

# 2024-2025 AMATEUR HIGH SCHOOL BASS ANGLERS RULES, REGULATIONS, and INDEMNITY AGREEMENT

## 1. PURPOSE

The Amateur High School Bass Anglers (AHSBA) was established by a group of individuals in February 2017 for the purpose of promoting sportsmanship, conservation, life skills, character, citizenship, and teamwork, all while practicing the Golden Rule, through the sport of competitive bass fishing to those students who currently attend high school in the state of Georgia.

## 2. ORGANIZATION DIRECTORS

AHSBA Board Members:

James Hall (AHSBA, Tournament Director)

Charlie Kirkpatrick (Cass)

John Rice (Cartersville)

Lyle McClure (Adairsville)

Jason Ivester (Cass)

Chuck Moore (Woodland)

**IT IS THE SOLE RESPONSIBILITY OF EACH PARTICIPANT TO BE FAMILIAR WITH AND ABIDE BY THESE RULES. THESE RULES TAKE PRECEDENCE OVER ANY OTHER PRINTED AHSBA INFORMATION.**

## 3. NON-AFFILIATION

All parties acknowledge that the Amateur High School Bass Anglers (AHSBA) is self-supported as a nonprofit organization.

## 4. PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY

The Amateur High School Bass Anglers (AHSBA) Senior League is open to students in grades 9-12 at an AHSBA approved High School. Students in grades 7-8 may choose to fish Senior League provided the second team member is in grades 9-12. All student anglers will demonstrate a positive attitude toward their teachers and classmates and not be a disciplinary problem in school. You are a reflection of your team and the AHSBA organization in your appearance, your speech, and your **social media presence**. All participants and parent(s)/guardian(s) must accept and sign this document via online registration to be eligible to compete. All participants must have in their possession a valid fishing license covering the waters fished, where required by law. *\*\*Existing AHSBA members younger than grade 9 who competed prior to the 22-23 season may continue to fish senior league under the grandfather clause. New members will be required to fish within the appropriate age group in alignment with SAF regulations.\*\**

## 5. ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP

The annual membership dues include a membership in the Student Angler Federation (\$25 – may be waived with proof of existing SAF membership). Dues are paid directly to team representatives and may include an additional amount for angler jerseys. Supplemental to membership fees, each senior angler is responsible for tournament entry fees in the amount of \$60 PER BOAT, per tournament, due by 5 p.m. on the Sunday prior to tournament day. The Junior League tournament fee is \$30, due by 5 p.m. on the Sunday prior to tournament day. \$30 of each senior fee goes to the yearly scholarship fund. All remaining entry fees (both juniors and seniors) are used to fund prizes and trophies.

**All anglers have access to a bulk registration option.** Anglers who choose to register for all tournaments at once will be able to do so at a discounted rate of \$55(SR) or \$25(JR) per boat, per tournament.

Anglers may get local businesses to sponsor fees. This is an expensive sport to participate in, so please have an appropriate plan of action to fund your fishing. The team representative receives no stipend for what he does, and we are not funded for organizing and operating this fishing team. Some expenses to consider are tackle, cold weather clothing, raingear, travel expenses, fuel for boat and vehicle, licenses, launch fees, food, lodging, etc.

## 6. TEAMS

A team shall consist of two anglers and a Boat Captain. **Each angler is responsible for securing a boat and Boat Captain.** If the front angler is determined unqualified by the Boat Captain to run the trolling motor, the Boat Captain will operate the trolling motor. (It is the option of the front angler to relinquish control of the trolling motor, and/or locations to fish to the rear angler). Each angler will share equal time in the front and back of the boat. If the Boat Captain feels an angler cannot adequately control the trolling motor, the Boat Captain may take control of the trolling motor at any time.

## 7. OFF LIMITS

There will be no off limits or official practice days for AHSBA tournaments. However, event waters shall be limited to the lake being fished (no locking through to another body of water) and may be placed OFF-LIMITS by Tournament Director for a particular tournament event. Members may not have the assistance of any non-competitor for the purpose of locating or catching fish on the competition day. No guides may be used for the purpose of locating or catching fish within 14 days of the tournaments. Consult tournament director prior to fishing with anyone that could be considered a professional fisherman/guide for ruling.

