

GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION 2026 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP MEMO

The recipient of this memo is requested to furnish a copy to the Club President or Secretary as soon as possible. It is also suggested that the Club ask a member who is connected to the internet to visit the GBF website (www.gabassfed.org) and print out the 2026 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP MEMO for the Club Captain and team mates to reference.

For All QUALIFIED CLUBS entering the 2026 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP – please read on! This tournament determines who will be eligible from the State of Georgia (GA), based upon annual club participation, to compete in The Bass Federation (TBF) Division 1 National Semi-Finals Tournament to be held on Lake Toho, FL, 26-27 September, 2026 with the official practice dates of 23-25 September, 2026.

Watercraft Liability Insurance [WLI] Policies. Each year there are about two dozen policies presented that do not clearly state Watercraft Liability Insurance or show a start and ending date for the coverage. If the boat owner is in doubt have the insurance agent prepare a memo to the GBF Tournament Committee stating the policy number, amount of Watercraft Liability coverage and the **start and ending date** of the policy.

Reminder - the amount of WLI coverage is \$300,000 **or** \$100,000 of WLI in conjunction with a one million dollar “umbrella” liability policy. In this case the boat owner must have clear copies of both policies.

NOTE: The policy must state Watercraft Liability. If this is a rider on the Home Owner’s policy it may only list the code HO-75 and the coverage amount. General Liability coverage is NOT sufficient on a Home Owner’s policy as several companies deny that this coverage applies to watercraft. Second, the Specification Page must show a **beginning** and **ending date!** Comments such as **“Continuous Coverage”** and **“Non-expiring”**, etc. are **not legally sufficient!** There are a number of large, quality insurance companies, that we see many policies that produce terrible specification pages. If you an insurance question, please the Georgia Bass Federation Tournament Director **before** arriving at the tournament site.

As you read through this State Championship **Memo**, contains four (4) parts: a **Requirement Check List**, the **Tournament Rules and Regulations** the **Schedule of Events** and a **Boat Safety Procedure**.

Remember that it was by luck of the draw that each day’s boating partner were chosen. The GBF knows the competitive spirit within each competitor and feels a few words of encouragement and guidance are in order.

First, the GBF places great emphasis on the Co-Angler partner to insure he or she are able to participate in a safe boat. Remember the Georgia Safe Boating Laws require a 100 foot No Wake zone between any boat under power and other stationary boats, swimmers, developed banks, bridges, piers, docks and in narrow channels.

Alongside the GBF also places great emphasis on the fact that the Boater also deserves the ability to compete in his/her safe boat. This Boater is the captain for the day. He/she brought a valued and respected watercraft to this competition with full knowledge they would be sharing this watercraft with another person during the tournament day. As such, it is very important to recognize the Boater is the owner of this watercraft and/or the caretaker for this property. Assisting the Captain by

following their rules on their vessel is required and will go a long way toward making the day a more pleasant experience. Ask permission to board, how you as the Co-Angler can be of assistance and follow the captain's orders throughout the day. It is for your safety and security as well. For the Co-Angler, it is an optional decision to give the Boater a monetary amount to help pay for daily cost of running the boat.

In addition to competing against all other Boaters in the event and the weather conditions the captain of any vessel of any size, of any type, operating anywhere in the world is responsible for the safe and efficient operation of the ship, including its seaworthiness, safety and security, cargo operations (tackle storage), navigation, crew management (the Co-Angler), and ALL legal compliance, for the persons and cargo on board. As Captains, they are in overall command of the ship and are responsible for the safety, efficiency and feasibility of the watercraft throughout the tournament day. Their responsibility is to keep you safe throughout the tournament day.

THE ONLY STATE CHAMPIONSHIP ENTRY METHOD IS ON THE GBF WEBSITE. PLEASE SUBMIT ENTRY FROM WEBSITE ONLY. (www.gabassfed.org) .

Please send all updates to Registrations@gabassfed.org and Tournamentdirector@gabassfed.org as soon as you make any changes to an already submitted entry form.

The entry fee will be \$150.00 per Boater and \$100.00 per Co-Angler. As a Club you are entering an EQUAL number of Boaters and Co-Anglers. Big Fish is included in the entry fee. Entries will be accepted ONLINE ONLY starting January 10, 2026, UNTIL March 6, 2026.

DO NOT mail Checks after the end date. The entire process is handled online at www.gabassfed.org and NO entries will be accepted for the State Championship at the tournament site.

Go to <https://gabassfed.org/ga-state-championship-registration/> and look for the text above to submit any registration amendments. If you have any problems, contact the Georgia Bass Federation (GBF) Tournament Director.

