**COMPETITION RULES, INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT**

Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to LONE STAR BASS TRAIL. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each Angler agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations may be cause for disqualification. The violation of a tournament rule may result in, but is not limited to, weight loss, the loss of weight up to a specific time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day and or disqualification from the entire tournament.

1**. LAWS, BOATS, SAFETY AND WEATHER**

* LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Anglers must adhere to all federal, state and local laws. Anglers are required to contact the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL tournament director in charge with any questions or concerns.
* Each Angler/Team will be permitted to use their boat for tournament competition and should be fully equipped with all essentials to meet state water safety requirements including proper insurance.
* The Angler/Team must have his boat’s Kill Switch connected any time the combustion engine is in gear. If the Angler/Team does not comply with the Kill Switch rule the boat must be shut down until Angler attaches the Kill Switch.
* Personal floatation device. Each Angler/Team must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver and must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition any time the combustion engine is in gear. If the Angler does not comply with the above the boat must be shut down until all passengers have met the Flotation Device rule.
* The tournament director or his designee has the right to delay, shorten or cancel the start of an event because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors. Competition waters may also be restricted at any time because of bad weather. LONE STAR BASS TRAIL monitor the weather during the competition day and will communicate to you via text message and phone.
* In the event dangerous conditions develop, LONE STAR BASS TRAIL will suspend the competition for all participants and instruct you to immediately take cover. If at any time you feel you are in danger, and you HAVE NOT been contacted, you should take cover and immediately contact the tournament director in charge. The tournament director in charge will suspend the competition until the conditions have improved.

2. **SPORTSMANSHIP**

* LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Competitors are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any violation of the standards may be deemed cause for disqualification. (SEE Sportsmanship and Flagrant Sportsmanship Violations, definition and penalties,
* Use of alcohol or drugs (other than drugs purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Events could be cause for automatic disqualification.
* Maximum courtesy must always be practiced, especially regarding boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters.
* GoPro footage will be reviewed for violations after each event

3. **LONE STAR BASS TRAIL TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR’S ROLE**

* Interpretation and enforcement of rules shall be left exclusively to the tournament director and/or his assigned designees at the competition.
* In the event of a rule violation, the tournament director and/or his designees may impose such sanctions as disqualification and/or prohibition from participation in subsequent LONE STAR BASS TRAIL competitions.
* Subject to appeal, the decision of the tournament directors and/or his designees, or a special rules committee established by the tournament director shall be final in all matters.
* Serves as the on-site liaison between the Anglers as required.

4. **LONE STAR BASS TRAIL GoPro FOOTAGE**

* In-leu of a boat official LONE STAR BASS TRAIL will provide each angler with a GoPro camera mounted to a Yolotek power stick.
* Each angler is responsible for providing a working Anchor light for the Yolotek power stick placement.
* The GoPro will be set up to the specifications as set forward by the tournament director and the angler should not alter with the GoPro during the course of the day unless directed to by the tournament director
* All fish must be weighed in front of the camera for documentation purposes
* At this time no penalties will be assessed for any landing violations etc until such a time as live feeds are available, at that point tournament officials will be able to monitor video and assess penalties via text communication.
* Each angler is responsible for having a smart device either phone or tablet that is capable of sending and receiving text messages and phone calls. In the event of cell service outage continue sending text updates as required
* Prior to launching each angler will be given a set of scales, extra batteries, GoPro mounted to a Yolotek power stick and a paper pad/pen in case of failure of devices. All materials must be returned to tournament trailer upon completion of the tournament day.
* The duties of the angler/team will be to weigh and record the weight of each scorable catch in the log book as well as update the Scoring System using their Smartphone through the Connect Scale App
* Anglers are also responsible as “time keepers” throughout day as to when “lines are in” and “lines are out”. See 8e SPECIFIC ILF COMPETITION RULES / PENALTIES
* As of now, NO Specific Penalty Violations will be assessed “on the spot” However, if noted by tournament director during the pre tournament meeting the ability to assess penalties has been activated for that individual tournament penalties will be assessed via text and/or phone call.

