

2023 BIG FISH EVENTS

CHECK EACH EVENT FACTS SHEET FOR SPECIFIC DETAILS

OVERALL Top 3 big bass winners must be present at close of final session



Section 1: Rules, Regulations and Agreements

- 1.1. Official Rules ("Rules") of any Bass Pro Shops/Cabela's North American Bass Challenge (NABC) Big Fish Event ("Event"). Participant(s) agree and acknowledge that they have read, understand, and willingly agree to abide and comply with all Rules and Safety regulations herein and as posted on our official website and linked to your registration confirmation upon entry. Interpretation and enforcement of all Rules shall be left to the sole and exclusive discretion of the Event Director and/or their designee and are not subject to appeal. In the event a Participant(s) violates any rule whether contained herein or not, the Event Director may impose penalties on a Participant as they deem necessary (including but not limited to any other participant competing from the same boat). Such penalties may include but not limited to; A reduction of competition hours, loss of one or more fish, loss of catch for a session, the day, or the Event, disqualification from the Event, qualification from future events, a specific number of events, a specific time period, or a lifetime, loss of Entry Fee, forfeiture of winnings/ prizes; and any other penalty determined/assessed by the Event Director.
- 1.2. Participants willingly assume all risks associated with participating in any NABC Big Fish Event.
- 1.3. All local, State & Federal regulations / laws shall apply at all times including, all boating/fishing regulations, including off-limits times or area's (listed herein or not) which also shall apply at all times.
- 1.4. In the event of a discrepancy between any past printed version and the official digital version of the Rules, the Rules posted on the official website and on each specific event fact sheet at the time of the Event shall prevail. Participants agree to abide by all Rules and any decisions by Event Director which are final.
- 1.5. Participants agree to immediately report to the Event Director any violations, suggestions to violate or any infraction of the Rules. Failure to immediately report these issues or any rules violations, or false verification of documents, may be cause for disqualification.

1.6. You CANNOT weigh-in a fish in any session without proof of paid entry for that day AND a photo ID that matches proof of entry, bring these items with you to the weigh in line.

1.7. The following items (minimum) will be randomly checked at each weigh-in session. Violation of any rules or safety items will be cause for disqualification: Fishing License - # of fish in possession - Kill Switch - Alcoholic Beverages - Horsepower Rating - Life Jackets – Engine Cutoff Device (Kill Switch).

Section 2: Participation and Eligibility

- 2.1. Each person in the boat must be a paid Participant of the Event and must read and abide by the official Rules. One (1), Two (2) or a Maximum Three (3) anglers per boat. (NOT to exceed rated capacity) No one other than paid Participant or officials are permitted in a competitor's boat during tournament hours. All bass caught by contestants fishing together can be disqualified if any of the said contestants are found to be in violation of any tournament rules and regulations.
- 2.2. The Event is an "open" amateur event. (See 2.7 for Professional criteria)
- 2.3. Participants less than 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or adult with written parental permission. (Written parental permission must be provided to Event staff prior to the start of the Event) Participants under the age of 18 years may not fish alone in the Event.
- 2.4. Event officials reserve the right to refuse entry to anyone for any reason in their sole discretion.
- 2.5. **The Event is for amateur/grassroots anglers only. Professional anglers are not eligible to compete.** If you are unsure of your professional status, it is your responsibility to request a decision from NABC in writing prior to entry. Any Participant who enters this Event and is determined to be a professional, will be removed from competition immediately and will forfeit the Entry Fee (or entry fees) (as defined below).
- 2.6. Any angler meeting any of the following criteria is considered a "professional" and is not eligible to compete.

- I. Anglers who guided professionally for ANY species of fish and for a fee (of any kind) on the host lake within the last twelve (12) months immediately preceding the Event.
- II. Anglers who fished a season of a top-level circuit professionally of the B.A.S.S. Elite Series, MLF Tour/Pro Tour, and/or MLF Bass Pro Tour or NPFL within the last two (2) years or won any of those circuits' year end championships.
- III. Anglers who have professional career fishing tournament earnings in the aggregate in excess of \$250,000.00 with B.A.S.S., FLW, MLFLW, MLF, NPFL and/or the PAA.

