

Santa Clara Bass Busters Tournament Rules January 2024

1. Tournament rules: are in effect starting in January and remain in effect for the entire year. These rules will only be changed after the November tournament and before the January tournament of the following year.
2. Participation and eligibility: in all tournaments are open to members in good standing whose dues are not in arrears. Members must declare their intent to fish a tournament by the club meeting to qualify for tournament points. Additions and changes may occur after the club meeting only with the Tournament Director's approval.
3. Prospective members and guests: may fish the pick-your-partner tournaments. Prospective members may also fish draw tournaments on a space available basis. Guests pay no club fees and are not eligible for points or awards. (Exception: Awards will be awarded at team draw) All existing "good standing" members are given priority in the event of an open seat and may replace a guest or prospective member. All substitutions/changes must be approved by the Tournament Director. All fish caught by prospective members and guests will be included in the day's catch for team tournaments.
4. A co-angler can be paired with a given boater a maximum of 2x in any one tournament season. In the event of a repeat pairing, the co-angler will be put back into the draw or switched by the Tournament Director as necessary. Upon being drawn, you are guaranteed to fish – your fishing partner may be switched to ensure you aren't fishing with the same partner more than 2x. Pick-your-partner tournaments are excluded in the count.
5. Options: There may be an option pot declared for a tournament. All options are paid out at 100%. For an individual weight tournament, entry is optional for each angler. For a team tournament, options are optional as a team and the entry is based on 2 people regardless of one or two anglers' fish on a boat. Payouts are based on Appendix 1. Members, prospective members, and guests may participate in the options.
6. Sportsmanship: Any contestant who displays poor sportsmanship will be disqualified from the tournament they are fishing.
7. Spirit of the Rules: All rules have "loopholes." It is the intention of this club to provide an honest, sportsman like environment. In the interest of good sportsmanship, club members are reminded that the "Spirit of the Rules" will prevail in all judgment cases.
8. Boat and Motor: For the safety of all contestants. **ALL BOATS MUST NOT EXCEED B.I.A. RATINGS ALL BOATS MUST BE EQUIPPED WITH SOME TYPE OF OPERABLE IGNITION KILL SWITCH.** This ignition kill device must be attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is operating. Anytime the combustion engine is operating and in gear, there must be a driver in the driver's seat in full control of the boat. Fishing boats may be used that are 16 feet or more in length. Any raised platform or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. **ALL BLADDER tanks and any other type of gas tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited.** Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer 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 a boat. **NO "barges" or similar cumbersome craft will be permitted. NO BOAT EQUIPPED WITH "STICK STEERING" SHALL BE PERMITTED TO BE USED.** The Tournament Director shall make the definition of "stick steering". Boaters are responsible to have a back seat for use by their Co-Angler if they ask. If the Backseat is broke or unavailable the tournament director will make best effort including swaping non-boater to make sure a non-boater who needs a backseat will have access to one. However, there will no penalties to the boater. We encourage the boater and non-boater have a dissuasion before they reach the tournament.
9. Basic Boat Equipment: Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, it must have a functional bilge pump and **LIVEWELL SPACE, PROPERLY AERATED TO**

ADEQUATELY MAINTAIN ALIVE A LIMIT OF BASS BY BOTH FISHERMEN USING THE BOAT. The Tournament Director shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether aeration and capacity is "proper and adequate."

