

## 2016 SAF High School Fishing State Championship Rules

The TBF Student Angler Federation expects strict adherence to the following rules by all contestants. In the event of an emergency, please call 911 first and then notify the tournament director.

**1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT** • These rules will remain unchanged during 2016. Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the tournament director. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each contestant and coach 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 weight loss (late penalty, dead-fish penalty and short-fish penalty), the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification from the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligibility to participate in future High School Fishing tournaments. Protests are to be made in writing within 30 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day.

**2. PARTICIPATION & ELIGIBILITY** • Participation is open to all 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>, 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grade high school students. Participation by one (1) - 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade student per team is permitted in SAF conducted events: (State Championships, Opens and National events). As long as the primary team member in the boat is of High School grades 9 - 12. You must be a member of SAF to compete. There is no entry fee to TBF Student Angler Federation (SAF) members. For non-members a \$25 membership fee will be collected at the time of ADVANCE registration. Late fees may apply if you register onsite, advance registration online is highly encouraged. SAF members/contestants receive a one-year digital subscription to FLW Fishing e-magazine and full SAF member benefits, including event insurance and other perks. **Contestants must also have the signature of a parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the entry form.** Contestants must have in their possession a current student identification card from the school they represent (our proof of grade level for home schooled/others) and a valid fishing

license for the waters they fish. Contestants are required to follow all applicable federal, state and local regulations and laws. Any violation of such regulations and laws may result in disqualification from the tournament. Each team will consist of two eligible contestants and one coach. Each team must compete in the state in which their school is located. Entries should be made on [Highschoolfishing.org](http://Highschoolfishing.org). Date & time of entry will be recorded. There is no limit to the number of teams accepted from each school or club. Entries for the 2016 season will be accepted for each High School Fishing State Championship starting at 5 p.m. Central time January 7, 2016. Accepted teams will be confirmed and notified via e-mail at least 12 days prior to each tournament. Tournament officials reserve the right to reject any application to fish for any reason whatsoever.

**3. PURCHASING OF OR GATHERING INFO.** • The purchasing of or bartering for information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the hiring of fishing guide services or a coach is not permitted by contestants or coaches within 10 days of the start of any SAF tournament. In addition, during that 10 period, no competitors will be permitted to practice with gain assistance from anyone for the purposes of locating or catching fish except from a teammate or coach from your school club or team who is fishing the same event, your designated boat captain for that event or an immediate family member. Any violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

**4. OFF-LIMITS, PRACTICE & COMPETITION** • There is no official practice period or off-limits period. There are, however, specific rules defined below that govern practice within 10 days of each tournament. Contestants and coaches may be on tournament waters until the start of onsite registration. Contestants and coaches may not enter tournament waters to locate bass or potential fishing waters or sightsee after the start of onsite registration except during tournament hours. Testing equipment on tournament waters after the start of onsite registration is permitted only with prior approval from the tournament director. Within 10 days of the tournament no team, contestant or coach may practice with, hire, barter for, or engage services with, for the purposes of locating or catching bass on the tournament waters, any

person who has been a bass guide for hire on the tournament waters within the last 12 months unless such person is the parent or documented permanent legal guardian of a contestant on a registered team in the event. Written proof of permanent legal guardianship to the satisfaction of tournament officials may be required. Within 10 days of the tournament contestants may only practice with their teammate that is confirmed in the tournament, their coach or an immediate family member (mother, father, brother, sister or grandparent) who also meets the above criteria concerning guides. Nobody else, except an SAF pre-approved media representative or official is allowed in the boat. Within 10 days of the tournament and extending through competition, contestants may not solicit and/or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone except contestants confirmed in the tournament and through publicly available sources (quasi-public websites, blogs and/or social media pages set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a small group of individuals are not publicly available sources). Within 10 days of the tournament and extending through competition, teams may not follow a noncontestant's boat or participate in the placing of markers by noncontestants or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. Flights over tournament waters, including drones, are not permitted on competition days. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