2026 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP CHECKLIST

Clark's Hill Lake (Raysville Marina)
6584 Lincoln Hwy; Thomson, GA, 30824
March 23 - 24, 2026

- Have you prepared a Club Notebook for Registration?
- Have **ALL the Club Members** joined **TBF and MLF**?
- Has your Club paid the \$100.00 Annual GBF Dues, made payable to the GA Bass Federation and been **sent to the current GBF Treasurer? Mailing address: 109 Balmoral Lane; Warner Robins, GA 31088**
- Has your Club updated and submitted the annual Officer's Roster?
- Has the Club Captain been identified? This provides a single point of contact for the participants from your club.
- Have back-up boats been designated by marking the appropriate box on the entry form on the website?
- Have back-up anglers been identified by sending the person's information with their availability to the Tournament Director prior to the close of the online entry process?
- Has the Entry Form been filled out and submitted from the GBF Website?
(www.gabassfed.org)
- Club Captain – make sure that all persons identified as Boaters have cleaned their boats (carpets cleaned, trash/lose items picked up) and has one storage compartment empty for their partner's use.
- Has the **\$250.00 Entry Fee for each (2) person team**, been paid to the GA Bass Federation?
- CHANGES – Update State Championship Entry Form from the website through March 6, 2026. After that date, contact the Tournament Director at TournamentDirector@GaBassFed.org.
- Have all participants signed an "Official Waiver Form"** online?
- Do ALL offered boats, primary or back-up have the required Watercraft Liability Insurance coverage? Is the boat owner the operator? Company owned boats are "borrowed boats."

**GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION
TOURNAMENT RULES and REGULATIONS
2026 STATE CHAMPIONSHIP**

1. **Safety:** Safe boating conduct **WILL** be observed at all times by all tournament competitors. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved Chest-type life preserver (PFD). This Personal Floatation Device must be worn **ANY** time the combustion engine is operating. The PFD must be strapped, snapped or zippered securely and maintained in that condition until the competitor reaches her/his fishing location and the combustion engine is shut off. **The use of “Fanny Pack” type PFDs are prohibited.** The boat operator must have the “kill” switch attached to her/his person when the combustion engine is running. Boats shall be operated in a safe and sane manner. The non-boater has the right to demand safe and sane boat operation. Violations of this rule shall be reason for immediate disqualification. **REMEMBER: The key phrase for all GBF events is “SAFETY-SAFETY-SAFETY.”**

All boat operators born after January 1, 1998 must have passed a boater safety course approved by the Georgia Department of Natural Resources and carry proof of completion on board to operate any vessel. Persons 16 years of age or older may operate any Personal Water Craft (PWC) on the waters of Georgia if they carry aboard proper identification such as a government-issued ID containing a photo, a description of the person and date of birth.

Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each contestant is required to wear a fastened U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is running from boat check until weigh-in each day of the tournament. All boats must be equipped with a factory-installed emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver’s body with a standard-length, factory tether whenever the combustion engine is running. Boaters and co-anglers may fish and charge batteries using an onboard charger by letting the combustion engine idle in neutral only if the boat is equipped with a certified and functioning wireless ignition-shutoff device and everyone in the boat is wearing a fastened U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device.

All persons must be seated and a driver must be behind the steering wheel in full control of the boat whenever it is on plane or the combustion engine is running and in gear. At the discretion of the tournament director, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or canceled due to unsafe weather or water conditions. Competitors may leave their boat and seek shelter in bad weather or when danger is imminent. They must, however, stay within sight of each other. Contestants involved in boating accidents and/or safety incidents may be required to complete a Boat US Foundation boating safety course before participating in another GBF tournament. A free course for each state is available at boatus.org.

2. **Rules:** Great effort, study and research have gone into the formulation of these rules. The rules of this tournament are not subject to protest or change. These rules will remain unchanged during 2026. Interpretation of these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Committee and the Board of Directors of the Georgia Bass Federation Inc. and their decision shall be final in all matters. **These rules apply during the pre-practice period, as well as, the actual tournament event.**

Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations (boater or co-angler) may be cause for disqualification. The violation of a tournament rule may result in, but is not limited to, weight loss, the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day, the loss of the heaviest one-day catches, the loss of the heaviest bass for the day, disqualification from the entire tournament, a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 or ineligibility to participate in future GBF tournaments. Protests and/or alleged rule violations are to be documented in writing by the witness within 30 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day. GBF reserves the right to consider rule violations reported or discovered after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for future events, including denying entry to compete. Interpretation of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Committee and the Board of Directors of the Georgia Bass Federation Inc. and their decision shall be final in all matters. These rules apply during the pre-practice period, as well as, the actual tournament event days.

In general terms, the Georgia Bass Federation (GBF) follows Phoenix Bass Fishing League (BFL) Rules as defined by MLFLW, LLC, (DBA "MLF5") with the relaxed exception of the Alabama Rig. Where BFL defines Alabama rigs and similar umbrella-type rigs to be limited to a maximum of five wires with a maximum of five spinners, five lures and three hooks (single or treble) unless state regulations are more restrictive, in which case state regulations prevail, during GBF Tournaments Alabama rigs and similar self-contained umbrella-type rigs can have a maximum of five (5) hooks (single or treble) unless state regulations are more restrictive, in which case the state regulations prevail.



The Bass Federation (TBF) partners with Major League Fishing (MLF) and the reason for the Georgia Bass Federation (GBF) aligning with the Phoenix Bass Fishing League (BFL) Rules is as a product of this competition cycle, beginning in 2021, providing an angler with the opportunity to receive a FREE entry into the Phoenix Bass Fishing League (BFL) All-American. The more consistent we can make the rules between GBF, TBF and the MLF BFL the better it will serve our GBF anglers representing The State of Georgia.

