

Ohio River Bass Aid Tournament Rules – ORBA = Ohio River Bass Aid

- 1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT:** Interpretation and enforcement of these rules shall be left to the on-site Tournament Director. The only appeal is to the Tournament Director, and their decision shall be final in all matters and is not subject to appeal. Officials may impose such sanctions, as deemed appropriate for any infraction including, without limitation, disqualification, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Each contestant 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. Protests should be in writing within 30 minutes of final flight check-in time of each tournament day. A Tournament Committee (if needed) will be formed at each tournament by a random drawing of three teams from all teams entered, to consult with the Director over protest or issues of note. If for any reason, any of the drawn teams are themselves a subject of the issue, then another team will be drawn to take their place. Announcements made by the director at the Tournament site take precedence over these written rules.
- 2. PARTICIPATION:** All tournaments will be two (2) anglers per boat that shall compete as a team. Each team must have at least one participant who is 18 years of age or older. Under 18 must also have the signature of a parent or legal guardian on the entry form/release, proof of age is the responsibility of the participant. There is no membership fee to fish the ORBA.
- 3. VALID LICENSE:** All participants must have in their possession a valid fishing license covering the waters and all days to be fished. All state rules regarding fishing will be observed unless more stringent regulations are specified at the rules meeting. Properly, fully completed official entry must be received BEFORE the event registration deadline date. Officials specifically reserve the right to refuse participation, including championship or other special event participation, to anyone, for any reason.
- 4. DISQUALIFICATION:** Disqualification from this or any tournament for any reason could result in forfeiture of entry fee.
- 5. ENTRY FEE, FORMAT:** The entry fee for each Team \$200. Payout is based on number of entries plus sponsor additions.
- 6. PRACTICE/Off Limits:** Competition waters are not closed or off limits at any time before the tournament day.
- 7. TACKLE & EQUIPMENT:** Only artificial lures may be used. No "live bait" will be permitted. Only ONE (1) fishing rod (8-foot maximum length from butt of the handle to rod tip) and reel may be in use or used at any one time. All other types are prohibited. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional and sporting manner. Anyone guilty of snatching or snagging visible fish will have their day's catch disqualified. When fishing for bass you can see, all bass must be hooked inside the mouth and must be verified by your partner before being unhooked to be counted as legal. No gaffs or grippers may be used to land bass nor be permitted in the boat at any time. Alabama rigs and other similar types of baits will follow the most restrictive state laws covering any part of the tournament waters.
- 8. SAFETY & TOURNAMENT INTEGRITY:** Safe conduct must always be observed by all participants. Participants must always abide by all local navigation laws and avoid restricted areas. All participants are required and agree to wear a fully zippered fastened or snapped Coast Guard-approved type III or greater chest type personal floatation device anytime the combustion engine is running. Tournament officials have the right to delay or cancel the start of an official tournament day, restrict tournament waters or impose speed limits because of navigation, traffic, bad weather or any other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors or the public. In the event of a storm, lightning, severe weather or any unsafe condition, participants should remove themselves from competition and seek safety or shelter until it is safe to continue. Participants may not leave their boats during tournament hours except in case of emergency. Competitors may leave their boat and seek shelter in bad weather or when danger is eminent. They must, however, stay within sight of each other. ALL the rules of this event, particularly the safety rules are the responsibility of BOTH contestants in the boat to verify and adhere to.
- 9. SPORTSMANSHIP:** Participants will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner, always maintaining professional demeanor in public and in communication with officials. Maximum courtesy must always be practiced, especially about boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any unfavorable conduct, speech or action by a participant in our efforts to promote sportsmanship, clean water and conservation will not be tolerated and could affect eligibility to participate. Each

competitor is expected to participate in the marshaling of the field to help maintain the highest integrity of competition. Use of alcohol or any mind-altering drugs (other than those drugs purchased over the counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any competitor during the event or use of alcohol until after you have weighed in will not be tolerated. All competitors are bound by prevailing state statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. Any conduct prior to or during the event reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or disqualification. Any disqualification discipline or suspension from any fishing organization may be grounds for rejecting any application for participation or disqualification. Any violation of these basic sporting principles will be taken seriously. Any participant receiving a citation or written warning from a law enforcement officer during tournament hours, the team is disqualified. Any extreme violation of these rules will be grounds for disqualification from all future Fin Hunter Bass Tournaments.

