



**JULY 18, 19 & 20, 2024**

# **TOURNAMENT RULES**

**FORT FRANCES CANADIAN BASS CHAMPIONSHIP INC.**

THE FOLLOWING ARE THE RULES OF THE 2023 FORT FRANCES CANADIAN BASS CHAMPIONSHIP (FFCBC) TOURNAMENT. ANY CHANGES OR ADDITIONS TO PREVIOUS RULES ARE PRINTED IN **BOLD FACE TYPE**. **March 6, 2024**

## 1-TOURNAMENT FORMAT

- a) FFCBC competition is a three day, two person team format, live release tournament.
- b) The tournament operations director has the right to delay or shorten the tournament, subject to weather and/or safety considerations.
- c) All competitors and officials will conduct themselves in a true sportsmanlike, courteous, safe and ethical manner. As competitors, each angler represents not
- d) only their Team and Sponsors, but also the FFCBC and other Teams.
- e) Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship Inc., its promoters, employees, sponsors, organizers, hosts, directors, officers and affiliated organizations assisting
- f) in the operation of any aspect of the tournament, their agencies and/or agents and assigns are not responsible for any death, injury, damage, liability, fire, theft or
- g) loss that may result prior to, during or after the tournament howsoever caused.
- h) All references to money are in Canadian Dollars.
- i) All references to time are Central Daylight Time as determined by GPS.

## 2-PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY

- a) Competitors must be a minimum of eighteen (18) years of age as of June 30th in the year of the competition unless they have the permission of their parents or guardians. **One competitor must be at least sixteen (16) years of age as of June 30th.** All participants will require a **WAIVER OF CLAIM, RELEASE AND INDEMNIFICATION AGREEMENT AND PHOTO AND VIDEO RELEASE** signed by them or by their parents or guardians if applicable.
- b) All anglers must possess a valid Ontario Sport Fishing Licence except those exempt by the Fisheries Act.
- c) Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship Inc., reserves the right to refuse entry to any individual or team for any reason that the tournament committee may deem appropriate.
- d) Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship Inc., reserves the right to expand the field without going to the waiting list.
- e) There will be a limited field of 125 paid teams for the tournament and entries accepted as indicated below:

## 3-ENTRY PROCESS

- a) Entries will be accepted for the first 125 teams for the 2024 FFCBC on a first-paid first-in basis.
- b) Each entry must be accompanied by a \$200.00 deposit.
- c) Team numbers will be assigned upon confirmation of payment.
- d) The balance of the entry fee must be paid in full by July 17, 2024 or the entry and the deposit will be forfeited.

## 4-WAITING LIST

- a) Once the field of 125 teams is filled entries will be placed on a waiting list in the order that their entry was received.
- b) In the event of a scratch or cancellation waiting list anglers will be contacted in the order that their entry was received to fill the newly created vacancy.
- c) Once contacted regarding the opportunity to fill a newly created vacancy, Anglers on the waiting list will have 48 hours to confirm participation and partner and to arrange payment.

## 5-ANGLER REPLACEMENT PROVISIONS

- a) If, after competition has been started, a team captain or partner is unable to compete because of medical, family or other justified reasons, the remaining team member will be given the option to replace the leaving team member with another angler. The replacement angler must not have been on tournament waters during competition. The director of the tournament operations must be advised and approve of any angler replacements.

## 6-ENTRY FEE

- a) **The entry fee for the tournament is \$600.00 per team.**
- b) Minimum payments and payment in full must be made as indicated above.

#### 7-PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE

- a) Unlimited pre-tournament practice is allowed.
- b) Moving fish from one location to another during pre-tournament practice is prohibited. Violations will result in tournament disqualification.
- c) **All Competitors must be off the water by 3:00PM on Wednesday, July 17, 2024.**
- d) Contestants residing on Rainy Lake during tournament competition days are permitted to travel directly from their place of residence to the Sorting Gap Marina. These contestants, when leaving the Sorting Gap Marina at the end of the day, must travel directly to their place of residence.
- e) No contestant may enter the tournament waters for the purpose of catching or locating bass or locating possible fishing locations after tournament hours.