2.7. Any Participant desiring to inquire regarding the professional status of another Participant, must do so in accordance with the Protests and Dispute Article of these Rules (Section 15).

Section 3: Registration and Entry Fee

3.1. Each Participant shall pay an entry fee of \$125 for a one-day entry or \$200 for a two-day entry (hereinafter "Entry Fee") per angler to participate in the Event. The Entry Fee shall be paid in full prior to the close of registration for the event. Two-day entry discount only applies if both days are paid in advance of the first day, otherwise it is considered a two (2) - one-day entry's to fish both days.

3.2. Participants are encouraged to register Online or at one of the local onsite registration times / locations listed on that Event's fact sheet. **GENERAL** Event Registration with multi day discounts closes at 6 p.m. "event local time" on the night prior to the beginning of the first day of the event. Generally, there will be NO "at the ramp" morning registrations. Once **GENERAL** registration closes and the event begins, participants that register for subsequent days must do so before 6 p.m. the evening before the subsequent day they have elected to fish. ANY days not registered for by the 6pm close of general registration will be at the one-day price. Late entrants must also adhere to the off-limits rules listed herein.

3.3. There will be no refunds of the Entry fee unless an event is cancelled in advance. In the event of a verifiable emergency and a Participant requests to cancel an entry, NABC will consider moving an entry forward to another NABC event as a one-time courtesy. Subsequent withdrawals will forfeit entry fees.

3.4. If the Participant registers online they are **NOT** required to attend a local mandatory onsite registration prior to the Event. There is no meeting to attend prior to the Event, it is each Participants responsibility to read and understand the Rules, including all safety rules. IF you have questions ask a tournament official.

3.5. Payment of the Entry Fee constitutes a representation by each Participant that he/she has read and understands the Rules, including all safety rules. All Participants agree they will abide by such Rules and abide by decisions of the Event Director and/or Event Staff. IF you have questions please ask.

3.6. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes including those involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with Event Rules, shall be grounds for rejecting any application for registration and/or for disqualification, suspension from the Event, and/or other disciplinary action.

3.7. **OPTIONAL** NABC Membership - NABC membership is **OPTIONAL** it is **NOT required**; annual memberships are only \$40.00 per person per year. Membership is **100% optional** but carries with it some great member benefits, any one of which is valued at more than the membership actually costs.

- I. Each person who purchases an OPTIONAL NABC membership **before GENERAL registration** closes will receive a custom Federation Angler IM7 graphite rod (\$89.99 value) at their first event of the year. Members must pick up their rod (choice of spinning or bait casting) at the registration site listed on the event fact sheet or after the days final weigh-in. We may not distribute rods during tournament hours and we will NOT ship them.
- II. In case of a tie NABC membership is the first tie breaker.
- III. In select events first out of the money for all sessions (4 per day) wins a \$50.00 Gift card **IF** they are a NABC member. Check the event fact sheet.

Section 4: Practice, Off Limits, Event and Hours

4.1. Fish must be caught on/from the official Event waters during official hours. You may fish anywhere on Event waters accessible to the public by boat, except areas designated as "off limits/no fishing" by local, state, and federal officials.

- 4.2. Event off limits time begins at 6:30 p.m. the night before the first competition day of each Event. Participants must be off the water on or before 6:30 p.m. on the day prior to the Event and may not begin fishing or casting until the official Event start time, which is listed on the fact sheet and will be announced via text message the morning of the event. The Event lake is off limits to fishing after each day's final weigh in on ANY competition day(s). **All participants must follow the off-limits rules for the previous day even if you're not fishing all days of the event.** You may return to your launch site by boat, but are not allowed to fish or use electronics for the purposes of finding fish.
- 4.3. There is no single launch site for the Event. Participants may leave from any launch on the competition waters at any time; however, a Participant may NOT fish any water that is un-accessible to the public, nor begin fishing / casting until the official Event start time. Official "first-cast" start times will be listed on the event fact sheet as determined by the Event Director and Participants will be notified when to commence fishing via text message the morning of the Event. (In the event a participant does not receive the official text message, they may commence fishing at the official start time listed on the Event fact sheet as verified by cellular phone time).
- 4.4. No one may leave his or her boat to fish, to land a fish, or to make that boat more accessible to fishing waters.
- 4.5. No Participant may buy, barter, or hold or a fishing location for any other Participant or for a Non-Participant for use during any event day or during off-limits prior to start. This also forbids the practice of someone "Hole sitting" for you.
- 4.6. Participants must be in line at the bump tanks or in the marked safe weigh in zone area before the end of the respective time session for their fish weight to be tallied and counted in the results of that time session. You may leave the weigh in line, safe zone or tanks and return to your boat if you decide not to weigh in during a particular session.
- 4.7. From time to time, the immediate areas where the Event "live releases" fish daily may be made off-limits to fishing and Participants. IF that area is known prior to the event it will be listed on the event fact sheet. Otherwise, Participants will be notified via text message of such location.