10. Tackle and Equipment: Only artificial lures will be used; however, pork and pork-strips may be used. Rods may be of any length.
11. Trolling as a method of fishing is not permitted. Trolling is defined as fishing while the big motor is running and in gear with baits in the water.
12. Tournament dates and lakes: will be selected by the Tournament Committee and may be subject to change. Once the tournament schedule is approved and posted, there will be "no change in venue" other than adjusting to a new launch facility.
13. Fishing Hours: will be determined by the Tournament Director and will be announced prior to each tournament. All tournaments will be based on the permit on file with the state's Department of Fish and Wildlife.
14. Official Timepiece: will be that of the Tournament Director.
15. Licenses: Each contestant must have in possession a valid and current fishing license with appropriate stamps governing the fish-able water of the event. Penalty for such an offense is disqualification of the day's catch.
16. Fishing Locations: Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere except: Within 50 yards of any marina gas pump or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position, with the trolling motor stowed. No such boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50- yard circle claimed by him, to the exclusion of any other competitor or waters set as off limits by the Tournament Director. A competitor may give permission to fish closer.
15. Fish Handling: Contestants will make every effort to handle fish by the lower jaw. Aerated live wells will be used. Rope or metal stringers will not be allowed. Fish in live wells will not be removed except in a culling situation or at weigh-in. Dead fish may not be culled. All fish culled must actively swim away, if not they must be retrieved by the contestant and returned to the live well and sufficient live fish culled to meet legal possession limit requirements.
16. All members declaring themselves as Boaters in a tournament will be responsible for having a liability insurance policy (minimum of \$300,000 liability) for their boat. Boats will be equipped with standard Coast Guard Safety equipment. Safe conduct while boating is necessary.
17. Boating Safety: Life jackets and lanyards connected to functioning engine kill switches must be used when the outboard motor is operating. Co-anglers are required to supply their own life vest. Running lights are to be used at morning blast-off, during night tournaments and whenever they are needed for safe boat operation. All boats are to obey (5mph) zones. Violation of this rule may result in tournament disqualification.
18. Check-in: All boats may be checked for functional live well and both anglers have life vests to receive an official signed weigh slip from the Tournament Director prior to blastoff. In the event an angler is late for blastoff they may still be eligible to fish the tournament if the following conditions are met.
 1. Late arrivals will be required to locate another club member and have livewell checked and verified as empty before fishing.
 2. Late arrivals may provide a signed affidavit by the club member who checked the livewell to the Tournament Director at weigh-in.
 3. The signed weigh slip or affidavit may be required at the weigh-in to receive points or awards.

19. **Measuring Devices:** All boats will have a Well-E-GO flat board or ruler to measure fish. Fish of questionable length will be measured on the club's official flat board. Fish will be measured flat with mouth closed and moving tail and must measure 13" (thirteen inches) in length.
20. **On photo events:** The club will provide club approved measuring boards to each boater and must be returned to the tournament director after event. Biggest fish may be kept in the live well and weighed and will be used for any tie breaker or big fish awards.

Photo Standards - Digital photographs of each fish submitted to judges for scoring must meet these criteria:

- A. *Unique*—Each digital photo submitted by the same Competitor in each Event must be of a different fish. Subsequent digital photos of the same fish submitted by the Competitor in an Event will be denied.
- B. *Visible/Legible*—Each photo must be in sharply focused and clear enough for a judge to verify:
 1. Lack of clarity will result in denial of photo.
 2. Verify the fish's condition. Violation will result in denial of photo.
 3. Verify the fish's length. Judge will score fish at the greatest length of which he is certain.
 4. Verify whether the bass' jaw or lip, is in contact with the measuring board fence. Inability of the judge to verify will result in a penalty of 1 inch. Except where covered by hand or fingers, the entire fish, from its mouth/jaw to the tip of its caudal (tail) fin, must be visible in photos. If either end is covered or cropped off, the photo will be denied.
 5. *Centered*—Camera lens positioned directly over the center of the fish's body, which contributes to accurate measurement by judges. Photos taken at a low angle in order to obscure an open mouth may be denied or penalized at the Tournament Director's discretion.
 6. *First-generation*—Each digital photo must be a first-generation image (not a photo or screen-shot of another photo). Violation will result in denial of photo.
 7. *Example Photo*



