



# ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit

## Official Rules

ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit official rules/online rules will take precedence over all written rules.

ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit reserves the right to have an observer/camera boat follow a competitor's boat or place an observer in a competitor(s) boat at any tournament event.

**ELIGIBILITY:** All individuals with a paid entry fee are eligible to fish. All participants under 18 years of age must have a signature from a parent or legal guardian and must be boating with a certified boater. A team may consist of one (1) angler per boat or two (2) anglers per boat. ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit reserves the right to reject any entry that is not in the best interest of the tournament.

**ENTRY FEE:** Entry fee is \$200.00 per boat per tournament. Conservation of the fish is a great concern to us. To protect the species, we will release the team's fish after they are weighed in. Entry fees will be accepted by mail or may be paid at the ramp. Take off positions are determined by order of paid entry. Paid entry fees or deposits may be transferred with ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit approval. No refunds.

**BIG BASS POT & SIDE POT:** There will be an optional \$20.00 Big Bass Pot per boat at every tournament. Two (2) Big Bass places will be paid at each tournament. There will be an optional \$20.00 Side Pot at each tournament, which will be paid back to the top 3 heaviest bags. 100% of the Big Bass and Side Pot money taken in will be paid back.

**PAYBACK:** ABA Shriners Open Fishing Circuit will pay back one (1) place for every ten (10) teams entered at all tournaments. All tournaments will pay back 85% to the field.

**CHECK-IN and PRE-MEETING:** One team member must check in the morning of the tournament. A pre-meeting will take place on the water approximately five (5) minutes prior to the official start time. Idle by live well checks will take place at any time either on or off the water.

**SCORING / CULLING:** Largemouth, small mouth, and spotted bass will be scored. There will be a five (5) fish limit at all lakes. Short fish will result in a one (1) pound penalty plus the loss of the short fish. A dead fish will result in a one (1) pound penalty per dead fish. If dead fish is big bass, one (1) pound will be deducted from big bass. No more than five (5) fish are allowed in a live well at any time, unless it is during the culling process. Anyone bringing more than five (5) fish to the weigh-in scales will not be allowed to weight in any fish. Culling of dead fish is prohibited.

**QUALITY ASSURANCE TESTING:** By competitor(s) signature on entry form and / or participation in these tournaments, the competitor(s) agree to any quality assurance tests if required by the Tournament Director. They may include all or part of the following: CVSA, Polygraph Test, Urinalysis, or Blood Test. Refusal of an angler to submit to a test or failure of a test will result in loss of winnings, immediate disqualification, plus subsequent disqualification from future tournaments. Quality assurance tests will be conducted as soon as possible at the conclusion of official tournament hours.

**SAFETY and SPORTSMANSHIP:** Safe boating must be observed at all times. Life jackets and kill switches must be used any time the combustion motor is running above an idle. All competitors are required to follow the highest degree of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation. At the discretion of the Tournament Director, tournament days may be shortened or cancelled due to unsafe weather or water

conditions. No alcohol or controlled substance can be used or allowed in the boat during tournament hours. No hole sitting allowed.

**PROTEST:** All protests must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director within fifteen (15) minutes of the weigh-in completion. The appointed Tournament Advisory Board will handle all protests. The decision of the Tournament Director shall be final in all matters.

**LATE PENALTY:** One (1) pound per minute, up to ten (10) minutes, the disqualification.

**TIES: Tournaments (Overall Results):** All ties will be broken by 1) big bass, 2) most fish weighed in, 3) by earliest entry. **Tournament (Big Bass):** All ties will be broken by 1) total weight, 2) earliest entry.

**Standings:** All ties will be broken by 1) total weight, 2) big bass.

**TACKLE and EQUIPMENT:** Only artificial lures and pork style baits are allowed, no "live bait" or "prepared bait" is permitted during the tournament hours. All bass must be caught on a rod and reel. Only one rod and reel in use at any time by any one angler. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. All angling must be done from the boat, anglers are not permitted to leave the boat to land a fish or to gain access to secluded waters.

**BOATS and MOTORS:** Any boat, 14 feet or longer, meeting B.I.A. and Coast Guard requirements with a functional kill switch and functional bilge pump and properly aerated live well will be accepted. No over-powered boats.

**LOCATIONS:** Anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as "off limits" or "no fishing" by the Corp of Engineers, local, state, or federal officials. Fishing is not permitted within fifty (50) yards of a marina gas pump or competitors anchored boat. Any additional off limits will be announced at the pre-meeting prior to take-off.

**INSURANCE:** Boat owners must have at least \$100,000 of boating liability insurance. Proof of insurance may be asked for at any time and may be a question on the polygraph test.

**SPECIAL SITUATIONS: Breakdown:** In the event of a boat breakdown, the team may transfer their fish to another competitor's boat for transport to the weigh-in site, meeting the following conditions. The fish must be placed in a segregated live well. One member of the breakdown team must accompany those fish at all times to the weigh-in site. The team broken down must stop fishing from the time of transfer. **Early Departure:** Any team departing prior to weigh-in from the tournament lake, must contact the Tournament Director or appointed staff member. This is to assure that no competitors are stranded on the lake. **Cell Phones:** We encourage all competitors to have a cell phone in their boat for emergency use only. Competitors must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. No tournament boat may be loaded on the trailer before weigh-in except with the permission of the Tournament Director.

**RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND COVENANT NOT TO SUE:** All competitors must sign a waiver, release of liability, and covenant not to sue before competing in any tournament. It is required that all competitors take responsibility for themselves while participating in event activities.

**KNOWLEDGE OF THESE RULES IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH COMPETITOR:** Failure to read these rules or ignorance of them is no excuse. The Tournament Director reserves the right to reject any entry if he feels that it is not in the best interest of the ABA Shriners Fishing Circuit. Any announcements made by the Tournament Director at the tournament site take precedent over written rules. The decision of the Tournament Director shall be final in all matters.