Section 5: Safety

- 5.1. Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by Participants.
- 5.2. Participants are aware they are participating in a physical activity in the sport of fishing that may be dangerous and can cause injury. These activities may involve and are not limited to: severe cardiovascular stress, possible violent contact, injury or drowning. Participants understand and acknowledge the activities involve certain risks including, but not limited to, death, serious neck and spinal injuries, brain damage, and/or serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, muscles, skins, eyes and internal organs, and property damage. Although particular Rules, equipment, and personal discipline may reduce the risks associated with participating in the Event, the risk of serious injury does exist and cannot be completely eliminated. Therefore, each Participant willingly and expressly assumes this risk to participate.
- 5.3. Use of or possession in the boat of alcohol or marijuana/cannabis products, ("medical" or otherwise) or any mind altering drugs by any participant during the official event or tournament days or in our weigh-in process area and/or any use by the final day designated "leaders" until any polygraph examinations are complete will not be tolerated and shall be cause for disqualification.
- 5.4. All boats must be equipped with some type of emergency ignition cut-off device (kill switch) on any remote steered outboard while main engine is in use. Ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must operate properly, which means when the kill switch is activated the outboard main engine must stop running immediately. The ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must be attached to the boat operator at all times while the outboard main engine is in use.
- 5.5. U.S. Coast Guard approved chest type life jackets (PFD) are required for each person on board during competition. Life jackets (PFD) must be worn and strapped, snapped, or zippered securely, and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is out of gear or shut off. Operation of Inflatable life vests where legal, must be regularly checked.
- 5.6. If Participants observe any unsafe, unethical or other significant hazard, weather, condition or activity during his/her presence or during participation in the Event, Participant should remove themselves to safety and from participation and if applicable bring it to the attention of a representative of the Event immediately.
- 5.7. No boat shall have a motor of higher horsepower than approved by the U.S. Coast Guard.

5.8 In the event of sudden or significant weather condition developing forcing the Event Director to advise via text message regarding any change, delay, suspension and/or cancellation of one or more weigh in sessions of the day(s), the day(s) payouts will be allocated against all completed hours of competition and paid places.

Section 6: Sportsmanship

6.1. Sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and fish conservation are required from every Participant. Participants shall demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of fishing. This includes any and all social media content that may be shared now or in the future. Any Participant found compromising the integrity of the sport and/or the Event may be subject to disciplinary action and/or disqualification.

6.2. The favorable public reputation of the circuit, the sport of fishing, the Event Director and Staff, sponsors, partners and officials are of paramount importance. IF you have an issue talk to an Event staff person to person and they will do all they can within the rules to help or clarify. Participants shall refrain from making unreasonable attacks, accusations, and comments that disparage the integrity of the circuit, Event, the sport of fishing, the Event Staff, sponsors, partners and officials. This includes but is not limited to the Participants social media accounts and digital sites.

6.3. Participants shall act in a courteous manner at all times, especially with Event officials and in regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-participants who may be on Event waters.

6.4. Any Participants attempting to manipulate the outcome of the Event or defraud the Event or NABC, any participant, sponsor, affiliate or partner will be disqualified and may be subject to prosecution.

Section 7: Tackle and Equipment

7.1. Participants must possess all necessary fishing licenses and follow all regulations. All state rules regarding fishing and fishing methods will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified by Event officials.