## 8. TOURNAMENT HOURS

Tournament hours will be determined prior to each tournament with most being safelight until 2:00 PM for Juniors and 3:00 PM for Seniors. All tournament times will be based on Eastern Standard Time regardless of where held. The AHSBA Tournament Director or his designee reserves the right to change hours or cancel an event for any reason deemed necessary.

## 9. LAUNCH SEQUENCE

Starting positions will be determined by a virtual random number generator.

## 10. CHECK-IN

Chips must be returned to the board by designated time or angler will face a late penalty as outlined in Section 18.

## 11. TOURNAMENT START / BLAST-OFF:

Boats will leave by their numbered position assigned at the time the launch order was published and confirmed. Swapping numbers is not permitted. No passing of tournament boats will be allowed until you reach the mouth of the launch site.

## 12. SAFETY

**Rain gear and outerwear:** We will fish rain or shine with the exception being extreme cold, flooding, or lightning. Please acquire and have with you at all times the appropriate gear to keep dry and warm. **First Aid Kit:** Boat Captions need to keep a first aid kit in boat for cuts, scrapes, hook removal, etc. **Safe Boating:** Safe boating conduct must be observed at all times. Each competitor is required to wear a US Coast Guard approved **Type 3** personal flotation device, securely fastened at all times, while boat is being propelled by the combustion engine. All occupants shall remain seated in a recommended on-plane seating location when the combustion engine is running. Sitting on pedestal seats while the combustion engine is in operation is not permitted. **A kill switch must be fastened to the driver anytime the combustion engine is propelling the boat.** Failure to do so is grounds for disqualification from the event. **All boats must be USCG approved for at least 3 individuals and have a sufficient weight capacity to carry the load per the USCG vessel label. Boats must also have operational running lights which must be turned on at the blast-off of each tournament.** Each boat must be equipped with an operational live well system capable of keeping a tournament limit of bass alive. Any boat equipped with a motor that exceeds the horsepower rating of the boat according to the manufacturer's USCG Vessel Label is prohibited from being used in a high school tournament. Auxiliary gas and bladder tanks not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer's 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 that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in the boat. During the tournament, no portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline may be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor. Violators will have their catch disqualified. *Note: each team representative must use his/her best personal judgment with safety always at the forefront and should verify that the above rules are closely followed.*

### 13. SPORTSMANSHIP

Each contestant is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conversation. NO TEAM MAY FISH WITHIN 50 YARDS OF ANOTHER BOAT WHICH IS ANCHORED WITH THE TROLLING MOTOR UP. NO TEAM MAY FISH WITHIN 25 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WITHOUT THE OTHER BOATER'S PERMISSION. No hole sitting by a non-competitor or another competitor to aid a tournament participant will be allowed. At no time during any AHSBA event will a competitor act to give themselves an unfair advantage over other AHSBA competitors. The use of cellular phones is encouraged within a team to help other team members, record any rules violations, post social media posts/pictures, and to keep up with inclement weather details. Any participant causing dissension in any tournament could be disqualified for the rest of the tournament season. Violators will have their catch disqualified.

### 14. TACKLE AND FISHING METHODS

Only artificial baits may be used. No live or cut bait is permitted (pork baits are permitted). All bass must be caught alive in a legal and sporting manner. No snagging. Each competitor may use only 1 rod at a time. No more than 1 line in the water at a time per angler. Trolling with the combustion motor is not permitted. No competitor may leave the boat to land or catch fish. Be respectful of the Boat Captain's boat and equipment.

### 15. STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS

All participants are expected to abide by all state and federal laws and game regulations. Any team who intentionally violates a law or regulation in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage will have their catch disqualified. In the case of multiple governing authorities, the strictest law is applicable. Any participant including BOAT CAPTAINS who consumes, or is under the influence of alcoholic beverages, stimulants or depressants during any AHSBA function will have their team's catch disqualified. Prescribed medications taken per doctor's instructions are excluded.

### 16. EMERGENCIES

In the event of an emergency situation competitors should call 911 first and then notify coaches. Competitors shall remain with their partners in the boat at all times during the tournament, except in the event of sickness or brief excursions for the restroom, severe storm or other such hazard. It is permitted for a competitor to leave the boat for marina services. Competitors may leave the boat to dislodge it, but only to return the boat in the direction it came from. Leaving the boat to advance is not permitted. In falling water conditions, a team may leave the boat to advance it only to return from water accessed without leaving the boat. If for any reason either or both team members decide to leave the tournament waters early, both members shall bear full responsibility for notifying the tournament director. If one team member leaves the water early, he/she must notify the director immediately and may not return to fish. The other team member may continue fishing in his/her absence only if there is a third party present on the boat. By leaving early, anglers forfeit all points for that tournament. In case of a breakdown, one partner may return with fish by another tournament boat or a director's boat while the other partner is permitted to stay with the disabled boat. Your boat must remain in tournament waters at all times and all participants must remain in their boat except in case of dire emergency or boat breakdown. Leaving the boat to land a fish is not permitted. Fueling is permitted. All fish must return to the official AHSBA weigh-in site by tournament boat. All tournament boats must pass by the blast-off dock with live well open, running lights on, and kill switch attached to body for boat check. **It is each participant's responsibility to be in the water prior to start. Tournaments will start just after first light based on the opinion of the director. If not in the water and ready at that time you will go after those that are ready.** If you remove your boat from tournament waters prior to the end of tournament hours you must still return your chip to the board prior to check-in time. It is the responsibility of each participant to check in or you will be considered late and will be disqualified. All fish are to remain in the live well until scales open (10 minutes after check-in).

**BOAT BREAKDOWN:** If boat problems are experienced during tournament hours you may change boats if the following guidelines are followed. **A)** You must notify one of the tournament officials that you are going to change boats. **B)** You must have your livewell checked before changing boats and again after changing boats. **C)** A tournament official can check your boat both before and after changing boats. Another tournament participant can check your boat prior to the boat change, but a different tournament participant from another tournament boat or an official must check your boat after the change prior to starting to fish again. **D)** You must provide the tournament director with names of participants who checked your boat prior to fishing again.

## 17. WEIGH-IN PROCEDURES

Weigh-in will be on a first come first serve basis with bags provided by the tournament director. **All fish must be left in the live well until a bag is obtained.** The catch will be measured, weighed, and returned to the water as soon as possible. Once fish have been presented to a tournament official to be weighed, all fish become the property of the AHSBA and no additional fish may be brought to the scales. Once a team member has checked in or left the boat for the purpose of checking in, neither team member may continue fishing.

## 18. LATE PENALTY

Teams that are not checked-in at the appointed time will be penalized 1 pound per minute. Late penalties will be deducted from the team's total weight for the day. Any team 15 minutes late or more will be disqualified. Competitors who have their catch disqualified because of a late penalty will receive the same points of an angler not weighing any fish after the last place angler with fish.

## 19. SCORING

A limit of 5 bass (largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass) per boat may be weighed in. Minimum lengths will be set by the states governing body (GA DNR, TWRA, AL Game and Fish, etc.) length limit. Lengths will be measured with the mouth closed and tail pinched. "Meanmouth" bass (a cross between a Spotted bass and Smallmouth bass) will be scored as Smallmouth bass and subject to State Regulations for Smallmouth bass. A short fish brought to the scales will not be weighed and will result in a 1-pound penalty. All culling tools must be no-pierce devices. Culling of dead fish is prohibited; the penalty for culling a dead fish will be culling the largest fish in the bag. A half-pound penalty will be deducted from the total weight of the tournament limit for any team caught with more than 5 fish in their live well at any time during the tournament. On any water where state or local laws prohibit culling or impose limits of less than 5 fish, the state or local laws will replace the above as the rule.

