

# 2024 FRESNO BASS CLUB

## TOURNAMENT RULES

July 11, 2024

1. **ELIGIBILITY FOR TOURNAMENT PARTICIPATION:**
  - A. The participant must be a current member of the FRESNO BASS CLUB, paid their annual FBC dues and are in good standing with the club. The participant must also have paid the club's annual liability insurance dues and show proof of a current personal boat insurance policy to tournament director prior to fishing first club event. (Minimum Liability Coverage must be \$300,000 per occurrence) All boaters must possess a CA Boater Card if 60 years of age or younger.
  - B. Contestants must be at least 16 years of age to participate in a tournament.
  - C. Family club members may be any age as long as they fish with a parent or legal guardian.
  - D. All Members must sign an insurance waiver annually prior to their participation in any club tournament.
  - E. Minors under 18 years of age must have their waiver signed by a parent or legal guardian.
  - F. The participant must have physically attended at least one meeting and paid their annual dues prior to fishing a club tournament.
  - G. Renewing members must renew their membership by the February meeting each year to remain in good standing otherwise, the member must attend a meeting prior to fishing a tournament.
  - H. Any member whose membership has lapsed shall return as a "Returning Member" regardless of the amount of time that has passed between their original membership and their renewal membership. A new member is defined as a person who has never been a member of the FBC.
  - I. All tournament contestants must sign a club liability waiver prior to fishing each FBC tournament. This waiver is located on the bottom of the entry form.
  - J. Guests or Prospective Members (Purpose to increase membership)
    1. A current FBC Member may have a Guest/Prospect fish with them for recruiting purposes.

2. FBC Members may fish with more than 1 Guest/Prospect in a calendar year.
3. A Guest/Prospect may only fish once in any calendar year.
4. A Guest/Prospect must attend the meeting the month of the event or obtain a waiver from the board.
5. A Guest/Prospect must sign FBC Insurance Liability Waiver prior to fishing in a club tournament.
6. The FBC Member will be responsible for informing the Guest/Prospect of the FBC tournament rules. Guest/Prospects shall obey all FBC Tournament Rules.
7. A Guest/Prospect can only be a non-boater and not a current FBC member. (Cant be a boater due not having club insurance)
8. If there are too many FBC non-boater members, the Guest/Prospect will not be allowed to fish the tournament in question.
9. The Guest/Prospect are not allowed to participate in any FBC options or pools.
10. Entry Fee: The Guest/Prospect will fish without paying any fees or options and will not be allowed to take part in any FBC payouts.
11. If the Guest/Prospect drops out, the boater will then take on the last non-boater drawn.

K. Any participant that tests positive for COVID-19 shall not be eligible to participate in any FBC functions or events until they provide a negative test at least one day before the event.

2. **ENTRY FEE & TOURNAMENT DATES:**

- A. The entry fee for point tournaments is \$30.00 per contestant.
- B. Carryover of entry fees, including options, shall be made only if the contestant notifies the Tournament Director, President or Treasurer by 7:30PM the evening prior to the tournament. Progressive Big Fish Pot will not be carried over.
- C. Carryover of entry fees must be arranged between the member and the FBC treasurer or you will receive a refund.
- D. If an individual officially withdraws from a tournament, they may not re-enter and fish the tournament.
- E. Entry fees, including options, must be paid prior to the monthly meeting or at the monthly meeting prior to the draw for partners. A

member may sign-up late without any options including PBFP, any time after the stated monthly meeting until 7:30 PM the Thursday night before the actual tournament date. A member will not be allowed to sign up any time after 7:30 PM the Thursday before the tournament.

F.

1. Progressive Big Fish Pot (PBFP) (Largest bass over 5 lbs.)
2. No catch-up or PBFP option shall be allowed outside of the normal sign-up period.
3. No shows or withdraws will forfeit their monies paid into the PBFP

G. The tournament draw will be held at the meeting prior to that month's tournament.

H. The selection of tournament dates is to be made by the club's elected board members or a tournament committee if one is so designated by the club's board. The selection of dates is subject to the following:

1. No more than one tournament shall be held in any one month.
2. The day of the tournament will be on a Sunday but, may be on a Saturday if the tournament is a two-day event or a night tournament.
3. As many dates as practical shall be set in as far in advance as possible.

### 3. CONTESTANT PAIRING:

A. Pairing of contestants shall be done at the meeting prior to the tournament by a draw of boaters matched with non-boaters.