3. Participants and Eligibility: Participation in this Tournament is open only to members of the GBF and TBF/FLW who are at least **16 years of age** and are members of a GBF sanctioned club and are in good standing with their GBF club. Any person under **18 years of age** (19 in Alabama and Nebraska) entering a tournament must also have the signature of a parent or legal guardian on a hard copy of the GBF Participant Release of Liability and Acknowledgement of Risk Form.

Additionally, with regard to the Participant Release of Liability and Acknowledgement of Risk Form a competent adult is defined as a person 18 years of age or older who is not under the influence of alcohol or drugs and who is carrying proper identification such as a government issued ID that contains a photo, a description of the person and date of birth. No additional requirements are made and in signing the form the parent or legal guardian holds harmless the GBF, GBF members and the minor's boating partners for all days of competition.

To protect everyone's best interest proof of age to the satisfaction of tournament officials is the responsibility of all prospective competitors. If asked each participant is required to present proper identification such as a government issued ID that contains a photo, a description of the person and date of birth,

Any person's participation in any tournament is at the sole discretion of GBF officials. Any person who, in the judgment of the tournament director, is disabled or handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his or her boater or co-angler partner or compromise his or her safety or the safety of other competitors or the boating public may not be eligible to participate. Participation by anyone in any GBF tournament is at the sole discretion of the GBF President.

All contestants must have a valid fishing license for the waters they fish. Random checks will be conducted at each tournament. Failure to provide proof of a valid fishing license within a reasonable amount of time when requested by the tournament director will result in disqualification for that day and any preceding days in which the license was required for the tournament.

If furnishing a boat, her/his current boat registration and in force proof of \$300,000 of Watercraft Liability Insurance [WLI] or \$100,000 of WLI backed by a \$1 million "Umbrella" Liability Policy covering the boat and the designated operator will be required. Only properly designated alternates shall be eligible to take the place of a participant during the tournament. **NOTE: You must have a copy of your boater's insurance with you or your person or in your boat and if we ask for it in a random check, which we do once in a while, you must be able to produce a copy within a reasonable amount of time (say 24 hours) or your disqualified.**

To reiterate and clarify, participation by anyone in any GBF tournament is at the sole discretion of the GBF President. Participation of minor's is allowed with the written consent of a parent or legal guardian.

4. **Entry Fee:** The entry fee for Boaters is \$150.00 and \$100.00 for Co-Anglers. Payback is 100% to the participants in each separate group of Boaters and Co-Anglers. Big Fish payback will be based upon the number of entrees. There will be a Day 1 and Day 2 Big Fish for Boaters and a Day 1 Day 2 Big Fish payback for Co-Anglers. No refunds will be made nor will credit be extended, except in dire cases approved by GBF. Disqualification from this or any tournament for any reason could result in forfeiture of entry fee.

5. **Tournament Format:** The tournament format will be a blind draw where a Boater and Co-Angler are paired each day by random computer selection. Boaters will keep the same boat number each day and draw a new Co-Angler every tournament day. Flights will be reversed for the second day to promote fair play. Additionally, boaters only compete against other Boaters and Co-anglers only complete against other Co-anglers. Based upon TBF guidelines and participation, the top ten (10) Boaters and the top ten (10) Co-Anglers will automatically qualify to fish the TBF Division 1 National Semi Finals in September, 2026.

Note: At this time no stipend is provided from GBF for anglers to attend the TBF Division 1 Semi-Final. This old practice was abolished to provide for additional winnings at each event; bringing the GBF State Championship payout in line with the way that the TBF Division Semi-Final payout is administered.

6. **Registration and Drawing:** Registration will be completely on-line and will consist of two (2) steps. Step 1 is club based and will require the club presidents and secretaries to ensure that the following tasks have been completed:

- a. Has your club submitted/updated the online Officer's Roster?
- b. Has your club paid the annual GBF dues?
- c. Has your club updated TBF members and paid their TBF membership?

These club specific items must be completed by **31 December, 2026**. Once these three (3) important items have been completed, then your club is ready to proceed to Step 2. If you have any problems completing any of these please contact your Area Director or the GBF President.

Step 2 is the individual Team registration that will open on January 10, 2026 on the gabassfed.org website. Teams will register on line via the Registration Form on the GBF website. When hitting the SUBMIT button, all members listed on the registration form is agreeing to everything listed on the GBF Liability Release Form. Also, if you are listed as a Boater, you will be required to have a copy of your boater's insurance on your person at all times and prepared to show it, if asked. The last step is to mail a check for the entry fee to the current GBF Treasurer? **Mailing address: 109 Balmoral Lane; Warner Robins, GA 31085. Please make checks payable to "Georgia Bass Federation"**.

Clubs should continue to identify a Team Captain, as in the past. The Team Captain is responsible for the participants from his or her club. It is a good idea, though not required, that the Team Captain gather together with all required documents and bring that with him/her in case questions arise at the registration/drawing on Friday evening, prior to the tournament. Note that after each Team has entered online, they receive a confirmation email. Simply have each club member provide a copy of this email verification to you for safe keeping. All/any changes to the club roster will be resolved from **3:00 – 4:00 pm on Sunday, 22 March, 2026** before the drawing for partners takes place.