- 10. ENTRY DEADLINE:** Entries are preferred online at www.ohioriverbassaid.com or can be submitted by mail or phone. Early Entry Deadline is 7:00pm the Friday before the Saturday tournament. Entries will be accepted at the ramp on the day of the tournament up to 30 minutes before legal daylight. Entries can be cancelled by 7:00pm the evening before the tournament. Cancellations after that time will forfeit your entry fee and the monies will be put to the restocking program and buying Bass fingerlings.
- 11. BOAT OPERATION:** Only persons of approved age and licensing according to local and state laws shall operate the outboard motor of the boat.
- 12. BOAT EQUIPMENT & SAFETY:** The safety of all contestants, ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH SAFETY DEVICE. This engine stop device must be attached to the driver's body 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. Each boat must have a U.S. Coast Guard rating plate attached to the boat by the manufacturer if required. The horsepower rating of the outboard engine must not exceed the rating specified on this plate. A minimum beam width of 70 inches. All boats must be equipped with a steering wheel. No other steering devices will be permitted. Maximum engine horsepower shall not exceed 250 horsepower. Changing or altering standard factory motor parts to increase horsepower over factory rated horsepower is forbidden and will result in disqualification. During any official practice or competition day(s) of any DMT event no contestant may operate a boat unless they have documented proof of an insurance policy with reasonable amounts of watercraft liability coverage on that boat and a valid expiration date. Proof must remain WITH THE BOAT during the entire event RANDOM CHECKS MAY BE CONDUCTED AT ANY TIME. Policy must be in full force covering the competitors in that boat, all dates of the event. NOTE: Statements of "No fixed expiration date" are NOT acceptable. All tournament boats are required to have in their possession all Coast Guard-required safety equipment, including but not limited to approved type III or greater chest type personal flotation devices, a type IV throw cushion, fire extinguisher, distress horn/flag/whistle. In addition, each boat must have a functional bilge pump and livewell space, properly aerated, to sufficiently maintain, in a healthy condition a limit catch. We recommend the use of ICE to cool livewell water and improve oxygen levels during "hotter" months. The Tournament Director shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate". Fishing boats may be used that are 16 feet in total length or longer, propeller driven. No Jet boats permitted. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Only gas tanks that are factory installed options or auxiliary tanks installed by a factory authorized dealer are legal. Boats that do not have factory installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks properly secured or strapped in a boat, that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to all contenders and/or the public. No "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted. All tournament boats must be cleaned of all harmful exotic aquatic species prior to entering the water and upon departure from infected waters.
- 13. BOAT CHECK & ID:** Each boat MUST be given, prior to each day's start, a livewell and SAFETY INSPECTION check by a tournament official, also a boat number marker, which MUST remain in or on the boat and turned in during check-in. This marker will also be used for official check-in.