#### 8-BOAT NUMBERS AND ANGLER KITS

- a) Boat numbers and angler kits will be available to registered teams prior to the start of the tournament.

#### 9-RULES MEETING

- a) **The Rules Meeting will be held under the tent at the Sorting Gap starting at 4:00 p.m. on Wednesday, July 17, 2024.**
- b) **At least one and preferably both members of the team must attend the entire Official Rules Meeting. Failing to do so will mean attending a special session at 9:00 a.m. on Day One.**

#### 10-LAUNCH ORDER

- c) Day One launch order. Boats 1-20 leave by finishing position from the previous year. The remainder of the field leave as registered.
- d) Day Two and Day Three launch order leave by finishing position of prior day.

#### 11-LIVE RELEASE OF FISH

- a) Fixed or portable aerated live-wells capable of supporting life are mandatory and every effort must be made to keep bass alive.
- b) Under no circumstances can a fish be purposely altered.
- c) Any fish mauled, mashed, frozen, stringered, injected with water or other fluids, containing foreign matter to add weight or showing white gills or soft flesh, will result in disqualification of the team.
- d) Under no circumstances are dead fish to be released. See rule 14-h and i.

#### 12-PENALTY FOR LATE CHECK-IN

- a) Contestants who are late crossing the finish line, located on Rainy River at the last dock prior to arriving at the launch site at the end of the day will be penalized ¼ lb. per minute late up to 5 minutes after their appointed return time. Fish brought in after the 5 minute period will not be weighed.
- b) The teams finishing time will be determined as the time when their boat completely passes between the finishing line buoys. Boats must be off plane and must cross the finish line in single file.
- c) If a tournament boat's lateness is due to going to the aid of a boat in distress, and assistance was required, the fisherman must note the location, time, persons in distress, and the circumstances of the emergency. The situation will be reviewed by the director(s) of tournament operations and if deemed serious enough to require assistance, causing the fisherman to weigh in late, the team's catch for that day may be allowed.

#### 13-PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS

- a) The tournament waters are all Canadian waters of Rainy Lake accessible by boat from Fort Frances. Ottertail Lake is out of bounds to all tournament anglers and Seine River is out of bounds upstream of the first green buoy in the mouth of the Seine River. Absolutely no fishing is permitted in U.S. waters. **Travel is permitted on U.S. waters.** The penalty for fishing ineligible waters could result in disqualification from the tournament or disqualification of the day's catch.
- b) No fishing is allowed downstream of the Ranier CN lift bridge.
- c) The tournament operations director has the right to alter or restrict tournament waters with prompt notice to all registered teams.

#### 14-SCORING

- a) Only largemouth and smallmouth bass legally caught on a tournament day by angling qualify for weigh-in.
- b) A daily limit of five (5) bass per team will be weighed. A team may possess the daily Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources limit while angling only. While under main engine only five (5) bass may be retained in the live-well(s). The penalty for failure to comply is disqualification of the day's weight.
- c) The official minimum length is twelve (12) inches measured from the tip of the nose with mouth closed to the end of the tail with the tail compressed. A courtesy board, identical to that used by the tournament weigh master, will be available to the competitors prior to their catch being turned over to the weigh master or his/her representative.
- d) Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to meet the official minimum length will not be weighed and that day's weight will be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound for each "short" fish. In the event that assessing weight penalties results in a negative total weight for the day, the negative weight shall be carried forward to the next day or subtracted from the existing team total, whichever is appropriate.
- e) Each team's fish must be presented to the weigh master or his/her assistants in the official bags supplied by the tournament organizers.
- f) All weights, upon verbal acceptance by the team captain, and then publicly called by the weigh master, are immediately official and are not thereafter contestable.
- g) One team member must sign the official weigh-in form recording the weight of the catch.
- h) Dead or non-releasable fish presented for weigh-in will be weighed. Four (4) ounces will be deducted from the total daily weight for each dead or non-releasable fish that is weighed. A resulting negative daily weight will be handled as per the second sentence of rule 14(d).
- i) Species caught other than bass must be returned to tournament waters with the exception of damaged fish as per provincial fishing regulations. All legal fish of any species caught and damaged must be turned over to the tournament committee before weigh-in.