7. **Sportsmanship:** Defining sportsmanship as a fair and generous behavior or treatment of others, especially during a sporting contest it is paramount that maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of competitors and non-competitors alike who are also present on the tournament waters. Any act of a competitor which reflects unfavorably upon the GBF's effort to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and sportsmanship shall be reason for immediate disqualification.

To provide additional detail on the topic all contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a matter that will be a credit to themselves, to GBF, GBF's sponsors, the sport of fishing and GBF's efforts to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to the following:

- a. Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the rules.
- b. Consumption, abuse of, addiction to and/or possession of any kind of mind-altering substance during registration or tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedures.
- c. Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.
- d. Boat operation in an unsafe or unsportsmanlike manner.
- e. Violation of a posted no-wake zone.
- f. Publicly criticizing or questioning the integrity of GBF or TBF officials, including but not limited to GBF rules, policies and procedures.
- g. Dissemination of disparaging content or content that one should reasonably know would harm the reputation of MLF, MLF officials or MLF sponsors, TBF, TBF officials or TBF sponsors or GBF, GBF officials or GBF sponsors or of your own sponsors.
- h. Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set forth.

In case of any conduct not complying with the standards outlined above, GBF shall have the right to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future GBF tournaments.

8. Pairing of Contestants: All boaters and co-anglers will be paired each day by random draw and the Boater will receive a popsicle stick with their boat number and flight time. Boaters will keep the same boat number each day and during this pretournament meeting will draw a new Co-Angler each day. Flights will be reversed for the second day. Two (2) contestants will be assigned to each boat. All effort will be made not to pair contestants from the same Club, though this may be unavoidable. Announcement of your Day 1 partner shall be made at the drawing. Your Day 2 partner will be drawn immediately after Day 1 pairings are complete.

All contestants must contact their assigned boater or co-angler following the pretournament meeting. Partners should advise each other of their respective lodging and phone numbers and establish a meeting time and place for the following morning's takeoff. The tournament director, at his/her sole discretion, may reassign partners prior to takeoff. If more boaters than co-anglers are entered in a tournament, excess boaters will be paired together. If the number of co-anglers exceeds the number of boaters, excess co-anglers may choose to change to boater status, should they have an approved boat available.

It shall be the responsibility of each partner to agree and appear at a mutually-agreed upon location in time to launch and check out through the official check point/inspection station and be started from the release point on time. Tournament officials shall have no responsibility for finding missing partners. It is suggested that a minimum of thirty (30) minutes be allowed for preparation, boat and equipment inspection and departure to the check-out/start point.

9. Pre-Tournament Practice: There will be NO "Off Limits" before the Pre-Practice period. During the official practice period, a Contestant will only be allowed to fish alone, with another contestant, alternate, or a member of his/her family. The body of water goes off limits as listed in the posted Schedule of Events. Contestants cannot solicit/receive fishing information from any person other than another contestant during the official practice and tournament.

Do NOT fish a "Draw" Tournament during this period, example would be a BFL, ABA, or open tournament.

10. Purchasing of information, Placing Brush and "Hole Sitting": Once competition is under way, contestants may not solicit and/or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone except boaters and co-anglers confirmed in the tournament and through publicly available sources (quasi-public websites, blogs and/or social media pages, including but not limited to Facebook, Instagram, Snapchat and Periscope, set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a small group of individuals are not

publicly available sources). During competition days, contestants may not place brush or other physical fish attractors, including chum of any kind, in tournament waters. During competition days, boaters may not follow a non-contestant's boat or participate in the placing of markers, brush or other fish attractors by non-contestants or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. **In multiday tournaments, co-anglers who share a boater partner's fishing locations with another contestant will be disqualified along with the contestant requesting and/or using the information.**

11. Tackle and Equipment: Only artificial lures may be used. No live bait or prepared bait will be permitted with the exception of pork strips, rinds, etc. Only casting, spin casting or spinning rods, not in excess of 8 feet in length, with appropriate reels may be used. All other types are prohibited. Only one rod and reel is permitted in use at any given time, however, other rigs as specified may be in the boat ready for use. Nets may be used to land fish but **NOT** gaffs or "grippers". Underwater TV cameras may NOT be used during the tournament. Co-Anglers are limited to a maximum of seven (7) rods.

12. Boat and Motor: All boats offered for use in a GBF Tournament must meet the standards of the U S Coast Guard and the state of Georgia. All boats must be equipped with some type of Ignition "kill" Switch. All tournament boats must be 16 feet or more in length. Horsepower of the principal power source shall be within the USCG rating as designated on the manufacturer's rating plate (Not to exceed 250 HP) and shall not be less than 75 horsepower. Boats with "Stick Steering", "barges" or similar cumbersome craft shall not be permitted in the tournament. Gas must be stored only in factory-installed tanks. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. A competitor furnishing a boat and motor shall be expected to make that boat and motor available for tournament use by him/herself and his/her daily partner. Tournament boats must be equipped with a chair-type seat on the rear deck and a large empty compartment for the use of the Co-Angler partner.

