

ANGLER NATION

TEAM TRAIL

Official Rules

1. **Rules Changes:** - Decisions of the Tournament Director are final and are not subject to appeal. Interpretation of these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. Protests must be made in writing prior to the official closing of the scales at each tournament.
2. **Participation/Eligibility:** All Angler Nation Team Trail Tournaments are open only to members of the Angler Nation. Basic Membership fee is \$120 per team and must be paid before the start of the second event. Platinum Membership is \$240 per team and must be paid before the start of the first event. All entrants must sign a one-time waiver. Any person entering an Angler Nation Tournament under the age of 18 must also have the signature of their parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the waiver form. Each team is permitted a maximum of four (4) members, to be named on the membership form prior to the first tournament entered. All contestants are required to have a valid fishing license. Jack-potting events will not be allowed and participation is allowed at the discretion of the Director.
3. **Pre-Tournament Practice:** All Angler Nation Tournaments will have no off-limits period prior to the tournament day that begins at 12:00am.
4. **Registration/Pre-Tournament Meetings:** Entries may be mailed if postmarked one week prior to the pre-tournament meeting. Checks will be accepted at the tournament meeting; however, cash is preferred. If paying late at the ramp the day of the tournament, payment must be in cash. Those teams entering at the ramp will be placed at the end of the field but will weigh in with the first flight. The pre-tournament meeting is non-mandatory; however, teams are responsible for any late announcements made.
5. **Fees:** One day events are \$100 per team and the Classic two-day event is \$150 per team. A \$50 fee will be assessed on all returned checks. Any contestant with a returned check on file (un-paid) will not be allowed to enter an event, without first paying for that returned check (and fee) in cash prior to the current event. Entry fees are non-refundable but are transferable as a credit to the next event if acknowledged before take-off positions are established by the tournament director.
6. **Safety:** Safe boating must always be observed. Each contestant is required to wear a fastened, U.S. Coast Guard approved, personal flotation device anytime the boat is on plane. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device, which must be securely attached to the driver's body any time the boat is on plane. Tournament days may be shortened or canceled due to unsafe weather or any conditions that would endanger the safety of the competitors. The decision to shorten or cancel tournament days will be determined by the Tournament Director.
7. **Permitted Fishing Methods:** All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner. Only artificial lures may be used except for pork trailers. Only one fishing rod per angler may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast or rod is used. Trolling with the combustion engine as a method of fishing is prohibited. Sharing fish with other teams or individuals will result in immediate disqualification for all parties involved. All angling must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters
8. **Sportsmanship and Conduct:** All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to Angler Nation Tournaments, sponsors, the sport of fishing and Angler Nation Tournament's efforts to promote that sport. Examples of conduct not complying with those standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1) Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any mind-altering substance during tournament hours

- 2) Abuse of, or addiction to, mind altering substances
- 3) Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably on Angler Nation Tournaments or the sponsors of those tournaments or reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules.

If conduct does not comply with the standards set forth, Angler Nation Tournaments, and its director shall have the right to refuse any application, or to deny a confirmed application, by returning the entry fee of a previously accepted application or disqualify a contestant. Angler Nation Tournaments reserves the right to refuse entry to anyone.

9. **Boat Operation:** During hours of competition, contestants may not receive assistance from non-competitors, follow a non-competitor's boat, participate in the practice of "hole sitting", or the placing of markers by non-competitors. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., to communicate fishing information during tournament hours is strictly prohibited.
10. **Boat and Horsepower Regulation:** Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a properly aerated live well with space to maintain alive a limit catch of bass. Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition may not exceed the horsepower limitations as displayed on the manufactures rating plate. By signing the entry form, each contestant agrees to submit their boat and/or motor to an inspection. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating plate will be cause for disqualification from the tournament and may result in future ineligibility to enter any Angler Nation Tournament
11. **Permitted Fishing Locations:** Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat from the host ramp, except areas designated as "off limits" or "no fishing" by state or federal officials or within 50 yards of a competitor's boat unless otherwise agreed upon by the other tournament angler.
12. **Off-Limit Areas:** Will be established and announced before each tournament. Contestants fishing inside the established off-limits area will be immediately disqualified. Contestants' boats must remain in the tournament waters during the event.
13. **Launch / Trailering:** This is a trailering series, if you prepay by the Thursday before each event, then you may launch from any ramp that is accessible by water from the host ramp. If you do not prepay, you must launch from the host ramp only. When trailering, you may unload and load one time for each event. Trailering restrictions may be modified for "Special" night events where multiple weigh-ins are required by permit authorities.
14. **Official Checkpoints:** It is the sole responsibility of each contestant to know and understand their flight number, and to arrive at the designated check-in location on time, regardless of what they are told.
15. **Scoring:** Will be determined by the pounds and hundredths of pounds of each angler's catch during the tournament. Only Largemouth, Spotted, or Smallmouth Bass are accepted species. Any team who possesses more than the tournament limit, except while in the act of culling, will have their catch for that day disqualified. Official length and limits will be the legal length and limit for the lake on which the event is being hosted and may be adjusted by the director. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the prescribed length limit, or determined by the tournament director to be dead, will result in a ½ lb penalty for each offending fish and will be applied to the days catch. If more than one fish fails to meet the minimum length limit the entire days catch will be disqualified. Each contestant's catch must be presented in an official Angler Nation Series weigh-in bag and verified by the acceptance of the weigh-slip. The Golden-Rule measuring board is the official measuring board of Angler Nation Team Trail Tournament Series.
16. **Angler of the Year:** Angler of the Year will be calculated using points acquired during participation in qualifying events. Each qualifying event will award points per place of finish beginning with the winning team and decreasing by 1 point until the lowest total weight has been realized. Any team that finishes with a zero weight will be awarded 5 points less than the lowest total weight place. The team with the largest accumulation of points at end of the regular season

