



## 2025 Champions Tour Pro-Am Rules/Penalties

**Champions Tour penalties will NOT be enforced. The following Champions Tour rules that normally would result in a penalty are encouraged to be followed and educated to the Am.**

### **LANDING FISH:**

- When landing a largemouth or smallmouth bass, the fish cannot touch any part of the boat at any time during the landing process such as carpet, windshield, motor, console, etc.
- If the fish comes unhooked from the lure and falls to the deck or floor of the boat it will still be assessed as a violation, even if the bass is a non-keeper.
- Landing nets will be allowed

### **RELEASING FISH:**

- When releasing ANY bass, the angler's hand must be at gunnel level or closer to the water. No flipping or tossing of a bass back into the water is allowed.

### **LITTERING:**

- No littering of any materials in the lake is allowed including plastic baits and fishing line. If an angler directly puts any foreign matter from his or her boat in the water, it must be removed upon notification by the Pro or Am. If a fish removes or breaks a lure off, that is NOT considered a penalty.

### **BREAKING OFF ON PRIVATE PROPERTY PENALTY:**

- Anglers must make a full attempt at getting their lure unhooked from the private property.

### **THE FOLLOWING RULES WILL BE ENFORCED:**

### **LATE POLICIES:**

- Competitors must return to the official takeoff location by the designated check in time as given at the pre-tournament meeting by the Champions Tour Tournament Director.

**Penalty – Late Violation:** The Competitor will be penalized 1 pound per minute for up to 15 minutes. Total days weight will be disqualified if over 15 minutes late.

### **PRACTICE:**

- "Official Practice" will begin at 6:00 a.m. on the Friday before the event and will conclude at 12:00 p.m. on the Monday before the event. You may launch before 6:00 a.m. but cannot leave the dock until 6:00 a.m. Boats MUST be on the trailer by 12:00 p.m. (noon). The penalty for being on the water early or putting your boat on the trailer late will be 15 minutes per hour of offense, delayed start for the offending angler on tournament day. If an angler is on "tournament waters" during the off-limits period will result in disqualification from that event.
- During "Official Practice", ONLY immediate family members, or a registered Boat Official for that event can pre-fish or be in a boat with a Champions Tour angler.
- While practicing at ANY TIME for a Champions Tour event on that given body of water, no largemouth or smallmouth bass can be transported from one fishing location to another on that given body of water. The only exception is if you are competing in another tournament on that body of water.
- Champions Tour Anglers CAN have one (1) individual with them in their boat during the OFFICIAL PRACTICE PERIOD that is responsible for capturing media content for that angler. The Champions Tour Angler MUST request approval for this from the Champions Tour Tournament Director at least three days prior to the official practice period beginning. The Champions Tour Tournament Director will approve this request but does reserve the right to request additional information or not allow it. The individual who is tasked with capturing media content for that angler CAN NOT fish, hold a fishing rod, or provide any fishing information, or information related to boating or fishing to the Champions Tour angler during that day. Violation of this rule will result in disqualification for the event.

### **SAFETY:**

- Safe boating practices are EXPECTED and the responsibility of the Champions Tour Angler's.
- There is a 55-mph speed limit by Champions Tour Angler's during the competition hours, unless local regulations are less.
- It is the Champions Tour Angler's responsibility to be aware of the weather and navigate safely in the given conditions.
- All Competitors are required to wear a Coast Guard approved life vest, securely fastened, always while the boat is being propelled by



the main combustion engine.

- Boats must have a kill switch attached to driver of boat when big motor is turned on.
- Running lights must be on if necessary and functioning properly.
- Champions Tour Competitor **MUST** have a first aid kit in their boat during all Champions Tour events. Competitors must show this kit to Champions Tour Staff at their first event of the season.
- Horsepower cannot exceed the limitations set by the U.S. Coast Guard. When required, each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard horsepower-rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer. The horsepower of the outboard engine must **NOT** exceed the rating specified on this plate nor the horsepower maximum set by the Champions Tour. Each competitor agrees to submit, by their signature on the official entry form, the boat and outboard motor used in the tournament, to an inspection by factory-trained personnel, if there is reason to suspect the horsepower is more than the rating. Normal maintenance of engines is allowed. Changing or altering standard factory parts of a competitor's engine to increase the horsepower over the factory horsepower rating, is forbidden and will result in disqualification. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower-rating numbers on the engine, is also cause for immediate disqualification from Champions Tour tournaments.