5. **THE WEIGHING OF BASS**

* All LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Events shall utilize the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL term “scorable bass". A scorable bass is any bass caught that weighs one (1) pound or greater. Any bass caught that weighs less than one (1) pound shall be deemed “un-scorable.” Weight is the only determining factor for a bass being scorable or un-scorable.
* There is no limit to the number of scorable bass an angler/team can catch and record during competition.
* Only the angler/team will handle bass caught during competition. Once a bass is caught, the bass will be set onto the official scale by the angler/team.
* The angler/team will hold the official scale by the hand only and position it at eye level. The bass must be steady, allowing the scale to be clearly read by the camera.
* Should the bass be less than one (1) pound, Should the bass be more than one (1) pound, fish can then be entered into the official scoring systems. The scale system should automatically log the catch. LONE STAR BASS TRAIL has redundant systems and both should be used when available. Then angler/team should also write down the weight and time of the fish catch as backup.
* The LONE STAR BASS TRAIL OPEN is a combined 2 tournaments a 5 fish limit tournament and also a no limits tournament. Anglers can enter one or both events. The software will automatically cull any fish weighed if you are in the 5 fish limit event

6. **END-OF-PERIOD SCORING**

* The LONE STAR BASS TRAIL OPEN will have no breaks or periods
* the angler/team is responsible for knowing the when a period starts and ends.
* At the ends of periods, the angler will be clearly notified by text when the period competition is coming to an end and when angler must stop fishing. The only deviations to the scheduled ends of periods will be if all anglers receive extra competition time because of an Official Time Out due to a Mechanical Failure, Medical Emergency or Weather, as called by the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL tournament director in charge.
* Regarding the final cast of any period, any bass hooked on the final cast must be “inside the boat” - visibly inside the gunnel - before the time expires.

7. **TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT**

* Use of nets and grippers for landing bass is prohibited.
* Only artificial lures can be used and must follow state guidelines.
* All bass must be caught in a conventional sporting manner.
* Any bass caught while “visually fishing” must be hooked inside the mouth and verified by the showing to the camera in a manner that the camera will pick up the fish is hooked inside the mouth before being unhooked. The weight of a bass caught by the technique of “sight fishing” can only be scored once during that day.
* Anglers will be permitted the use of a lure retriever; however, LONE STAR BASS TRAIL anglers must supply their own lure retriever.

8. **CELL PHONE USAGE**

* Anglers are not allowed to use their Cell Phones at any time during an Event to place a call or send a text for the means of locating fish. Obviously, due to the nature of this event heavy cell phone usage will be happening.
* Anglers cell phones will be used during the competition day to log catches via text and the appropriate app and to check the leaderboard as the Angler/Team sees fit

9. **ALCOHOL, DRUGS and DRESS CODE**

* Use of alcohol or drugs (other than drugs purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any Angler LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Events including the award presentation after the event is not permitted and could be cause for automatic disqualification.
* Anglers must be clothed with photo or video appropriate apparel during the entire event and cannot go shirtless.

**THE BELOW PENALTIES WILL NOT BE ASSESSED DURING THE 2019 SEASON. THE RULES STILL APPLY BUT PENALTIES WILL NOT BE ASSESSED AT THIS TIME. FAILURE TO ADHERE TO THE RULES WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION FROM THE EVENT AND POSSIBLY FUTURE EVENTS**

10. **COMPETITION RULES / PENALTIES**

* NO INFORMATION RULE: An angler shall not pursue any action of any kind that may give that Angler/Team a competitive advantage during competition.

All Anglers, including eliminated Anglers, may not talk with any other Angler/Team, sponsor, locals or anyone else, except for authorized media personnel about any daily results or any other event information. Anglers may not talk to about any other Angler’s lake positions or tactics used during any competition day.

Once the lake or body of water is announced at the pre-tournament meeting the anglers may use any mapping or GPS device including boat electronics, cell phones, tablets or computers to research any information about the event location. The angler is prohibited from using is cell phone device to place call, text or email to gain lake information at any time after the specific lake has been announced.

