

2024 OMTT OFFICIAL RULES

1. PREFACE-RULES: Rules are unchanged for all Ozark Mountain Team Trail Events. Interpretation and enforcement of rules and regulations is left exclusively to the Tournament Directors and are not subject to appeal. **Protest must be submitted to OMTT official in writing prior to closing of scales.** All protests in writing stand up unless a witness disagrees, where final decisions are made by tournament director. Anglers being protested may not be witnesses. Witness does not have to be a tournament angler. **Once anglers have been protested and notified, protested anglers may not protest the team that protested them. Protested anglers must both take a lie detector test or disqualification will occur.** Rules are in effect during competition days of all Ozark Mountain Team Trail Events. It's every angler's responsibility to know rules and anglers will be held accountable. All Anglers must have a **current fishing license** in the state waters fished. Failure to do so will result in disqualification. **Cheating** is not tolerated. **Trailing of Boats is prohibited** during OMTT tournament hours unless approved by Tournament Officials. Cell phone use rule strictly enforced. **FISHING ALONE is NOT ALLOWED!** (see rule 24). No fish catch results in show points only at each event.

2. ELIGIBILITY: To maintain the highest standards possible, participation in Ozark Mountain Team Trail Events, (herein after referred to as OMTT), will be by entry invitation only. Any angler whose entry and membership has been accepted and paid by the official deadline is eligible. **Boater only must be 18 years of age or older.** OMTT reserves the right to refuse any entries.

3. ALTERNATE & BUY IN: Each team allowed 1 alternate and 1 buy into qualify for the Championship. **Buy In must be approved** by tournament director. **Buy in fee is \$270.** Alternates pay a \$20 membership fee. **Observer may be used in an emergency situation to fill a spot with tournament director approval after alternate has been used.** No alternate used in Championship. See Rule #24 for more information.

4. SPLIT UP TEAM: After the first tournament fished, if a team decides to split up and get new partners for remainder of season, the team must decide who boater is. If they can't decide who boater is, OMTT officials use angler listed as boater on first tournament entry form for current season. The boater assumes the points and the non-boater starts with **show points only** at the next tournament in current season. The boater is not allowed an alternate for remainder of season and the non-boater will be allowed one alternate to be used for remainder of that season.

5. MEMBERSHIPS, ENTRY FEES, DEADLINES & DEPOSITS: **\$50 yearly membership fee per angler.** Membership qualifies your team for Bassmaster Team Championship eligibility. **Entry fee is \$250 and Big Bass fee is \$20 per boat/per tournament.** Completed signed entry forms and all entry fees for the Tournament must be paid in full before take-off. Entries may be transferred to another tournament only in the same tournament year by Tournament Director's approval. **No Show \$50 Deposits are Non-Refundable** unless emergency situation is approved by tournament director. \$50 deposits hold take off position for a single event and \$200 deposit holds position for all four events in a season.

6. TOURNAMENT REGISTRATION: Official registration available on **Friday** before the tournament for teams not registered. www.ozarkmountainteamtrail.com or **see entry form to view registration info.** Boat number determined by the date and time of registration. Pre-registered anglers do not have to be present at registration and it's every angler's responsibility to know rules/takeoff orders.

7. INSURANCE: Boat Liability Insurance (\$100,000 minimum) required of all competitors in OMTT events. Recommend 300,000 liability or higher.

8. OFF LIMITS: During the OMTT regular season, there are no off limits. OMTT Championship off limits Monday-Wednesday week of championship event.

9. COMPETITION PERIODS: Tournament hours begin as listed on the entry and/or stated at official registration. The Tournament Director reserves the right to change the Tournament Hours on competition days. Competitors must know and observe the official times, dates, and rules. During all **competition hours**, tournament anglers **may not** procure the service of guides or local experts, participate in the practice of "hole sitting", follow a non-competitor's boat to fishing locations, **use mobile communication devices** to communicate fishing locations or information during competition hours, fish in the designated off limit areas given in the pre-take-off announcements. **No wake zones & no fishing zones on all lakes must be observed.** **Cell Phones**, emergency use only. Breaking of the for mentioned rule results in immediate disqualification unless approved.

10. SAFETY: Safe boating demanded and observed at all times. Each contestant is required to wear a U.S. Coastguard approved personal flotation device fully strapped, snapped, or zipped securely **anytime the combustion engine is moving boat** once competition day begins. Competition day begins after you receive your boat paddle and ends when you turn boat paddle in. Violators of this rule will be disqualified. All boats must be equipped with an engine shut-off device securely attached to the boat operator when the combustion engine is running during competition days. **At the discretion of the Tournament Director, tournament times may be delayed, shortened, postponed, or cancelled due to unsafe weather conditions.** When current and forecast weather exceeds the minimums for small craft advisories on the body of water being fished, the tournament director may delay, postpone, reschedule, or cancel the tournament. Scales may open early due to incoming weather conditions.

