

OFFICIAL TEXAS TEAM TRAIL RULES (updated January 13, 2017)

These rules will remain in effect during the 2017 season. Interpretation of these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions, as he deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualifications, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments. Decisions of the Tournament Director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal, and are not reviewable by any court of law. The Texas Team Trail (TXTT) reserves the right to make needed changes to these rules in order to ensure the safety, welfare of the TXTT anglers, and/or the public and preserve the integrity of the TXTT. Any rule changes will immediately supersede all previously published copies of rules. It is your responsibility to read and understand the rules and how you, your points and qualification for the Championship are affected by not complying with the following rules. Every Angler will be required to sign an affidavit that he/she has read, understands and accepts all rules.

- 1. Participation and Eligibility:** Participation is open to current TXTT members who are 18 years old and older. Any person entering a Texas Team Trail event under the age of 18 years must be paired with a partner 18 years of age or older and also have the signature of their parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the official entry form. TXTT reserves the right to refuse membership and participation in any and all events to any individual or team at the discretion of the Tournament Director. In addition:
 - a. Anglers that have competed as a boater / pro in a FLW Tour Major or BASS Elite Series event within 6 months immediately preceding the TXTT event being entered are not eligible to compete.
- 2. Federal, State and Local Laws:** All contestants must have a valid fishing license and are required to obey all federal, state and local laws and regulations.
- 3. Teams:** All TXTT tournaments are team events, with all points/awards going to the team. **Anglers may not fish as individuals.** A team consists of two (2) anglers, one of which must be designated as the "Captain." A team must enter all four (4) TXTT regular season events and participate in at least two (2) of the four (4) to qualify for the championship. Anglers may only be entered on one (1) team per event. A team may assign one alternate partner during the year and will retain all points earned. The designated boater will receive all tax forms at the end of each tournament year. Teams that do not wish to participate in the Team of the Year race or the Championship may use as many partners as desired. Should a break up of a team occur, all points earned will stay with the designated Captain, no exceptions. An alternate partner may not be used during the Championship.
Only in the event of military deployment or the death of a partner, the Tournament Director may, after reviewing the circumstances, approve an alternate partner for the championship event. If approved, no Team-of-Year points will be awarded to said team.

- 4. Information:** No fishing information may be purchased, bartered, solicited or otherwise received from any person who entered official tournament waters during the established off-limits period for all TXTT qualifying events.
- 5. Pre Tournament Practice:** All TXTT regular season events have a 5-day off-limits period, which consists of the Monday-*Friday prior to the tournament. **The Friday prior to each regular season tournament will be considered an official practice day ONLY for those anglers that have pre-registered and paid entry for the event before midnight Thursday. The Thursday and Friday prior to the Championship will be considered official practice days ONLY for those teams pre-registered and paid before midnight Wednesday.* During the official practice period non-competitors are not allowed to be in a competitors boat on the water for any reason. No Contestant may be on designated tournament waters for any reason during the official off-limits period (this includes “walking” the shoreline, marinas, boat docks, etc. for the purpose of locating or catching fish). Tournament waters are also off-limits following registration from 6:00 pm Friday evening until takeoff the morning of the tournament. Contestants are allowed to travel by boat from another launch ramp or dock directly to the hose site for takeoff the morning of the tournament.
- 6. Registration:** 250 teams will be considered a full field for all Texas Team Trail events and registration may be closed when 250 teams have registered for any single event. Anglers may pre-register online prior to each event. Membership, the registration fee and Anglers Advantage for each event must be paid in full prior to the conclusion of on-site registration, which will run from 3:00 - 6:00 pm (for 1st event) & 4:00 - 6:00 pm (for the other events) the evening before the event. At least one member of each team must register in person at the designated site during onsite registration hours regardless of pre-registration. Boat numbers and flights will be based on random draw at the regular season events. Boat numbers at the Championship are based on TOY standings and on Day 2 of the Championship order will be reversed. *Registrations and payments of any type are not accepted the morning of ANY tournament.*

 - a. If extenuating circumstances prevent on-site registration attendance, it is the sole responsibility of the team to appoint a representative who will be responsible for drawing the team’s boat number during on-site registration and communicating all pertinent information to the team.
- 7. Contingency Requirements:** Serial numbers are required in order to receive sponsor contingency prize money and must be reported to the TXTT registration staff by take off of the 1st day of competition in order to be paid.
- 8. Insurance:** A minimum of \$100,000 liability insurance is required of all contestants utilizing their boats in any Texas Team Trail tournament.
- 9. Safety:** Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each Contestant is required to wear a fastened (fully zipped and/or all clips fastened), U.S. Coast Guard approved, personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from boat check until weigh-in. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device, which must be securely attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is in operation. The driver must be seated in the driver's seat anytime the combustion engine is engaged in gear. Tournament days may be shortened or canceled due to unsafe

weather or any conditions that would endanger the safety of the competitors at the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek shelter in bad weather, at which time no fishing may occur.