7.2. All fish must be caught on artificial bait by casting only, no foul hooking of any visible fish. When visibly fishing for any bass, bedded or otherwise the bass must be hooked inside the mouth to be a legal catch. Participants may not fish any bed that has had a physical marker placed on the land or water to mark a bed prior to the Event. No trolling with big motor or a kicker motor is allowed.

7.3. Participants may use only one rod at any one time. Other rods may be in the boat for substitute purposes.

7.4. A fish may not be altered. No electronic or other tracking/marking devices (implanted microchips, tags/reflective markers, etc.) may be used to locate a fish. Depth-finders, sonars, fish finders, graphs and sound devices are allowed.

Section 8: Boat Motor & Safety Equipment

8.1. ALL Participants in any vessel are responsible for daily checking/verifying all required safety equipment before leaving the launch point and/or making sure the watercraft and fishable waters are safe.

8.2. All boats must be propeller driven; jet drives are NOT allowed. Boats are required to have on board all coast guard required safety equipment. Anytime the combustion engine is running there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat.

8.3. All boats must be cleaned of all harmful exotic aquatic invasive species. **CLEANED, DRAINED and DRY**, before entering and when leaving the lake.

8.4. Each boat MUST be capable of safely carrying the Participants fishing from it up to the Event limit of (3) three participants and may NOT exceed the vessels rated capacity.

8.5. By entering the Event, Participants hereby agree to allow their boat to be boarded for observation, filming, and/or inspection by Officials at any time prior to, during, or following the Event, to include, but not limited to, all safety equipment, all storage, boxes, containers, rating plates, live-well, and engines.

8.6. Boats are required to have a functioning bilge pump, live well, and an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver anytime the boat is on plane. It is recommended, but NOT required to have a marine band radio on board.

8.7. The following items (minimum) will be randomly checked at each weigh-in session. Violation of any rules or safety items will be cause for disqualification: Fishing License - # of fish in possession - Alcoholic Beverages - Horsepower Rating - Life Jackets – Engine Cutoff Device (Kill Switch).

Section 9: Weigh-in and Penalties

9.1. **You CANNOT weigh-in a fish in any session without proof of paid entry for that day AND a photo ID that matches proof of entry, bring these items with you to the weigh in line.**

9.2. All bass weighed-in become the property of the Event and will be released back into the lake alive.

9.3. Four (4) weigh-in sessions are held each day normally and will vary by event; *as an example*; **First Cast to 9:00 a.m., 9:01-11:00 a.m., 11:01 am -1:00 p.m., and 1:01-3:00 p.m.**; Check Event fact sheet for each event. No one is allowed to get into the weigh-in line AFTER the final published weigh in time.

9.4. For conservation, all bass brought to the official weigh-in station must be in a weigh bag with adequate water. If a Participant does not have a weigh bag, one will be provided by NABC. **Bass must be alive to be weighed-in.**

9.5. Any fish that cannot be clearly and 100% positively weighed-in by the person who originally caught it may NOT be weighed-in at all and must be released. **Be careful when handling fish in the boat.**

9.6. No one Participant may weigh more than one (1) fish per session which is a maximum of (4) four fish per day. Fish weighed in one session does not carry forward from session to session. Participant's single biggest bass weighed in during the event is counted for any overall standings.

9.7. Keep your fish separated, clearly marked, and identifiable. Fish must be weighed-in by the Participant who originally caught the fish and must be in said Participant's actual physical possession in the weigh-in line. (Only exception is a disabled Participant, (with prior approval) we will allow another Participant to bring the clearly marked fish to the scales).

9.8. Any artificially weighted / altered bass will be disqualified; any alteration of length or weight of bass is prohibited and the Participant(s) may be subject to prosecution and shall be disqualified from all future events. Any questionable fish will be subject to inspection by a marine biologist or similarly qualified expert.

9.9. Only LIVE largemouth, smallmouth and Ky spotted bass will be weighed. Specific lake minimums and/or slot limits must be followed, it is the responsibility of the Participant to abide by all Event, local, state, and federal Rules.

