

Mt St Helens Bass Masters Tournament Rules

(Revised January 2022)

DEFINITIONS:

- **Team(s)** – Means one to two individuals fishing solo or together competitively
- **Non-Piercing** – Means that no part of device may pierce the skin/flesh
- **Written communication** – Means handwritten, typed or text message
- **NMMA** – National Marine Manufacturers Association
- **Club** – Refers to a gathering of paid Mt St Helens Bass Masters members
- **Payout** – Refers to prize(s) awarded, monetary or other
- **Total Entries** – Refer to all paid contestants for event

1. **BOATS AND MOTORS:** All boats must meet Coast Guard regulations (insurance, tags, lights lifejackets, etc.). There is no horsepower limit; however, no engine may exceed the NMMA horsepower rating for the boat on which it is used. All boats must have an emergency kill switch. All boats must have an aerated livewell large enough to sustain a tournament limit in releasable condition. Aeration tablets may be used.

2. **SAFETY:** Boating safety must be observed at all times during tournament hours. A US Coast Guard approved, chest type life preserver must be worn and fastened by everyone in the boat anytime the combustible engine is operative, and the kill switch must be tethered to the driver when the engine forward or reverse gears engaged. No alcohol, illegal or prescription drugs that adversely affect the operator maybe consumed during tournament hours. Any angler or anglers consider the fishing conditions unsafe for the event, they can refer the issue to the Tournament Director, at which time the Tournament Director must call for a vote of the Board to proceed with the event.

3. **PROOF OF LIABILITY INSURANCE:** All boaters will provide proof of a valid Owner's Liability Insurance policy to the start of any tournament or tournament season and is required for entry.

4. **DISQUALIFICATION:** Any angler or anglers found to be in violation of any of the documented rules will be disqualified, and entry fees, cash awards and/or trophy awards will be forfeited and may be grounds for future exclusion from any Mt St Helens Bass Master Events. Any angler or anglers that are issued a citation for a safety related reason during the tournament hours will be disqualified and entry fees, cash awards and/or trophy awards will be forfeited. Any disqualification from a "club" tournament will result in entry fees, cash awards and/or trophy awards being forfeited. A disqualifying tournament cannot be used as one of your "throw-out" tournaments. All protests must be made within 30 minutes following the last team's weigh in and shall consist of a verbal communication followed by written communication MUST be filed with the Tournament Director. Any investigation, findings and/or action of protest or disqualification will be at the Tournament Director's discretion. The Tournament Director may request a meeting of the Board of the Mt St Helens Bass Masters for a final decision.
5. **TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:** All fish shall be caught in a legal sporting manner. Intentional snagging of a fish will not be allowed. Any bedding or nesting fish hooked outside the mouth must be released. Trolling with the aid of a combustion motor is not permitted, however "dragging" with an electric motor is considered legal. Only artificial lures may be used. Only one rod may be used at any one time. Other rods may be in the boat and ready for use, however, every cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is made. The use of underwater cameras/video systems may not be used during tournament.
6. **MISCELLANEOUS RULES:** During tournament hours, anglers must stay aboard their boat except for in designated areas or in case of emergency and are allowed to fish only in designated tournament waters. During tournament hours, a contestant may not solicit the assistance or advice from anyone to locate bass except from another entered contestant in the tournament, and violation will be grounds for disqualification. Failure to report violations or suggestions or attempts to violate these rules will be cause for disqualification. Only non-piercing culling devices may be used.

- 7. PERMITTED FISHING WATERS:** The Tournament Director (or their appointee) will determine and communicate any off-limit areas at the Driver's Meeting. All fishing must be done from a previously inspected boat. Boats may not be trailed to and from weigh in site during tournament hours unless under the direction of the Tournament Director. Having a non-contestant sit on a hole for you will not be tolerated and may result in disqualification. Contestants may not leave the boat to land a fish.
- 8. ENCROACHMENT:** A "25-yard rule" is in effect at all times during tournament hours. No contestant's boat may move within 25 yards of another contestant's boat at any time for the purpose of fishing, without the consent of all contestants involved. No contestant may fish within 50 yards of an anchored boat, if consent is granted for one boat, it must be granted for all. A boat moving from one area to another may infringe upon this zone as long as parties that are moving do not fish and do not intentionally disrupt the area. Judging distance is very difficult on the water as a general rule of sportsmanship all anglers should give all other enough room to make reasonable cast to fish area.
- 9. WIEGH-IN:** Each team may weigh a total of five fish. There is no size limit for "club" tournaments. A 12-inch limit size limit is set for all "non-club" tournaments. Fish will be measured on flat board with mouth closed and tail maybe fanned to the advantage of the angler. Size limits may be larger if State regulations require, such as in the case of a slot limit. A penalty of .25 pounds per dead fish will be deducted from the total weight. Any team bringing more than five fish to the scale will be disqualified. Anglers must cull any fish over the five fish limit at the time the sixth fish is caught. Any team weighing a short fish will be assessed a one-pound penalty plus the loss of the short fish. Any team who is late to weigh-in will be penalized one pound per minute up to 15 minutes. After 15 minutes, no weight will be allowed. The Weigh Masters' bump board is considered the tournament official length measuring device.

