



The 36th annual Sturgeon Bay Open Bass Tournament Rules | Spring 2026

1. RULES. The following rules are the official rules of the Sturgeon Bay Open Bass Tournament (SBOBT). Interpretation of these rules shall be left up to “TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR.” The decision of the tournament director and tournament officials shall be final in all matters. Tournament officials RESERVE THE RIGHT TO REFUSE ENTRY TO ANY INDIVIDUAL OR TEAM FOR ANY REASON.

2. PARTICIPATION AND ELIGIBILITY. There is no age limit, but contestants under the age of 18 must be accompanied by a contestant 18 years of age or older. All contestants must complete an official entry form and pay the proper entry fee before the tournament deadline. All contestants are subject to a Polygraph test. The winning team and two additional teams may be selected at random and subject to a polygraph test each year. Failure of the polygraph test will result in disqualification of all prizes.

3. REGISTRATION AND TOURNAMENT MEETING. One member of each team must be present to register at the tournament headquarters from 4:00pm to 5:30pm on Thursday. Contestants not registered prior to the pre-tournament meeting will be disqualified. All entrants must attend the pre-tournament meeting starting at 6:00pm Thursday. Boat numbers must be picked up after the pre-tournament meeting. If not, team will be last out both days.

4. INSURANCE. All boats competing in the SBOBT shall maintain their own liability insurance during all practice and tournament hours. Contestants assume all risks of loss and waive any or all claims they may have for injury, property damage, consequential damages, or any damage of any nature against any director, official, sponsor or any contestant or other person connected with the SBOBT and related events.

5. HEADQUARTERS AND WEIGH-IN AREA. SBOBT Headquarters and scoring area will be at the Sawyer Park Boat Launch, S. Neenah Ave. Sturgeon Bay, WI. 54235

6. BOATS. BOATS MUST HAVE COMBUSTION ENGINE, BE A MINIMUM OF 16 FEET IN LENGTH and comply with all Wisconsin DNR and Coast Guard regulations.

7. BOAT IDENTIFICATION. All boats will be required to display an official team number that will be furnished by the SBOBT which shall be affixed to the outboard motor, (inboards will display the number in an easy to see spot).

8. BOAT POSITION. Boat numbers will be posted on the tournament website. Boat numbers will be posted on a weekly basis.

9. BOAT INSPECTION. All boats will be made available before each day’s start for inspection. At this time all live-wells should be open, all kill switches fastened, and life jacket on. NO boat shall be allowed to compete that has not been inspected each day of competition.

10. FISHING RULES. All Federal, State & Local rules will apply. The Tournament Director may specify more stringent regulations. Only those fish caught in normal angling methods will be scored. Only ONE casting, spin casting or spinning rod may be used at any one time. Alabama Rig and other multi-lure rigs like it are prohibited from use on or during the SBOBT Tournament. **ONLY ARTIFICIAL BAIT MAY BE USED. NO BATHYSCOPES OR FLOGGERS ALLOWED. NO TEAM OR PERSON SHALL MARK FISH BEDS IN ANY MANNER WITH ANY FOREIGN OBJECT PLACED IN THE WATER BY EITHER YOU OR ANOTHER FISHERMAN. FISHING OVER A MARKED BED WILL RESULT IN DISQUALIFICATION FOR THAT DAY.** Entrants must possess all required licenses.

11. SCORING. Tournament standings and final winners shall be determined by the pounds and ounce weight scored of each 2 person team's catch during the competition days of the tournament. Only largemouth and small mouth bass will be scored. The limit shall be a combined total of six (6) of the above species per day per team, unless otherwise specified by tournament officials. The official length shall be fourteen inches (14") and verified by the tournament director.

Please refer to the Anglers Guide for Bass for more details.

The Anglers guide will guide you through the proper way to take your pictures. This will be posted on the site prior to the event. If more clarification is needed it will be addressed at the Thursday meeting.