9.10.A Maximum of two (2) fish in a Participants possession at any time, (state laws will apply). AFTER the final published weigh in time each day, all releasable fish not weighed shall be released back into the water and are not allowed to carry over to another day.

Section 10: Permitted Fishing Locations

10.1. Tournament waters shall be set by officials for each Event. All Participants must obtain this information from NABC.

10.2. Fishing on Event waters is permitted within the boundaries defined by the fact sheet and Event director that are available to the public and accessible by boat except: Any water within these tournament boundaries closed to public fishing, posted "off-limits or no fishing" by local, state or federal officials will be OFF-LIMITS, the removal of official local, state or federal property or barricades at any time to make an area more accessible by boat is strictly prohibited.

10.3. Also, any live fish release area established by the Event Director will be off-limits and will be announced on the event fact sheet if known before the event or by text message at the Event.

10.4. No fishing is allowed within fifty (50) yards of an anchored boat that was first anchored in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water.

10.5. No Participant may "Buy" or "Barter" a fish or a fishing location. Only water open to ALL public fishing will be considered Event waters. All angling must be done from the boat. On Event days, participants are prohibited from fishing except during designated tournament fishing hours. Participants must not fish Event waters before and after tournament hours except to

navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities. If repairs or a test-run is needed, NABC staff must be notified prior to a test run.

Section 11: Communications

11.1. Cell phones and other communication devices may NOT be used for the purposes of locating or finding fish and/or communicating with other Participants or Non-Participants regarding such.

11.2. Text message updates and Event communication are an added bonus service provided. The Event nor Event Staff can guarantee delivery of any text messages or communications. It is the Participant's responsibility to know and to manually enter their correct cell phones into the registration/text system. Some carriers block text messaging services and it is the Participant's sole responsibility to check with their provider to determine that. If Participant is unable to receive text messages, please contact your provider prior to the Event or you may utilize the NABC live leaderboard/website.

11.3. Participant's entry into any Event by any means physical or digital represents your express consent to receive email, phone, and text message communication from the Federation Angler national office, the Bass Pro Shops / Cabela's North American Bass Challenge, and any of its owners, successors, directors, members, officers, agents, contractors, affiliates, employees, sponsoring agencies, sponsors, and/or advertisers before, during, and after an Event. Participants who remain in the database after an Event understand and acknowledge that they will receive ongoing communication. We will not sell or disseminate participant databases with any outside organizations. We value your privacy and the trust you place in us to protect it. In order to discontinue communication, it is Participant's responsibility to notify the Federation Angler National office to opt out of those communications.

Section 12: Official Safety Checkpoint

12.1. **Safety begins with YOU!** - ALL Participants in any vessel are responsible for daily checking/verifying all required safety equipment before leaving the launch point.

12.2. The following items (minimum) will be randomly checked at each weigh-in session. Violation of any rules or safety items will be cause for disqualification: Fishing License - # of fish in possession - Alcoholic Beverages - Horsepower Rating - Life Jackets – Engine Cutoff Device (Kill Switch).

Section 13: Late Penalty

13.1. It is each Participants responsibility to allow ample time, considering dock/ramp/parking/traffic or congestion to be inside the designated weigh-in safe area for each weigh-in. You have 2 hours in each session to weigh in DO NOT push the limits, regardless of fault, there is NO excuse for being late.

13.2. Participants who are not inside the designated weigh-in safe area before it is closed for each session will not be allowed to weigh-in for that session.

Section 14: Scoring

14.1. Participants may not weigh more than (1) one bass per session. Four (4) sessions equals a possible (4) fish per day. Bass weighed-in any session does not carry forward from session to session. Participant's single biggest bass weighed-in during the entire Event is entered into the final overall standings.

14.2. The top published prize for each event is guaranteed all other places or prizes are dependent on entries. Full payout info will be publicly posted after the close of registration. As an example; Normally, based on overall event standings 1st, 2nd, and 3rd place overall big fish overall will be awarded cash and/or prizes. **Based on entry's each session will award no less than 3 and no more than 10 biggest fish each session in cash and/or prizes.(places each session are based on entries) Therefore, a one-day Event with (4) four sessions could award from 12 up to 40 total places depending on number of entry's, PLUS the top 3 from overall standings for a total of 43 possible places in cash and prizes. A two-day Event with (4) four sessions each day could award from 24 up to 80 total places depending on entry's, PLUS the top 3 from overall standings for a total of 83 places paid in cash and prizes. Plus, any sponsor bonuses or contingencies. Again, check event fact sheet for details final payout will be published when registration closes but the top overall big fish prize is guaranteed as advertised for each event.

