

St. Michaels Church Open Team Bass Tournament Rules and Regulations

1. **Participants and eligibility:** The tournament is open to all persons (male and female) providing the person operating the combustion engine is 18 years of age or older. Anyone under the age of 18 will be considered a minor. All participants must hold a valid Louisiana fishing license. An adult choosing a minor as a partner will take full responsibility for that minor.
2. **Registration:** Each team member must fill out and sign the registration form. Fees can be received by cash or check. No credit cards will be accepted. A late fee of \$20.00 will be charged to any team registering after 10:00pm on Thursday, September 29, 2016. There will be no applications accepted after 6:00am on Saturday, October 1, 2016 (tournament day).
3. **Sportsmanship:** All competitors are expected to show common courtesy to other competitors and non-competitors alike. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES OR ILLEGAL DRUGS will be allowed in any tournament boat during the tournament hours. Any contestant who displays poor sportsmanship, violates these rules, or violates the fish and game laws of Louisiana can be disqualified.
4. **Safety:** All safety precautions and safe boating conduct must be observed at all time. Unsafe operation of a tournament boat will result in team disqualification. Team members must wear USCG approved life vests while the combustion engine is running and in gear. In an emergency situation, or when safety dictates, one or both team members may take their catch and get in another teams boat to return to their launch site. The affected team members may not fish from the rescue boat.
5. **Boat Equipment:** Each tournament boat must contain safety equipment adequate to pass Coast Guard regulations. All boats must be equipped with approved running lights and a working engine kill switch. Both the driver and passenger of each team that participate in boats with motors that exceed BIA horsepower rating, accept full liability and responsibility for any and all personal injury or property damage that may occur.
6. **Tackle:** Only artificial lures can be used. No prepared or live bait, other than pork strips, may be used. All bass must be caught live in a conventional manner using rod and reel. No trolling will be permitted at any time during tournament hours. Only one rod and reel at any time may be used by any contestant. Maximum rod length shall be 8 feet.
7. **Pre-tournament Practice:** There is no cut off period before the tournament. Anglers are not permitted to catch bass at any time prior to the tournament and transport them to be released in another part of the tournament waters in an effort to establish a population of bass in a selected area.
8. **Permitted fishing waters:** All creeks, canals, and navigable waterways in The Atchafalaya Basin and Lake Verrett system, that are open to the public shall be permitted fishing waters. Waters that are posted (off-limits, no fishing, no trespassing and private property) by the State or Local authorities or any posted water where the public is not allowed, is off limits to all competitors. There will be no fishing allowed within 50 yards of another competitors boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position. No such boat shall permit tournament competitors to fish within a 50 yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitors during tournament hours. CB radios, walkie-talkies, fixed or portable phones cannot be used between competitors during tournament hours to locate or acquire fish. No competitors shall have a non-competitor scout out a hole or hold a hole for him during tournament hours to obtain fish.
9. **Morning Check in:** Boats will be checked in beginning at 5:00am on tournament day. Designated check-in site will be: **Doiron's Landing either side in Stephensville, LA.** BOATS MUST LAUNCH AT Doiron's Landing ONLY. After being checked in, boats may leave their launch site, but may not start fishing until 6:30am on tournament day. The tournament directors time will be the official time. All competing boats will be checked for visible life jackets, running lights in and working, and for empty live wells.
10. **Fishing Hours:** No competitor may begin fishing before 6:30am on tournament day (Saturday, October 1, 2016). Teams must be checked in by 6:00am on tournament day. All fish must be caught during the day of the tournament. No angler will be permitted to change launch sites during the tournament hours. Tournament hours will conclude at 3:00pm on tournament day at The St. Michael Fall Festival (6484 LA HWY 44 Convent, LA 70723) weigh-in . Any boat not reporting to the St. Michael Fall Festival at 3:00pm will be disqualified.
11. **Penalties:** Teams that have not reported to the St. Michael Fall Festival at 3:00pm on tournament day will be disqualified. The minimum length of bass will be 12 inches measured on a gold rule type straight flat board. Any team weighing in fish shorter than 12 inches will have one pound subtracted from their remaining total catch for each illegal fish. Short fish will not be weighed. Limit is 5 bass per team. Any team with more than 5 fish in their creel in the weigh-in area or attempting to weigh more than 5 fish will be disqualified. There will be a 4 ounce reduction per each dead fish. All state and federal laws will be adhered to during the tournament hours. Any and all teams are subject to a lie detector test for tournament purposes only.
12. **Ties:** The largest bass of the creel of tied teams will decide the tie, then the second largest bass.
13. **Prizes/Payback:** Any person receiving prizes or prize money, are responsible for paying all applicable local and federal taxes. There will be a 70% payback of all tournament fees distributed in prize money awards. There will be a 100% payback of both big bass prize awards. Payback will be awarded one place for every six boat entries, and first and second place big bass awards.
14. **Launch Fees:** Any and all launch fees are the responsibility of the tournament teams.
15. **Protests:** Protests or complaints, must be submitted in writing to the tournament director before the scales are closed. The tournament director must be informed of such action prior to or during the weigh in.
16. **Damage:** Damage of any nature to a contestant's boat, equipment, or fishing tackle is the responsibility of the contestant .
17. **Rules Changes:** Tournament rules will remain unchanged throughout the event. The tournament director may require assistance from the tournament committee. The tournament director has the right to refuse any fish presented to the weigh in. The decision of the tournament committee is final in all matters.
18. **Restocking:** All fish become the property of the St. Michaels Open for restocking purposes.