- 10. SCORING:** Seven club tournaments held each year, five are scored. Each tournament starts with 100 points, big fish bonus. "Show" points for zero fish caught will award per tournament. Formula:

Total weigh + point scale + big fish (if you have B/F) = Total points

Example:

Team 1: Weighs 12.21 B/F 3.00 Points: 112.21

Team 2: Weighs 9.08 B/F 6.25 Points: 112.33

Two-day tournaments still 100 points, but your weight counts. If you do not have B/F for tournament you do not get B/F bonus points.

Teams that weigh zero fish for tournament will receive next number of points in line (example: 1st Place =100pnts+weight, 2nd Place=99pnts+weight, if last team to weigh fish is 10th Place for 90pnts+weight, the teams with zero fish would all receive 89pnts for the tournament). Ties will be decided by big fish.

- 11. TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP:** Points accumulated throughout the yearly tournament schedule will count toward the Team Championship. Points are only awarded for club partner tournaments. No points are awarded for Jack and Jill, Jamboree, or Open tournaments. The team with the highest point total at the end of the year will be the Club Champions, the second highest total will receive second place, the third highest total will receive third place, the fourth highest total will receive fourth place, and the fifth highest total will receive fifth place. There will be two Big Fish awards given out at the end of the season, one for the biggest largemouth and one for the biggest smallmouth.

- 12. CLUB TOURNAMENT ENTRY FEES:** The following fees must be paid by each member of the "team" in order to qualify for cash prizes, trophies/plagues, and end of the year points.

Entry Fee:	\$20 per person
Big Fish:	\$5 per person
Mystery Pot:	\$5 per person
Total paid:	\$30 per person per tournament

13. CLUB TOURNAMENT CASH AWARDS: Club tournaments have a "Club Pay Outⁱ" of 80% of the "Total Entriesⁱⁱ". Cash awards are as follows (may be moved up/down by a few dollars to round out):

First Place: 40% of Pay Out

Second Place: 30% of Pay Out

Third Place: 20% of Pay Out

Fourth Place: 10% of Pay Out

The "Total Entries" are calculated after deducting costs of tournament (plagues, permit fees if applicable, etc.). Big Fish and Mystery Pot will receive 100% of the "Mystery Pot and Big Fish Entryⁱⁱⁱ".

14. OPEN TOURNAMENT TROPHIES: Trophies will be presented for the top 5 places in Open Tournaments, and for Big Fish of the tournament.

15. OPEN TOURNAMENT CASH AWARDS: Open tournaments will provide a "Pay Out" of the "Total Entries" in cash awards as follows:

First Place: 36% of Pay Out

Second Place: 21% of Pay Out

Third Place: 15% of Pay Out

Fourth Place: 10% of Pay Out

Fifth Place: 7% of Pay Out

Sixth Place: 6% of Pay Out

Seventh Place: 5% of Pay Out

Big Fish of the tournament will receive 100% of the "Big Fish Entry^{iv}"

16. UNFILLED TOURNAMENT PLACES: In the event that the fish caught for an event do not determine all places in the event, the remaining place awards percentages of the "Total Entries" will be divided amongst all non-placing tournament contestants. In the event no Big Fish is caught for a tournament, the Big Fish Entry will be returned to those who participated in the option pot. Twenty percent (20%) of the Open Tournament "Total Entries" will remain with the Mt. St. Helens Bass Masters as the host of the tournament, regardless of fish caught.

- 17. SUBSTITUTION POLICY:** For club tournaments only, each team member is allowed one substitute for the season. A team can use the same substitute each time but may not "Cherry Pick" when the substitute is used. It is possible for two teams to pair up as substitutes for a tournament. Each would be solely responsible for their own bag weights for the tournament and would be fishing for own limit.
- 18. PARTNER REPLACEMENT POLICY:** For club tournament only, team members may replace a partner if the partner cannot continue the tournament season. The team must provide written notice that a partner is leaving and who the replacement is. The new partner must pay all necessary club, state, and national dues. The club portion of the due will be pro-rated based on the tournaments completed. A team may only have one replacement partner per tournament season to be eligible for the Team Championship.
- 19. DEVIATION FROM TOURNAMENT RULES:** Any deviation from the Tournament Rules listed above must be brought to the Tournament Director (or their appointee) and if they approve would be brought before anglers for tournament and discussed at the Driver's Meeting prior to the tournament that will be affected. The Tournament Director (or their appointee) will have the final decision on the matter.

¹ "Club Pay Out"- Pay out in club events is 75% of the Total Entries" received.

² "Total Entries" – This is the total entries paid by all participants, not including "Big Fish"

³ "Big Fish Entries" – This is the total entries paid by all participants for the Big Fish option pot and does not include any other entry.

⁴ "Pay Out" – Pay Out is 80% of the "Total Entries" received. The remaining 20% of the entries is retained by the host, Mt St Helens Bass Masters.