Should an angler receive information that potentially gives him/her a competitive advantage, such as locations: baits, topography, conditions, etc., including unsolicited information, he is required to share that information with the tournament director. The tournament director shall determine whether this information should be subsequently shared with any or all other anglers.

***(Penalty –Sharing Information, Result: 10 min stop fishing and/or disqualification*)**

* ASSESSING PENALTIES: If the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL calls a penalty on the angler, he/she is not allowed to drop shallow water anchors or operate the trolling motor unless the boat is in immediate danger of being damaged.

For example, if a penalty results from a bass Landing Violation the bass must immediately be weighed and released. The angler is required to manually record the weight of the bass in the Official Log Book before he starts the penalty clock.

Once the penalty clock starts the angler is not allowed to do any FISHING MOVE or Activity (such as: retie, change baits, etc.) during a penalty time. The only exception is moving the boat to the nearest safe water. If the angler fails to stop doing fishing activities an additional penalty time will be added for a penalty compliance violation for each occurrence.

***(Penalty - Penalty Compliance Violation, 1 Minute Additional Penalty)***

* PENALTY CARRY-OVER: If an angler is assessed a penalty at the end of Period One or Period Two, the penalty time will begin at the “Lines IN” in the next period. The beginning ride around time prior to "Lines IN" cannot be used for the penalty minutes.
* LINES-IN LINES-OUT RULE: The anglers are given the starting and ending time of each period by the tournament director. It is the responsibility of each to be aware of these “times”. Any casting that is done outside of the start (LINES-IN) and ending (LINES-OUT) times will result in a penalty plus loose of any fish caught.

This includes the time between periods, anglers are not allowed to test or tune lures by casting or entering the water.

***(Penalty –Penalty Lines-In Lines-Out, 10 Minute Stop Fishing Penalty)***

* ENCROACHMENT RULE: There is no official buoy distance rule. However, at no time is an angler allowed to interfere with another angler’s line. If an angler casts close to another angler and hooks into or crosses over his/her line, the casting angler will be penalized. anglers approaching another Anglers area are expected express their intentions and follow Sportsmanship rules.

**(Penalty –Hooking or Cross over other line, 2 Min., stop fishing when lines are untangled)**

* LANDING BASS: While landing Bass, the Bass cannot touch anything within the gunnel rail of the Boat including the carpet. If the bass comes unhooked from the bait and falls to the carpet or hits any other part of the inside of the Boat, it will be assessed as a violation. The only exception to this is a “deep-set hook or bait” that needs to be removed to protect the fish.

Additionally, the angler is not allowed to cradle or secure control of the Bass against the body while landing the Bass. The angler cannot allow a Bass to touch any part of his body other than his hands or forearms. The only exception is slight tail flicks or touches are not counted as an infraction.

Should an angler hook multiple Bass on one bait, a penalty will be assessed for each bass that touches anything inside the boat or touches the angler as described above.

A landing penalty can be assessed from the time the Bass is inside the gunnel rail to when the bass is placed on the scale clip. A Bass that is not properly clipped to the scale and fall to the carpet is also considered a penalty. Angers can be assessed multiple Landing penalties.

The Landing violation only applies to the Bass species.

***(Penalty –Fish Landing violation, 2 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* RELEASING of CATCH: When releasing any species of fish that is scorable or un-scorable, the angler’s hand must be at gunnel level or closer to the water. No flipping or tossing of any fish species.

***(Penalty –Fish release violation, 2 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* BROKE OFF FISH: LONE STAR BASS TRAILdoes not have a Broke Off Fish penalty.
* SECOND LINE: An angler will be allowed to utilize a second line in the water ONCE PER PERIOD. However, when utilizing a second line, an angler must employ a “cast and retrieve” method. Working bottom bait very slowly is considered a “cast and retrieve” method. If an angler casts a second line in the water more than once per period, the angler will receive a penalty. Dragging a line from a stationery rod is not permitted. Although the angler will be penalized for the second-time use of two lines, any bass caught that is scorable will count.