13. Basic Boat Equipment: Every boat must have all required Coast Guard safety equipment. In addition, each must have a functional bilge pump and live well space able to accommodate and keep safe a maximum tournament limit. This live well space shall be properly aerated, to adequately maintain alive a limit of bass by both fishermen using the boat. Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat. Tournament officials shall have the sole responsibility for determining whether the aeration and capacity are "proper and adequate". **Any raised platforms or decks cannot be higher than the gunnel of the boat.**

14. **Boat Identification:** NO Outward Visible Indication will be present on GBF Tournament boats. This is why during this sporting contest it is paramount that maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of competitors and non-competitors alike who are also likely present on the designated tournament waters. Each boat shall have a numbered and colored popsicle stick provided at the pairing meeting. The color identifies the flight and the number identifies the sequence within the flight. As a courtesy the check-in time may also be recorded upon the stick. Anglers must present their popsicle stick to the weigh master each day at weigh in.

15. **Boat Inspection:** It is the responsibility of the Co-Angler to assure her/himself that the boat meets USCG and Georgia safety requirements and that they know the location of the fire extinguisher and the bilge pump activation switch. The tournament committee shall inspect each boat for functional navigation lights, aeration/live-well system and an ignition "kill" switch. The partners must be wearing USCG chest type PFD's that fit and are properly fastened. Should the Co-Angler find any deficiencies they are to alert the nearest GBF staff member immediately for resolution.

16. **Boat Operation:** Boaters will fish from the front deck of the boat only. Co-Anglers will fish from the back deck or seating area of the boat only. Boaters will have complete control of boat operation and waters to be fished. For safety concerns in rough water or swift current, in the event of an outboard or trolling motor breakdown or during an emergency, Co-Anglers may operate the trolling motor or the outboard but may not fish anytime from the front deck. Additionally, GBF suggests that co-anglers share fuel expenses with their boater partner to help offset the high cost of boat operation.

Boaters may NOT request that the Co-Angler not fish. Any Boater that, in the judgment of the tournament director, operates the boat in such a manner that unfairly handicaps his/her Co-Angler and any Co-Angler who unfairly handicaps his/her Boater may be disqualified. A degree of patience and the utmost sportsmanship must be observed by both competitors at all times.

Co-Anglers are not allowed to record GPS waypoints or use any type of handheld GPS during any competition day nor share information about their Boater's location or tactics with any other Boater. In multiday tournaments, co-anglers who share a boater partner's fishing locations with another contestant will be disqualified along with the contestant requesting and/or using the information.

The boat must remain in the tournament waters during the tournament day. After afternoon check-in it is permitted for the boater to choose to pull his/her boat out of the water prior to the daily partners weighing fish. Note that both daily partners must remain together, within sight of each other, until after both have crossed the weigh-in platform.

All contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. Both competitors must remain in the boat at all times except in case of dire emergency. In such an emergency, competitors may be removed from their boat to a boat operated by other competitors or to a rescue boat so designated by tournament officials. Partners must remain together at all times, in sight of each other and each other's catch, under the conditions cited above, in order for their catch of the day to be scored in the tournament.

All GBF members recognize that a bio break or a bathroom break will be necessary during the tournament day. Boaters and Co-Anglers should agree to make provisions for handling these instances. A Boater cannot refuse to allow a Co-Angler to have a bathroom break and/or to request the use a public facility in doing so. It is also recognized that a momentary condition of being out of sight for restroom break is permitted, however **ALL FISHING MUST CEASE**, until both boating partners are back together. If a competitor must violate any of the above conditions due to an emergency or any other reason, his/her catch of that day shall not be counted in the tournament.

17. **Permitted Fishing Locations:** Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere **Except in designated off-limits areas or within 50 yards of a marina gas docks or within 50 yards of another competitor's boat, regardless if the competitors' boat is anchored or maneuvering.** All angling must be done from the boat. Competitors wishing to change fish habitat by placing any object in the tournament waters may do so if such action does not violate state or federal regulations. Contestants must not leave the boat to land a fish. All bass must be caught live and in a conventional sporting manner.

18. **Official Checkpoints:** **Morning** - Each contestant must be in the water with his/her partner thirty (30) minutes prior to the scheduled inspection time for their flight. **Afternoon** - The boater pair must check in with the tournament committee check-in boat no later than the check-in time announced for their flight. After proper recognition at the check-in point, competitors will proceed to the weigh-in site at a slow idle. Remain in your boat with the aerators running until you are handed an official weigh bag by a tournament official; then place your fish in the bag and proceed to the weigh-in station. Our ultimate goal is conservation and returning the fish that are caught, alive, into the tournament waters is our goal.

19. **Scoring:** Tournament standings, auxiliary awards and final winners shall be determined by the pound and hundredths of pound of weight of each competitor's catch during the tournament. All dead fish will be penalized eight (8) ounces. Additionally, the **Big Fish weight** will be penalized eight (8) ounces if the big fish is determined to be non-releasable. Only Largemouth, Spotted, Red Eye, Shoal, or Smallmouth bass will be weighed. The limit shall be five (5) total of the above species. All competitors are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. The Tournament Director will announce the length limits prior to the start of the tournament. At no time shall a competitor have in her/his possession more than the limit described above.

