

Merryville Museum Bass Tournament Official Rules

The Merryville Museum Bass Tournament will be a 5 fish (stringer) limit per boat tournament. There will be a Big Bass and Trash Fish entry that will be individually. Contestants may have more than 5 fish in their boats. However, they may only weigh-in 5 fish. All fish will remain the property of contestants.

ELIGIBILITY:

All local, state, Coast Guard, and federal penal code laws and boating regulations shall apply at all times.

- a) This tournament is for amateur anglers ONLY. Professional anglers are NOT eligible.
- b) If you are unsure of your professional status it is YOUR responsibility to request a decision in writing from our staff PRIOR to entering a tournament. Any contestant who enters this tournament and is determined to be a professional will be removed from competition immediately and forfeits any entry fees.
- c) Each person in the boat must be a paid contestant of the tournament and abide by all tournament rules and regulations. It is the contestant's sole responsibility to review the official rules prior to the start of the tournament. Paid entry into the event via mail, fax, online or in person represents contestants acceptance of all tournament rules and regulations.
- d) Non-contestants are NOT allowed in paid contestants' boats at any time during official tournament hours (Saturday from first cast to 2:00 pm). The maximum number of contestants in one boat will be limited to three (3).
- e) Any contestants found to be in violation of any tournament rules and regulations may be subject to disqualification from the tournament and all future events.
- f) Anyone that has been disqualified in connection with any fishing tournament is NOT eligible. No exceptions.
- g) Contestants under 18 years of age must have written parental permission.
- h) During tournament hours no alcoholic beverages are to be consumed by tournament contestants or allowed in contestant's boat.
- i) Tournament officials reserve the right to refuse any entry for any reason.

REGISTRATION, ENTRY FEE AND OTHER:

- a) Entry Fee is \$50 per boat, \$10 for big bass (per contestant) and \$10 for Trash Fish (per contestant) and must be paid before fishing begins. Registration for the event closes at midnight the day before the tournament begins. There will be no late registration at the ramp on Saturday morning and no one will be allowed to enter the tournament after the registration deadline. Contestants may register online prior to the tournament or with one of the Merryville Museum Members prior to the event.
- b) No refunds of entry fee(s).

SAFETY (THE FOLLOWING IS MANDATORY):

- a) All boats must be equipped with some type of emergency ignition cut-off device (kill switch) on any remote steered outboard while main engine is in use. Ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must operate properly, which means when the kill switch is activated the outboard main engine must stop running immediately. The ignition cut-off device (kill switch) must be attached to boat operator at all times while the outboard main engine is in use. However, kill switches are not required on boats or hand-operated engines that were not manufactured with one.

- b) U.S. Coast Guard approved life jackets are required for each person on board.
- c) No boat shall have a motor of higher horsepower than the approved Coast Guard maximum.

PERMITTED FISHING AREAS AND HOURS:

- a) Fish must be caught on the tournament waters during official tournament hours.
- b) Tournament off limits begins at 6:00 PM the day before the tournament event. Contestants must be off the water on or before 6:00 PM Friday and may not begin fishing until official tournament start time on Saturday at 6:00 AM.
- c) There is no formal launch site for this tournament. Contestants may launch or start from any site that they have been granted access to on the Old River, however no contestant may start fishing until the official tournament start time of 6:00 am. All contestants must check in prior to launching, at any location, at the official check-in location, which is located at the Old River Dam Road at the boat launch or by calling/texting 337-401-9015. Check in will start at 5:00 am on the morning of the tournament.
- d) No fishing within 50 yards of a launch site.
- e) No one may leave his or her boat to fish or land a fish.
- f) Contestants are limited to use of a primary boat only.
- g) No fishing allowed within 25 yards of a non-anchored boat or 50 yards of an anchored boat without that boat's permission.

