

2024 OFFICIAL TEXAS TEAM TRAIL RULES (updated Aug 27, 2023)

These rules will remain in effect during the 2024 season. Interpretation of and changes to these rules will be left exclusively to the Tournament Director. In the event of a rule violation, the Tournament Director may impose such sanctions, as he deems appropriate, including, without limitation, disqualifications, forfeiture of prizes and prohibition from participation in subsequent tournaments.

Decisions of the Tournament Director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal or review by any court of law. Texas Team Trail (TXTT) reserves the right to make needed changes to these rules in order to ensure the safety, welfare of the TXTT anglers, and/or the public and preserve the integrity of TXTT. Any rule changes will immediately supersede all previously published copies of rules.

Payouts include cash and prizes and are based in part on the number of entries for each event. It is your responsibility to read and understand the rules and how you, your points and qualification for the championship are affected by not complying with the rules. Every angler by their presence at the event and at the time of their entry registration will be required to agree to an affidavit that he/she has read, understands and accepts all rules, that they enter the event voluntarily and agree to the release of liability.

1. Participation and Eligibility: Participation is open to any angler 18 years of age or older who is a current TXTT member. Any person entering a TXTT event under the age of 18 years must be paired with a partner 18 years of age or older and also have the signature of their parent or legal guardian in the provided space on the official entry form. TXTT reserves the right to refuse membership and participation in any and all events to any individual or team at the discretion of the Tournament Director.

2. Federal, State and Local Laws: All contestants must have a valid fishing license and are required to obey all federal, state and local laws and regulations.

3. Teams: All TXTT tournaments are team events, all points/awards will go to the team. Anglers may not compete as individuals. A team consists of (2) anglers, one of which must be designated as the "Captain". Teams that do not wish to participate in the Team of the Year race or the championship may use as many partners as desired.

Team Alternates: A team may use an alternate for only one regular season event during the year and will retain all points earned IF the following 3 procedures are followed: 1.) TXTT must be notified of the alternates use BEFORE the event. 2.) DO NOT register for the event with your alternate. You MUST register with your original partner for points to follow your team. 3.) Contact us as at 580-765-9031 as soon as it is known that an alternate will be used. Alternates will be required to pay TXTT membership and provide all information required for registration. Alternates are not eligible to compete in the 2024 TXTT championship event.

Anglers may only be entered on one (1) team per event. Cash prizes will be equally split between the team members, with separate checks printed and separate tax documents sent to each team member. Therefore, SSN numbers from BOTH team members are required at time of registration, NO exceptions. Payouts include cash and prizes. The designated team Captain will receive all tax forms for non-cash prizes and/or contingencies.

4. 2024 TXTT Championship Qualifiers: The top 75 teams based on TXTT Team of Year points ranking following the final regular season event will qualify for the TXTT championship. ALL championship entry fees must be paid before the deadline date of 3pm Friday the week before the event (8 days before the first tournament day). Teams missing the registration deadline will forfeit their spot and TXTT will proceed down the ranking list as far as 85th place in an effort to fill the field.

Non-fishing observers: A qualifying team member may compete individually in the TXTT Championship only after gaining advance approval from the Tournament Director. Qualified anglers requesting

permission to fish the championship individually due to unforeseen circumstances MUST provide their own APPROVED non-fishing observer for all days of competition. Approved observers must be 18 years or older, pay a 2024 TXTT membership and cannot be anyone considered an “expert” on the championship waters by the Tournament Director. Additionally, both qualified team members MUST agree that one member is unable to fish the championship and are required to notify the Tournament Director as soon as it is known and at least 24-hours before Day 1 of the 2024 TXTT Championship. Approved observers may not provide any assistance with the exception of safety related circumstances. Anyone gaining approval to fish the Championship with an observer may be subject to a polygraph exam.

5. Information: No fishing information may be purchased, bartered, solicited or otherwise received from any person who entered official tournament waters during the established off-limits period for all TXTT events.

6. Pre-Tournament Practice: All TXTT events will have a 5-day off limits period, consisting of Monday thru Friday prior to the tournament. The Friday prior to each regular season tournament will be considered an allowed designated practice day ONLY for teams who are fully registered and paid. If you decide you wish to practice on Friday before the event, you MUST register online or by phone BEFORE you get on the water Friday and before 3pm to avoid late fees. Teams paying before 3pm on Friday online at OutdoorTeamworks.com or by phone at 580-765-9031 will pay an early entry fee of \$250.00 per team (BOTH team members’ info including SSN numbers and boat info must be provided.) NO refunds will be made. All teams who wait until after 3:00pm on Friday to register, may not practice on Friday and will pay an entry fee of \$300.00 plus membership fees if they are not already a member.

