



BASSMASTERS

(a BASS Federation Nation Affiliate Chapter)

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Revised: February 2019

ARTICLE I – NAME

This chapter shall be called the VIRGINIA BASSMASTERS.

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

To stimulate public awareness of bass fishing as a major sport. To offer our state conservation department our organized moral and political support and encouragement. To promote full adherence to all conservation codes and to demand adequate water standards and legal enforcement of existing regulatory standards. To detect and report any polluter and call public and political attention to his crime. To improve our skill as bass anglers through a fellowship of friendly exchange of expert bass catching techniques and ideas, and to function as a dynamic and effective link with other chapters embracing the principles and purposes of the Bass Angler's Sportsman Society.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

The chapter shall begin with at least six but not more than ten charter members. During the chapter's first six months of existence, total general membership shall not exceed 25 members. Presently, the membership shall not exceed 50 members.

Section 1. Requirements for Membership

To become a chapter member, a person shall:

- a. Be a Virginia or North Carolina resident.
- b. Be at least 16 years of age.
- c. Voluntarily express a genuine interest in membership.
- d. Be recommended by one member at a regular monthly meeting.
- e. Be voted on by the membership.

Section 2. Membership Dues

The membership dues shall be one hundred sixty five dollars (\$165.00) annually, thirty dollars (\$30.00) shall be submitted to the state's B.A.S.S. Federation Nation of Virginia and thirty five dollars (\$35.00) shall be submitted to the national B.A.S.S. Federation Nation prior to December 31. The balance of one hundred dollars (\$100.00) shall be due at the first meeting in February or no later than the March tournament.

Section 3. Removal of Membership

A person may be removed from membership for any of the following:

- a. Failure to pay dues.
- b. Any action which would reflect unsportsmanlike demeanor toward a fellow club member or dishonor and disgrace on this chapter.
- c. Any member willfully breaking any of the above will be subject to suspension by the Board and removal of membership at the next regular meeting by a quorum of the members. There will be no refund of membership dues.

ARTICLE IV – OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1. The elected officers and their duties shall be:

- a. **PRESIDENT** – Preside over all meetings and direct all official business. Appoint and direct all committee functions. Supervise all club functions. Represent the club at Region and Federation functions.
- b. **VICE PRESIDENT** – Act as program chairman, assist the President in his duties and preside in the absence of the President at club, Region, and Federation functions.
- c. **SECRETARY** – Keep and distribute to all members all minutes of all the proceedings of all meetings, to handle all correspondence and to notify the membership of all meetings, and/or club functions, maintain a current roster, to call the roll and record all votes, to notify all new members of their election to membership, and to update these bylaws, as required.
- d. **TREASURER** – Receive all monies paid into the club treasury as dues or otherwise, to give a receipt of all monies received by him and enter same on records of the club treasury, to issue checks or pay out money when ordered to do so by the membership of the club or an order signed by the Board of Directors.

- e. **TOURNAMENT CHAIRMAN** – Keep all tournament records for determining yearly award winners, notify all members of the yearly standings each month, notify all members of the winners of each tournament, notify all members of the times, location, limits, and pairings for each tournament, and present trophies to tournament and yearly award winners.

Section 2. Board of Directors

The Board of Directors shall consist of all officers and shall attend to the affairs of the club during the interim between meetings of the club, but its acts shall not conflict with actions taken by the club.

Section 3. Eligibility for Holding Office

To be eligible for an office, a member must:

- a. Have been a member for six months.
- b. Have attended at least 75% of the chapter meetings and 75% of chapter tournaments.
- c. Have shown an active interest in all chapter functions.

ARTICLE V – METHOD OF AMENDING THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

The constitution may be amended at any regular meeting by a quorum of the members, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been presented to the membership at least one regular meeting prior to the vote. The same motion cannot be made more than twice during a fishing season.

ARTICLE VI – COMMITTEES

Special committees shall be appointed by the President. The President shall be a member of all committees.

ARTICLE VII – VIRGINIA BASSMASTERS CLUB TOURNAMENTS

1. One club tournament will be held in each of the following months: March, April, May, June, July, August, September, October, and November.
2. The Tournament Chairman, shall present a tournament schedule to be presented and approved by the membership at the last meeting of each year for the next year's schedule.
3. Upon approval of the tournament schedule at the club's last meeting of the year, it shall not be changed.
4. The Tournament Committee shall decide the times of each tournament and notify all members of such times at least two weeks before said tournament. These times may be altered at the tournament site by the Tournament Chairman.
5. Scoring for tournament and yearly awards shall be by pounds and ounces. In scoring, an 8 ounce penalty will be given for each dead fish weighed. A bonus of 5 ounces will be added to each member's yearly total for each meeting attended. The criterion for meeting attendance shall be a member's presence at roll call.
6. Trophies shall be awarded at each monthly tournament for first through third place, first place non-boater and lunger. The non-boater trophy will be awarded to the top non-boater finishing out of the top three in the overall tournament.
7. Yearly trophies shall be awarded at the last regular meeting of the year to the top three Fisherman of the Year, the Lunger of the Year winner, and the top three Non-Boater Fisherman of the Year.
8. There shall be no entry fee for regular monthly club tournaments, other than a member's yearly dues. There will be, however, a voluntary Lunger Pot collected at each tournament by the Tournament Chairman. To enter the Pot, a member may pay ten dollars (\$10.00) prior to the start of the tournament. One half of the money collected will be deposited in the club treasury, with the other half won by the member participating in the Pot with the largest bass. This shall be a purely voluntary Pot open only to dues-paying members of Virginia Bassmasters.
9. Members that qualify to represent Virginia Bassmasters in BASS Federation Nation of Virginia tournaments are expected to fish them. The top two members at the end of a fiscal year qualify for the next year's Mr. BASS Tournament. The top six members at the end of the fiscal year qualify for the next year's Chapter Team Tournament. A Virginia Bassmasters member in good standing who is participating in Region 7 tournaments will be allowed to fish with a non-Virginia Bassmasters member.

ARTICLE VIII – VIRGINIA BASSMASTERS CLUB TOURNAMENT RULES

The following rules and regulations have been formulated and designed with the expressed intent of affording each contestant equal opportunity of success depending upon his angling skill. These rules are not subject to change and their interpretation is reserved solely for the Tournament Committee.

1. **PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY** – Must be dues-paying members of Virginia Bassmasters. A contestant shall fish only with another dues-paying member of Virginia Bassmasters or alone.
2. **CONTESTANTS PAIR-OFF** – Contestants shall be initially paired by random draw at the meeting. Once a boater has been paired with a non-boater, that boater shall be removed from each tournament day's draw until such time as each non-boater has fished with every boater or that year's season has ended, whichever shall first occur. Boaters paired together are not required to fish together. Any re-pairing shall be done from the bottom of the pairings list up, but shall include a boating member's desire not to fish alone first. After all pairings/re-pairings are appropriately adjusted by the Tournament Committee, when two contestants check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together throughout the day and until their weigh-in is completed. A contestant must not allow any bass caught by him to be counted on the score of another contestant. In such cases, both contestants will be disqualified for the tournament and future tournaments.
3. **TOURNAMENT FISHING HOURS** – To be announced two weeks before the tournament and just prior to morning take-off. Starting to fish before the official starting time shall be cause for disqualification. Returning to weigh-in after tournament hours shall result in a 1 lb. penalty per minute up to 15 minutes. After 15 minutes late, shall be cause for disqualification. Boat and motor trouble and other problems will not be an excuse for tardiness. The Tournament Chairman will keep the official time.
4. **SAFETY** – Safe motoring conduct must be observed at all times by all tournament participants. Caution and safety on morning take-offs must be observed. Each contestant is required to wear a chest-type life preserver at all times the outboard motor is in gear. This preserver must be strapped, snapped, or zipped securely. Penalty for failure to abide by this rule is a 1st offense warning, thereafter loss of big fish.
5. **SPORTSMANSHIP** – Sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation is expected from each participant. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Drunkenness on the part of any contestant during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification. Alcohol may be consumed if not abused. Individual members may be restricted from drinking alcoholic beverages by the Tournament Committee.
6. **TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT** – Only artificial lures may be used. NO "live bait" or "prepared bait" will be permitted; however, pork type strips, rinds, etc. may be used, Alabama rigs permitted only during Virginia Bassmasters club tournaments. Only one rod is permitted in use and in the water at any one time. Other rigged rods may be in the boat for substitute purposes. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner. Electronic depth finders, temperature gauges, light meter, etc. may be used. A culling system may be used, however it can not be a penetrating system, Non Penetrating culling system is to be used."
7. **BOAT AND MOTOR** – Fishing boats and motors may be of any size. Electric motors may be used to maneuver the boat while casting; however, "trolling" as a method of fishing is prohibited.
8. **BASIC BOAT EQUIPMENT** – Every boat must have standard coast guard safety equipment and an aerated livewell.
9. **BOAT OPERATION AND EXPENSE** – A full discussion should be held between the two partners prior to a morning departure as to a schedule of the boat operations. A schedule must be set that permits each contestant equal time at the controls. It is required that the partner not owning the boat pay a minimum of \$40 for gas and oil per tournament day. The contestant who is operating the boat shall have the privilege of selecting their route and fishing water. In the event that one contestant elects not to operate the boat, and such election is satisfactory to his partner, the contestant waiving the right to operate the boat shall still have the right to choose the fishing spots one-half of the time. Any contestant found operating the boat in an obvious and deliberate manner to handicap his partner shall be disqualified.
10. **PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS** – Fishing is not permitted any place not accessible to the public in the area chosen for a tournament, or in areas identified as "Off Limits" by the Tournament Committee. No fishing is permitted within 50 yards of another contestant's boat that was first at the location and their trolling motor up with boat anchored. No such anchored boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50 yard circle claimed by him or her to the exclusion of any other competitor. It is the responsibility of the anchored boat to make other competitors aware that he or she is anchored. All fishing must be done from a boat. Contestants must not depart the boat to fish or to land fish. Boats must stay in the water during the tournament day. All contestants must leave the official area by boat and return by boat. If a boat is disabled, a contestant and his/her fish may be taken to weigh-in by the best means possible keeping one's own catch in their site at all times prior to check-in.
11. **DON'T KILL YOUR CATCH** – Each contestant will be expected to keep his bass alive to the best of his ability. All fish will be brought to the scales I plastic bags with water and all live fish will be released except trophy fish.
12. **SCORING** – Only largemouth, spotted or smallmouth bass will be weighed. During the tournament day, each contestant must keep his fish separated from that of his partner. At no time shall any contestant have more than the legal number of bass allowed per person, on the body of water being fished. Each contestant must present his own catch to weigh-in. A bass will not be counted nor weighed that is not within the limit of the body of water being fished. As a penalty, one pound will be subtracted from his total weight. Any contestant bringing in more than the limit, will have his bass culled down to the limit by the Tournament Committee and the largest bass on the stringer will be culled first. It is the responsibility of the individual contestant to ensure his weight is recorded correctly.

13. **TIES** – In the event of a tie, the winning contestant in each instance shall be decided by the weight of the largest bass caught during the tournament by each contestant and declaring the one with the largest bass the winner. In the event of a tie for lunker, the winning contestant in each instance shall be decided first by the number of fish caught, second by the total bag weight, and third by a toss of the coin. It is the responsibility of the individual contestant to ensure that his largest bass is weighed.
14. **FISHING CONDITIONS** – The tournament will be held unless the ramp is unavailable due to weather related conditions. An alternate ramp, if available, may be selected by the Tournament Committee, time permitting.
15. **PROTEST** – Any contestant wishing to protest the score of a fellow contestant must do so in writing and within thirty (30) minutes after that day's official weigh-in time.
16. **LATE** – If a club member is late to a tournament, the late member will be docked his biggest fish during the weigh-in. His biggest fish will be culled by the Tournament Director or designee. Late will be defined as not having your boat in the water and ready to go at the prescribed time set by the Tournament Director.
17. **RATIO** – Membership must maintain a minimum 2 to 1.5 boat owner to non-boat owner ratio. Any current club member who is a non-boat owner may remain a member until which time he chooses to renew his membership.
18. **INSURANCE:** A contestant **may not** operate a boat unless that contestant and/or boat owner has provided valid documented proof of a minimum of \$300,000 Boating Liability Insurance on the boat to be operated. The documented proof must show an effective date and must be received by a club officer prior to the first tournament in which the boat is to be used.

CHRONOLOGICAL ORDER OF BYLAW AMENDMENTS:

Amendment to bylaws proposed, voted on, and passed March 25, 1995. (original vote date 1995, law added April 2007)

A Virginia Bassmaster member, in good standing, who is participating in the Region 7 Tournaments, will only be allowed to fish with a partner who is also a member of Virginia Bassmasters in good standing.

Amendment to bylaws proposed, voted on, and passed July 19, 1997:

Article VIII. 16. Late. "Late will be defined as not checking in with the tournament chairman prior to blast off the morning of the tournament: shall be changed to "Late will be defined as not having your boat in the water and ready to go at the prescribed time set by the Tournament Director."

Amendments made to bylaws as voted on by the membership December 1999:

Reflect increase in dues from \$125.00 to \$150.00 and Article III.3.b shall now read "Failure to attend 50% of the chapter meetings and 50% of chapter tournaments, including the Don Sprinkle Open, during a 12-month period. **Note: This was later removed.

Amended to include the insurance requirement rule 18 as part of the Constitution & Bylaws 2000 on May 13, 2000.

Amendment to tournament bylaws proposed, voted on and passed May 2001:

Amendment to Bylaws tournament rule 2 to reflect that boaters paired together are not required to fish together.

Amendment to bylaws reflecting that a motion cannot be made more than twice during a fishing season was proposed, voted on and passed July 2002.

Amendment to tournament rules late to weigh-in penalty was proposed, voted on and passed September 2002:

Article VIII.3. Tournament Fishing Hours shall read "Returning to weigh-in after tournament hours shall result in a 1 lb. penalty per minute up to 15 minutes. After 15 minutes late, shall be cause for disqualification.

Amendment voted on during the 2004 season and Reprinted: August 25, 2004

Section 3.b of Article III-Membership "Failure to attend 50% of the chapter meetings and 50% of chapter tournaments, including the Don Sprinkle Open, during a 12-month period" has been deleted. Once a member pays dues, he/she is a member for the year and cannot be removed from the roster unless requested by that member.

Section 17 of Article VIII-Tournament Rules has been changed to indicate that the boater to no-boater ratio is now 2 to 1.5. There must be at least 2 boaters for every 1.5 non-boaters.

Amendment made to reflect Virginia B.A.S.S. Federation dues change for 2005: December 4, 2004

Section 2. Membership Dues has been changed to reflect the increase in State dues as required to \$20.00.

Amendment made to reflect National B.A.S.S. Federation dues change for 2006: November 1, 2005

Section 2. Membership Dues has been changed to reflect the increase in National dues as required to \$20.00.

Amendments made throughout the Constitution and Bylaws to reflect the name changes of National B.A.S.S. Federation to BASS Federation Nation and Virginia B.A.S.S. Federation to BASS Federation Nation of Virginia: January 12, 2006

Amendment proposed, voted on and passed November 2006:

The phrase "in site of one's own catch" be added to tournament rules regarding the transporting of a competitor's fish to the scales in the event of a boat breakdown. An angler's fish and the angler may be transported to weigh in (i.e. an angler's catch must be in their site at all times prior to check-in), in the event of a breakdown.

Amendments proposed, voted on and passed, March, 2007:

Article VII, part 5. There will be 4oz added to the dead fish penalty making the total penalty 8 oz.

Article VIII, part 2. The fine for not contacting the tournament director prior to a club tournament (\$25.00) has been removed from the bylaws. There will not be a fine for not contacting the tournament director.

Article VIII, part 4. Replacing the sentence "Each contestant is required to wear a chest-type life preserver at all times the outboard motor is running" with "...a chest type preserver at all times while the motor is in gear."

Article VIII, part 10. Fishing is not permitted within 50 yds. of another contestants boat that was first at the location, has his trolling motor up and is anchored.

Article VIII, part 13. The means of resolving a tie for the 'lunker' will be as follows: First, the contestant with the most fish caught that day will win; Second (if the first option does not work), the contestant with the heaviest bag wins the lunker; Third and final (if the second option does not work), a flip of the coin will decide the lunker winner.

Article VIII, part 14. Replace the existing sentence with "The tournament will be held unless the ramp is unavailable due to weather related conditions. An alternate ramp, if available, may then be selected by the Tournament Committee, time permitting.