1. In the event the boater does not show at the tournament, the non-boater is placed in the "next available boat."
2. In the event a boat is disabled or inoperable at the tournament date, the non-boater is placed in the "first available boat." The boater is then placed in the "next available boat." Availability of boats goes by blast order drawn at the meeting.
3. In the case of an on the water break down and the "first available boat" is not readily available, the tournament director may assign or approve the non-boater and boater moving to more available boats.

4. Non-boaters signing up late shall be placed in the “first available boat.”
  5. The “first available boat” is defined as: the first boat that does not have a non-boater.
  6. Boaters signing up late shall be placed at the end of the field.
  7. Contestants that sign up as a boater or non-boater shall remain as such for the tournament except for when there is a need for more boaters.
- B. If more “boat owners” than “non-boat owners” are entered in a tournament, the excess of boat owners shall be allowed to fish alone in their own boat, or with immediate family (father, mother, husband, wife, son, daughter, brother, or sister) who is an active member of FBC.
- C. Any member may fish FBC tournaments with his or her immediate family member who is also an active FBC member, and not be subject to the draw pairing. Such pairings shall be entered into the boat-owners draw only to determine their position in blast-off.
- D. If a member is fishing with two of their children, one has to be a paid contestant for the tournament and both must be current paid members of FBC. If one of the two children are over 16 years of age, they must go into the draw.
- E. Paired contestants must stay together throughout the tournament.
- F. A member signing up with a family member without going through the draw process must show up and participate together for the duration of tournament (both days if a two-day tournament.) If either family member fails to show up for any reason, both members will have “one strike” against them (no exceptions.) If this should happen again in the same tournament season/year, both members will have a “second strike” against them. Upon receiving the “second strike,” both members will forfeit their option of fishing together without going through the draw process for the balance of that tournament season/year. If either member wished to drop out at any time, both members must drop out together or be subject to the “two strikes rule.”
- F. If a Family member signs up late (After the draw) the pairings will remain as is.
- G. Denying of draw partner – A contestant may deny their 1<sup>st</sup> draw however, must maintain the 2<sup>nd</sup> draw partner or not fish the tournament unless they receive board approval.

H. Buddy Tournaments: non-boaters that do not partner up with a boater will go into the draw.

**4. WEIGH-IN:**

A. The First 3 boats (6 contestants) shall be responsible for assisting with the weigh-in. This is not an option without permission from the Tournament Director or a 1-pound penalty will apply. The weighmaster may choose his own weigh-in crew with board approval.

1. 1<sup>st</sup> boat is the weighmaster.
2. It is the responsibility of participating contestants to check in with the weighmaster at the designated check in time.
3. During a two-day tournament, the same weigh-in crew will help with the weigh-in both days.

B. No contestant in any point tournament shall allow any fish caught by him/her to be included in the tournament weight of any other contestant. The contestants involved in this infraction shall be disqualified and dismissed from the FRESNO BASS CLUB.

C. All boats must be within the designated weigh-in location prior to the announced check-in time and report to the check-in boat if a check-in boat has been designated. If no check-in boat has been designated, the contestant will proceed to the predetermined weigh-in location. If there is a check-in boat, it will be designated by the tournament director prior to the start of the tournament. Any contestant arriving late for the weigh-in, or not reporting to the check-in boat, is disqualified, regardless of the time period involved. For example, if check-in time is 3:00 PM, a participant has until 3:00:59 seconds before being considered late. It is the responsibility of both contestants to be at the weigh-in prior to the designated time.

D. Culling of fish must be done outside of the buoys of weigh-in area.

E. Any contestant bringing more than the designated tournament limit to weigh-in will be disqualified.

**5. LAKE HEADQUARTERS & "OUT-OF-BOUNDS" AREA**

A. Lake headquarters shall be selected by the FBC Board or tournament committee if a committee has been so designated.

B. The official weigh-in station shall be at the lake headquarters unless circumstances deem it necessary to be elsewhere. This exception

shall be at the discretion of the board or tournament committee if so designated.

- C. The “out-of-bounds” areas shall be designated by the tournament director at the club meeting and at tournament blast-off.
- D. All fishing shall be done from the boat.