#### 15-BOATS AND MOTORS

- a) All boats must be a minimum of fourteen (14) feet in length.
- b) No barges, houseboats, or similar cumbersome craft will be allowed.
- c) All boats, motors and their equipment must meet Canadian Coast Guard standards.
- d) The tournament operations director reserves the right to disallow the use of any boat, motor and/or equipment deemed unsafe, inappropriate or unsuitable.
- e) All boats equipped with an emergency kill switch mechanism must have the kill switch tether securely attached to the operator whenever the boat is on plane.
- f) Boat numbers (motor tags) must be affixed to right and left cowls of the main combustion engine so that they are clearly and plainly visible.

#### 16-DAILY LAUNCHING AND MORNING EQUIPMENT INSPECTIONS

- a) Sorting Gap Marina is the designated launch site.
- b) Teams are required to have their equipment ready and on the water thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled departure time of their flight. Late arrivals will be penalized and leave at the end of the next available flight.
- c) Boat inspections will take place each morning at the Sorting Gap Marina commencing one and one half hours prior to flight departure time.
- d) Boats will be inspected for, but not limited to: Boat numbers (motor tags) properly affixed and unaltered; operation of live well; kill switch operation; no live, dead, frozen, or freeze-dried bait, no underwater cameras and required safety equipment.
- e) Teams must have all tackle boxes, hatches and live wells open for easy inspection prior to the arrival of the tournament officials.
- f) Failure to report for daily boat inspection will result in disqualification of that day's catch.

#### 17-TRICKLE STARTS

- a) The official starter will release teams, by flight, using trickle start, commencing at 6:30AM from the Sorting Gap Marina.
- b) Teams will be called and released every few seconds using a signal flag, number board and bullhorn. Each team must officially acknowledge being called by waving to the official starter. Teams will idle past the starter and only commence acceleration when waved on by the official starter. Teams will be allowed to go a maximum of 30 miles per hour while traveling upstream to the Ranier Railway Lift Bridge. "NO PASSING" will be allowed until clear of the Ranier Railway Lift Bridge.
- c) Any team starting or attempting to start out of order will be held by the official starter until the balance of the flight has departed.
- d) No Passing will be allowed when returning downstream from the Ranier Lift Bridge to the official time keeper check in markers.

#### 18-DAY ONE, TWO AND THREE FLIGHTS

- a) Day One Launch Order Numbers, Boats 1-20 leave by finishing position from the previous year. The remainder of the field leaves as registered.
- b) Day Two and Day Three launch order leave by finishing position of prior day.
- c) The flights for Day One will be in the angler kits.
- d) The flights for Days Two and Three will be on the website and sheets will be handed out each morning before launching.

#### 19-DAY ONE, TWO AND THREE START TIMES

Flight #1 will commence departing at 6:30AM

Flight #2 will commence departing immediately after the last boat in Flight #1.

Flight #3 will commence departing immediately after the last boat in Flight #2.

Flight #4 will commence departing immediately after the last boat in Flight #3.

Flight #5 will commence departing immediately after the last boat in Flight #4.