10. Permitted Fishing Methods: Only artificial lures may be used with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only one fishing rod per angler may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is attempted or rod is used. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Switching or sharing fish with other teams or individuals is a violation of these rules and will result in immediate disqualification. All Bass must be caught alive, in a conventional, sporting manner. When sight fishing for Bass, all fish must be hooked inside the mouth to be counted as a legal fish (this will be a polygraph question). All angling 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.

11. Sportsmanship and Conduct: All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a competitor, which reflects unfavorably upon the TXTT's effort to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, shall be reason for disqualification. Other examples of conduct not complying with these standards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- a. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any mind-altering substance during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure;
- b. Any previous conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation for a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude, or a crime related to, arising out of, or involving any fishing tournament or event, except with full, prior written disclosure to the Tournament Director under oath and by affidavit of all facts and circumstances surrounding such conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation at least ten (10) days before the TXTT event being entered, and thereafter subject to the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion that such conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation does not result in the Contestant's honesty, integrity, character or qualifications to enter the event being unreasonably questionable.
- c. Actions or words which reflect unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, and fair competition;
- d. Disqualification from TXTT or other fishing organizations that resulted from rule violations that result in a Contestant's honesty, integrity, character, and qualifications for entry into a TXTT event being questionable in the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion.

Upon review of the circumstances by Texas Team Trail and the Tournament Director, the Tournament Director shall have the right to refuse any application, or to deny a confirmed application, by returning the entry fee of a previously accepted application, or disqualifying a Contestant. Texas Team Trail reserves the right to place an official observer in a Contestant's boat at any time during competition hours.

12. Assistance: During the official practice period and extending through the hours of competition, **contestants may not have non-competitors in their boats on the water for**

any reason, receive fishing information from non-competitors or follow a non competitor's boat or participate in the placing of markers by non competitors or participate in the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular telephones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, pagers or any electronic device to obtain and use fishing information from anyone during tournament hours is strictly prohibited. In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should call 911 first and then notify the Tournament Director at (512) 773-7401.

13. Boat and Horsepower Regulation: Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain alive a limit catch of Bass. Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition may not exceed the horsepower limitations as set by the U. S. Coast Guard in such vessel. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating plate to conceal such limitations will be cause for disqualification from the tournament. No Contestant may have a platform, raised deck, or ladder which is higher than the gunnel of the boat. Standing on the fishing seats or outboard motor will not be allowed in TXTT events. No air or jet drive boats will be permitted during official practice or competition days. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Optional remote engine fuel tanks must be factory or factory authorized dealer installed and be strapped or otherwise secured. 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.

14. Permitted Fishing Locations: Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat, except areas designated as "off limits", "no boats", "keep out", "restricted" or "no fishing" (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by state or federal officials, or within 50 yards of a competitor's boat which 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. The act of moving Bass from one area of the lake to another confined area of the same lake at any time, whether or not during official practice days or competition days, is not permitted.

15. Off-Limits Areas: Such areas established by federal, state and local laws and areas announced at registration for each TXTT event. Contestants may not fish inside the established "off-limits" areas. Violation of the rule will result in immediate disqualification.

16. Trailering is Not Allowed: (In the event of severe weather or location limitations, alternate take-off and check-in instructions will be given at the registration site, at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director). All boats must leave the official check point by boat in the order designated at registration. Contestants may launch their boat at a ramp other than the designated take-off location, but all Contestants must come through the official check-in location before leaving to fish. Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat. Contestants' boats must remain in the tournament waters during the event. In the event of a mechanical breakdown, there are two permitted methods of

returning to the check-in. (1) by remaining in boat and being towed by water, or (2) by entering the boat of another competitor. The Contestants must return to the official check-in location by the methods set forth above by their assigned check-in time to avoid late penalty. 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. Any Contestant 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 Contestants to locate the Tournament Director to request a restart.

