



TOURNAMENT RULES

(September 2024 – May 2025)

About TBC

The Bass Challenge is a monthly bass angling tournament conducted on the first weekend of the month except in January. Enter as many events as you wish; no need for club affiliation; tournaments are open to anybody. Teams compete to qualify for the TBC National Championship to be held in May.

The TBC Organising Committee expect strict adherence to the following TBC bass angling tournament rules by all contestants.

These rules will remain unchanged during the season and supersede any previously published set of rules for this tournament trail and intended to further the best interests of bass fishing in general and not to benefit any individual, team or competitor. Please make sure you understand the rules and regulations.

1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT

Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the TBC Organising Committee. Decisions of the TBC Organising Committee are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament organiser immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations may be cause for disqualification.

2. GENERAL

All anglers enter The Bass Challenge Tournament Trial voluntarily and at their own risk. SA BASS and staff, TBC Organising Committee, MLF South Africa, tournament sponsors, and all resort proprietors and their employees at all levels, are indemnified from any personal liabilities whatsoever that may be incurred by any person while travelling to, or from, or during the tournament.

Anglers are not allowed to keep the official weigh-bags, tags or boat flags used at the tournaments.

3. DATES & VENUES

The tournament season will be from *September 2024 to May 2025* and the venue for each competition will be announced at the preceding month's captains meeting and on the www.mlfsouthafrica.com website

TBC organisers cannot be held responsible if dates and venues need to be changed because of influences beyond their control. Notice will be given by notifying participants via the website or social media networks.

At the discretion of the tournament organiser, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or cancelled due to unsafe weather or water conditions.

4. QUALIFYING EVENTS

There will be eight (8) qualifying tournaments for the season.

The emphasis is on team (rather than individual) competition and only one team per boat is allowed.

A team consists of maximum two persons on one boat.

To be in contention for "TBC Team-of-the-Year" a team will have had to compete in at least 6 competitions during the specific season.

Only the top 20 (twenty) teams on the TBC final log standings for the season will qualify to compete in an exclusive "championship", where The Bass Challenge Championship winner will be crowned.

- Only the top 15 (fifteen) of the teams on the TBC final log standings qualify to compete in the TBC Championship plus one Wild Card entry.

5. POINT STANDINGS

Each team's End-of-Season-Standing-Points will be determined by the team's Participation Points, plus their best six (6) Grand Prix scores for the season, in one region. (A team's accumulated points cannot be transferred between regions.)

A Grand Prix-system will be used as follows: the winner of each monthly tournament receives 100 points with following positions receiving points on a decreasing scale (i.e.: 99 for 2nd, 98 for 3rd, 97 for 4th and so on).

Each team will receive an extra thirty (30) Participation Points per event attended in person.

In the event of a tie on the End-of-Season-Points standing for the top position, the team with the most event wins during the current season will be the TBC Team-of-the-Year. If there is still a tie, the team with the heavier total combined bag weight through the entire season will be the winner. If there is still a tie, the team with the heaviest single event bag for the current season will be declared the winner.

6. REGISTRATION

Entry fee is R300/ person per event.

Registration on the day will start 60 minutes before the start of the tournament. Once registered, anglers are required to wait for the pre-tournament meeting before setting off.

At the launch one of the marshals will check your live-well and life jackets and you will receive a tag to confirm that you comply to the rules.

Take your tag to the TBC gazebo where you will then register your team for the day.

Keep your tag in a safe place, as you will need to hand it in when you weigh in at the end of the day. Anglers have to declare that they have lost their tag *before* weighing in otherwise the team will be disqualified for the day.

7. TOURNAMENT HOURS

Start times for competitions will be announced prior to the competition on www.mlfsouthafrica.com, TBC Facebook page and on the TBC WhatsApp group.

- 06:00 Registration opens
- 06:45 Pre-tournament meeting
- 07:00 Tournament start (depending on safe weather conditions)
- 16:00 All tags on the board
- 16:30 Prize giving

- These times will be dependent on venue.
- No fishing is permitted before the day's pre-tournament meeting and the allocated start time.
- If you wish to join later, you are to communicate with the organisers in advance to make the necessary plans.

8. PERMITTED FISHING METHODS

Participants may "pre-fish" a body of water at any time prior to the competition as long as the owner's permission has been obtained

Many of the TBC competitions will be held on property belonging to private individuals. Such properties have their own rules and regulations, which must be adhered to at all times prior to, during, and after a competition.

All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner and be hooked inside the mouth. All fishing must be conducted from the boat. Only artificial lures may be used, with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. (No live-baiting permitted)

Only one wet rod with one main line and one lure / bait per angler at any given time is allowed. The rod must be hand held (no rod holder may be used). Rigs like the double rig where multiple lures / baits are attached to one main line are not

allowed, except for commercial available "Alabama" rigs.

Creating feeding spots by dumping bait either artificial or natural, or any other attractant in order to attract fish to a specific location is prohibited.

At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat.

All team members who compete from different vessels will have to stay within 20 metres from each other at all times during tournament hours. A minimum casting distance of 20 meters must be maintained between teams at all times during competition hours. No team may cast into or move into another team's area at any time during the competition unless invited by that team, in which case you must also vacate the area on request.