Championship allowed designated practice days are Thursday and Friday prior to the event, ONLY for qualified anglers registered and paid before the deadline date of 3pm Friday the week before the event (8 days before the first day of championship). If your team is notified you are qualified for the championship after another team forfeits its spot, the same practice rules listed above will apply.

Designated Allowed Practice Dates ONLY for pre-registered teams

- Sam Rayburn#1 - 02/17- **Off-limits:** 02/12-02/16 – **Allowed practiced day for pre-registered teams ONLY** 02/16
 - Sam Rayburn#2 - 03/23 - **Off-limits:** 03/18-03/22 – **Allowed practice day for pre-registered teams ONLY** 03/22
 - Lake Fork -04/13 -**Off-limits:** 04/08-04/12 - **Allowed practice day for pre-registered teams ONLY:** 04/12
 - Belton Lake - 05/04 - **Off-limits:** 04/29-05/03- **Allowed practice day for pre-registered teams ONLY:** 05/03
- ❖ Toledo Bend 06/08-06/09 *TXTT Championship Qualified Teams Only* **Off-limits:** 06/03-06/07
- **Allowed practice days for pre-registered teams ONLY:** 06/06 and 06/07

Non-competitors are NOT allowed to be in a contestant’s boat on the water for any reason. The ONLY exception shall be an approved observer or a designated tournament official. No Contestant may be on tournament waters for any reason during the official off- limits period (this includes “walking” the shoreline, marinas, boat docks, etc. for the purpose of locating or catching fish). If an angler plans to leave their boat in the water at a dock this must be complete by 6:00pm on Friday evening. Tournament waters are off-limits following registration from 6:00pm Friday evening until takeoff the morning of the tournament. Contestants are allowed to travel by boat from another launch ramp or dock directly to the takeoff site the morning of the tournament or to return directly to their place of launch in multi-day events.

7. Registration: 250 teams will be considered a full field for all Texas Team Trail regular season events. Officials reserve the right to exceed 250 teams in any single event. Anglers are HIGHLY encouraged to preregister online at OutdoorTeamworks.com. prior to 3pm on Friday before each regular season event. Make sure you have BOTH team members’ information including TXTT member number, accurate SSN#s and boat/equipment information before

attempting to complete your entry. IF you cannot find your TXTT membership card or you do not remember your TXTT Member number please call 580-765-9031 to get it as you MUST have it to register. All credit card payments will incur a 3% fee which is NOT refundable. Membership, entry fee and Angler Advantage for each event is NON-REFUNDABLE, in the case of a verifiable emergency the entry fee may be transferred to another event at the discretion of the event officials. All entry fees can be paid online at OutdoorTeamworks.com. Registration must be complete and fees paid in full online or by phone before you can get on the water to practice on Friday. Otherwise, registration must be complete and fees paid before the conclusion of mandatory on-site registration, which will run from 3:00-6:00 pm (for 1st event) & 4:00–6:00 pm the evening before subsequent events. Only credit cards (no cash) will be accepted during on-site registration. At least one member of each team must check-in/register in person at the designated on-site registration location; even if pre-registered. Any team who does not check-in during the above described times forfeits their entry fee and is removed from the event. If extenuating circumstances prevent team members from attending on-site registration, it is the sole responsibility of the team to appoint a representative who will be responsible for checking them in and communicating all pertinent information to the team that could not attend. Boat numbers and flights for regular season events will be assigned based on a random computerized drawing. Boat numbers at the Championship are based on TOY standings. On day 2 of the championship the order will be reversed. Registrations and payments of any type including Angler Advantage are NOT accepted after the close of on sight registration. NO EXCEPTIONS.

8. Contingency Requirements: Serial numbers are required in order to receive sponsor contingency prize money and must be reported to the TXTT registration staff, so take a picture of your boat and motor serial numbers that you will be fishing out of for that event. Keep them on your phone or write them down and keep them with you. We will ask for them before you can be paid. Contestants must fish TXTT events using the boat/motor listed on their registration form. If there is a change in the boat or motor being used, it is the contestant's sole responsibility to provide the updated contingency information to the tournament staff at on-site registration. In the event that a different boat/motor than that stated on the registration form is used, all contingency money will be forfeited, and contestants may be disqualified to include future TXTT events.