11. SPORTSMANSHIP, ALCOHOL & DRUGS: All contestants are required to follow the highest degree of sportsmanship, conservation, care, and courtesy. Alcoholic beverages are not allowed in the boat, used by competitors during competition hours, or on tournament stage. No drugs (other than those purchased over the counter or prescribed by a physician) shall be used by any competitor during competition hours. **Respect competitors on the water and call tournament director immediately if problems arise.**

12. BOATS AND MOTORS: All boats must meet B.I.A., Coast Guard and HP requirements; Boats with **stick steering**, house boats, barges or other cumbersome crafts are not allowed at the Tournament Director's discretion. All boats must be

equipped with an ignition "kill switch" device. Each boat is required to have a properly aerated live well adequate to maintain alive, a limit catch of bass. Running lights, if required by OMTT Officials, must be operational. Electric trolling motors may be used for maneuvering.

13. TACKLE, EQUIPMENT & FISHING: Only artificial bait or lures may be used. Pork style baits are allowed. No **live bait** or prepared bait allowed. **Baiting** brush-piles or other fishing areas with live bait is not allowed. All bass must be caught on rod and reel and only one line allowed in water per angler. If an angler breaks line while setting the hook or retrieving a fish, they are allowed to try to secure the visible line and land the fish for it to be counted as legal. Trolling, as a method of fishing is not allowed. **Underwater cameras** are not allowed during competition hours. Dip nets are allowed to assist in landing fish. Snagging bass off spawning beds is prohibited and all bass caught off spawning beds must be hooked inside the mouth. All bass must be caught alive on rod and reel. **Umbrella/Alabama rigs are NOT allowed, for explanation see rule #27.**

14. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS & COMMERCIAL DOCKS: Fishing on the tournament waters is permitted anywhere **except**: knowingly fishing within approximately 50 yards of a **commercial/public gas pump**, fishing within approximately 50 yards of **another competitor's boat** which was first anchored or secured in a fixed position (with the trolling motor in or out of the water), unless that competitor specifically allows any and all tournament boats the right to fish within 50 yard radius claimed by him; fishing within any area designated by state or federal agencies as a "no fishing" area; fishing within the buoyed areas of the take-off cove. Other specific off limits shall be addressed at the pre-takeoff meeting. Corps of Engineer Lakes in the White River chain have specific off limits in and around "Concession Areas" (Marinas) and commercial docks. Anglers ticketed in non-permitted fishing areas, will be disqualified.

15. SPECIAL SITUATIONS/ON WATER BREAK DOWNS: Contestants may not depart the boat to land fish or make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Contestants must land all fish from inside the boat. **Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat.** Neither competitor may depart from the boat except in the case of dire emergency. In such an emergency, one or both competitors may be removed from their boat to another boat operated by other competitors or a rescue boat. It is the responsibility of anglers to keep their fish separated and in water during transport to the tournament weigh-in site. Anglers must notify a tournament director by call or text when appropriate phone signal allows.

16. TAKE-OFF ANNOUNCEMENTS & INSPECTION: Mandatory pre-take-off announcements approximately 10 minutes prior to take-off. Boats take off in order of event entry by flights. Failure to respond to the call of your boat number can result in the loss of take-off position. No boat allowed to leave the take-off area until boat number is called by an OMTT official. An idle by inspection will be conducted during take-off. Boat operator is asked to show "kill switch" as he/she idles by the last check point. **No boat leaves the take-off with a faulty "kill switch"**. Coastguard approved life jackets must be fully zipped, snapped, or strapped on all persons in boat. Live wells must be opened and aerators on during idle by. Failure to comply by these rules may result in forfeiture or loss of take-off position. No jockeying for boat position.

17. OFFICIAL CHECK IN: Check-in site will be determined by OMTT Officials. All boats will identify themselves at check-in site by means of boat number and proceed **immediately** to the designated weigh-in area to weigh fish. Failure to receive morning boat inspection or turn in your boat number/paddle at the check point will result in disqualification. It is boater responsibility to control your boat at check in, not the OMTT.

18. SCORING: Largemouth, Kentucky (spotted), Smallmouth and Meanmouth (Red Eye) Bass are counted. **Five Fish** per team may be weighed in at each event. Fish must be weighed on OMTT scales in an OMTT bag. The official length limit for bass will be determined by Tournament Director and announced at pre-take-off meeting. Bass should be measured on a flat board with mouth closed and tail of the fish must touch or sweep the legal length line to qualify. Bass presented for weigh-in which fail to measure the official length **will not be counted** and will cause a **1.00-pound penalty** for each such bass presented to be deducted from the contestant's total score. For each legal **dead bass** presented to weigh-in official, the competitor shall be penalized **0.50 pounds** to be deducted from their daily score. Tournament Officials shall have sole authority for accessing penalty points. **Abass weighed for big bass must be alive.** At no time during tournament hours shall a contestant possess more than a 5-fish limit (except during culling) or weigh in more than a five fish limit.