#### **INSURANCE -**

- I represent and warrant that I now have or will obtain prior to the 2025 Champions Tour tournament series, boat owners liability insurance (including coverage for third party property damage and bodily injury) with no "tournament exclusion," having a minimum limit of \$300,000 per occurrence. The insurance must be issued by a reputable insurer rated A or better by A.M. Best and Company. I shall provide the Champions Tour with satisfactory evidence of that insurance at the first tournament meeting of the season or at any time requested by Champions Tour staff. **ANY COMPETITOR WHO DOES NOT HAVE PROOF OF IN-FORCE INSURANCE WITH \$300,000 COVERAGE MAY BE DISQUALIFIED. EACH POLICY MUST SHOW AN EFFECTIVE START AND EXPIRATION DATE.** Tournament officials have sole authority to determine if insurance policies meet Champions Tour requirements.

#### **AM ANGLER'S:**

- AM's are **NOT** allowed to provide any fishing location information to the angler.
- AM's are **NOT** allowed to drive the main engine, unless in an emergency.
- AM's are **NOT** allowed to share any information from previous Champions Tour events where they served as a Boat Official.
- AM's are **NOT** allowed to provide any insight on tactics that would help the angler catch fish.
- AM's **WILL** provide scoreboard updates to the angler, following each fish recorded in the LiveWell App every five minutes.

#### **SCORING OF FISH:**

- The minimum size bass will be 1 lb 0 oz in weight.
- Immediately after a legal catch is made by the Pro OR Am:
  1. **One video will be REQUIRED for each legal bass entry. The video must show the following:**
    - Angler holding the bass for a "hero" shot
    - Shows the bass on the scale, shows the bass's weight, and nothing touching the bass
    - Shows the angler releasing the bass back into water
  2. The "Am" will hold the scale and will "call the weight" of the bass and record the video.
  3. The "Am" will then **immediately** record the weight by writing it down on the team's fish log sheet and **BOTH** anglers will need to initial the weight on the official scorecard. **No casts** by either angler will happen until **BOTH** initials are on the score card.
  4. The "Am" will then enter the fish's weight and upload the video into the Reel LiveWell App.

**Please note that the bass's weight on the scale MUST match the weight that is both recorded in the Reel LiveWell App AND on the official fish log sheet. If the weight displayed on the scale does not match the weight recorded on the fish log sheet and in the App, that fish catch will be disqualified.**

- At **NO** time can Champions Tour Competitor put a bass in their livewell.
- A Champions Tour Competitor's Am **WILL** notify Champions Tour Staff if they are having technical difficulties of adding a scorable bass into the LiveWell App **IMMEDIATELY** at time of technical issue. Instructions will be given at that time.

#### **SIGHT FISHING:**

- A bedding bass may only be caught and entered once.
- Any bass that is caught sight fishing must be hooked inside the mouth and shown to their partner.

#### **ANGLING TECHNIQUES**



- Competitors may not leave the boat for the purpose of fishing; **all fishing and landing of fish must be done within the boat.** Neither of the angler's feet may leave the inside of the boat.
- You may NOT use the trolling motor or outboard to move your lure (No Trolling or Strolling).
- You can NOT use the trolling motor or outboard to lengthen the distance of your cast.
- No Live bait, only artificial lures are permitted.
- A-rigs are allowed as long as they adhere to the state laws in which competing.
- **LANDING NETS WILL BE ALLOWED in Pro-Am events.**
- NO GRIPPERS allowed.
- Only rods shorter than 8 ½ feet.
- All fish must be caught in a traditional sporting manner.

#### **END-OF-PERIOD SCORING:**

- The LiveWell App will serve as the "Official Time Clock."
- At the end of a period, the Competitor will be clearly notified by the Am when the period competition is coming to an end and when the Competitors must stop fishing.
- Any bass hooked on the final cast must be "inside the boat," visibly inside the gunnel before the time expires.
- The legality or illegality of a period-end catch will be determined by the Am.