Amendment to bylaws reflecting National and State Federation dues increase effective 1-1-10, January, 2010.:

Article III, part 2. National dues are now \$30 and State dues are now \$35 for total club dues of \$165.

Amendments proposed, voted on and passed, June 2010:

Article III, Section 3, part b. Added "...unsportsmanlike demeanor toward a fellow club member...".

Article V. The same motion cannot be made more than twice during a fishing season.

Article VIII, Section 2. Clarified initial pairings by random draw; if two are paired who have already fished that season, they can be re-paired; and any re-pairings shall be done from the bottom of the pairings list up, but shall include a boating member's desire not to fish alone first. After all pairings/re-pairings are appropriately adjusted by the Tournament Committee, when two contestants check out at the beginning of the day, they must stay together throughout the day and until their weigh-in is completed.

Article VIII, Section 9. It is required that the partner not owning the boat pay his/her boater's luncheon pot entry of \$10, and \$40 for gas and oil per tournament day.

Article VII, Section 10. Fishing is not permitted any place not accessible to the public in the area chosen for a tournament, or in areas identified as "Off Limits" by the Tournament Committee. No fishing is permitted within 50 yards of another contestant's boat that was first at the location and their trolling motor up with boat anchored. No such anchored boat shall permit selected competitors to fish within the 50 yard circle claimed by him or her to the exclusion of any other competitor. It is the responsibility of the anchored boat to make other competitors aware that he or she is anchored.

Article VII, Section 18. Changed the minimum watercraft liability coverage amount to \$300,000 to be consistent with BASS rules.

Amendments proposed, voted on and passed, December 2012:

Article VII, Section 9. Omitted \$100 fine for not fishing State qualifier tournaments: Mr. BASS or Chapter Team.

Article VIII, Section 4. Omitted penalty for violating life-jacket rules and replaced with 1st offense warning, thereafter loss of big fish.

Amendment to bylaws reflecting National and State Federation dues increase effective 1-1-14, January, 2014.:

Article III, part 2. Club membership dues are now \$100 instead of \$85 beginning with the 2015 season.

Article VII, Section 9, The non-boater shall not be responsible for ramp fee or their boater's luncheon pot entry. And the gas expense of \$100 typically provided to the boaters at Mr. Bass and to all 6-man team members shall be discontinued until further notice.

Article VIII, Section 2. Delete the first 8 sentences of section 2 and replace with "Non-boating contestants will be paired by draw at the ramp on the morning of each day's tournament. The no-boaters shall draw their partner for the day from boaters checked in that day. Once a boater has been paired, that boater shall be removed from the next tournament day's draw until such time as each non-boater has fished with every boater or that year's season has ended, whichever shall first occur." Continue with "When two contestants check out at the beginning of the day,....."

Article VIII, Section 17. Replace the words "must maintain a minimum" with "shall not exceed a maximum".

Article VIII, Section 6 Tackle and Equipment, February 2017

Amended to use. Added "Alabama rigs permitted only during Virginia Bassmasters club tournaments."

Article VIII, Section 12 Scoring, February 2017

Amended to include Spotted Bass, to read "Only largemouth, spotted or smallmouth bass will be weighed."

Article VII, Section 2, February 2019

Amended to "The Tournament Chairman, shall present a tournament schedule to be presented and approved by the membership at the last meeting of each year for the next year's schedule."

Article VII, Section 3, February 2019

Amended to "Upon approval of the tournament schedule at the club's last meeting of the year, it shall not be changed."

Article VII, Section 9 Fourth Sentence, February 2019

Amended to "Members that qualify to represent Virginia Bassmasters in BASS Federation Nation of Virginia tournaments are expected to fish them. The top two members at the end of a fiscal year qualify for the next year's Mr. BASS Tournament. The top six members at the end of the fiscal year qualify for the next year's Chapter Team Tournament. A Virginia Bassmasters member in good standing who is participating in Region 7 tournaments will be allowed to fish with a non-Virginia Bassmasters member."

All other information contained herein is believed to be accurate and reflects any and all amendments made by the membership to the Virginia Bassmasters' Constitution and Bylaws to date in accordance with Article V.