



2026 Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation Team Series Overview and Rules

Set-Up:

A Tournament Director or Committee shall run each Tournament. The Tournament Director shall be allowed to fish as a contestant. Tournament Headquarters shall be the official weigh-in site.

Angler Teams:

The Team Series is open to any two-person team. In order to be an eligible two-person team:

- Both team members must be a registered B.A.S.S. Nation member (\$30.00)
- Both team members must be a registered Illinois Bass Nation Member (\$65.00)
- Teams may consist of two adults or an adult and minor.
- Neither team member may be a professional angler on a major tournament circuit such as the Bassmaster Elite Series, MLF Bass Pro Tour, NPFL
- Neither team member may be a current local guide on the tournament waters.
- Your team may substitute a partner for an individual tournament who must meet all membership requirements. The substitute may not be a registered guide on the tournament body of water.
- Your team may fish one tournament solo. Lake size limit regulations do apply.
- If for some reason you are forced to get a new partner, this may be approved once during the series. All circumstances concerning a partner change must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director and or tournament committee, reviewed and approved prior to the next tournament. The Tournament Directors' decisions are final. No Partner changes will be allowed after the 3rd tournament of the series. Extenuating circumstances will be discussed by the tournament committee.
- The IBN reserves the right to reject and/or revoke Team Series membership for any past or present conduct that the IBN Board unanimously determines in its sole discretion to be inconsistent with fair competition and good sportsmanship.

Point System:

All Teams will receive 50 points for participation by checking in the morning of the tournament. Their weight will then be added to the participation points to determine their point standings following each event. **Scoring will be the best of 5 events out to the 7 events dropping your lowest 2 scores.**



1st Place	100 points
2nd Place	99 points
3rd Place	98 points
4th Place	97 points

Pay outs:

The payout will be based solely on the participation level for the individual tournament. Typically an event will pay 1 place for every 7 entries received. Final determination will be made by the tournament director or committee at each event. The IBN will always pay at least 3 positions.

Bassmaster Team Championship:

All Team Series participants will be competing for a spot at the **Bassmaster Team Championship**.

The IBN will send a minimum of one team. We will begin with the top team by points and continue down to fill all possible spots. **Total Points for the season will not include the Team Series Classic Tournament.** The entry fee for the Bassmaster Team Championship is \$500 per team. This entry fee will be paid by the IBN on behalf of the teams that qualify.

Bassmaster Team Championship anglers compete for a spot in the 2027 Bassmaster Classic.

IBN Team Series Classic:

The Classic field will be limited to 20 qualifying teams in the AOY point standings. If a team receives a classic entry but elects not to fish the classic, that spot does not become available to the next highest point finisher. In such cases the field is reduced to the remaining classic qualifiers that elect to fish the classic.

IBN Team Classic Payout:

The Payout for the Classic will be solely based on the success of the team series tournaments. The amount of the winnings will be determined at the end of the official tournament series. The final amount of payout for the tournament will be determined by the IBN at the completion of the tournament series.



Illinois Bass Nation Member Incentive:

At the end of the series the IBN will award a spot on the following year's IBN State Team to the 4 highest placed teams (Boater and Non-Boater) that are registered, active members of an IBN club in the current and previous year.

All participating Teams are encouraged to become a part of an IBN Club to take advantage of this Member Incentive Opportunity.

Insurance:

DURING THE OFFICIAL COMPETITION DAYS, NO COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT COMPETITOR HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM OF \$300,000 BOATING LIABILITY INSURANCE COVERING THE BOAT BEING USED IN THE TOURNAMENT. PROOF OF INSURANCE MUST BE WITH THE BOAT BEING USED AND MUST COVER THE COMPETITORS USING THAT BOAT. RANDOM CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED AND ANY COMPETITOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF IN-FORCE INSURANCE WITH \$300,000 COVERAGE WILL NOT BE ALLOWED TO COMPETE.