#### **MECHANICAL FAULT:**

- It is the Competitor's responsibility to have a working boat, motor, and equipment. The competitor's boat WILL meet all state and local regulations.
- The Champions Tour will NOT refund any entries because of mechanical issues.
- The Champions Tour and their staff are not responsible for providing a loaner boat or ensuring a competitor has returned to the official check in point at the given time. It is the Competitors responsibility to compete at all possible times and make every effort to return to the official check in point at the given time under their own power or via another Champions competitor. Before any communication takes place with another Champions Tour competitor regarding transportation in another angler's boat, approval must be received from the Champions Tournament director.
- If a competitor experiences mechanical failure or difficulties with their boat during a Champions Tour event, **NO TIME OUT will be called.**

#### **TIES:**

- In case of a tie for a day's total weight, ties will be broken in the following manner, 1) total number of legal keeper's caught 2) largest fish caught and 3) coin toss
- In case of a tie for the day's big bass, it will be awarded to the angler that caught the bass first.

#### **SPORTSMANSHIP:**

- Contestants cannot use alcohol or drugs during the tournament.
- At **NO** time can a competitor use cigarettes or cigars during the official tournament hours.
- A Sportsmanship violation is defined as an aggressive behavior or hostile action directed at a fellow Pro or Am, Am, non-competitor, or a representative of the Champions Tour.
- **Use of profanity directed at these individuals will not be tolerated. Am's are required to report violations.**
- Penalty will be determined by the Champions Tour tournament director and Competitor is subject to disqualification.

#### **FLAGRANT VIOLATION:**

- Anglers can not alter or manipulate the weight or length of a bass at any time. The penalty will be immediate event disqualification and elimination from all future Champions Tour events.
- A flagrant violation is any act that reflects unfavorably upon the positive efforts of Champions Tour, Champions Tour director, sponsors, spectators, fisheries conservation, & clean waters will not be tolerated.
- Penalty will be determined by the Champions Tour tournament director & Competitor is subject to disqualification.
- If a competitor receives an on the water violation from a Department of Natural Resources Officer, Sherriff, etc., their tournament weight prior to the issuance of the ticket will be erased and they will start over a zero fish/zero pounds when they begin fishing again.

#### **EMERGENCIES:**

- Competitors shall always remain with their Am in the boat during the tournament, except in the event of health concern, severe storm, other weather, boating or navigational hazard.
- Competitors may leave the boat to dislodge boat but are required to return to the boat in a prompt manner. A penalty will not be assessed in this situation.
- Going to shore to use a public restroom is permitted for either a competitor or Am. No fishing shall take place unless the Am and



Competitor are both back in the boat.

### **COMMUNICATION:**

- In case of emergencies, severe weather conditions or event instructions, Champions Tour Staff will text instructions to the Competitors and Am's phone, with the details. It is the Competitors responsibility to be aware of incoming text messages on their phone.

- If fishing is suspended due to severe weather, anglers will be informed via a text message that fishing is suspended and to seek safety. Once anglers have reached safety on shore, they may not leave that location or fish until notified by text that competition will resume.

- At **NO** time can a competitor inform or instruct there Am to not answer a phone call or text message from the Champions Tour staff. If the Champions Tour staff calls or texts the phone of the Competitor or Am, the Am **MUST** pick up, reply, or call back immediately following the boat ride or fish catch. If at any time the Competitor instructs the Am to not answer or reply to a Champions Tour staff phone call or text message, the Am **MUST** inform the Champions Tour Tournament director immediately. If it is determined that a Competitor has instructed a Am to not communicate with Champions Tour Staff, or provide the Champions Tour Staff with an accurate location information, that Competitor will receive a 10 lb penalty and may be subject to not receiving future Champions Tour invitations.

- Competitors shall be **prohibited** from using cell phones, pagers, text messaging or marine band radios to contact or communicate with other anglers, non-competing anglers, family or media staff, other than for emergency reasons.

- **NO** team fishing or the sharing of information or strategy between Competitors. This goes into effect at the pre-tournament meeting as soon as the lake split is announced until completion of the event.

- Any communication between anglers for the purpose of assisting another competitor returning to the "weigh in" due to a mechanical failure will first **need to be approved by the tournament director.**

### **PROTESTS:**

- If a Competitor witnesses a rule infraction, he/she must inform the Champions Tour Tournament Director **within 15 minutes** upon arrival to the check-in site at the conclusion of the tournament. Protest **MUST** be in writing and can **NOT** be anonymous. You must also keep your Am angler in your boat and with you until the protest has been reviewed by the Tournament Director. The protest must include the angler's name that is being protested, description of the angler's boat, detail of the rule infraction, as well as the time of infraction.