



# **LETR**

## **Bass Fishing Tournament**

### **Rules**

#### **1. RULES AND PENALTIES**

The following rules shall apply to the Law Enforcement Torch Run (LETR) Bass Fishing 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 may impose such sanctions as deemed appropriate by them, including without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes, entry fee and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. The decision of the Tournament Director, or his/her designee, shall be final in all matters. Penalties may include the following: a) Loss of one or more fish in question. b) Loss of catch for the day c) Disqualification from the tournament in question d) Disqualification from future events. e) Any different or additional penalties determined by the Tournament Director. Each competitor agrees to report to the Tournament Director immediately 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, may be cause for disqualification.

#### **2. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY**

This tournament is open to all. Participants that are operating a boat must be 16 years of age. Participants under the age of 16 must be accompanied by an adult 18 years of age or older. All participants must have a valid Georgia Fishing License and be in compliance with all Local, State, and Federal fishing guidelines.

#### **3. PRACTICE AND COMPETITION**

There are no off limit times/dates for practice for this tournament. A designated tournament official must be granted access to the competitor's boat at any time during the official practice or competition days. Failure to grant such access may result in immediate disqualification.

#### **4. REGISTRATION**

It is the responsibility of each competitor to insure they are properly registered prior to the event. Competitors must sign in, in person, at the tournament site at least 15 minutes prior to the start of the tournament. Any competitor that fails to sign in prior to, or up to 30 minutes after, the start of the tournament may be disqualified from the tournament.

#### **5. SAFETY**

Safety is paramount and anglers must recognize that; Fishing from an open boat in itself is inherently dangerous, and as a result LETR Bass Tournaments seeks to limit those hazards with reasonable safety rules. a) Safe boat conduct and speed limits must be observed at all times by competitors. During official practice and competition, competitors must wear a US Coast Guard approved chest-type life preserver and must be worn at all times while the combustion engine is in gear. This life preserver must also be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is no longer in gear. Violation of this rule shall be reason for disqualification. "Fanny Pack" preservers are not allowed. In the event a boat is being towed, all anglers in the towed boat must wear a life preserver. b) Tournament officials may delay, shorten, restrict tournament waters or cancel the start of an official tournament day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. c) When boating in low visibility situations (fog, heavy rain, etc.), competitors must operate their boats at a safe speed and in a safe manner as determined by tournament officials. d) In the event of an emergency, competitors should call 911 immediately and then notify tournament officials. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather when danger may be imminent, at which time all fishing must cease.

## **6. SPORTSMANSHIP**

Competitors 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. a) Use of alcohol or drugs (other than over-the-counter, or prescribed by a physician) by any competitor, during the tournament will not be tolerated and will be grounds for automatic disqualification. Alcoholic beverages will not be allowed in the boats during the official competition or in the weigh-in area while weigh-ins are being conducted. b) 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, may be reason for disqualification.

## **7. ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT**

Anglers participating in this tournament shall observe this code of conduct and the applicable rules for this event. Anglers shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a professional manner that demonstrates integrity, honor, and respect toward fellow competitors, tournament staff, and the general public.

## **8. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT**

The use of a landing net is allowed. The use of grippers in landing bass is prohibited. Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted during 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. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. When visually fishing for bedding bass, bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked to have a bass counted as a legal fish all. No competitor may intentionally snag or foul hook a bass to be counted in their daily catch. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their catch disqualified. Competitors are allowed to share baits and tackle with one another at any time.

## **9. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT**

During official practice and competition every boat must have all required US Coast Guard safety equipment. 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. 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.

## **10. BOAT AND MOTOR**

During official practice and competition all boats must be equipped with an operational and approved type of ignition kill switch and single lanyard. Lanyard must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is in gear and driver must be in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats that are less than 16 feet in length may 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. NO EXCEPTIONS. All bladder tanks and any other type of auxiliary gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks, properly secured or strapped, and meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. No portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor.

