote in the best interest of the club. All decisions are final and will be accepted by club members. The votes of the Board will be in the best interest of the two primary goals of the club, which are that all members fish and have fun in a safe manner.