will be determined Angler of the Year. The Championship does not qualify for the Angler of the Year points, however, in the event of a tie it will be used as a tie breaking event.

17. **Late Penalty:** Contestants who are not officially checked-in at the appointed time will be assessed a one pound per minute penalty from the total weight. Any contestant more than 10 minutes late will be disqualified. In the event of a mechanical breakdown, a contestant may return to the check-in location with their catch by receiving a ride from another registered contestant or tournament official only after talking with the tournament director first. The contestants must return to the official check-in location by their assigned check-in time to avoid late penalty.

18. **Closing of the Scales:** Scales will close 20 minutes after the last flight is due in. Due to certain weigh-in locations this time may be lengthened or shortened at the tournament director's sole discretion. Any change to the above stated official scale closing time policy will be announced. It is the angler's responsibility to verify the official scale closing time and to be in the weigh-in line by that time.

19. **Ties:** All ties will be decided by:

- 1) total number of fish caught
- 2) Big fish
- 3) Coin toss.

All ties will be resolved by splitting that place and the next place's money. Every team has the option to weigh a big bass in their catch regardless of its size.

20. **Payout Definition:** All payout checks will be made payable to the registered team captain. Teams will be responsible for handling the division of monies won and payment concerning 1099's. Any member that receives a check must have a completed w9 on file before payment can be dispersed. Checks must be cashed within 90 days of issuance and will be considered void after the 90 days has expired.

21. **Polygraph:** By signature on the entry/waiver form, contestants agree to a test by a qualified polygraph examiner. Refusal to or failure of a polygraph test will result in the disqualification of the failing team. Those contestants finishing in first, second, big bass, and a random top 10 team must be present at the conclusion of the weigh-in for the polygraph examination. Any contestant scheduled for a polygraph test, and not present, will have their winning held until a test has been administered. Any additional polygraph will be at the contestant's own expense of \$250.00. Should a contestant fail multiple polygraphs it is the sole discretion of the tournament director to ban the member from future participation. No refund will be paid to contestants that have pre-paid events should they be banned.

22. **Substitutions:** Each team may register, as members of their team, up to (2) substitutes per season. Each substitute will be charged a onetime \$60.00 fee and must have the tournament director's approval in advance. A substitute will only be allowed to fish 3 qualifying events. If a substitute is required for the two-day championship, they must have fished at least (1) current regular season event to be considered eligible. Any active member may substitute for another member however any points awarded will be applied to the team designated at the time of registration.

23. **Restricting, Seeding or Baiting:** No restricting bass by any method which disallows natural movement throughout the entire impoundments area. Seeding bass from one impoundments area to another tournament impoundments area, or any coordinated effort in the use of live bait, in baiting holes for the means of attracting or maintaining bass is prohibited. The act of moving bass from one area of the lake to another confined area of the same lake is not permitted.

24. **Bass Team Championship:** The Angler Nation Team Trail is sanctioned as a B.A.S.S Team Championship series. For every 25 participating teams, 1 team will be selected to participate in the B.A.S.S. Team Championship. All costs associated with fishing the B.A.S.S. Team Championship will be the responsibility of the participating teams. Teams will be selected for participation from the platinum membership based on their finish in the Angler of the Year standings. If a team is not able to participate for whatever reason the next team will be selected. This process will continue until all open positions have been filled.