#### 20-DAY ONE, TWO AND THREE RETURN TIMES

Flight #1 returns no later than 3:30PM

Flight #2 returns no later than 3:45PM

Flight #3 returns no later than 4:00PM

Flight #4 returns no later than 4:15PM

Flight #5 returns no later than 4:30PM

#### 21-SPORTSMANSHIP AND COURTESY

- a) It is strictly prohibited for any competitor to give, offer, accept or suggest the exchange of any weighable fish to, from or with any other competitor.
- b) Each boat may use an identifiable marker with team number written on marker which, when in place on the water, will establish a 50 yard diameter fishing circle which may not be fished by another contestant. A marker may not be placed in the water by any contestant which will prevent access to navigable portions of the lake beyond the marker. A marker may not be placed in the water currently being used by another contestant or non-contestant. Once a marker is in place to establish the circle, the contestant must remain in the 50 yard fishing circle, and may leave only when playing a fish. Upon landing the fish, the contestant must return to the fishing circle or lose control of the area. If leaving or not fishing, the marker must be retrieved. PENALTY: infractions could result in disqualification from the tournament or disqualification of the daily weight.
- c) Each boat, if so equipped with either an anchor or power pole or similar shallow water anchor with the trolling motor in the up position and was first anchored on a spot it will have established a 50 yard diameter fishing circle which may not be fished in by another contestant.

#### 22-SAFETY

- a) All competitors must practice safe boating at all times during practice and tournament fishing.
- b) i) All railway bridge crossings will be designated as "NO PASS ZONES".  
ii) The maximum speed going under any railway bridge (including both Bear Pass and 5-Mile) is off plane (RANIER CN LIFT BRIDGE EXCEPTED).  
iii) Non-compliance in any "No Pass Zone" will be deemed an "unsafe boating practice".  
iv) Penalty for non-compliance will be disqualification of the days weight and the next days starting position will be the last boat out in the last flight. If a "non-compliance" infraction should occur on the final day of the tournament, the anglers will forfeit their days catch weight.
- c) Every competitor must wear a fully secured Coast Guard approved life jacket or flotation device while traveling from one location to another other than trolling or drifting speed, and where so equipped tethered kill switches must be attached to the drivers body.
- d) No alcoholic beverages or illicit drugs may be possessed or consumed by the competitors during tournament fishing hours up to and including the weighing of their catch.
- e) In the event of a thunderstorm, lightning, or severe weather, Teams may pull onto the nearest shoreline until it is safe to continue fishing. Competitor(s) may not leave their boats during the tournament except at the official weigh-in station at the Sorting Gap Marina, at designated rest stops or if severe weather forces them ashore.
- f) Every team, whether weighing fish or not, must, at the end of each day, report to the official tournament check-in station. The penalty for failing to report at the end of Day One or Day Two will be a two (2) hour delayed start on the following day. The penalty for failing to report on Day Three will be immediate forfeiture of any prizes won up to that point.
- g) All situations which might be considered an incident by police must be reported to a tournament official ASAP (spotter, director, command centre).
- h) Town of Fort Frances (TOFF) supplies tournament anglers with convenient parking area in the woodyard. TOFF rules must be obeyed while on TOFF property (i.e. no smoking, conducting self and vehicle in safe manner, use of designated entrances/exits only, use of

designated areas only, no littering). Offenders will be escorted off of TOFF property and tournament disqualification may result upon review of incident by FFCBC tournament officials.

#### 23-MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN OR EMERGENCIES

- a) In the case of an emergency or mechanical breakdown, cellular phones, CB's, and VHF Marine radios may be used.
- b) Anglers will be advised of the command centre phone number at the rules meeting.
- c) IN THE EVENT OF BREAKDOWN ANGLERS MAY ALSO USE AN ONSHORE PHONE TO REACH THE TOURNAMENT COMMAND CENTRE IF OTHER COMMUNICATION METHODS ARE ABSENT OR FAIL TO WORK.
- d) Committee patrol boats are prohibited from towing any competitors boat during tournament fishing hours. If necessary for safety reasons, towing will be allowed.

#### 24-TRANSPORTATION OF FISH AFTER MECHANICAL BREAKDOWN

- a) In the event of mechanical breakdown the fish from the disabled boat may be transferred to another competitor's boat provided the competitor agrees.
- b) The fish from the disabled team must be accompanied by a member of the disabled team and the fish from the disabled team must be kept in a separate live well.
- c) Both catches must arrive prior to the earliest return time deadline for the flights that the teams are competing in.

