

# 2020 OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT RULES

## ELIGIBILITY

- (a) All Federal, State, local parks and wildlife regulations and licensing shall apply at all times.
- (b) **UNLESS EXEMPT**, anglers must have a valid Louisiana Recreational Fishing License in their possession to weigh a bass at the Lazerre Park weigh station. Anglers may be required to confirm license possession during the PSE test.
- (c) Each person in the boat must be a paid contestant of this tournament and abide by all tournament rules and regulations.
- (d) Non-contestants are not allowed in paid contestants' boats at any time during official tournament hours.
- (e) All bass caught by contestants fishing together will be disqualified if any of the contestants are found to be in violation of any tournament rules and regulations.
- (f) Any contestant found to be in violation of any tournament rules and regulations will be disqualified from this tournament and may, in the sole discretion of tournament officials, be disqualified from all future tournaments.
- (g) Tournament officials have the right, in their sole discretion, to refuse any entry.
- (h) Participants under 18 years of age, must be accompanied by a parent or adult with written parental permission at registration.
- (i) **All boats are required to display biodegradable, fluorescent orange flagging tape during the entire tournament. Flagging of at least 4 inches in length must be attached to the trolling motor or other clearly visible location.**
- (j) **When fishing within the boundaries of Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge, (FNWR), each participant must possess a refuge access permit. Permits are available online at the following link.**  
<https://www.fws.gov/southeast/pdf/regulations/felsenthal-national-wildlife-refuge-public-use.pdf>

## REGISTRATION AND ENTRY FEE

- (a) Entry fee must be paid before fishing.
- (b) No refund or substitution of entry fee for any reason.
- (c) The McDonald's Challenge is a mini-tournament within the main tournament. It is open to all TWO-DAY registrants whether an individual or an organization. The cost of entering the Challenge is an additional \$20 added to the two-day rate. The top three largest bass caught by a Challenge entrant will be awarded cash prizes. This may or may not be the largest bass caught in the main tournament.
- (d) **ENTRY FEE** will be \$85 per day fished, \$150 for two days, or \$170 for McDonald's Challenge, **IF POST MARKED BY** June 6th, 2020, you will be entered into the early bird drawing for \$1,500. Entries postmarked or received after Saturday, June 6th, 2020, will be \$95 per day fished, \$170 for two days, or \$190 for McDonald's Challenge. Register at any authorized registration site, the Ronald McDonald House or online.
- (e) Registration will be held at Lazerre Park on Thursday, June 11th (10am to 7pm), Friday, June 12th (9am to 7pm), and Saturday & Sunday, June 13th & 14th prior to the start time for that day. Beginning Thursday June 11th, registration will only be accepted at Lazerre Park.

## SAFETY (THE FOLLOWING IS MANDATORY)

- (a) All boats must be equipped with some type of emergency ignition cut-off device (kill switch) on any combustion powered outboard motor. Ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must operate properly; which means when the kill switch is activated, the outboard main engine must stop running immediately. The ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must be attached to boat operator at all times while the outboard main engine is in use.
- (b) Boat operator must show proof of valid registration.
- (c) U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are required for each person on board. Life jackets must be worn and fastened while main engine is in use.
- (d) No boat shall be overpowered, i.e. have a motor of higher horsepower than approved Coast Guard Maximum.
- (e) The tournament will be held regardless of weather.

- (Should conditions threaten safety, please use caution.)
- (f) No alcohol or illegal drugs allowed during tournament hours.
- (g) The above, mentioned rules are for your own safety.

## PERMITTED FISHING AREAS AND HOURS

- (a) Upstream and downstream tournament boundaries extend from the **HWY 7 BRIDGE AT ARKADELPHIA** to Mile Marker 1 on the Ouachita (Black) River. Tournament waters only include publicly available waters between those two points. Tournament contestants may only launch boats in waters that are permanently and continuously accessible from the Ouachita River by boat.
- (b) **You cannot pull a boat behind another boat and switch in order to access fishing waters.**
- (c) Tournament hours are: one half hour before official sunrise and 3 pm on Saturday and Sunday.
- (d) Official clock and official start/stop times will be determined by tournament's official radio station KJLO/104.1 FM.
- (e) No fishing is allowed within 50 yards of a marina gas pump, or another boat which is tied or anchored with trolling motor out of water, unless permission is granted by the contestant in the other boat.
- (f) At no time may you leave your boat to assist in accessing water or to retrieve a bass. All bass must be caught from a boat.

## TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT

- (a) All bass must be caught on artificial bait utilizing a rod and reel. No trolling with combustion powered motor. Only one rod may be used at any one time by a contestant. Other rods may be in the boat for substitute purposes.
- (b) **Anglers may only fish from motorized or non-motorized water craft.**
- (c) No electronic tracking devices (implanted microchips) may be used to locate bass for tournament purposes (depth-finders and graph charts are the only exceptions).