**5. REGISTRATION & PRETOURNAMENT MEETING** • Two high school anglers must register together as a team with a coach, ALL three are HIGHLY encouraged to register in advance online at [highschoolfishing.org](http://highschoolfishing.org) or by calling TBF at 580.765.9031 to avoid a \$25 per angler on-site late registration fee. In addition to a late fee any teams waiting to register until they get to the event will also go out last at the takeoff in the order they registered. Each angler and their coach must check-in at the designated registration check-in site at the times listed. Contestants and/or coaches who fail to notify the tournament director and are more than 15 minutes late for registration check-in may not be entered in the tournament. It is mandatory that all contestants and their coaches attend a pretournament meeting at the time and place set forth. Participants not present for a pretournament meeting may not be allowed to participate.

**6. BOAT ASSIGNMENTS** • Takeoff order (boat number) is determined by SAF: Entry date and time or by random computer draw as officials choose for each event. Each team must be accompanied on the water by their coach, who will supply a boat but is not permitted to fish.

**7. SAFETY** • Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each contestant and coach is required to wear a fastened U.S. Coast Guard-approved and state approved personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from boat check until weigh-in each day of the tournament. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation. All persons in a tournament boat shall remain seated in a manufacturer-recommended on-plane seating location when the combustion engine is in operation. Sitting on pedestal seats while the combustion engine is in operation is not permitted. Contestants are not permitted to drive the boat when the combustion engine is in operation. Safe boat conduct must be observed at all times by contestants and coaches. At the discretion of the tournament director, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or canceled due to unsafe weather or water conditions. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

**8. SPORTSMANSHIP** • All contestants and coaches are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to FLW, TBF and SAF, our sponsors, the school the team is representing, the sport of fishing and FLW, TBF and SAF's efforts to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following: Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the rules for the 2016 High School Fishing season. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration, the pretournament meeting or during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure. Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances. Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months. Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization. Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair

competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set forth herein. In case of any conduct not complying with the standards outlined above, tournament officials have the right to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete or to disqualify a contestant.

**9. BOAT OPERATION** • Coaches must supply and drive boats for their teams. To qualify as a coach, the person accompanying a team as “coach” must be at least 19 years old. Contestants may operate the trolling motor. Coaches may provide assistance, including information about locating and catching fish, but are not permitted to fish. The use of mobile communication devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc. by contestants and coaches during tournament hours is strictly prohibited except in an emergency (severe weather, breakdowns, etc.) or to communicate with lockmasters about locking or with the tournament director.

**10. BOAT & HORSEPOWER REGULATION** • All boats must be propeller-driven and a minimum of 16 feet in length. Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a properly aerated livewell space to maintain alive a limit catch of bass. Maximum horsepower for all outboards is not to exceed the horsepower capacity set forth on the “Maximum Capacities” placard described below. Each boat must have a clearly legible “Maximum Capacities” (or comparably titled) placard that includes a maximum horsepower rating affixed to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must not exceed the maximum horsepower capacity specified on this placard or any horsepower limit set by SAF. By signing the entry form, contestants and coaches agree to submit their boat and/or motor to an inspection by tournament officials. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating placard will be cause for disqualification from the tournament and may result in ineligibility to compete in future High School Fishing tournaments. Fishing platforms must be factory-installed equipment. No portable platforms may be used in tournament competition. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks or auxiliary fuel tanks that are securely strapped or otherwise fastened to the boat. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day

must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

**11. PERMITTED FISHING METHODS** • Fishing is defined as having a lure attached to a line and a rod and reel with the lure in the water. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner. Only artificial lures may be used, with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only ONE fishing rod per contestant may be used at a time. Trolling as a method of fishing is strictly prohibited. All bass caught while sight-fishing must be hooked inside the mouth and immediately shown to your coach for verification.