## 20. POINTS

Points are awarded by place earned and total bag weight, and can only be earned if the angler is present at weigh-in. First place will receive 100 points plus one additional point for each pound caught, second place will receive 99 points plus one additional point for each pound caught, third place receives 98 plus, and so on. After all bags are weighed, anglers who zero out will receive the next level of points. For example, if the angler with the lightest bag earns 72 points prior to weight value being added, anglers who zero will receive 71 points. At the end of the season, the lowest scoring tournament will be dropped by each team. Anglers who fish a minimum of 5 AHSBA events will be invited to fish the AHSBA Classic in May 2025. The top 15 boats from day one of the Classic will qualify for day two.

## 21. TIES

Regular tournament ties will be decided by big fish weight. In the case of a tie for the classic winner a fish-off will be held. In the case of a tie for the points championship, the winner will be determined by the most total weight for the regular season.

## 22. PROTEST

Any protest must be submitted to the AHSBA Director or Team Representative within 15 minutes of the close of the tournament weigh in. All participants agree to abide by the results of the Tournament Director. Rulings will be made as soon as possible after all information and facts are gathered and considered by the AHSBA Board of Directors.

## 23. BOAT CAPTAINS

Boat Captains must be 19 years of age and can supply all boat related items for the team such as nets, weigh-in bags, anchors, and marker buoys. Boat Captains may not touch fishing rods at any time during competition hours. Boat Captains are the only ones permitted to operate the boat during tournament hours with the combustible engine in gear unless the Boat Captain is incapacitated. **Tournament Director must be notified of any change in captain prior to tournament start time.** All rules in regards to conduct that apply to anglers also apply to Boat Captains. Failure to follow these rules will mean immediate disqualification from the tournament for the team the Boat Captain is captaining for and would include probation or immediate dismissal from the program by the Tournament Director and/or AHSBA Board of Directors.

## **24. LIABILITY INSURANCE**

Boat Owner / Boat Captain must carry a minimum of \$300,000 of Liability Insurance on any boat used during any AHSBA Tournament. Failure to do so or reporting of false information will result in disqualification of catch. Cancellations or changes of boat insurance must be reported to the Tournament Director as soon as possible and must be reported prior to fishing any AHSBA sanctioned tournament.

## **25. PARTICIPATION**

The AHSBA tournament director retains the right to refuse anyone's admittance into AHSBA events. Entry fees will not be refunded. Any disruption verbal or otherwise during tournament hours, including blast-off and weigh-in, that affects the ability of the AHSBA officials to conduct the tournaments in an orderly manner will result in disqualification in that event and possibly the remainder of the season.

## **26. BOAT BOARDING**

Any tournament boat may be boarded by a AHSBA official at any time during the tournament hours.

## **27. VIOLATIONS OF RULES AND DISQUALIFICATION**

The violation of a tournament rule by either team member may result in weight loss: the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day (eligible for a restart), loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification for the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligible to participate in future AHSBA events. If disqualified from a tournament, weight will be recorded as 0.00 lbs with no points awarded. If the Tournament Director and/or Board of Directors feels that their violation was a willful attempt to gain an unfair advantage or to intentionally cheat, then AHSBA has the right to refuse entry from that angler in future events. Cell phones may be used at any time. AHSBA reserves the right to pull any angler from the team because of disciplinary reasons.

## **28. DECISIONS AND INSTRUCTIONS**

All decisions made by and instructions given by AHSBA tournament officials are final and binding in any and all matters.

## **29. RULES INTERPRETATION**

Interpretation of these rules will be left to AHSBA Board of Directors. Infractions of any rule may result in disqualification of catch or removal from team events. ALL DISCIPLINARY DECISIONS WILL BE MADE WITH THE GOOD OF THE TEAM IN MIND AND ARE FINAL. AHSBA fishes under the SAF umbrella; any rules not mentioned here but in SAF rules are still in effect and vice versa. It is the responsibility of the angler/coach to be familiar with SAF rules.