19. CULLING: Culling must be done immediately after 6th catch by one angler before culling angler makes another cast. **Anglers may not cull a dead fish.** Culling of a dead fish will result in immediate disqualification. Anglers may put fish #6 in the live well before getting the cull fish out of live well as long as culling angler does not make a cast before the culled fish is released back into lake waters.

20. LATE PENALTY: Contestants not at designated check-in site by official designated time will be penalized **one pound** for each minute late up to a maximum of **ten minutes (ten pounds)**. Penalized weight will be deducted from the team's total weight. If the maximum of ten minutes is exceeded, contestants will forfeit all weight for that day's competition.

21. PAYBACK: 100% pay back of all paid entries at every event. **\$5000** guaranteed to first place at each regular event. Pay back rewarded to the first **25 places** guaranteed at each regular event. **100% of Big Bass** money paid back at each regular event to **3 places** in a 50/30/20 split. If a **Tie** occurs, OMTT Tournament Officials will combine and divide equally the prize money between the spots that are tied. Trophy position shall be determined by entry position/boat number on ties. Tournament Director has the right to change payback spots if needed. Added monies may be added to tournament payouts.

22. DRAW PRIZE QUALIFICATION: Qualifying Anglers/Teams **must be present at Championship** for all year end draw prizes.

23. CHAMPIONSHIP & AOY: Teams **must fish 3 of 4 tournaments** (which can include 1 alternate and 1 buy in) to be eligible for Angler of Year, OMTT Championship and BassMaster Team Championship. Point system used to determine AOY. Top 50 in angler of year points automatically qualify for championship AND any team that fishes ALL 4 events. No Alternates are allowed in OMTT Championship. **No fishing alone, see Rule #24.** Off limits and official practice days to be announced. **Ties** for first place at championship only, broken by a 1-hour fish off immediately following weigh in, weather permitting. Anglers may not acquire fishing advice from anyone once notified of the fish off. If fish off does not determine a

winner, then heaviest one day bag wins. Tie for big bass splits winnings. All other regular season rules apply during competition period.

24. OBSERVER RULE: Rule is applied to a **Championship or Regular Season** team. If one member of a team cannot fish due to extraordinary circumstances and when all other options have been exhausted, boater may get an observer that must be approved by an OMTT official. Observer is in the boat with the angler during tournament hours for safety reasons only. The observer is not allowed to fish, give out information or assist the angler in any way except in an emergency situation. OMTT reserves the right to enforce this rule. OMTT reserves the right to allow boater to fish alone if observer can't be found for championship only. Subject to lie detector test if fishing alone in championship.

25. BASSMASTER TEAM CHAMPIONSHIP: OMTT teams/members are eligible to qualify for the BASSMASTER Team Championship and One angler's chance to qualify for the **BASSMASTER CLASSIC. Current MLF and BASS Elite Anglers are not eligible.** Teams are chosen in order of current year OMTT AOY points. If a team chooses not to participate, that team will be replaced by next team in AOY points. If one member of a team chooses to not participate, the remaining member has the right to find a replacement approved by OMTT tournament director. For more information go to bassmaster.com.

26. LIE DETECTOR TEST: Lie detector test given at each OMTT event. By his or her signature on entry form and/or participation in any OMTT tournament event, anglers agree to submit to any or all quality assurance tests. Refusal to submit to any or all tests will result in immediate disqualification and possible ban from future OMTT events. If anglers fail lie detector tests, the angler's weight shall be 0.00 pounds and they lose all winnings. None of the OMTT rules shall prohibit an Official from approaching, observing, or boarding any competitor's boat during tournament competition periods. If an angler fails a test, further discipline will be up to the tournament officials.

27. UMBRELLA RIG / MULTIPLE LURE RULE: During competition days **no more than one artificial lure of "ANY KIND"** may be attached to a line. One lure is defined as a single manmade device designed to catch one fish at a time. Umbrella-type rigging harness – **with or without hooks** – is **not** allowed. Umbrella rig is considered having 4 or more wires that extend around and/or below the main hook. Traditional twin arm spinnerbaits and buzz baits are allowed. On multiple arm spinnerbaits, buzzbaits or jig heads, no more than **four wires a maximum length of 6 inches each** may extend off the main arm or body of the lure **above the main hook. Trailer hooks and plastic trailers must be on the main hook of the bait. Only spinner blades can be affixed to the arms, no hooks or soft plastics.** A spinner blade may be attached to the main hook. **Example:** Live Target Bait Ball Spinner Rig is approved only if the three plastic trailers are changed to spinner blades. Attaching trailer hooks, plastic trailers, blades, etc., to a single lure is acceptable. OMTT officials have the sole authority to determine whether a lure is considered a single lure as defined above. If you are not sure about a lure, get it approved by a tournament director before tournament hours.

28. Points: Teams catching no fish in an OMTT regular season event, only receive show points toward anglers of the year points for that event.

Call Scott Berry @ 417-861-2983 with questions!