## **11. BOAT IDENTIFICATION**

Prior to the start of the tournament, each boat will be given an inspection check by a tournament official. Boaters will be given a launch numbered chip which must be displayed upon request of tournament officials and must remain with the boat until turned in at the check-in.

## **12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS**

Tournament waters and off limits areas shall be established by the Tournament Director for this tournament. Specifically any water within boundaries posted "Off-Limits" or "No Fishing" by state or federal agencies as well as the live-bass-release area established by the Tournament Director will be OFF-LIMITS and 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.

## **13. COMPETITORS MUST REMAIN IN BOAT**

Competitors must leave from and return to the official checkpoints by boat and 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 remain together in the boat and in insight of each other and each partners catch, 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. If an emergency occurs, competitors must call 911 then contact a Tournament Director, at which time both competitors must cease fishing, their catch verified by a tournament official to insure their catch is counted in the tournament. If after the emergency situation has been resolved, tournament officials may allow competitors to resume fishing. Trailering boats during tournament hours is prohibited, except at the direction of tournament officials. Competitors may not shift the majority of their weight outside the boat and onto a dock or other object outside the boat for the purpose of landing a bass or accessing a fishing spot. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat to retrieve a lure. All fishing by that competitor must cease until the competitor is back in the boat. Only then may another cast be made. In the event of a needed restroom break, or refueling, contestants are allowed to leave the boat, at which time all fishing must cease until the partners are back together in the boat.

## **14. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT**

There will be only one "official point" for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon and will 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 all fishing must cease. Partners must stay together through the weigh-in process.

## **15. SCORING**

Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pounds and ounces weight of each competitor's catch during the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted or Redeye bass will be weighed. The limit for boaters shall be 5 of the above species and varieties, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials. The official length for bass shall be established by the Tournament Director. Culling must be performed immediately upon catching a sixth fish. In the event tournament officials observe more than the allowable limit is in boat or at weigh-in, tournament officials will cull beginning with the largest fish. Only bass measuring the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed. Short fish will accrue a penalty of 1 pound and that bass will not be weighed. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed only at the discretion of tournament officials. Once a competitor's catch is verified by, no additional fish may be added to the catch. Placing bass on a stringer is prohibited, however culling tags or clips may be used. In the event of a mechanical failure (boat is inoperable) anglers may have their catch counted by one of the following methods ONLY: 1) Boat is towed to the weigh-in site by another boat; 2) One partner may take both anglers catches (clearly marked) and board another competitors' boat only for a ride to weigh-in. Competitors must not allow any bass caught by them to be counted on the score of another competitor. Mechanical failures do not extend established weigh-in times.

## **16. CATCH AND RELEASE CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED**

For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, a penalty of 4 ounces (.25 pounds) per dead fish will be assessed and deducted from the day's total weight. Competitors are allowed to ice a dead fish that is part of their daily catch. 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 will have sole authority for assessing dead fish penalties. SMALL DIP NETS FOR CULLING PURPOSES ARE ENCOURAGED. Placing bass on a stringer is prohibited, however culling tags or clips may be used.

#### **17. LATE PENALTY**

Competitors who are not in the official checkpoint area as described in Rule 14 at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound for each minute. Late penalty will be deducted from the total weight of their catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "big bass award". No weight will be awarded if the net weight after penalties is zero or less. Any competitor more than 15 minutes late will lose all credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuses for tardiness, and in no case, will 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. Exact starting and check-in times will be announced at the Tournament Briefing.

#### **18. TIEBREAKERS**

Ties will be broken using the following criteria: a) Largest number of legal fished weighed. b) Largest number of legal live fish weighed. c) Largest bass weighed if the tie is not broken by applying the foregoing procedures, the tie will remain a tie.

#### **19. WAIVER AND RELEASE**

As a condition of participation in this tournament, competitors must execute a waiver, release of liability and a name and likeness release.