21. **Size Limits/Bag Limits:** Qualifying fish (largemouth, smallmouth, or spotted bass) must be a minimum of 13" (thirteen inches) in length, measured laying flat, mouth closed on a Well-E-GO flat board or ruler and the daily limit will be 5 (five) fish per angler. Team tournament limits are 5 (five) bass per team but never more than the legal daily possession limit. If only (1) angler competes as a team the limit is 5 fish. Should local regulations specify a different method of measurement, a different minimum length, or a different bag limit than the club's standard, the more stringent standard will be utilized in the tournament.
22. **Weigh-In Procedures:** All anglers will present their day's catch in a weigh bag. To weigh a big fish, it should be marked with a culling tag or identified by the angler upon presenting their weigh

bag. The big fish will not be weighed if not identified. Once the weigh bag has been presented to the weighmaster, no changes may be made to the day's catch.

Any fish greater than 5 lbs. should be in its own bag. Fish shall not be held in the weigh bag for longer than 3 minutes. Anglers should not bring their weigh bag to the weighmaster if their wait will be longer than 3 minutes.

Fish should be released as quickly as possible based on the instructions of the Tournament Director.

23. Trophy Fish: is a fish 5 (five) pounds or larger and may be claimed by its captor.
24. Drawing Partners: for the monthly tournaments are detailed under either draw or the pick-your partner.

Tournament sections.

25. Start and Finish: All contestants will start and finish at the lake headquarters (usually at the launch site) as set by the Tournament Director. The Tournament Director will instruct all boats to the designated meeting area during the morning blastoff.
25. Alcohol Use: No alcohol or drugs will be permitted in or around boats through completion of the post tournament debriefing. Anyone who appears under the influence will be disqualified from the tournament.
26. Operation of Boat: The Boat shall operate his/her boat from the front of the deck. The non-boater has the right to choose half of the fishing areas but does not have the right to operate the boat from the front of the deck unless granted permission by the boater (or) in a safety/emergency situation.
27. Sharing Expenses: The co-angler is required to cover a fair share of expenses. The amount can be up to 50% of the expenses agreed upon by the boater and co-angler. Shared expenses generally include the following: gas- vehicle and boat, outboard oil, tolls, parking fees, launch fees, and lodging.
28. Radios and Cellular Telephones: are allowed in boats as an emergency tool only. Boat-to-boat communications are prohibited except for emergency purposes.
29. Pre-Fishing: will be allowed at any tournament lake at any time before the tournament starts.

Leaving Boat: All fish will be hooked, fought and landed from the angler's boat. No fishing from docks, shore, or other places is permitted.

30. Scoring: will be in pounds and hundredths of pounds. All fish must measure 13" (thirteen inches) long with mouth closed on a Well-E-GO flat board or ruler. Each contestant's big fish will be utilized as a tiebreaker in case of ties.
31. Re-Weighing of fish can only be requested once and only at the scales. The second weighing will be official.
32. Penalties:
 1. Tardis Contestants who are late for weigh-in will have 1 (one) pound subtracted from the total weight for each minute late up to 5 minutes (5 lb max). Contestants who are late by more than 5 (five) minutes at the specified time or have not checked in for the weigh-in will be disqualified for that day.