14.3. All prizes will be awarded at the designated Main weigh in location following the final Event weigh in.

Section 15: Protests, Disputes & Truth Verification Tests

15.1. Rules violation must be reported immediately. Any witness has a right to protest a participant. All protests or disputes relating to any matter must be made in writing and submitted to the tournament director within 10 minutes of the last fish being weighed that day and prior to delivery of any prizes or winnings. Tournament officials, in their sole discretion, reserve the right to consider rule violations reported or not and discovered at any time for any reason, by any persons, before or after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for any past or future event including denying entry to compete. After reviewing the submission, the Event Director shall inform the protesting Participant of the decision. The Event Staff's decision is final and not subject to further appeal. Protests made after the deadline will be disregarded and the protesting Participant may be subject to disqualification as well. Truth verification final results are non-disputable and are not subject to protest.

15.2. The interpretation and enforcement of the Rules will be the sole responsibility of the Event Director.

15.3. All Participants agree as a condition of entering the Event, by entering the event with payment of entry fee, and by his/her signature on the Event entry form (in person or electronically), to submit to a polygraph examination should they be so requested to do so at any time for any reason or for now reason and to provide truthful and honest responses and to abide by its results as determined by a qualified examiner. Participants must successfully pass the polygraph/truth verification testing or be removed from competition.

15.4. At the sole discretion of the Event Director or his/her designee, random third-party administered Truth verification examinations may be administered on site during the Event. Refusing to take a polygraph/truth verification examination for any reason will result in immediate disqualification.

15.5. Any Participant taking medication should notify the examiner prior to examination.

15.6. Any Participant determined by the examiner and/or other Event Officials to be in violation of the Rules, intoxicated and/or under the influence of any type of illegal drug(s) at the time said Participant is required to take the Truth verification examination, will be disqualified from this and possibly all future events.

15.7. Participants acknowledge and agree that Event Officials may disclose the results of the polygraph exam. If or when disclosure occurs is at the sole discretion of the Event Officials.

15.8. Participant found in possession of an illegal substance will be subject to disqualification/prosecution.

15.9. Anyone who has failed to pass a polygraph examination in a competitive event and/or been disqualified for fraudulent actions in connection with any fishing contest is not eligible to compete.

Section 16: Catch and Release

16.1. Every effort must be made to keep bass alive including proper live well aeration, treatment and temperature management. **You may NOT weigh a dead fish.**

16.2. Every boat must have adequate live well space, properly aerated, to sufficiently maintain, in a healthy condition a limit catch by competitors using the boat. NABC recommends the use of live well additive such as G-Juice and ice, in warmer water months to improve oxygen levels and promote a healthy release of fish into natural habitat.

Section 17: Ties

17.1. In the event of a tie for the overall big bass awards or an individual session the tie breakers will be 1.) NABC membership 2.) Fish that was weighed first 3.) Date/ time of that days Event paid entry. 4.) Flip of coin.

Section 18: Patches Signage & Promotion

18.1. Event officials has no intention to restrict the use of logos, patches or signage and encourages their use to promote your various supporters. However, we do reserve the right to restrict a logo that is deemed offensive. Further realizing we are in a TV/media/sponsorship field that MAY sometimes restrict the use of some signage Event officials reserves the right to restrict the use of such signage in our promotional endeavors with as much advance notice as possible. Finally, if you are being filmed for television no tobacco products may be used while filming.

Section 19: Miscellaneous / Captions

19.1. The headings, captions, titles, and numbering system are inserted only as a matter of convenience and may under no circumstances be considered in interpreting the provisions of this Agreement.

19.2. The Rules shall be governed by and construed in accordance with the laws of the State of Oklahoma in all respects, including matters of construction, interpretation, validity, and enforcement.