Official Rules & Procedures:

Official Rules:

Great effort, study and research have gone into the formulation of these rules. Our intention is to generally follow the tournament rules published by B.A.S.S. from time to time. In the event of any conflict between B.A.S.S.' rules and our stated rules herein exist, then the stricter rule shall apply. Likewise, in the event of any conflict between our rules and the rules of any federal, state, municipality or other authority (such as the DNR or lake manager, etc.) exists, then the stricter version shall apply. For the avoidance of doubt, interpretation and enforcement of rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Director / committee. The Tournament Director / committee may impose such sanctions, as he deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualification, and forfeiture of any and all prizes. The decision of the Tournament Director / committee shall be final in all matters.

1. Tournament Entry Fee:

Tournament entry fees for 2026 regular season events will be \$160 for participants that pre-register (i.e. confirmed payment of deposit/entry fee via IBN website, or payment received by IBN via mail prior to the tournament), otherwise the tournament entry fees paid at the trailer on tournament day will be \$185 per team. Only pre-registered entries are eligible to draw their launch position. Same day entries will fill the final launch



positions in order of tournament registration (i.e. the last same day entry will be the last launch position).

2. Series Pre-Registration:

Each team may preregister at \$50 per tournament.

Example

- Team “A” can send in \$50 for each team series event they want to secure a launch position in all events, which will be (\$50 x 7 events) \$350
- Team “B” sends in \$150 and specifies the 3 events they want to participate in. Both Teams would then need to pay the remaining \$110 of the entry fee the day of the event. By pre registering they would be exempt from the \$185 entry fee the day of the tournament.

Pre-registered boats will draw for launch position on the morning of the tournament

Anglers can register by sending in an entry form Postmarked no later than 10 days prior to the date of each tournament. Registration can also be completed the morning of the tournament at the launch site and must be a cash transaction; no checks will be accepted at that time. (\$185 at the launch the day of the event).

The Tournament Director may impose a cut off for an event based on our permit allowance at that location. All teams are encouraged to preregister for events.

3. Safety:

Safe boat conduct must be applied at all times by all competitors. During the official competition each competitor must possess a Coast Guard-approved chest type life preserver. This preserver must be strapped, buckled, or zippered securely while on the boat and maintained in that condition until the combustion engine is shut off. Violation of this rule shall be the reason for disqualification. Tournament officials have the right to delay, shorten or cancel the start of an official Tournament Day because of bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the contestants and tournament committee. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather where danger may be imminent. Tournament waters may also be restricted because of unsafe conditions including but not limited to bad weather. The Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation has the right to impose speed limits on any and all tournaments. Whether or not to impose a speed limit, the area covered by the speed limit and/or the actual speed limit imposed shall be left exclusively to the discretion of the Tournament Director. In case of an emergency the competitors shall dial 911 FIRST and then notify the Tournament Director.



4. Sportsmanship:

Competitors of the Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation are expected to follow HIGH STANDARDS of sportsmanship, safety, and conservation. Any infractions of these fundamentals may be deemed cause for disqualification and additional sanctions up to and including removal as a member of the Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation. Use of alcohol or drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by licensed physician) by any competitor during the official practice or during the tournament hours will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future IBN Tournaments. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a competitor, which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries, conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be reason for disqualification. The prevailing statutes and regulations of the State of Illinois bind all competitors. No alcoholic beverages, stimulants, depressants, or otherwise shall be allowed in the boats during the official practice or competition days, Chemical-substance addiction or abuse, conviction of a felony or other crimes involving moral turpitude, or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition, and compliance with tournament rules shall be ground for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification. Competitors who fail to show the morning of take off and have not notified the Tournament Director no later than 11:00 pm the evening prior to the tournament day, at the Tournament Directors discretion may be disqualified. Any disqualification or suspension from, or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and for disqualification.

5. Boat & Motor:

For the safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH. This device must be attached to the driver's body at any time the combustion engine is operating. Anytime the combustion engine is operating and in gear, there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. **Maximum horsepower 250, no jet drive or tunnel hull boats.**



*** All teams moving forward to the Bassmaster Team Championship will be required to operate a console steering boat. No tiller drive boats will be allowed.

6. Basic Boat Equipment:

Every boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. These can be found at www.boatus.org/equipment

7. Boat Identification:

Each boat MAY be given, prior to the day's start an inspection check by a tournament official. All boats will be tagged for identification purposes. The team will be given a numbered plate or Key fob which MUST remain with your boat until turned in at the official check-in.