9. WEIGHING OF FISH

All teams must be in the weigh-in queue and handed in their tags by 16:00.

a. You will be disqualified if your tag is not on the board before 16:00.

b. Any team who has already handed in their tag on time and joins the weigh-in queue after 16:20 will be disqualified.

Only members of the bass family may be weighed-in and the weight will be measured in kilogram.

Any fish presented to the weigh master which is obviously dead, or a fish that is not gilling or finning within (10) ten seconds after being placed on a wet towel in the shade; will be regarded as "dead" as decided upon by the weigh master alone, and will not be added to the competitor's scorecard.

Any number of fish may be caught and released during tournament day, however only a maximum of three fish may be weighed by the weigh-in marshals, which will count towards the teams total bag weight.

Any fish weighed by a marshal before the weigh-in time will be noted on the teams score card and once it has been noted it cannot be removed for any reason whatsoever.

Culling is permitted, however culling at the weigh-station will not be allowed.

Only a total of three fish per team can be kept in a follow me bag or live-well at any given time. Teams with more than three fish per angler in a live-well or follow-me bag will incur a 1000gram penalty.

No stringers or keep-nets are permitted.

Intentional damaging of fish (fin clipping, illegal tagging, or disfiguration of any kind) will lead to instant disqualification.

10. PRIZE MONEY

CASH + trophies for top three places;

Trophy for heaviest fish,

Lucky draw prizes.

Prizes for each event will be awarded based on the total bag weight for the day. Prize money is based on the number of paid entries for each tournament and paid for the top three heaviest bags plus lucky draw prizes. Prize money is allocated only to teams and not individuals. In the event of a tie, the teams will share the prize money of the tied position for which they tied, plus the position immediately below that.

Prize giving follows immediately after the results are known and written complaints received have been sorted out.

Should the purse money be affected in any criminal way whatsoever, tournament organisers, tournament sponsors, SA BASS and employees at all levels, will not be held liable for any compensation. In the event that a portion of, or total amount, of the prize money is not won, the residual funds will be added to the total prize money pool for the season's championship.

11. BOAT & HORSEPOWER REGULATION

All fishing must be conducted from a watercraft of sorts by means of oars, fins or trolling motor propulsion. You are permitted to have two trolling motors on the boat and are allowed to use them at the same time.

Watercraft permitted in TBC events are as follows:

- Small bass boats (aluminium, fibre glass or inflatable) (Length limit 4.6m)
- Kick-boats (electrically propelled or by means of kicking)
- Inflatable boats electrically propelled or by means of oars (Length limit 4.6m)

- Kayaks (no size limit)
- If your craft is not on the list and within the 4.6m cut-off, please contact the organisers prior to attending a tournament to confirm that your craft is permitted to enter.
- No watercraft deemed unsafe by the tournament committee will be permitted.
- All vessels are to conform to the SAMSA regulations.

Under no circumstances are outboard type motors to be used during TBC tournaments.

12. LIVE-WELLS

Any craft that is propelled by trolling motors or by oars are required to have a functional live-well. Such a live-well should meet TBC minimum requirements.

- i. Your live-well should be able to hold a minimum of 20 liter per three fish.
- ii. Your live-well should at least have an aerator and preferably have a bilge pump as well, water has to be replaced regularly.
- iii. The fish's health is the angler's responsibility.

Any craft that is propelled by kicking is to utilize an approved follow-me bag. However if the angler wishes to utilize a live-well instead, the live-well must meet TBC's minimum requirements.

Should your follow-me bag or live-well not meet minimum specifications you will not be permitted to fish the tournament.

Only one live-well is allowed to be used if a team is fishing off of two individual crafts.

13. SAFETY

The consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration or during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure and prize giving are strictly prohibited and will lead to instant disqualification.

Life jackets are compulsory at all TBC events. Each craft **MUST** have sufficient life jackets on board for its participants. Competitors under the age of 12 are required to wear their life jackets while underway.

At the discretion of the tournament organiser, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or cancelled due to unsafe weather or water conditions. There are three different coloured flags that all anglers must take note of:

GREEN flag – Safe weather conditions, continue fishing.

BLUE flag- Rods down, all fishing has to stop. Competitors may leave their boat and seek shelter in bad weather or when danger is imminent. They must, however, stay within sight of other teams.

RED flag – Rods down, all fishing has to stop, the tournament is called off for the rest of the day. All anglers have to get back to the weigh station within reasonable time and hand in their tags.

14. EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE

All anglers must propel their own craft and are not allowed to pull (or be pulled) by another angler, **UNLESS** in an emergency situation. In such situations the angler being pulled is to remain on their craft (If it is in a safe condition) as well as their catch for the day and should contact the organisers.

If an angler has any technical issues with his boat and is unable to get back to the launch on his own, he will be allowed to be towed in by another angler or by one of the safety marshals, but will only be allowed to weigh in two fish, the angler needs to contact the organisers before being towed in.