2. Undersized Fish: Penalties for weighing-in a fish smaller than the 13" minimum length shall be processed as follows: Each undersized fish shall be removed prior to weigh-in. In addition, per each undersized fish a One (1) pound penalty shall be incurred.
 3. Violation of Daily Limit: Anyone or any team having more than the 5 (five) fish limit in their possession past the official check-in time shall have their weight disqualified for the day.
 4. Culling fish inside the designated launch site and areas designated by the Tournament Director is prohibited and will result in the day's catch disqualified.
 5. Sight Fishing: When visually fishing for all bass, all bass must be hooked inside of the mouth and must be verified by your partner, when present, before unhooked to be counted as a legal fish.
 6. Mutilated/Altered Fish: Any fish that appears mutilated or altered in the Tournament Director's judgment may result in the day's catch disqualified.
 7. It is the goal of the club to release live all tournament caught bass following the weigh-in. Contestants are therefore required to do all in their power to preserve their daily catch. Deliberate rough or careless handling of fish while culling is grounds for disqualification.
 8. Dead Fish: The penalty for dead fish will be progressive in the amount of 1st dead fish .20 (20/100) of a pound. 2nd dead fish .40 (40/100) of a pound. 3rd dead fish .80 (80/100) of a pound. 4th dead fish 1.60 (160/100) pounds. 5th dead fish or more 3.20 (320/100) pounds.
 9. Protests: Complaints or protests must be submitted to the Tournament Director within 30 minutes after weigh-in. A decision of the Tournament Director will be made prior to awards and shall be final.
33. Awards: Eligible club members only: Draw and pick-your-partner tournament awards will be:
- First Heaviest Stringer- First Place Award
 - Second Heaviest Stringer- Second Place Award
 - Third Heaviest Stringer- Third Place Award
 - Big Fish- Big Fish Award

You may not weigh in a DEAD fish to claim the big fish award (tournament or for the year), however, a dead big fish will be counted toward your overall weight with a dead fish penalty applied.

34. Points: will be awarded each month as follows: Tournament points will be awarded to the top 20 places. A fish must be weighed-in to be eligible.

1st -20 pts 2nd-19pts 3rd-18pts 4th-17pts 5th-16pts 6th-15pts 7th-14pts

8th-13pts 9th-12pts 10th - 11 pts 11th - 10 pts 12th-9pts 13th-8pts 14th-7pts

15th-6pts 16th-5pts 17th-4pts 18th-3pts 19th-2pts 20th-1pt
Big Fish – add 1pt

- Team Draw/Pick: Club members on the same team receive equal points (exception - big fish point).
 - Prospective members and guests will receive no points.
 - Meeting Attendance 1 pt
 - Tournament (show up) 3 pts
 - Debriefing Attendance 1 pt

- All members are required to have 1 throw out tournament per year but will receive all Show Up, Meeting and Debriefing Points earned.
 - All ties will be broken as follows: (listed below by situation)
 1. Individual Tournaments: 1. Big fish caught at that event. 2. Total live fish weighed. 3. Total fish weighed. 4. Toss of a coin.
 2. Points on the Year: Big fish caught up to that point on the year.
34. Tournament Awards: At the end of each tournament, the Top 3 finishers and Big Fish winner will receive a placard. If it is the first placard for the member, the Club will provide an award plaque for them to install their placards. If the member needs an additional award plaque, they should notify the Tournament Director so an additional trophy can be ordered at the member's cost.
35. Year End Awards: will be awarded at the annual banquet to the top five tournament anglers. A \$500 cash award will also be given to the Angler of the Year. There is also a big fish award in the amount of \$250 for the club member that catches the largest fish of the year while fishing a club tournament and is a member in good standing. Awards will be presented to Sportsman of the Year, Mr. Bass, Rookie of the Year, and the Top Co- Angler. In the event of a tie for the Year-End Awards, the contestant with the largest fish caught during the year wins. In the event of a tie for the Angler of the Year, a fish off will take place at a lake and date designated by the tournament committee. The person with the largest weight during this fish-off will be declared Angler of the Year.
36. Courtesy: Any contestant who has to leave the water after the launch must notify a member of the club. If not possible to locate another club member they must leave a note in an obvious place on an officer's vehicle. A search party will be formed to search for any boat not checked in by the end of the weigh-in.
37. Boat in distress: Contestants with boat or motor trouble will be allowed to transfer their fish to another boat. The fish must be identifiable and accompanied by one contestant from the disabled boat.
38. In the situation of a ruling, the Tournament Committee may meet as a group to discuss the situation; however, the **decisions of the Tournament Director are final in all matters.**