20. **Culling of dead fish is NOT allowed.** In the event a competitor has more than five (5) fish in his/her possession at weigh-in the tournament officials shall cull the largest bass first down to the limit described and will accrue penalties at the rate of one (1) pound for each non-legal fish. Fish shall be measured on a flat board on the longest straight line. Fish which fail to measure the minimum length shall accrue a penalty of one pound and all such fish shall be disallowed. This penalty shall be deducted from the total score of the competitor.

Anyone attempting to alter a fish shall be subject to disqualification. Any bass that appears to have been mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered shall be weighed and credited only at the discretion of weigh-in officials. Each competitor must present his/her catch to the weigh-in officials. Contestants must not allow any bass they catch to be counted on the score of another contestant. In such a case, both contestants shall be disqualified from this tournament. After the competitor has delivered his/her catch to the weigh master, he/she may not touch said catch until the weigh-in procedure is completed. The bass caught must not be put on any type of stringer, at any time. Individual identification markers are allowed. Competitors will transport their catch from the boat to the weigh-in line in a water filled plastic bag provided by the Dock master. For determining which Federation club earns the "State Pride" award, the Top Boater and Top Co-Angler from each participating club, will have their weights added together and the highest club weight will earn the title.

21. **Don't Kill Your Catch:** Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. Eight (8) ounces will be deducted from the total weight for each dead bass presented for weigh-in. As stated in Scoring above **Do Not** clip fins or otherwise physically mark the fish for identification. The few bass that do not survive will be donated to a charitable cause.

22. **Late Penalty:** Any competitor who is not at the official check-in point as described in Rule 18 at the appointed time shall be penalized at the rate of one pound per minute late to be deducted from the total weight of her/his catch that day, including any weight to be counted toward a "lunker" award.

Any competitor more than 15 minutes late shall lose all credit for the day's catch. There shall be no excuse for tardiness and in no case, shall a competitor be allowed to make up "lost time". All fishing must cease upon check-in. It is the responsibility of the Club to get you back in case of breakdown.

23. **Ties:** In the case of a tie for any place, the contestant with the greatest number of fish or if still tied, the greatest number of live fish shall win the place in question. If the tie is yet unbroken, the contestant with the largest weighed Bag of fish will win the place (Day 1 or Day 2). A cut of the cards will resolve any yet unbroken ties. The next place will go to the person so eliminated.

24. **Communications:** There will be no communications, visually, vocally or electronically between contestants and non-contestants or electronically between contestants, during the competition hours concerning the fishing.

25. **Safety Checks:** None of the above rules shall prohibit a properly designated tournament official from approaching or boarding, with Captains permission, any competitor's boat at any time.

26. Protests and Violations: Any protest must be submitted to the tournament committee **in writing** no later than thirty (30) minutes after the protested person has weighed in his/her fish. With or without protest the GBF reserves the right to consider any rule violations reported or discovered after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for future events, including denying entry to compete.

Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament director immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations (boater or co-angler) may be cause for disqualification. The violation of a tournament rule may result in, but is not limited to, weight loss, the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day, the loss of weight for the entire day, the loss of the heaviest one-day catches, the loss of the heaviest bass for the day, disqualification from the entire tournament, a fine of not less than \$50 nor more than \$500 or ineligibility to participate in future GBF tournaments.

The process is all protests and/or alleged rule violations are to be documented in writing by the witness within 30 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day. GBF reserves the right to consider rule violations reported or discovered after a tournament has ended and assess penalties for future events, including denying entry to compete. Interpretation of these rules shall be left exclusively to the Tournament Committee and the Board of Directors of the Georgia Bass Federation Inc. and their decision shall be final in all matters. The investigation of these rules' violations applies during the pre-practice period, as well as, on the actual tournament event day.

27. Truth Verification Test: Local authorities will be brought in on any suspected violation of sufficient degree. Each contestant agrees to submit, by electronically signing of the tournament entry form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination provided by local authorities and to abide by its conclusion. Each contestant also agrees to the Release of Liability and Acknowledgement of Risk Statement, buy electronically signing of the tournament entry form. Failure to pass an examination provided by local authorities will result in disqualification from the tournament. Truth verification tests will be used at the local authorities' sole discretion, and the determination of the meaning of the results will be made solely by the local authorities and they will be recognized and understood by the GBF.

28. Captions: The captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in conjunction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules.

PRE-TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE of EVENTS
2026 GBF STATE CHAMPIONSHIP
 Clark's Hill Lake (Raysville Marina)
 March 23 – 24, 2026