If there were extreme weather conditions, or it was a real emergency issue, the organiser and the committee will vote and their decision will be final.

15. TEAM RULES

A team can compete off two individual crafts, if it is seen as an individual craft, which will be at the organizers discretion.

A team with two individual crafts are only allowed to use one live-well.

Any member fishing of two individual crafts may only start fishing once both teams are on the water and ready to fish.

You will not be allowed to fish off two crafts if one of the crafts is able to carry more than one angler safely. Teams who fish off two separate crafts are not allowed to be further apart from each other than 20 meter at any time. (Photo evidence has to be handed in by the complainant)

Penalty for first offence – written warning from any TBC Committee member; a copy of the warning has to be handed in at the weigh master. The penalty for second and more offenses – one fish penalty per offence.

You need to contact the organizers prior to the competition to confirm that your craft complies with the two craft team rule, the organizers decision will be final.

16. INFRINGEMENT RULES

Any complaint is to be submitted in writing, or by providing video footage, to the tournament organiser within 15 minutes of the check-in time of the day.

Should any infringement on these rules be brought to the attention of TBC organizers, the TBC organizers will take all evidence into account, call up a committee, deliberate and pass their verdict before prize giving. The committee and TBC organizers verdicts are final.

The competition organisers and marshals are responsible for the fair and impartial application of the rules. The decisions of the organisers and marshals are final.

The use of alcohol and/or non-medical drugs before or during competitions is prohibited. Violation of this rule will result in competition disqualification.

Littering will not be tolerated. Angler's found littering will be asked to clean up their mess. If they refuse they will be disqualified from the day's proceedings and possibly banned from future tournaments.

The organizers of the TBC competitions would like to promote a sense of sportsmanship, respect and proper conduct prior to, during and after competitions. If anyone from the public, a marshal, or competitor, view a TBC competitor exhibiting unsportsman like conduct, or in any way conduct him/herself in breach of the competition's rules prior to, during, or after a competition, they could be disqualified from that competition, and future competitions.

17. MISBEHAVIOUR

a. Fighting, pulling pushing and threatening each other and abusive language will not be tolerated, this includes officials as well. (Minimum 3 months ban up to 12 months).

b. Deliberate or intentional actions of a member, official, competitor (including the competitor's family, relatives or friends), publishing negative comments towards fellow competitors, administrators, officials or tournament partners on social media, using foul language (including officials) towards spectators, officials, competitors, tournament partners or employees of the venue. The competitor (official) may be banned for a period for a period of minimum 3 up to 12months if found guilty by a special committee appointed to investigate the matter. The decision of the special committee is final.

18. MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS

The favourable public reputation of SA BASS and TBC as sanctioning organizations in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets and tangible benefits for SA BASS. Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, fellow anglers or SA BASS. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with SA BASS policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of SA BASS, its officials or sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming an angler and will result in disciplinary action.

19. LOGO DISPLAY & MEDIA COVERAGE

During all days of competition any and all tobacco logos are prohibited and may not be worn or displayed. Anglers may wear their own apparel every day. SA BASS reserve the right, in their sole discretion, to prohibit any angler's apparel that it finds to be offensive. All decisions are in tournament organisers' sole discretion.

Only official SA BASS and TBC sponsors and benefit providers are entitled to publicity at tournaments as jointly agreed. No competitor may offer publicity, guaranteed or incidental, on behalf of SA BASS or TBC in exchange for sponsorship.

In the event of any television coverage of any SA BASS or TBC event, SA BASS owns the rights to all camera footage. SA BASS is under no obligation to remunerate, whether it be cash or any other means, what so ever, to any competitors should they appear in the production.

20. RIGHT OF ADMISSION

Right of admission is reserved: the TBC Tournament Trial is a showcase for bass angling! All contestants 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 SA BASS, sponsors, the sport of fishing and SA BASS' efforts to promote the sport examples of conduct not complying with those standards include, but are not limited to, the following: violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the official rules for the TBC Tournament Trial.

21. POWER OF DISQUALIFICATION

Under any of the above rules, tournament organisers are empowered to disqualify any competitor, after due consideration of the facts, deemed to have broken these rules at their level and/or apply disciplinary measures as defined in the TBC tournament rules. The regional organiser may recommend the banning of any angler for serious breach of rules. In the event of a dispute SA BASS may make use of a polygraph test for both anglers on the boat.

By filling in the entry form, submitting and participating in the TBC tournament trial, you have agreed to abide by all the rules and have acknowledged and have accepted the indemnity at the bottom of the entry form.

22. TBC CHAMPIONSHIP 2025

Date: 2, 3 May 2025 - It is a two day event.

Venue: Morgenstond Dam

Entry fee: R600/angler

Qualifications:

- Only the top 20 (twenty) teams on the TBC final log standings for the season will compete in the TBC Championship.
- The top 5 (five) teams at the TBC Championship teams can advance to compete in the SA BASS Cast-for-Cash National Championship* against the top anglers from each Cast-for-Cash region in South Africa.

***Please note:** *The SA BASS Cast-for-Cash National Championship has its own set of tournament rules that differ from the TBC tournament rules.*

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