**12. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS & BOUNDARIES** • Teams may fish anywhere on tournament waters within the boundaries defined on Highschoolfishing.org that is available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as “off-limits,” “no boats,” “keep out,” “restricted,” “no trespassing” or “no fishing” (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by tournament officials, local, state or federal officials, or within 50 yards of a contestant’s boat that was first anchored. An anchored boat is a boat held in a stable position by a line attached to a weight or by a Power-Pole or similar shallow water anchor with the trolling motor in the up position. All fishing must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. The use of cables, ropes, chains or any type of block and tackle system to maneuver a boat into fishing waters is strictly prohibited and will result in disqualification from the tournament. Teams must leave and return to the check-in by boat. The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. No tournament boat may be loaded on a trailer before the weigh-in except with the permission of the tournament director. In the event of equipment failure or emergency, there are three permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both contestants remaining in their boat and being towed by water, (2) by one contestant entering the boat of another team or (3) both contestants entering a rescue boat so designated by the tournament director. Under these three conditions the team’s catch may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Teams that elect to return to the check-in by any other means than cited above will

forfeit their day’s catch to that point in time of the tournament day. Any team returning to the check-in point will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the tournament director or his designated tournament official. It is the sole responsibility of teams to locate the tournament director to request a restart. Teams must remain together at all times and within sight of their coach until check-in. The momentary condition of being out of sight of each other for restroom breaks is permitted. Violation of this rule may result in disqualification.

**13. CHECKPOINTS** • There will be only one checkpoint for boat check in the morning and one in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check and checkout in the morning or failure to check in at the check-in point will result in disqualification. All fishing must cease upon check-in.

**14. LATE PENALTY** • Teams that are not at the designated afternoon checkpoint at the appointed time will be penalized 1 pound per minute, deducted from the total weight. Teams more than 15 minutes late will lose credit for that day’s weight.

**15. LIVE FISH** • Every effort must be made to keep fish alive using a properly aerated livewell. Eight ounces will be deducted from the total weight for each dead bass presented for weigh-in.

**16. SCORING** • Scoring is determined by the final weight of each team’s catch during each tournament. Only largemouth, spotted, redeye or smallmouth bass are accepted species. The tournament limit is five bass per team unless the state or lake limit is less than five, in which case the state or lake limit prevails. Teams possessing more than the tournament limit will have their catch to that point in the day disqualified and, time permitting, are eligible for a restart from the takeoff location. The minimum length limit for bass is 12 inches unless the state or lake limit is more than 12 inches, in which case, the state or lake limit prevails. Bass presented for weigh-in that fail to measure the prescribed length limit will be penalized at the rate of 1 pound for each short bass presented, plus loss of that fish. Each team’s catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag. The winning team is determined by the day’s heaviest catch. The top 10% each state championship advances to a High School Fishing Conference Championship. The top 10% from each Conference Championship advances to the High School Fishing

National Championship. All contestants automatically qualify for the SAF High School Fishing World Finals. If any qualified team is unable to attend an event they have qualified for, the next team in rank may be invited. The invitation is at the sole discretion of tournament officials.

**17. TIES** • Total number of fish for the tournament will break ties, Then total number of fish alive. If a tie remains, it will be broken first by earliest entry for the tournament, then by lottery.

**18. LOGO DISPLAY & TELEVISION COVERAGE** • Contestants and coaches may wear their own shirts or jerseys during State Championships. Tournament officials reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to prohibit any contestant or coach’s shirt or jersey found to be offensive. All decisions are in FLW, TBF and SAF’s sole discretion.

**19. ALCOHOL & TOBACCO** • During all days of competition any and all alcohol and tobacco logos are prohibited and may not be worn or displayed. Contestants and coaches may not smoke or use tobacco products during tournament hours, including weigh-in, at any event.

**20. TRUTH VERIFICATION TEST** • Each contestant and coach agrees to submit, by signature on the tournament entry form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in disqualification from the tournament. Truth verification tests will be used at the sole discretion of tournament officials, and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by tournament officials.

**21. INSURANCE** • Liability insurance with coverage in reasonable amounts is required on all boats used in High School Fishing tournaments. Proof of insurance must be with the boat being used and must cover all passengers in the boat. Random checks will be conducted. Failure to provide proof of insurance when requested by the tournament director may result in disqualification.

**22. CAPTIONS** • The captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules.