

# 2018 NICHOLS MARINE TOURNAMENT SERIES OFFICIAL RULES AND REGULATIONS

**1. RULES:** The following rules will be interpreted by the tournament director and/or committee and all decisions are final. We reserve the right to refuse entry to anyone.

**2. TEAM MEMBERSHIP REGISTRATION AND ELIGIBILITY:** Participation is open only to members of the *NICHOLS MARINE TOURNAMENT SERIES*. Team Registration (ID) is \$10 per team. Membership fee is \$100 per person. All entrants must sign a one-time waiver. At least one member of a participating team must be a minimum of 18 years of age. Entrants under the age of 18 must submit signature of his or her parent or legal guardian on entry waiver form. Each team is permitted usage of a maximum of 4 members. A team may be represented by only one (1) or two (2) team members in a given day.

**3. ENTRY FEES: ONE DAY EVENT .. \$200 and CHAMPIONSHIP TWO DAY EVENT .. \$300.** Entry fees are non-refundable once takeoff positions have been established at the pre-tournament meeting. Entrants will be charged \$25.00 for any returned or stopped checks, and if not made good within ten (10) days notice, such entrants may be banned from all future events. Entries may be mailed, paid online, or dropped off at the Tulsa Nichols Marine dealership. All other entries will be accepted at the ramp the day of the pre-tournament meeting.

**4. PRE-TOURNAMENT MEETING and ENTRY DEADLINE:** Pre-tournament meeting is non-mandatory, however teams are responsible for any late announcements made. Entry deadlines are the night before each tournament at the following times, 6:00 pm (saturday) for one day events, and 6:30 pm (friday) for the Championship two day event. Late entries will not be accepted beyond one hour of the deadline. Late entries will take off last and weigh in with first flight. Each team will be issued a 6X9 team card and may be attained at the tournament ramp through-out the day of the pre-tournament meeting. The card is to be displayed in view, anytime checking in with the check-in boat.

**5. QUALIFYING CHAMPIONSHIP:** Teams must have been represented in all regularly held one day events, to be eligible to enter the Championship. All paid team entries will be credited qualifying event status, regardless whether actually fishing the event, provided entry was paid prior to the events pre-tournament entry deadline, assuring that the teams entry fee is included in the days payout.

**6. DEPARTURE & RETURN:** The number of flights will be determined by number of entries. We reserve the right to assign flights and hours deemed necessary.

**7. MUST WEIGH-IN BEFORE TRAILERING:** Teams must weigh before trailering.

**8. SCORING:** 5-fish limit, 14-inch minimum, measured on flat board (Wil-E-Go) in a relaxed manner with mouth closed and tail lobes pressed together swept in any manner necessary to hit the mark. Only largemouth, spotted and smallmouth bass will be credited. Total weight determines placing. Ties will be broken by number of fish. Any bass not within legal limits will result in a two (2) pound penalty deduction, plus loss of said fish. Frozen or iced fish presented for weigh-in will result in immediate disqualification. Any dead fish will be weighed upon discretion of officials. There will be a one-half (1/2) lb. deduction for each dead fish. Rulings will be final. All fish must be caught during tournament hours.

**9. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Fishing from boat only, cannot leave boat in order to enter shallow areas or to retrieve a hooked fish. Fishing is confined to waters specified in the tournament. No fishing within 50 yards of another contestants anchored boat with trolling motor in up position, without permission of the first boat to arrive. At no time may a contestant cast a lure, closer than 25 ft., of another competitors boat. Partners must remain in sight of each other during tournament hours. In case of emergency, one or both contestants may return to weigh-in by means of another boat, provided it has a operating livewell and the director must be notified of such prior to weighing. Return by any other means than by water is prohibited without approval and direction from the tournament director.

**10. OFF LIMITS AREAS:** No Fishing areas will be determined by Tournament Launch site. Prior to each event a Applicable Off Limits map will be made available via the NMTS website.

**11. SAFETY & SPORTSMANSHIP:** Safe boating and fishing practices must be observed at all times. Coastguard approved floatation device and killswitch must be worn anytime boat is on plane.

**12. TACKLE & EQUIPMENT:** Only artifical bait or lures and pork-style baits may be used. No trolling, or snagging, and fish must be caught on rod and reel with one (1) line per angler in the water at a time.

**13 BOAT & MOTOR REQUIREMENTS.** No pontoons allowed. Allowed are any brand of boats of 16' minimum length, powered by a minimum of forty (40) horse-power, provided it has a working aerated livewell and meets U.S. Coast Guard and State regulations.

**14. MORNING CHECK-IN:** Prior to fishing, each team must have their livewell checked by a tournament official.

**15. TAKE-OFF:** Safelight. Teams will be directed out in numerical order. As teams are announced, they must wave to be recognized by the director and may depart only after the director acknowledges them by waving them out. Any team not present when their assigned takeoff was announced, must confirm with the starter boat for permission to depart.

**16. WEIGH-IN:** The official weigh-in will begin with 1st flight at 3:00 PM at each tournament. Each team must check in with the Check-In boat no later than their assigned flight time. Teams without fish need not check in. Fish will only be accepted in the tournament provided bags. Accepting fish in any other bag would result in disqualification.

**17. LATE PENALTY:** One (1) pound per minute up to five (5) minutes will be deducted, then disqualification. No exceptions.

**18. CULLING FISH:** No team may maintain more than five (5) fish in the livewell at any time. One member must attend to culling immediately, anytime any additional fish have entered the boat.

**19. RESTRICTING, SEEDING, OR BAITING:** No restricting bass by any method which disallows natural movement throughout the entire impoundment, seeding bass from one impoundment to the tournament impoundment, or any co-ordinated effort in the use of live bait, in baiting holes for the means of attracting or maintaining bass.

**20. TELECOMMUNICATIONS & GUIDE ASSISTANCE RESTRICTION:** During tournament hours, contestants are restricted from acquiring any fishing information by means of telecommunication or assistance of a guide (professional or non).

**21. NO ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:** No alcoholic beverages allowed in possession during tournament.

**22. NO DEAD WATER TIME:** There is no restriction for time on water before all events, however there will be no fishing allowed between Championship Day One afternoon check-in and Day Two takeoff.

**23. PROTEST:** Any protest must be in writing and filed with tournament officials prior to closing of the scales.

**24. POLYGRAPH:** By signature on entry form/waiver form, contestants agree to a polygraph test by a qualified examiner. Refusal to or failure of a polygraph test will result in disqualification and banishment from all future Nichols Marine sponsored events. First, second, and Big Bass award winners must be present at conclusion of weigh-in for polygraph administration, unless prior arrangements are approved directly from the tournament director. Any contestants not present for a requested polygraph will not receive winnings until test has been administered, at the next scheduled tournament. Any other arrangement for a polygraph will be at the contestants own expense of \$300.

**25. AWARD TIES:** Tie breaker, will be determined by the greater number of fish. If a tie still exists, the two (2) or more positions will be added together, divided by the number of ties, with the amount of payback awarded equally. Ties involving boat awards, may be given the option for a fish-off, provided both teams agree to such.

**26. POINT SYSTEM:** Points will be accrued from each regular event and the Championship event. First Place = 1 point, Second Place = 2 points, etc. throughout the money placing only. Teams not placing in the money will receive last money place points plus 10 additional points in regular season events, and 20 additional points in the Championship Event, whether having weighed fish or not. No-Shows will receive 500 elimination points.

**26. PAYOUT DEFINITION:** All payout checks will be made out in the name of the registered Designated Captain. Teams will be responsible for handling the division of payment concerning 1099's.