January, 2026	STATE CHAMPIONSHIP MEMO SENT TO CLUBS QUALIFIED TO FISH. Memo will be posted to the GBF Website.
January 10, 2026 thru March 6, 2026	<p>Appoint a Club Captain. Submit as many two (2) person teams as you desire. Provide your participants with the Fact Sheet and 2026 SC Memo. They should also visit the GBF website (www.gabassfed.org) to confirm final details.</p> <p>Submit photocopy of all that apply for each participant:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 2026 TBF and MLF membership cards 2. 2026 Georgia Fishing License 3. Boat Registration Card 4. Watercraft Liability Insurance [WLI] Specification page. 5. Official "Waivers Form" signed by all participants. (See last page) <p>Please Hi-Lite [yellow only] all key elements, i.e. names, dates, amounts, etc. ██████████</p> <p>on All Documents. This Helps registration go quickly.</p>
March 6, 2026	Last date to update entry forms from the GBF website. After this date bring a revised Entry Form to Registration.
March 20, 2026 Friday	<p>OFFICIAL PRACTICE PERIOD BEGINS AT SUNRISE</p> <p>All Tournament Rules are in Force during the Official Practice Period.</p>
<p>March 22, 2026 Sunday</p> <p>All Times are Georgia Time</p>	<p>3:00 pm – Lake goes OFF-LIMITS</p> <p>3:00 – 4:00 pm Club Captains submit any changes to their State Roster Location: Raysville Marina, Thomson, GA 30824</p> <p>4:00 – 6:00 pm GBF General Membership Meeting and Partner Draw</p> <p><u>ALL competitors must be present.</u></p> <p>Sponsor and Support Recognition, Tournament Safety Briefing, Flights, and Pairings for Both Days</p> <p>Host Hotel: Hampton Inn, 441 Park W Drive, Thomson, GA 30824 706-691-0833</p>

TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE of EVENTS
2026 GBF STATE CHAMPIONSHIP
Clark's Hill Lake, (Raysville Marina)
March 23 - 24, 2026

NOTE: Number of Flights will be based on actual participation. Please see the updated handout at the registration meeting.

<p>March 23, 2026 Monday</p>	<p>6:30 am OR (Safe Light) First Flight (Blue) Starts</p> <p>Short Break ----- Second Flight (Red) Starts</p> <p>Short Break-----Third Flight (Green) Starts</p> <p>3:00 First Flight (Blue) Returns Boats 1-15</p> <p>3:30 Second Flight (Red) Returns Boats 16-30</p> <p>4:00 Third Flight (Green) Returns Boats 31- 45</p>
<p>March 24, 2026 Tuesday</p>	<p>6:30 am (Safe Light) First Flight (Green) Starts - (Boats 45-31 Reverse Order)</p> <p>Short Break -- Second Flight (Red) Starts - (Boats 30-16 Reverse Order)</p> <p>Short Break -- Third Flight (Blue) Starts - (Boats 15-1 Reverse Order)</p> <p>2:00 First Flight (Green) Returns</p> <p>2:30 Second Flight (Red) Returns</p> <p>3:00 Third Flight (Blue) Return</p> <p>3:30 pm Awards Ceremony</p>

Boat inspection both days. Boats will be inspected by flight in numerical order starting at 6:00 am. There will be a short break between each flight. The **Tournament Committee will check** Live Wells [clean] and their Aeration System, the Navigation Lights, PFD's [fit strapped and zippered] and Kill Switch for proper operation. **Safety-Safety-Safety**

Contact the following people in case of emergency or for any questions during the day.

GBF President, Quinnen Peavy
 Cell: 229-425-9401
 E-Mail: president@gabassfed.org

GBF Tournament Director, Sawyer Hunt
 Cell: 912-856-6032
 E-Mail: TournamentDirector@gabassfed.org

**Georgia Bass Federation
Tournament Committee
BOAT SAFETY INSPECTION**

The Georgia Bass Federation relies on the Co-Angler to insure her/himself that the assigned Tournament Boat is safe for a days' fishing. Contact the Georgia Bass Federation Tournament Director if you have any questions or concerns regarding your inspection of the boat you will compete in. The Co-Angler should determine the location and condition as a minimum of the following items:

Fire Extinguisher, Type B, C or ABC. Is it in the "Green"?

Bilge Pump(s), is the sump free of litter? Turn pump ON - Is it running?

Throwable, Know the location! **Life Jackets Save Lives**

Sounding Device, Is it operational?

Location of the Master Switch, Bilge Pump Switch and Navigation Light Switch.

Now the boat team may proceed to the dock by flight in numerical order for the GBF Tournament Committee to inspect the boat for the following:

Navigational Lights, installed and operational. (ALL NAVIGATIONAL LIGHTS MUST WORK)

Live Wells, open, clean and the Aeration System is operational.

PFD's [Life Vests], USCG Approved - Type I, II or III Fit and must be zippered, hooked, and snapped secure. **Life Jackets Save Lives**

Kill Switch [Electrical Interrupt], Functional and is attached to the operator. The Inspector will then ask the team for their flights time of return. The boat will then idle to the designated Release Point to begin the days fishing.

Safety: The GBF is attracting many new anglers each year whose only tournament experience is weekend pick-up tournaments. We are certainly happy to see these new competitors. A few of these anglers seem unaware of our emphasis on safety. Unsafe or risky boat operation is unacceptable. The Co-Angler has **RIGHTS** in the safe operation of the boat during the tourney. A safety point of emphasis for all competitors is the Co-Angler has the **right and duty** to tell the Boater to slow down if he/she is concerned about her/his safety. This is absolute! No exceptions, NONE! This will be a point of emphasis at all GBF Tournaments. See Rule 1.

Boat - All boats offered for use in the competition will be clean and have a chair type seat in place on the back deck. This is an ADA requirement and the right thing to do. Exceptions may be granted in advance only by the Tournament Director. The boater will provide one large empty compartment for the use of the co-angler. ALL BOATS PRESENTED FOR USE IN THE TOURNAMENT SHALL BE CERTIFIED BY CLUB CAPTAINS AS TOURNAMENT READY.

GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION TOURNAMENT
PARTICIPANT RELEASE OF LIABILITY AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RISK
READ Before Signing

In consideration of the Georgia Bass Federation, Inc. allowing me to participate in this tournament, I acknowledge and Agree to the following:

1. I have read and understand the Official Rules of this tournament. I will obey all rules and understand that any violation may result in immediate disqualification.
2. For myself and on behalf of my heirs, assigns, personal representatives and next of kin, hereby release, indemnify and hold harmless releases with respect to any and all injury, disability, death or loss or damage to person or property, which I suffer or which I am found to have caused in whole or in part by my negligence or intentional misconduct, whether arising from the negligence of the releasees, or otherwise, to the fullest extent permitted by law.
3. I understand and acknowledge that competitive fishing is a dangerous sport, the risk and which include, though not exclusively, drowning, collisions in the water, and injuries from hooks and other fishing paraphernalia. I voluntarily assume responsibility for these risks identified, and not identified, and all risk of injury or death or damage to myself or my property or to others, including spectators and their property arising from my participation in this tournament.
4. I hereby release, discharge, and hold harmless and indemnify, GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION, INC., Officers, Directors, Tournament workers, the Host sponsors and tournament officials from all liability, claims, or rights of action which are related to, arise out of or in any way connected with my participation in this tournament, including specifically but not limited to the negligent acts or omissions of GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION, INC. it's Officers, Directors, Tournament workers, the Host sponsors, and Tournament officials, and its' partners, agents, or employees and all other persons or entities associated with this tournament, for any and all injury, death, illness or disease, and other damage or loss to property suffered by myself or others. In signing this document, I acknowledge and agree that if anyone is hurt, or property damaged while I am engaged in this event, I have no right to make a claim or file a lawsuit against GEORGIA BASS FEDERATION, INC. it's Officers, Directors, Tournament workers, the Host sponsors, and Tournament officials, and its partners, agents, or employees and all other persons or entities associated with this tournament.
5. If I am using a boat during the official practice or during the tournament, I certify that I now have, or will obtain prior to the event, properly damage/watercraft liability insurance having the required limits as specified by the Georgia Bass Federation and covering the dates of my participation in all events I attend. Upon request, I will provide satisfactory evidence of said insurance.
6. I have sufficient health, accident, and Liability insurance to cover any bodily injury or property damage incurred by myself or others as a result of my participation in this tournament as required in the rule's booklet, tournament memo.

My signature below reflects that I have read this entire document, understand it completely, understand that it affects my legal rights, and agree to be bound by its items.

Club Name: _____ Date: _____

#1: Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

#2: Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

PARENTS/GUARDIANS OF MINORITY AGE PARTICIPANTS This is to certify that I, as parent/guardian with legal responsibility for this participant, do consent and agree to his/her release as provided above of all the Releasees, and, for myself, my heirs, assigns, and next of kin, I release and agree to indemnify and hold harmless the Releasees from any and all liabilities, incidents to my minor child's (under 18, 19 NE/AL) involvement or participation in these programs as provided above, EVEN IF ARISING FROM THE NEGLIGENCE of the Releasees, to the fullest extent permitted by law.

A - PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Emergency Phone Number: _____

Date: _____

B - PARENT/GUARDIAN'S SIGNATURE

Print Name: _____

Signature: _____

Emergency Phone Number: _____

Date: _____

GBF BORROWED BOAT LETTER

A "Borrowed Boat" presents a special problem because of the difficulty to provide Liability Insurance coverage for the boat! Most liability insurance policies do NOT provide coverage on the boat if it is loaned to someone else! Also, the borrower's boat liability policy normally does NOT provide coverage on the Borrowed boat. Therefore, to enter a "borrowed boat" in the STATE CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSIC or QUALIFIER, the borrower must obtain boat liability insurance for himself on the borrowed boat. Normally the best source for this short-term policy is from the insurance company which provides the coverage on the borrower's own boat. This policy must describe the borrowed boat, the period and the amount of coverage. The borrower must also provide a letter (Sample Below) from the boat owner (Individual or Company) describing the boat and stating the borrower has permission to use the referenced boat for a given period of time. It is imperative that all boats used in the TSC have liability coverage. If a "borrowed boat" is to be entered the procedure outlined above must be followed. Contact the Tournament Committee with any questions.

SAMPLE PERMISSION –TO-USE LETTER

(FROM BOAT OWNER)

ATTN: GBF Tournament Committee

RE: Loan of my Bass Boat: OWNERS FULL NAME _____

MAKE: _____ MODEL: _____

GA. REG. NR: _____ ENGINE: _____ HP _____

I, (Boat owners Name), am the owner of the referenced bass boat and have given my full and

complete consent to _____ (Borrowers

Name)

Complete Address _____, to use this boat on _____ (Dates)

*Attached is a photocopy of my boat liability policy specification page and a letter from my insurance agent stating that _____ (Borrower Name) will have \$300,000 boat liability coverage while using my boat.

*OR

* _____ (Borrower Name), the borrower will have to provide his/her own \$300,000 of boat liability insurance.

The tournament committee may contact me at _____ (Cell Number), with any questions concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Boat Owners Signature: _____

Date: _____