## WEIGH-IN, SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONSERVATION

- (a) Every participant in this tournament is a supporter and representative of the Ronald McDonald House of Northeast Louisiana. Sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation are expected from every participant.
- (b) Bass must be caught on the same day they are weighed in.
- (c) **All bass caught within Arkansas waters above the Felsenthal Dam, will be weighed at the Crossett Harbor Weigh Station and returned to the waters in which they were caught.**
- (d) **All other bass will be weighed at Lazerre Park.**
- (e) **The weigh-in process for all bass caught in Arkansas waters above Felsenthal dam will be as follows:**
- 1. Tournament anglers will present their catch to the weigh master at the Crossett Harbor weigh station.**
  - 2. Anglers may present two bass at once.**
  - 3. Anglers will receive a weigh card with a number assigned to their bass.**
  - 4. Anglers WILL NOT be told the official weight of their bass at the Crossett Harbor weigh-in.**
  - 5. Anglers may weigh only two bass at the Crossett Harbor weigh station before reporting to the Lazerre Park weigh-in site.**
  - 6. After receiving their weigh card from the Crossett Harbor weigh station, anglers may proceed to the Lazerre Park weigh in station to enter the bass at any time within tournament hours.**
  - 7. To enter a bass, anglers must report to the Lazerre Park holding tank tent with the weigh card just as if they were holding a bass instead of a weigh card.**
  - 8. A Louisiana Recreational Fishing License is not required to enter weigh cards for Arkansas bass.**
- (f) All bass weighed in will become the property of the tournament and will be released back into the tournament waters.
- (g) For conservation reasons, all bass brought to official weigh-in stations must be in a weigh-in bag with water.
- (h) Bass may be transported to the weigh-in sites by any

method possible. However, bass must be alive, as determined by the tournament weigh masters, to be weighed.

- (i) No contestant may win more than one place per official tournament hour. More than one bass per weigh-in bag is prohibited, except at Crossett Harbor, where 2 fish may be brought to weigh-in station in a bag. Bass entered in the Big Bass of The Hour contest do not carry forward from hour to hour.
- (j) Bass must be weighed in by the contestant who actually caught the bass. The bass or Felsenthal weigh in card must be in said contestant's physical possession in the weigh-in line when said contestant declares ready to weigh. Contestant may possess two (2) Felsenthal "weigh cards" or two (2) live "weigh bass", EACH IN A SEPARATE WEIGH BAG, at the holding tank tent. When the contestant decides which fish to commit to weigh, they must have another person to 'hold' the second bass or return it to said contestant's live well/holding device. **When the Felsenthal angler decides to COMMIT TO WEIGH, his weigh card must be presented and HOLE PUNCHED at the weigh/commit tank.**
- (k) **THE LAST OFFICIAL WEIGH-IN WILL END BOTH SATURDAY AND SUNDAY AT 3PM. ANGLERS MUST BE IN THE LAZARRE PARK WEIGH-IN LINE BEFORE 3PM.**
- (l) Any artificially-weighted or preserved bass will be disqualified and that contestant will be disqualified and subject to prosecution.
- (m) Any questionable entry will be subject to inspection by a fisheries biologist or similarly qualified expert from the Department of Wildlife & Fisheries or tournament director.
- (n) **Anglers are advised that contest fraud is a felony. Violation will be prosecuted to the fullest extent allowed under the law.**
- (o) Minimum length of bass to be weighed is **"13 INCHES"**. Official measuring board is the Golden Rule flat board.
- (p) This is a BIG BASS tournament (one bass). Only largemouth, smallmouth and spotted bass will be weighed in.
- (q) **NO CONTESTANT MAY HAVE MORE THAN TWO BASS IN POSSESSION AT ANY TIME DURING OFFICIAL TOURNAMENT HOURS. WEIGH IN CARDS FOR BASS CAUGHT ABOVE THE FELSENTHAL DAM ARE CONSIDERED TO BE THE EQUIVALENT OF LIVE BASS.** All bass will be released back into the tournament waters from which they were caught when tournament is officially over each day.
- (r) In case of ties, the order in which bass are weighed will determine standing(s).
- (s) PSE test will be given to each hourly winner plus at least one other contestant from the hourly top five.
- (t) Each contestant, by signing the entry form agrees to submit to a PSE test.
- (u) After weighing a bass that placed in the current hour top five, anglers must stay under PSE tent until the hour is up or bass is bumped out of top five.
- (v) Any contestant determined by the PSE examination or tournament officials to be in violation of tournament rules will be disqualified.
- (w) Any contestant determined to be intoxicated or under the influence of illegal drugs will be disqualified for this and all future tournaments.
- (x) Any contestant found to be in possession of any illegal substance will be subject to disqualification and prosecution.

## BOAT INSPECTION

- (a) All contestants, by entering this tournament, hereby agree that their boat may be boarded and inspected by tournament officials at any time during the tournament, to include but not limited to, their boat registration, Coast Guard horsepower rating plate and boat contents to include rod boxes, closed storage compartments, tackle box, life jackets, PFDs and safety equipment.