9. Insurance: A minimum of \$100,000 liability insurance is required of all contestants utilizing their boats in any Texas Team Trail tournament. Said insurance must cover any and all injury and/or damage incurred in connection with the event.

10. Safety: Safe boating must be observed at all times. Each Contestant is required to wear a fastened (fully zipped and/or all clips fastened), U.S. Coast Guard approved, Chest type personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is in operation from boat check until weigh-in. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device, which must be securely attached to the driver's body any time the combustion engine is in operation. The driver must be seated in the driver's seat anytime the combustion engine is engaged in gear. If a competitor launches their boat anywhere other than the main take-off location then it is the responsibility of BOTH competitors in that boat to check the operation of and to use ALL required safety equipment on that boat before it leaves the launch location. Tournament days may be shortened or canceled due to unsafe weather or conditions that would endanger the safety of the competitors at the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion. If a contestant observes any unusual or significant hazard, they agree to remove themselves from participation until it is safe to proceed and to bring such to the attention of the nearest official. Competitors are allowed to leave the boat and seek safety/shelter, at which time no fishing may occur.

11. Permitted Fishing Methods: Only artificial lures may be used with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only one fishing rod per angler may be used at any one time. Additional rods may be in the boat and ready for use; however, each cast and retrieve must be completed before another cast is attempted or rod is used. Trolling as a method of fishing is prohibited. Switching or sharing fish with other teams or individuals is a violation of these rules and will result in immediate disqualification. All Bass must be caught alive, in a conventional,

sporting manner. When sight fishing for Bass, all fish must be hooked inside the mouth to be counted as a legal fish (this will be a polygraph question). All angling must be conducted from the boat. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish, or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters.

12. Sportsmanship and Conduct: All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-competitors who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a competitor, which reflects unfavorably upon TXTT's effort to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy, shall be reason for disqualification. Other examples of conduct not complying with these standards include, but are not limited to, the following: a. Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any mind-altering substance during tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure. b. Any previous conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation for a felony, a crime involving moral turpitude, or a crime related to, arising out of, or involving any fishing tournament or event, except with full, prior written disclosure to the Tournament Director under oath and by affidavit of all facts and circumstances surrounding such conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation at least ten (10) days before the TXTT event being entered, and thereafter subject to the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion that such conviction, charge, arrest, or investigation does not result in the Contestant's honesty, integrity, character or qualifications to enter the event being unreasonably questionable. c. Actions or words which reflect unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, and fair competition; d. Disqualification from TXTT or other fishing organizations that resulted from rule violations that result in a Contestant's honesty, integrity, character, and qualifications for entry into a TXTT event being questionable in the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion. Upon review of the circumstances by Texas Team Trail and the Tournament Director, the Tournament Director shall have the right to refuse any application, or to deny a confirmed application, by returning the entry fee of a previously accepted application or disqualifying a Contestant. Texas Team Trail reserves the right to place an official observer in a Contestant's boat at any time.

13. Assistance: During the allowed designated practice period and extending through the hours of competition, contestants may not have non-competitors in their boats on the water for any reason, receive fishing information from non-competitors or follow a non-competitor's boat or participate in the placing of markers by non-competitors or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. The use of mobile communication devices such as cellular telephones, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, pagers or any electronic device to obtain and use fishing information from anyone during tournament hours is strictly prohibited. In the event of an emergency situation, competitors should call 911 first and then notify the Tournament Director at (512) 773-7401.

14. Boat and Horsepower Regulation: Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. Boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain alive a limit catch of Bass. Maximum horsepower for all outboards used in tournament competition may not exceed the horsepower limitations as set by the U. S. Coast Guard in such vessel. Falsifying information on entry forms or altering the horsepower numbers on the motor or rating plate to conceal such limitations will be cause for disqualification from the tournament. No Contestant may have a platform, raised deck, or ladder which is higher than the gunnel of the boat. Standing on the fishing seats or outboard motor will not be allowed in TXTT events. No air or jet drive boats will be permitted during the allowed designated practice or competition days. Fuel may be carried only in factory-installed (built-in) fuel tanks. Optional remote engine fuel tanks must be factory or factory authorized dealer installed and be strapped or otherwise secured. Any additional fuel used during the tournament day must be purchased from a retail facility open to the public and pumped through a hose with a nozzle.