8. Permitted Fishing Locations:

Tournament waters shall be established by the Tournament Director. Each competitor must obtain this information from the Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation Tournament Director. Fishing is permitted anywhere on tournament waters except within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position with the trolling motor out of the water. Power poles are considered to be a fixed position device. All such boats are required to advise any other competitor when such a boat believes that the competitor's boat is close to being in this 50-yard radius. A competitor has the right to navigate through this 50-yard radius to get to fishable waters. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within this 50-yard circle claimed by him/her to the exclusion of any other competitor. Any water within boundaries posted off limits or NO Fishing by State or Federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS. All angling must be done from a boat. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing an object in tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations.

9. Contestants Must Remain In Boat:

Contestants must not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Boats must remain in tournament waters during tournament days. Contestants must leave and return to official check-in by boat. In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boat to: A BOAT OPERATED BY OTHER COMPETITORS OR A RESCUE BOAT. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions (to contact a tournament official



by phone or other means or to report an emergency breakdown), both competitors must cease fishing at this point and their catch must be verified by a tournament official in order to be counted in the tournament. If after the emergency situation is resolved by the tournament officials and enough time is left for the competitors to resume fishing a RESTART will be allowed and the competitors will continue and their catch will be counted. This applies only to dire emergency situations. The trailering of boats during the tournament hours is prohibited except by the direction of the Tournament Director.

10. Official Check Point:

There shall be only one official check point for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon and this point shall be designated by the Tournament Director. At the time of check out all competitors and their boats shall be in full conformance with all the rules set forth by the Tournament Director. At check-in all boats shall identify themselves by means of numbered plate or key fob and proceed immediately to the designated weigh-in area. Partners should stay together until they have completed weigh-in.

11. SCORING:

Tournament standings and final winners shall be determined by the pound and hundredth of a pound weight of each Team's catch during the competition day of the tournament. Only Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted-bass will be weighed. The limit shall be 5 of the above species and varieties per day, unless the prevailing state limit is less than 5, or a special limit is established for a particular tournament by the tournament officials, in which case the state limit, or special limit, shall be the tournament limit. At no time shall a competitor have possession of more than the tournament limit. Once a team is in possession of a tournament limit, both competitors may continue to fish, however both competitors must immediately stop fishing in the event either competitor achieves possession of fish in excess of the tournament limit, and must not begin fishing again until the process of culling down to the tournament limit is complete. Culling of dead bass is prohibited. Tournament officials will conduct checks for violation of these provisions, and in the event a competitor is determined to have culled a dead fish, or to have had possession of more than the above-described limits, shall be cause for penalty and/or disqualification as determined by the Tournament Director. The official length for bass shall be determined by the Tournament Director and announced at the tournament briefing. In most cases it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters. Only bass as described above which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighted-in. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of the tournament officials. After competitors check-in at the official checkpoint they MUST present all LEGAL bass fish in his possession to the tournament official to be counted, measured and weighed. Each competitor is expected to keep his catch alive by use of a properly aerated live well. All bass shall be escorted from the live well to the bump tank only in the bags provided by the tournament



officials, which competitors must fill with enough water to insure survival. Failure to do this can result in disqualification. The few bass which do not survive may be used for scientific study and for charity. Bass must not be placed on stringers at any time during the tournament.

12. Culling

CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED. For each legal dead bass presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized 8 oz. (.5 Lbs) The Tournament Director or his designees shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points. In addition, the Tournament Director, or his/her designees, may reduce tournament hours or tournament limits for fish care purposes. It is suggested in warm weather tournaments anglers keep extra ice for fish care. Contestants are allowed to purchase ice on the water at a retailer.

13. PENALTY POINTS:

Once checked in at the official check in point, competitor teams must bring all fish in their possession to weigh-in officials

The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have the sole authority for accessing penalty points. For each legal dead bass presented to a weigh-in official the competitor shall be penalized the following amounts on that day's weigh-in.

- 1 Dead Fish - (.50 lb)
- 2 Dead Fish - (1.00 lb)
- 3 Dead Fish - (1.50 lb)
- 4 Dead Fish - (2.00 lb)
- 5 Dead Fish - (2.50 lb)

Competitors that present a bass for weigh-in that fails to measure the prescribed length legal fish for the tournament waters will be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound for each non-legal bass presented from the total score of the competitor after removing the illegal bass. The Tournament Director and his designated appointees shall have authority for accessing penalty points.