## **30. LIABILITY WAIVER/INDEMNIFICATION:**

I understand participating in this event is potentially hazardous and that I should not enter or participate unless I am medically able and properly trained. In consideration of acceptance of this entry, I assume full and complete responsibility for any injury or accident which may occur while I am traveling to or from the event, during the event, or while on the premises of the event. I also am aware of and assume all risks associated with participating in this event including but not limited to falls, contact with other participants, effects of weather, traffic, and conditions of the water and road. I, for myself and my heirs and executors, hereby waive, release and forever discharge the event organizers (including but not limited to the Board of Directors, team representatives, and other participants), sponsors, promoters and each of their agents, representatives, successors, and all other persons associated with the event, for my all liabilities, claims, actions, or damages that I may have against them arising out of or in any way connected with my participation in this event. I understand this waiver includes any claims whether caused by negligence, the action or inaction of any of the above parties or otherwise.

I understand that any entry fee that may be charged is non-refundable and non-transferable. I hereby grant full permission to any and all of the above parties to use any photographs, videotapes, motion pictures, website images, recordings or any other record of this event.

**30.1. Authority to Register and/or to Act as Agent.** If you are registering third parties, you represent and warrant that you have been duly authorized to act as agent on behalf of such parties and that you have full legal authority to compete in the various events. By proceeding with this event registration, you agree that the terms of this Registration Agreement shall apply equally to you and to any third parties for whom you are acting as agent. Compliance with Children's Online Privacy Protection Act (COPPA). You represent and warrant that, in compliance with COPPA, you are over thirteen (13) years of age, and that if you are registering a child under fourteen (14) years of age you are the parent or legal guardian of such child, and do hereby consent that you will produce information to the satisfaction of the AHSBA, if requested.

**30.2. Limitation of Liability; Disclaimer of Warranties.** AHSBA shall not be liable for any direct, indirect, incidental, special or consequential damages, resulting from the competitions and the participation including but not limited to, damages for personal injury or injury to property or to other tangible or intangible items/matters, even if AHSBA has been advised of the possibility of such damages. You expressly agree that use of is at your sole risk. AHSBA expressly disclaims all warranties of any kind, express or implied, including without limitation any warranty of merchantability, fitness for a particular purpose or non-infringement.

AHSBA makes no warranty that the Competition and Competition sites and/or equipment being used will not be dangerous, uninterrupted, secure, harmless or accident free. AHSBA does not guarantee safety in connection with any of the training, practice or competitions relating to the various purposes of members or participants of AHSBA. AHSBA is expressly not responsible for any errors or omissions in its disclosures, or for the consequences thereof, nor for any injuries, accidents relating thereto, either with regard to bodily injury or property damage. You understand and agree that if you damage any property of AHSBA or the property of any third party that it is your own personal responsibility and that you should use your own discretion and the risk will be your sole responsibility for any damage that results from your participation.

**30.3. Indemnification.** You agree to indemnify and hold AHSBA and its officers and employees harmless from any claim or demand, including reasonable attorneys' fees, made by any third party due to or arising out of your participation in AHSBA or the violation of any of the various terms of this Liability Waiver and otherwise.

**30.4. Applicable Law; Consent to Jurisdiction.** The AHSBA events are controlled by AHSBA directors within the State of Georgia, United States of America. By completing this form or any subsequent registration of any particular event, both you and AHSBA agree that the statutes and laws of the State of Georgia, without regard to the conflict of laws principles thereof, will apply to all matters relating to this Agreement. You agree that exclusive jurisdiction for any dispute with AHSBA or any of its members, or participants reside in the courts of the State of Georgia and you further agree and expressly consent to the exercise of personal jurisdiction in the courts of the State of Georgia in connection with any dispute including any claim involving AHSBA or its members, participants, affiliates, subsidiaries, employees, contractors, officers, or directors.

**30.5. Severability.** If any provision of this Liability Waiver shall be unlawful, void, or for any reason unenforceable, then that provision shall be deemed severable from this Liability Waiver and shall not affect the validity and enforceability of any remaining provisions.