

2022 STARS AND STRIPES TEAM TOURNAMENT RULES & REGULATIONS

1. SAFETY: Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard-approved life preserver whenever the combustion engine is operating. All boats must be equipped with an ignition kill switch. A lanyard is to be attached to the boat kill switch and operator any time the combustion engine is operating. Violation of this rule shall be a reason for disqualification.

2. SPORTSMANSHIP: Tournament competitors are expected to adhere to high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal possession or use of a controlled substance during the tournament or tournament functions will be grounds for disqualification from that event and all further Stars and Stripes events. Any contestants cited during tournament hours for a violation of state, marine, fishing or conservation laws will be disqualified.

3. TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT: Only artificial lures may be used. (No live or prepared bait will be allowed with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Commercial fish attractants are allowed) Only one casting or spinning rod may be used at any time. Any competitor found to have in his possession equipment or baits not permitted will be disqualified.

4. HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS: Only Boats and Motors that are in compliance with the B.I.A. horsepower rating will be allowed to participate.

5. BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT: Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment, in addition to a live-well properly aerated to adequately maintain a live five-bass team limit.

6. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS: Fishing on tournament waters is permitted anywhere except those areas designated off-limits on the day of the tournament or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored. All angling must be done from the boat. Contestants may not depart the boat to retrieve a fish. The boat must remain in legal tournament waters on tournament days. Both team members must remain in the boat at all times except in the case of a dire emergency.

7. OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT: There shall be only one (1) official point for check out in the morning and check-in for the afternoon. At the time of check out, all boats are expected to be within full compliance of the rules.

8. SCORING: Tournament standing and final winners shall be determined by the pound and fraction of a pound of each team's catch during the day. Only largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass will be weighed. All contestants are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states in which they fish. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. Any fish deemed caught foul hooked will not be weighed.

9. POSSESSION LIMIT: At no time shall a contestant have more fish in possession than the designated limit for a team for the event. In the event that a team has more fish in their possession than the described limit, tournament officials shall cull the fish to the tournament limit starting with the largest fish down to the limit described.

10. CULLING: The culling of fish is allowed unless otherwise prohibited by state law. Only non-piercing culling tags will be allowed. Any team found to be using piercing culling tags will be disqualified from this event.

- 11. DEAD FISH PENALTY:** A penalty of one-half (1/2) of a pound will be deducted for each dead fish brought in at the time of weigh-in.
- 12. SHORT FISH PENALTY:** Any fish presented for weigh-in by a contestant that fails to measure the minimum size limit designated for the event shall not be counted in the day's totals. In addition, the largest fish of that day's catch for that team shall also be culled.
- 13. LATE PENALTY:** Competitors who have not arrived at the appointed time shall be penalized one pound per each minute that they are late. Any team over ten minutes late will lose credit for that day's entire catch.
- 14. TIES:** In the event of a tie, big bass will break stringer ties and heavy stringer will break big bass ties.
- 15. ELIGIBILITY:** Participation is open to anglers of either sex who are members of Stars and Stripes. (Unless its an Open Tournament then no membership is required). One member of each team must be eighteen (18) years of age or older. BASS Elite Series, FLW and Major League Fishing Touring Professional are not eligible to participate.
- 16. REGISTRATION:** An official Stars and Stripes entry form must be filled out and signed by both participants for each event they fish (Please print clearly). At least one (1) member of the team must be present for the registration. Failure to register during the prescribed time shall result in loss of starting position and reassigned to the back of the field.
- 17. STARTING POSITIONS:** Starting positions will be drawn at the pre-tournament meeting before each event. The starting positions for the Tournament of Champions will be computer drawn and posted on website 1 week prior to event.
- 18. SUBSTITUTION:** To be considered an established team both members must fish together in at least four events. A team may have only 1 substitute during the season. A substitute is to be identified on the entry form. If substitute is already a Stars and Stripes member then no additional fees, if not already a member of Stars and Stripes then a \$10.00 fee will apply. A member may fish alone.
- 19. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE:** Practice or Scouting of fish will be allowed with the following exceptions. No fishing or boating will be allowed on the tournament waters on the day of the event from 12:01 AM. until the start of the event. Exception to this is for Tournament of Champions.
- 20. TROLLING:** Trolling with the use of a combustible engine as a method of fishing is prohibited. A team found to be doing this would be disqualified for that tournament and put on probation for the remaining seasons tournaments.
- 21. PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE TOC:** Tournament waters are off limits starting 2 weeks before Championship Week. Championship week starts the Sunday before the Event at 12:01AM. During the off limits and tournament week NO GUIDES can be used. Guides are permitted prior to.
- 22. NO WAKE ZONES:** All no-wake zones and areas are NO PASS zones unless the boat being passed is fishing, gives permission to pass, is inoperable or multiple boat lanes permit a different route to be taken.

23. COMPLIANCE: It shall be the sole responsibility of all entrants to comply with the said rules and regulations.

24. RULINGS: The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall reserve the right for rules interpretations and rulings thereof. Furthermore, the tournament committee reserves the right to change dates or sites of any given tournament. Any protest must be in writing, signed by the protester, and filed in writing within ten minutes after weigh-in. The decision of the tournament officials in all rulings shall be final. Any and all contestants are subject to a truth verification exam (polygraph test), at the discretion of the tournament director or official. Failure to take and successfully complete this test is a reason for disqualification and forfeit of all prizes from this and all future Stars and Stripes events.

25. REFUSAL OF MEMBERSHIP: We reserve the right to refuse membership or entry into any Stars and Stripes Tournament Trail Events.

26. CHEATING: Anyone caught cheating in any tournament event will be immediately barred from fishing in any Stars and Stripes Events.

27. INSURANCE: All members will carry liability insurance on any boat they might use during any Stars and Stripes Tournaments. Failure to do so or reporting of false information will result in disqualification.

28. QUALIFYING FOR 2022 TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS: To qualify for this event two entrants must be designated as a team on the entry forms for the qualifying events that they participated in. A member of a qualified team whose partner can't attend this event can join together with another qualified member to create an eligible team. They also must enter a minimum of five events during the season.

29. TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS ENTRY FEE: Entry fees for the Tournament of Champions will be \$240.