#### 25-ON THE WATER

- a) Competitors are personally responsible for knowing all tournament rules, as well as the current Ontario Sport Fishing Regulations and Canadian Coast Guard regulations. Penalty: Teams found to have violated federal or provincial fishing and boating regulations during the tournament may be disqualified when this information is confirmed by tournament officials. This judgement could also apply to eligibility to participate in future tournaments.
- b) All Teams and their equipment are subject to inspection at any time during the tournament. Committee patrol boats may come alongside, following proper identification, and if necessary, board to check for adherence to all tournament rules. No other boat may come in contact with a competitor's boat at any time.
- c) No fish or fishing information may be given to or exchanged with competitors during the tournament fishing hours by tournament or non-tournament anglers.
- d) Competitors are expected to co-operate as much as possible with official video and still photography personnel.

#### 26-TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT

- a) Only artificial lures, manufactured baits, pork rind and commercially available liquid attractants may be used by Competitors. Landing nets may be used.
- b) No live bait, frozen or freeze-dried bait of any kind may be used or possessed by any Competitor at any time during the tournament.
- c) The use, in live wells, of commercially available fish care chemicals is permitted.
- d) The use of underwater cameras is not allowed during the tournament. If such equipment is found in a Competitors boat during boat checks or during tournament fishing hours the offending team will be immediately disqualified.

#### 27-RULE(S) VIOLATIONS, PROTESTS AND APPEALS

- a) Where a team is charged with a rule infraction by an authorized tournament official which could result in disqualification of the daily catch or tournament disqualification, the team has the right to appeal the decision to the tournament protest and appeals committee. Appeals must be submitted to tournament officials at the angler services tent prior to the following day, on the day of the rules infraction.
- b) An infraction witnessed by a competitor can be reported to the tournament protest and appeal committee at the angler services tent. In the event that an infraction is reported or a protest is lodged, a four-person protest committee, appointed prior to the tournament, shall convene. Only two protest committee members are required to convene on the infraction.
- c) Each team captain has the right to file a protest when they have first-hand knowledge that a rule or rules may have been broken or violated by another team.
- d) Witness(es) may be called to appear before the Protest Committee to provide evidence relating to the alleged rule infraction. At the discretion of the Committee, a polygraph test may be administered to any competitor directly or indirectly involved or affected by the protest under consideration.
- e) The protest and appeals committee will interpret the rules according to their spirit and intent. The decision of the protest committee is final and not subject to review of any kind.
- f) General Penalties: Teams may be disqualified from the tournament for frequent or major infractions of the rules and will not receive a refund of their entry fee. Examples of major infractions include unsafe boating practices, gross angling ethics violations and violations that clearly give one competitor an unfair or illegal advantage over other competitors, such as; movement of fish, use of live bait, fishing out of boating regulations, exchanging fish between teams and unauthorized use of underwater cameras.

#### 28-TIE BREAKERS

- a) Largest one day catch will determine boat position.
- b) If a tie affects teams receiving a cash prize the amount awarded will be determined by combining the prize money for the positions in question and dividing it equally amongst all affected Teams.

#### 29-CHANGES AND AMENDMENTS

- a) Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship Inc., retains the right to change or amend any or all of these preceding rules at their sole discretion without prior notification or consultation with the competitors.
- b) Final approved official rules of the Fort Frances Canadian Bass Championship Live Release tournament on Rainy Lake will be given to all teams as part of their registration package, subject only to clarification(s) arising from the official rules meeting.

**EMERGENCY NUMBERS:**

**JIM CUTHBERTSON 807-276-1269, CO-CHAIR**

**GREG GUSTAFSON 807-275-9589, ANGLER SERVICES**

**AL BOIVIN 807-271-2449, RAINY LAKE BOAT TAXI**

**BADIUK EQUIPMENT (CALL BEFORE 4:00 P.M.)  
807-274-6311**