TACKLE AND EQUIPMENT:

- a) All bass must be caught on artificial bait by casting only, no foul hooking. No trolling with big motor. Only one rod may be used at any one time by contestant. Other rods may be in the boat for substitute purposes.
- b) All bass must be caught from a legal boat.
- c) No electronic tracking devices (implanted microchips) may be used to locate fish for tournament purposes (depth-finders and graph charts are the only exception.)

WEIGH-IN, SPORTSMANSHIP AND CONSERVATION:

- a) Sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and bass conservation are required from every participant.
- b) All contestants will be required to check out with a tournament official at the launch site. Each contestant must have his check out sheet with him/her at the official weigh-in. Weigh-in will begin at 2:00 at the Boat Launch on Old River Dam Road (Upper-end) Boat Launch.
- c) Contestants must be in line by 2:00 for their weigh-in to count. Said contestant must have the official check-out form for weigh-in.
- d) All fish caught and weighed-in will remain property of contestants that weighed-in the fish.
- e) Trailering a bass to weigh-in site during tournament hours is permissible. Any contestant whether trailering or not, shall be required to bring their boat and respective partners with them to the official weighs-in site for a boat inspection when weighing bass.
- f) All bass brought to official weigh-in station must be in a weigh-in bag. A weigh-in bag will be provided by tournament staff. Bass do not have to be alive to be weighed in.
- g) No contestant may weigh-in more than 5 fish. Your biggest bass is registered into the final overall Big Bass standings.
- h) Bass must be weighed in by the contestants in the boat who originally caught the bass and it must be in said contestant's actual physical possession at the weigh-in line. Contestants entered in the Big Bass group must be identified in a separate bag.

- i) Any artificially weighted or preserved bass will result in immediate disqualification and the contestant may be subject to prosecution under federal law.
- j) Any questionable fish may be subject to inspection by a marine biologist or similarly qualified expert.
- k) This is a bass tournament. Only largemouth, smallmouth and Kentucky spotted bass will be weighed in, except for the Trash Fish entry. Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries minimums and/or slot requirements must be followed and it is the responsibility of the contestant to abide by all local, state, and federal rules for the host event waters.
- l) No boat may have more than the legal limit of bass (per contestant) or total for their boat in their possession at any time during official tournament hours.
- m) In event there is a tie for the overall stringer; the winner will be the stringer that weighs in the largest fish.

BOAT INSPECTION:

- a) All contestants, by entering this tournament(s), hereby agree to allow their boats to be boarded and inspected by tournament officials at any time during the tournament(s), to include, but not limited to, their boat registration, Coast Guard horsepower rating plate, live well, rod boxes, closed storage compartments, tackle boxes, life jackets, PFD's and safety equipment.
- b) Merryville Historical Society and Museum cooperates with local law enforcement and fish/wildlife officers during our tournament events. If any contestant is found to be in violation of local, state or federal law during tournament hours, they will immediately be disqualified and subject to possible prosecution from law enforcement officials.

COMMUNICATIONS:

- a) Your entry into an event via mail, fax, online or onsite is your expressed written consent to receive email, phone, and text communication from Merryville Historical Society and Museum before, during and after an event. Contestants who remain in our database after an event understand that they will be subject to ongoing event updates throughout the year. In order to discontinue communication it is your responsibility to notify us in writing to opt out of our mail, email and/or text databases.
- b) Contestants may use their cell phones for emergency and event communication purposes ONLY. Cell phones and other communication devices may NOT be used for the purposes of locating fish.

DECISIONS:

- a) Each contestant by entering the tournament(s) agrees that they have read and understand all rules and agrees to be bound by all.
- b) Any protests must be registered in writing with the Tournament Director within fifteen (15) minutes of the designated weigh-in.
- c) The interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be the sole responsibility of the Tournament Director. Decisions of the Tournament Director, Tournament Staff and Merryville Historical Society and Museum are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal.
- d) In the event of a discrepancy between print and digital version of the rules, the official rules listed on the Merryville Historical Society and Museum website at the time of the event will prevail.