Any fish in excess of the tournament limit (whether short or legal) shall result in a 2 lb penalty for each fish in excess of the tournament limit.

For clarification, in the event any competitor team brings more than the tournament limit to weigh-in, such competitors' daily catch shall first be reduced to the tournament limit by eliminating the largest fish first, in succession until the tournament limit is achieved. Then, after assessing any additional penalties for short or dead fish to the adjusted limit, the adjusted limit will be weighed, and then such weight will be adjusted further to account for the 2lb penalty for each fish initially brought to weigh-in that was in excess of the tournament limit. Only live, legal-length fish remaining in the adjusted limit will be eligible for any big bass award.



14. LATE PENALTIES AND NO SHOWS:

Teams who are not in the official check-in area at the appointed time will be penalized at the rate of 1lb. per minute late to be deducted from his total weight, including any weight to be counted toward a big bass award. Any Team more than 10 minutes late shall lose all credit for that day's weight.

16. TIES:

In case of a tie, for the first place team the following tiebreakers will be used in order:

- The team with the largest bass by weight. (All teams are encouraged to weigh their largest bass in case of a tie) It is not the scale official's responsibility to remind them.
- The team with the largest number of legal fish weighed-in during the competition.
- The team or individual with the largest number of legal LIVE fish weighed-in during the competition.
- In the unlikely event that teams remain tied after these tiebreakers are employed, then a flip of a coin will be used to determine winner(s) and the money will be equally split. The tournament Director and tournament officials shall resolve ties for lesser positions.

None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated Tournament official from approaching or boarding any competitor's boat at any time during the official competition day.

17. PROTESTS:

- All protests concerning the tournament must be in writing and signed by the protester and presented to the Tournament Director within 10 minutes of the end of weigh-in time (Scale is closed). The IBN will supply official protest forms which will include a copy that will be provided to the submitter of the protest, and another copy for the angler against which the protest is being filed.
- Protests will not be accepted unless the person(s) filing the protest were directly involved. • If there is evidence of extreme rule violations uncovered at a later time, the board reserves the right to review and take whatever actions it deems necessary.
- All protests will be reviewed and testimony will be taken at a special meeting of the Tournament Committee. All involved parties will be given at least 7 days advance notice. This date, time and location of this meeting will be at the sole discretion of the



Tournament Committee. Only involved parties (individuals not TEAMS) will be allowed at the meeting. No proxies or substitutes will be allowed. Failure to appear at this meeting will be grounds for dismissal of the Protest (if the submitter is not present) or admission of the violation (if the accused is not present).

- EACH CONTESTANT AGREES TO SUBMIT TO A POLYGRAPH TEST SHOULD THAT COMPETITOR BE ACCUSED OF ANY RULE VIOLATION. The costs of the polygraph test will be the responsibility of the party submitting to the polygraph test. Failure to submit to (and pay for) a requested polygraph test will be grounds for disqualification from the tournament and all future IBN events and membership.

18. Media (Written, pictures and information) Results

of the Tournament will not be official until results are reviewed by the Tournament Officials.

By participating in this competition contestants agree to waive their rights of privacy or publicity with regard to the programs of the tournament in which they appear and consent to Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation, B.A.S.S., LLC's (and their parent, affiliated and subsidiary companies, and those acting under their permission or upon their authority), copyrighting, distributing, televising, publishing and using in any way the audio and visual portions of any television videotape, film and photographs of any interviews, scenes or other sequences in which the contestant may be included, and any reproduction thereof, anywhere at any time through medium or media for advertising, promotion, trade, television programming or other lawful purpose whatsoever, and shall not be entitled to receive any royalties or other compensation in connection with such use.

Any issues not specifically addressed in this document will be ruled on by the IBN board and / or Tournament Director / Committee. All decisions will be final.

By completing a tournament entry form you agree that you are familiar with and will abide by all of the rules and requirements in this document.

Illinois B.A.S.S. Nation Team Series
Tournament Director
Matt Marques