6. **TOURNAMENT CHECK-IN TIME, FISHING HOURS & STARTING PROCEDURES:**

- A. Check-in time and weigh-in shall be determined by the tournament director and announced at the draw and prior to blast off.
- B. The tournament director shall give the official time at the pre-tournament meeting and prior to blast-off.
- C. The board or tournament committee if so, designated shall determine the method of starting except:
  - 1. No “flare” or “shotgun” starts shall be allowed.
  - 2. The order of starting or positioning of boats within flights shall be determined by the order in which boats are drawn at the meeting. For the second day of a two-day tournament the order shall be reversed.
  - 3. The prime consideration in determining the method of starting shall be the safety of all contestants.
- D. In the event a member or members arrive at the lake late, it will be necessary for the late arrivals to have their live wells checked by a tournament committee or board member they locate on the lake. The contacted member shall check the late boat’s live wells, then the late arrivals may begin fishing. Fishing before contacting a member for a live-well check is automatic disqualification.
- E. Any boater or non-boater who causes his or her boater or non-boater or themselves to be late for morning check-in will be assessed a 1-pound penalty against his or her total weight of that day’s tournament catch.
  - 1. Late will be defined as not being checked in at the stated and printed time at the designated area for that tournament.  
Check-in applies to all tournament participants (boaters and non-boaters.)
- F. A Contestant shall not be deemed late if the late arrival is pre-planned and the contestant notifies the tournament director or president by 9:00PM the Wednesday before the tournament. If notifications have been made, then no late penalty shall be assessed.

- G. Contestants that are granted a late start shall be considered last in the blast off order.

**7. SAFETY:**

- A. The boater and non-boater must always observe safe boating practices.
- B. Each contestant is required to wear a life jacket any time the boat is on a plane. It shall be up to each member to provide their own life jacket.
- C. All boating safety rules, speed zones, buoy markers, etc. shall be observed. Any contestant receiving a citation on the lake during the tournament shall be automatically disqualified. Parking tickets are not included. No passing is permitted in the 5 MPH area.
- D. Consumption of alcohol on the boat and during tournament hours is strictly prohibited. Tournament participants who violate this rule will be disqualified. Alcohol is only permitted after boats are loaded and fish weighed. In cases where boats are docked on the water, alcohol is not allowed until after tournament hours which conclude only after the scales are closed.
- E. All boats must have the required CA safety equipment onboard when participating in an FBC event. The required CA safety equipment includes life jackets, sound signaling devices, navigation lights and fire extinguisher.

**8. BOATS AND MOTORS:**

- A. Only fishing-type boats, twelve (12) feet or longer shall be used in tournaments.
- B. Any motor 9 ½ horsepower or greater shall be used as the main propulsion motor.
- C. A small gasoline or electric powered motor may be used to maneuver the boat while casting. Trolling as a method of catching fish where the lure presentation is aided by the use of the combustion engine or trolling motor is strictly prohibited.
- D. Each boat shall have the following equipment to be allowed to fish in the tournaments:
  - 1. A Live-well or live-wells with aerators sufficient to maintain fish in a live condition. Built-in live wells are not necessary.

A boater may use an ice chest or another container with aerator that will keep their catch alive.

2. The use of an ignition kill switch anytime the boat is on plane.

E. A Board member shall conduct a boat inspection before the start of each tournament to determine the acceptability of each boat and to check for illegal baits and equipment.

**9. BOAT OPERATION:**

A. It will be left to the sole discretion of the boat owner as to whether anyone, but the owner shall operate the boat or any of its equipment.

B. Each contestant shall be allowed to select the fishing area for one-half of the fishing day. The boat owner will have first choice, if desired, to pick which half of the day he will select the fishing area.

C. Expenses for the trip shall be shared by the non-boating partner. The following guidelines will be followed:

1. The non-boater will reimburse the boat owner **\$40.00** per fishing day for the cost of boat gas and oil used during the tournament. Rate will drop to **\$30.00** when pump price for regular gas drops below \$3.50/gallon. Rate will increase to **\$50.00** when pump prices for regular gas go above \$4.50/gallon.

2. Night tournaments are considered as one fishing day.

3. Any refund of non-boater fees due to unforeseen circumstances is to be determined between the boater and the non-boater.

4. Any other expense mutually incurred should be divided equally between the boater and non-boater. The method and amount of any sharing of expenses should be determined before the tournament fishing day begins.

5. Upon board approval, any non-payment of non-boater's fees may result in the non-boater not being able to participate in future events until the debt is paid in full.