BASS BUSTERS DRAW TOURNAMENT RULES

1. These tournament rules will apply during a tournament that has been designated a "Draw" tournament by the Tournament Director.
2. Only members, prospective members and guests may fish a draw tournament.
3. Only members may win points or awards. All fish caught as a team will be weighed, regardless of membership status.
4. Draw tournament rules:
 - a) Member must declare their intent to fish the tournament at the draw. If a member is not present they may have an attending member declare intent for them.
 - b) Prospective members must be present at the club meeting and declare their intent prior to the draw.
 - c) Members and prospective members must declare boat or no boat prior to the draw.

d) All existing “good standing” members are given first priority in the event of an open seat and may replace a guest or prospective member. All substitutions/changes must be approved by the Tournament Director. All fish caught by prospective members and guests will be included in the day’s catch for team tournaments.

e) A co-angler can be paired with a given boater a maximum of 2x in any one tournament season. In the event of a repeat pairing, the co-angler will be put back in to the draw or switched by the Tournament Director as necessary. Upon being drawn, you are guaranteed to fish – your fishing partner may be switched to ensure you aren’t fishing with the same partner more than 2x. Pick-your-partner tournaments are excluded in the count.

f) The club secretary will count the number of members fishing to determine the number of boats needed.

g) All boat owner names will go into one draw with co-anglers into another.

h) This will be a true draw. We will draw pairings of non-boat owners and boat owners until all non- boat owners are satisfied. If there is an odd boat owner they may elect to bring a guest if so desired. If an Angler cannot fish both days of a team contest, the angler will get credit for the team’s daily weight and earn points in the contest based on the weight of single day. If Boater fishes both days with different declared partners before event starts the boater will be credited with both days weight. The last boat drawn will act as the de facto starter and will be in charge of launching the boats according to their number. Starting positions will reverse on the 2nd day of a two-day tournament with the number one boat assuming as the de facto starter.

i) Draw tournament rules apply for all team draw tournaments.

BASS BUSTERS PICK-YOUR-PARTNER TOURNAMENT RULES

1. These tournament rules will apply during a tournament that has been designated a “Pick-Your-Partner” by the Tournament Committee.
2. Members must declare their intent to fish a pick-your-partner tournament at the club meeting. If a member is not present they may have an attending member declare their intent for them.
3. Prospective members and guest are invited to fish these tournaments.
4. Order of Priority for pairing of partners:

1 -Member, non-boat owner

2 -Member, boat owner

3 -Prospective member in attendance (walk in). 4 -Sponsored guest in attendance

5 -Outside guest not in attendance

The above order shall govern and each must be satisfied before consideration of the next priority. All members are given priority and will be paired with other members who wish to participate in the tournament. If a member has not been paired, a draw will be held to determine member’s partner.

5. Starting positions will be determined by a draw. The last boat drawn will become the de facto starter and is in charge of starting the boats according to their number. Starting positions will

reverse on the 2nd day of a two-day tournament and boat number one assumes as the de facto starter.

BASS BUSTERS TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPION (TOC) RULES

Qualifications: Top twelve-point qualifiers and draw individual tournament event winners from the previous year standings (minimum of 7 events participation) will compete in a one day tournament of champions (TOC) in the following year held during a combined club tournament at a lake of the Tournament Committee's choice. This will be a tournament within a tournament as follows:

1. A regular draw club tournament will serve as a TOC. In the case where the event is a 2 day tournament, the weight from the first day of this tournament will count towards the one day TOC.
2. Awards: Will be determined by that year's tournament committee.
3. Regular draw rules apply.
4. Eligibility: TOC qualifiers must be active members in good standing.
5. Awards and money awards will be given out after the first day of the regular club tournament.
6. Tournament committee members will be responsible for organizing a club BBQ / Dinner. The club will pay for the BBQ/Dinner expenses for club members.
7. Weigh-ins: Each TOC Qualifier will participate in an individual weigh-in of up to 5 fish for each contestant or the TOC determination.