- 14. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Tournament waters shall be established by Officials for each tournament. Each competitor must obtain this information from the tournament official. Fishing on tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: Any water within these tournament boundaries posted "off-limits or no fishing" by state or federal agencies will be OFF-LIMITS. Also, any live fish release area established by Tournament Officials will be Off-limits and will be announced at the Tournament Briefing. No contestant may "Buy" or "Barter" a fish or a fishing location. Contestants may not depart the boat to land fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. The removal of official local, state or federal barricades or barriers at any time to make an area more accessible by boat is strictly prohibited. The use of any type of block & tackle, rope, cable or similar type system to maneuver a boat into fishing waters is prohibited. On tournament days, participants are prohibited from fishing except during designated tournament fishing hours. Participants should stay off tournament waters before and after tournament hours except to navigate to and from the check-in site and launch facilities, if repairs and/or a test-run are needed contact a tournament official first. Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat and all boats must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. No boats may be loaded on a trailer before the weigh-in except by direction of the tournament director. In the event of equipment failure or emergency the tournament director must be notified as soon as it is safe to do so. There are only two permitted methods of returning to the check-in: (1) by both anglers remaining in their boat and being towed by water, or (2) with permission from the tournament director, by one or both anglers entering the boat of another tournament contestant, at which point all fishing must cease by all parties. Under these two conditions both contestants' catches may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules) provided that all contestants fish are adequately marked to provide clear distinction between their catches to the tournament director. Contestants who 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.
- 15. Tournament Time:** Each tournament start time shall not be before safe light for EST time zone. Start time may vary the morning of due to ramp traffic and number of entries. Morning boat check starts one and a half hours before safe light. Any portion of the boat is subject to inspection by officials at any time before, during or after the tournament. Refusal of inspection, the team is disqualified. At the time of morning boat check all competitors must be in full compliance of all rules. Each tournament shall be eight hours. Fog delays and extensions shall be up to the tournament director's discretion.
- 16. LATE PENALTY/BOAT CHECK-IN:** Competitors who have not placed their numbered boat marker back in the corresponding spot on the official check-in board located next to the weigh-in trailer by the official end of tournament time shall be considered late and shall lose credit for that day's catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case will a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time.."
- 17. SCORING:** No Points system in this tournament
- 18. TOURNAMENT/POSSESSION LIMIT:** The limit shall be five (5) of the above species and varieties unless the prevailing state limit is less than five (5), or a special limit is established for a tournament by the Tournament Director. At no time shall a competitor have in possession more than the tournament limit. Tournament Officials will conduct checks for violations of this provision, and in the event a competitor has in their possession more than the stated limit, shall cull, starting with the largest fish first, down to the stated limit. The official length shall be announced at the tournament briefing. In most cases it will be the longest state limit covering the tournament waters; in no case will it be less than 12 inches. Only bass which measure the official length or more on the longest straight line, shall be weighed in. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length shall not be weighed and will accrue penalties at the rate of one pound for each nonlegal fish. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor. Each team may choose only one live bass from their catch as an entry into the Big Bass pot. No dead fish will be weighed for big bass. Any fish that appears to have been altered will be weighed and credited only at the discretion of Tournament Officials. After a competitor checks in at the official checkpoint, he MUST present all LEGAL fish in his possession to a Tournament Official to be counted, measured and weighed. Once a competitor's catch has been presented to tournament officials, no one may alter nor add to their catch or return to their boat until their catch has been weighed and recorded. Fish must not be "stringered" at any time during the tournament. This would also include any device that would hold more than one fish in the livewell. Balance beams can be used for sorting fish but cannot be left attached to a fish..

- 19. CATCH AND RELEASE:** For each legal dead fish presented to weigh-in officials, the competitor shall be penalized eight (8) ounces, to be deducted from the total weight of that fish. Tournament Officials shall have sole authority for assessing penalty points.
- 20. TIES:** In the event of a tie the positions that tied will have those monies added together and split evenly between the tied competitors. The competitors will be deemed tournament equals in points/winnings.
- 21. PROTESTS & TRUTH VERIFICATION TESTS:** Anyone has a right to protest a contestant. Protests should be in writing within 30 minutes of final flight check-in time of each tournament day. Following interviews with concerned parties or truth verification testing if required, a final ruling will be made. In the event rules infractions occurred a penalty of daily and/or tournament weight may be applied, and cash, prizes and awards must be returned if so requested. If a protest is found valid, the disqualified party must pay all investigative costs. RANDOM and "FOR CAUSE" TRUTH VERIFICATION TESTS CAN BE GIVEN AT ANY TIME THROUGHOUT SEASON. EACH COMPETITOR AGREES, BY THEIR SIGNATURE ON ANY ENTRY FORM, WRITTEN OR ELECTRONIC or the acknowledgment checkbox for online entries and or by their participation in ORBA event, TO SUBMIT TO A TRUTH VERIFICATION TEST OR POLYGRAPH TEST SHOULD THEY BE ASKED TO FOR ANY REASON and abide by the conclusion. Failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification. The administration and interpretation of the truth verification test shall be the sole responsibility of ORBA, and their agent(s), and shall be used (or not used) at their discretion. Without limiting anything herein, ORBA shall have sole discretion to select the place at which such a truth verification test shall be administered, the individual who administers such a truth verification test, and the scope of the questions which may be asked during such test and the determination of the meaning of the results. The participant shall be available, at their own expense, at the stipulated location and shall cooperate in all respects.
- 22. PARTICIPANT RELEASE OF LIABILITY:** All participants must have signed the ORBA LIABILITY RELEASE form. Which is the signature of the Paper entry form or by clicking the agree box on the online entry from which acknowledges you have read and agreed to all these rules and waivers.
- 23. High Water Cancellation:** The tournament director has the discretion to shorten, extend, postpone or cancel any tournament at anytime due to unsafe weather or water conditions. High water cancellation decisions will be made by 6:00 p.m. (EST) 2 days before the tournament.