**10, SPORTSMANSHIP:**

A. Sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation is expected of each member.



- B. Operating the boat in any manner to handicap a partner is strictly forbidden.
- C. Contestant boats must always maintain at least 50 yards distance from other contestant boats, if fishing, unless all involved contestants agree otherwise.
- D. Shoreline or structure may not be buoyed or marked by a contestant for more than 50 linear yards.
- E. Any violation of any tournament rules shall be cause for disqualification from the tournament and possible dismissal from the club.

**11. TACKLE & EQUIPMENT:**

- A. Only artificial lures shall be used. No live or prepared bait except for pork rind type baits will be permitted. Liquid and solid fish attractants are allowed.
- B. Only casting, spinning, fly, or spin-casting reels may be used. The same limitation applies to rods. No rod longer than 8-1/2 feet from tip to butt cap may be used.
- C. Any number of rigged rods may be ready in the boat, but only one rod may be used at a time.
- D. Electronic depth finders, graphs, thermometers, pH meters, color selectors, and other similar equipment are permitted. Underwater video cameras are prohibited for use during tournament hours.
- E. Unless otherwise authorized, fish may only be taken by angling with a rod, reel and artificial lures. A lure can have no more than three hooks attached. A treble hook counts as one hook. In the case of umbrella rig type lures, there can only be a maximum of five lures attached to the rig and only three of the five lures can have a hook attached. The other two lures cannot have a hook attached and are solely for the purpose of acting as “teasers.”

**12. CARE & DISPOSITION OF FISH:**

- A. All contestants shall use reasonable care in the handling, keeping, and transporting of fish to the weigh-in site. Contestants are responsible for supplying their own weigh-in bags. A weigh-in bag must be a commercial bag made for the sole purpose of carrying fish to the scales.

- B. All live fish shall be returned to the lake in accordance with the tournament director's instructions. Dead fish shall be disposed of in accordance with State fish and game laws.
- C. A contestant shall be granted the right to keep any trophy fish for mounting purposes although fiberglass replica's will be encouraged.

**13. SCORING:**

- A. Tournament winners will be determined by total weight accumulated during the tournament. A total of five (5) fish may be weighed in by each contestant. At no time shall any contestant have more than his legal limit (5) in his possession except during the culling process. If more than 5 fish are brought to the scales the participant will be disqualified.
- B. Legal tournament fish shall be largemouth (black) bass, Kentucky spotted bass, Florida bass, and smallmouth bass.
- C. Minimum length of any fish shall be 13 inches. The fish shall be measured with the mouth open, hanging on a FLAT board. The tournament committee shall have an official board for the measurement of any questionable fish. All fish less than 13 inches weighed in will not be counted. A one-pound penalty will be deducted from the contestant's remaining legal fish total weight.
- D. A 0.50 lb. deduction will be assessed for each dead fish.
- E. A dead fish cannot be weighed in for any big fish award IE: Tournament big Fish, Big Fish Option or Progressive Big Fish Pot
- F. Any fish that appears injured or mangled in any way will be counted only at the discretion of the tournament committee or board members.
- G. In cases of ties on total weight, the tie will be settled by the largest fish in each contestant's catch.
- H. In the case of a tie on the weight of big fish, money will be divided equally, and two Big Fish trophies shall be awarded.
- I. Points shall be awarded starting with first place receiving 50 points, second place receiving 49 points, and so on.
- J. There will be a total of eleven (11) point tournaments fished in a tournament year. Nine (9) of the eleven (11) tournaments will be used for the calculation of the year end standings.
- K. Two points will be awarded to each member in attendance at each monthly meeting.

- L. In the event of a tie for total weight, including big fish, both contestants will receive 50 points and the second place points will not be awarded.
- M. Once an angler surrenders their catch to the weighmaster the fish become property of the weigh master. Once the angler surrenders his fish to the weigh master, no fish can be added or subtracted from the angler's bag.
- N. Anglers are responsible for selecting their own big fish to be weighed in.
- O. Anglers are allowed one re-weigh, but they must accept the second weight better or worse.
- P. Decisions made by the weigh master and tournament director are final. Anglers can file a protest with the board within thirty minutes if they do not agree with their findings.