***(Penalty –Illegal 2nd Line, 1 Min., stop fishing when 2nd lure is retrieved)***

* LEAVING BOAT TO FISH: Anglers may not leave the boat for the purpose of fishing. Leaving the boat to assist in landing a hooked bass, as an act of fishing, will result in a penalty. Although penalized, if an angler retrieves a scorable bass, the fish will count. Leaving the boat for non-fishing reasons is allowed without a penalty.

***(Penalty –Leaving Boat to Land fish, 4 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* OUT OF BOUNDS: On some bodies of water, anglers will compete in a pre-determined zone each day. The boat must be positioned inside the zone boundaries. Fishing outside of the boundaries is allowed if the boat position remains inside the boundaries. Any boat position outside the zone will result in a penalty.

***(Penalty –Boat out of Bounds, 5 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* GRAPHING: Graphing between periods in order to locate bass is not allowed. Penalty will be called when the angler marks a waypoint between periods.

***(Penalty –Graphing between Periods, 5 Minutes at start of next period)***

* PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICE: Each angler must wear a Coast Guard-approved chest-type life preserver. ILF Angler’s life preserver must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition any time the combustion engine is in gear. If the angler does not comply with the above the boat must be shut down until all passengers have met the Flotation Device rule.

***(Penalty - Safe-boat conduct Penalty, 3 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* KILL SWITCH: The angler or other appointed driver must have his boat’s kill switch connected any time the combustion engine is in gear. If angler does not comply with the above the boat must be shut down until angler or other appointed drive attaches the Kill Switch.

***(Penalty –Kill-switch connection, 5 Minutes immediate, stop fishing)***

* SPORTSMANSHIP: A Sportsmanship Violation is defined as aggressive or hostile behavior directed at a fellow angler, a non-competitor or any representative of LONE STAR BASS TRAIL, including the use of profanity directed at these individuals, will not be tolerated. Anglers are required to report violations to the tournament director.

***(Sportsmanship Violation, Penalty will be determined by the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL tournament director)***

* FLAGRANT VIOLATION: A flagrant violation for any act that reflects unfavorably upon the positive efforts of LONE STAR BASS TRAIL, LONE STAR BASS TRAIL sponsors, spectators, fisheries conservation, and clean waters will not be tolerated.

***(Sportsmanship Violation, Penalty will be determined by the LONE STAR BASS TRAIL Tournament director)***

* MECHANICAL FAULT: If an angler experiences mechanical failure during competition and the tournament director determines that the angler is at fault for the problem, no TIME OUT will be called.

***(Penalty –Self-inflicted Mechanical Failure, No time out for repair)***

* MECHANICAL FAILURE: If an angler’s boat experiences mechanical failure during competition and the problem is determined by the tournament director to be no fault of the angler, an OFFICIAL TIME OUT will be issued. All competing anglers will be promptly notified when the OFFICIAL TIME OUT is to begin. Anglers must immediately stop fishing when the OFFICIAL TIME OUT is called. Anglers in the process of landing in a “hooked” bass it will be allowed to count as a scorable bass toward his daily weight total.

The OFFICIAL TIME OUT will be employed for the duration required to replace the angler’s boat or appropriate boat part. The angler experiencing the boat failure will notify the tournament director in charge who will then communicate the beginning and ending times for the OFFICIAL TIME OUT.

If it is determined the repair is not fixable the angler will have to finish the competition in the best means possible.

At the end of the period, anglers will be allotted extra minutes of fishing, with the total number of minutes equaling the duration of the OFFICIAL TIME OUT. LONE STAR BASS TRAIL reserves the right to alter the day’s competitive time schedule should a TIME OUT occur.

* IMBEDDED HOOK IN ANGLERS BODY: If an Angler has an imbedded hook in any part of his body, NO TIME OUT will be called.
* Litter and Smoking: No littering in the lake including plastic baits, line and cigarette butts.

***(Penalty –Litter and Smoking, 2-minute penalty)***