17. Official Checkpoints: There will be only one official checkpoint for boat inspection in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check-out in the morning or failure to officially check-in at the check-in point will result in disqualification from such event. It is the sole responsibility of each Contestant to arrive at the designated check-in location on time. Regardless of what you are told or understand, it is the angler's responsibility to verify their provided flight card time. All fishing must cease upon check-in, or upon such other time as may be designated by the Tournament Director.

18. Scoring: Will be determined by the official weight of each angler's catch during the tournament. Only Largemouth, Spotted, Red Eye or Smallmouth Bass (collectively, "Bass") are accepted species. The limit will be five Bass per team. Any Contestant who possesses more than the tournament limit, unless actively culling, will have their catch for that day disqualified. Culling must be done immediately. The minimum official length limit for all species for TXTT events will be 14" unless the lake limit is more than 14", in which case, the lake limit will prevail. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the prescribed length limit, will result in loss of that particular fish and a one-pound penalty to the weight of the remaining fish. Each Contestant's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag and verified by the signature of at least one team member. Bass will be measured with mouth closed, tail compressed and swiped to achieve overall greatest length. A measuring board will be provided at check-in and will serve as the official measuring standard for TXTT events. It is the contestant's responsibility to ensure all fish presented for weigh-in are of legal length according solely to the TXTT official measuring board.

19. Live Fish: Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. The use of chemical live well additives which promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat are recommended. A half pound (.50) penalty will be deducted for each dead Bass presented for weigh-in. Culling of dead bass is prohibited. No dead bass will be eligible for Big Bass awards or prizes.

20. Late Penalty: Contestants who are not at the official check-in point at the appointed time will be assessed a ONE (1) pound per minute penalty from their total weight including any weight to be counted toward a big Bass award. Any Contestant more than 15 minutes late will forfeit that day's catch.

21. Closing of the Scales: Scales will close 30 minutes after the last flight is due in. Due to certain weigh-in locations this time may be lengthened or shortened at the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion. Any change to the above stated official scale closing time will be announced during registration, during boat check-out., or during weigh-in. It is the angler's responsibility to verify the official scale closing time and to be in the weigh-in line by such time.

22. Ties: In the event of a tie for first place, the Tournament Director shall designate, depending on time and safety conditions, a fish-off period to be held within 24 hours of the closing of the scales. If an angler/team declines to compete in the fish off, the other team involved will be awarded first place. Should a tie still exist following a fish-off period, the highest ranked team in the Team Of-The-Year standings will be awarded 1st place. Should a tie exist following a fish off period at the first event of the year, the tie will be broken by a coin toss. All other ties for cash prizes will be split equally among the teams involved.

23. Championship Qualifiers: All teams who enter all four (4) regular season events and participate in at least two (2) of the four (4) will automatically *qualify* for the TXTT Championship event. Each team is allowed one (1) alternate during the year (see Rule #3). The Championship is NOT an entry fee free event. Entry fee will be the same as a regular season event.

24. Polygraph: Polygraph exams will be administered on-site at each event. The first place team and a team randomly selected will automatically be tested. Each contestant who fishes a TXTT event also agrees to submit to a polygraph examination should it be deemed necessary at a time and location determined by the Tournament Director following the competition. Failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification.

25. Protest and Reporting Procedure: All protests must be submitted in writing along with a \$100 cash deposit within fifteen (15) minutes of the last flight check-in to the tournament director or designated tournament official. The protestor also agrees that if there is a question with regards to verifying the protest charge, he or she may be subject to a polygraph exam and agree to testify in a court of law if necessary. If the Tournament Director, or polygraph, upholds the protest, the cash deposit shall be returned to the contestant submitting the protest.

26. Team of the Year: Points will be awarded as follows: Total Entries = Total Points: Winning team receives the exact # of points as the # of entries. Example: 200 Entries – Winning team receives 200 points, 2nd place receives 199 points, 3rd place receives 198 points, etc. All teams that participate and do not weigh in a bass will receive ten points less than the last place team that weighed fish at that event. All teams that enter but do not participate will receive zero points for that event. The team that accumulates the greatest amount of points for the entire season will be awarded the prestigious “LUCAS OIL TEAM OF THE YEAR” title, TXTT rings and entries paid for 2018. Points earned at the TXTT Championship will be doubled.