12. BOUNDARIES. Fishing will be allowed in all legal waters of Sturgeon Bay and Green Bay within 5 miles of the Door County shoreline. Waters within 1/2 mile of Chambers Island are also included. No fishing allowed north of Ellison Bluff. The southern boundary will be no further than a 90-degree angle from Chaudoir's Dock to the west shore. No fishing permitted east of buoys #5 and #6 at the US Coast Guard Station located toward Lake Michigan from the weigh in area. There will be no fishing allowed in Lake Michigan. A 25-yard distance between anchored boats will be enforced. The use of a trolling motor while anchored to position the boat, thus blocking other boats is prohibited.

13. TROLLING. No fishing will be allowed while any combustible engine is running. Also the use of Planner Boards is prohibited.

14. PRACTICE. Pre-tournament practice fishing can be done anytime up until 3:00 PM on the Thursday before the tournament begins. Contestants must be off the tournament waters by 3:00 PM Thursday. **CONTESTANTS CAUGHT ON THE WATER AFTER 3:00 PM ARE SUBJECT TO DISQUALIFICATION.**

15. FISHING TIMES. Fishing will start at 7:00 AM each day and end at 4:00 PM ON FRIDAY AND 3:00 PM ON SATURDAY. Flight times will be announced at the Thursday night meeting.

16. PROTESTS. A \$150 protest fee is required to protest another team. Fee will be refunded if protest is deemed valid. **ALL FORMAL PROTESTS MUST BE SUBMITTED THE DAY OF THE OCCURRENCE AND NO LATER THAN 1 HOUR AFTER THE LAST OFFICIAL TEAM HAS WEIGHED IN FOR THAT DAY.**

17. TIES. In case of a tie after two days of fishing, the team with the 2nd day's heaviest weight shall be determined as the 1st place winners. This is for the 1st place only. Ties for lower places shall divide the total of tied places amongst the tied teams. Between means "2" and amongst means more than "2". (i.e. a tie for 3rd shall add prize money for 3rd and 4th and divide it equally between the teams).

18. LATE RULE. Check in time will be announced each morning. Contestants must be checked in by that time or you will be disqualified for that day's participation. NO Exceptions!! Each team must check in each day. Failure to check in and return equipment will result in disqualification.

19. SAFETY. Safe boating shall be observed at all times. During competition, each contestant shall wear a chest type life preserver anytime the main combustion engine is running. All boats shall be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device ("kill-switch"), which must be securely attached to the driver whenever the main combustion engine is in operation.

20. SPORTSMANSHIP. All contestants are required to follow the highest standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation at all times. Drunkenness will be cause for immediate disqualification at any time during this contest. The use of illegal drugs will also mean disqualification from all and any part of this sporting event.

21. SEVERE WEATHER. Under normal conditions, no contestant may leave his/her boat during the tournament hours, except at the weigh-in area. The exception to this rule would be in the event of severe weather. In this case you may seek shelter at the nearest shoreline or shelter.

22. ALCOHOL USE. At no time will there be any alcoholic beverages aboard any tournament boat during tournament hours. There will be no use of alcoholic beverages before start of either day's competition. Drinking of alcoholic beverages after each day's weigh in is allowed, but please uphold the high standards of this tournament and its sponsors while doing so.

23. NO WAKE ZONES. Boating safety is a must in this tournament! Any and all no wake zones will be observed. This also pertains to areas near other fishing boats.

24. BREAKDOWNS. In the event that your boat becomes inoperable, you may be towed to the scoring area. You may receive a tow from any other boat including U.S. Coast Guard, a non-tournament boat, or a tournament boat. You may not leave your boat unless it is in peril of sinking.

25. EQUIPMENT. EACH TEAM WILL BE REQUIRED TO HAVE A DIGITAL CAMERA THAT USES A STANDARD SIZE SDHC CARD (NOT A SD MICRO). The SDHC card will serve as the team's "bag of fish" and must be returned to the tournament director at the end of each competition day along with the bump board and scorecard. A verification team will review all submitted images you choose, and each catch will be converted to weight based on length using bump board photos. It's the team's responsibility, to take the pictures as directed in the Anglers Guide, or they will not be considered for length to weight conversion for your total weight. Reminder that the same fish can only be scored once daily. The verification committee, with the help of computer software, will verify all pictures.