**14. TOC (Tournament of Champions):**

- A. The Lake TOC location will be determined by the prior year's TOC Winner and shall be within a 100-mile radius of a lake on the previous year's tournament schedule.
- B. The top ten anglers in overall AOY points after throwing out their two lowest finishes, will advance to the TOC.
- C. Members who participate in 9 out of the 11 scheduled tournaments or accumulate a total of 220 points for the year after throwing out their two lowest finishes will qualify for a wildcard berth into the TOC.
- D. For the purposes of defining participation in a FBC event for TOC purposes, a boater must at a minimum pay their entry fee, check-in at the designated check-in location at the lake and launch their boat on tournament waters. The same goes for non-boaters, they must pay their entry fee, check-in at the designated check-in location at the lake and launch on tournament waters with their designated boater. If the above criteria are met and the member(s) have to leave early for whatever reason, the tournament will count for TOC purposes.
- E. If any club member leaves before official check-in time, they should attempt to call the tournament director and notify them of their early departure. If cell phone service is not available or the Tournament Director does not answer, the member(s) must contact another club member to advise them of their early departure.

Failure to notify someone of your early departure will result in the disqualification of the boater and non-boater who left early, and that tournament will not count toward TOC qualification.

- F. If an angler gets disqualified from any tournament, for any reason, that tournament will not count as one of the tournaments used for TOC qualification purposes.
- G. Official Cutoff: The TOC waters will be off limits beginning at 0001 hours the Monday morning preceding the TOC until 0600 Saturday morning the day before the TOC.
- H. Pre-fishing is allowed on Saturday, the day immediately before the TOC, with the following restrictions:
  - 1. You may only pre-fish with another FBC TOC qualifier, FBC club member or immediate family member. For the purposes of this section, immediate family members are defined as Father, Mother, Spouse, Children, and in-laws by marriage.
  - 2. You cannot pre-fish with a guide, or a person deemed a “local expert” (Unless that person is already an FBC member) on the TOC body of water any time after the official cutoff as defined above. A “local expert” is defined as anyone who has ever fished a tournament for money on that specific body of water.
  - 3. If you are a TOC qualified non-boater and utilize a non-qualifying club member’s boat to pre-fish with, the non-qualifying club member may not provide any information to the TOC qualifier for the purpose of locating or catching bass. The non-qualifying club member cannot operate the trolling motor or electronics for the non-boater or do anything else to give the non-boater an unfair advantage over other TOC participants. The non-qualifying club member whose boat is being used can only run the big motor and navigate their boat from fishing location to fishing location per the non-boaters’ instructions. Once at a fishing location, the non-qualifying boater must relinquish control of the front of the boat to the TOC participant and remain an observer.

**15. ANGLER OF THE YEAR:**

- A. Angler of the Year shall be determined by the total raw points earned throughout the tournament season. There are no throw-outs for AOY.
- B. In the event of a tie for “Angler of the Year,” first place shall be shared by the two tied contestants and AOY trophies given to both.

**16. ROOKIE OF THE YEAR:**

- A. Rookie of the Year is a first-time angler in the FRESNO BASS CLUB. The Rookie is allowed to participate for this award only during their first FULL season (calendar year) in the club.
- B. In the event of a tie, the award shall be shared by the two tied contestants and trophies will be given to both.

**17. NON-BOATER OF THE YEAR:**

- A. Non-Boater of the Year is an angler that is subject to the non-boater’s draw for partners for the complete tournament year.
- B. A non-boater may retain their non-boater status if:
  - 1. Angler is drawn out, but there are more non-boaters than boaters, and the non-boater is required to furnish a boat to compete in the tournament for which the angler is drawn out.
  - 2. The tournament director requested that said non-boater furnish a boat for a given tournament to prevent other non-boaters from being drawn out.
  - 3. The tournament director shall insure the events in 1 and 2 above do not occur more than twice in a tournament year.
- C. In the event of a tie for Non-Boater of the Year, the award will be shared by the two tied contestants and trophies will be given to both.

**18. RULE DECISIONS:**

- A. The interpretation of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Board of Directors.
- B. All protests or complaints must be filed in writing with a board member present at the tournament no later than 30 minutes after the last contestant has weighed in.
- C. A properly filed protest or complaint must be acted upon by the board.

- D. If the member filing a protest or complaint is a board member, the contestant must file the protest or complaint with another board member who is present.
- E. If the above procedure is not followed, the protest or complaint shall be invalid, and no action will be taken.
- F. Annual review of club rules requires a board majority vote to approve any changes

**Issue date: July 11, 2024**