15. Permitted Fishing Locations: Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters accessible by boat, except areas designated as "off limits", "no boats", "keep out", "restricted" or "no fishing" (or similar language or markings intended to restrict public access) by state or federal officials, or within 50 yards of a competitor's boat which was

first anchored. An anchored boat is a boat held in a stable position by a line attached to a weight or by a Power Pole or similar shallow water anchor with the trolling motor in the up position. The act of moving Bass from one area of the lake to another confined area of the same lake at any time, whether or not during allowed designated practice days or competition days, is not permitted.

16. Off-Limits Areas: Such areas established by federal, state and local laws and areas announced at registration for each TXTT event. Contestants may not fish inside the established “off-limits” areas. Violation of the rule will result in immediate disqualification.

17. Trailering is Not Allowed: All boats must leave the official check point by boat in the order designated at on-site registration. Contestants may launch their boat at a ramp other than the designated take-off location, but all Contestants must come through the official safety check-out location before leaving to fish. Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat. In the event of severe weather or location limitations, alternate take-off and check-in instructions will be given at the registration site, at the sole discretion of the Tournament Director. In the event that contestants are allowed to launch at various boat ramps and trailer their boats to the weigh-in site, they must relaunch their boat the morning of the tournament even if they have access to a dock, houseboat, etc. Additionally, both competitors in the boat must perform a safety check of all required safety equipment and follow all safety rules before leaving the launch site. Finally, all boats MUST check in with tournament staff in an approved manner to confirm that they are safely off the water at the end of each day. Contestants' boats must remain in the tournament waters during the event. In the event of a mechanical breakdown, there are two permitted methods of returning to the check-in.

(1) by remaining in boat and being towed by water, or

(2) by entering the boat of another competitor. The Contestants must return to the official check-in location by the methods set forth above by their assigned check-in time to avoid late penalty. Contestants who elect to return to the check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day's catch to that point in time of the tournament day. Any Contestant returning to the check-in point will be eligible to restart and resume competition under the supervision of the Tournament Director or his designated tournament official. It is the sole responsibility of Contestants to locate the Tournament Director to request a restart.

18. Official Checkpoints: There will be only one official checkpoint for boat inspection in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check-out in the morning or failure to officially check-in at the check-in point will result in disqualification from such event. It is the sole responsibility of each Contestant to arrive at the designated check-in location on time. Regardless of what you are told or understand, it is the angler's responsibility to verify their provided flight card time. All fishing must cease upon check-in, or upon such other time as may be designated by the Tournament Director.

19. Scoring: Will be determined by the official weight of each angler's catch during the tournament. Only Largemouth, Spotted, Red Eye or Smallmouth Bass (collectively, “Bass”) are accepted species. The limit will be five Bass per team. Any Contestant who possesses more than the tournament limit, unless actively culling, will have their catch for that day disqualified. Culling must be done immediately. The minimum official length limit for all species for TXTT events will be 14” unless the lake limit is more than 14”, in which case, the lake limit will prevail. Bass presented for weigh-in, which fail to measure the prescribed length limit, will result in loss of that particular fish and a one-pound penalty to the weight of the remaining fish. Each Contestant's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag. Bass will be measured with mouth closed, tail compressed and swiped to achieve overall greatest length. A measuring board will be provided at check-in and will serve as the official measuring standard for TXTT events. It is the contestant's responsibility to ensure all fish presented for weigh-in are of legal length according solely to the TXTT official measuring board.

20. Live Fish: Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live well. The use of live well additives which promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat are recommended. An 8-ounce penalty will be deducted for each dead Bass presented for weigh-in. Culling of dead bass is prohibited. No dead bass will be eligible for Big Bass awards or prizes.

21. Late Penalty: Contestants who are not at the official check-in point at the appointed time will be assessed a ONE (1) pound per minute penalty from their total weight including any weight to be counted toward a big Bass award. A Contestant more than 15 minutes late will forfeit that day's catch.

22. Closing of the Scales: Scales will close 30 minutes after the last flight is due in. Due to certain weigh-in locations this time may be lengthened or shortened at the Tournament Director's sole and absolute discretion. Any change to the above stated official scale closing time will be announced during registration, during boat check-out., or during weigh-in. It is the angler's responsibility to verify the official scale closing time and to be in the weigh-in line by such time.

23. Ties: A tie for first place will result in a fish off where possible and at the first safe opportunity. The decision to hold a fish off or not and the rules that govern it will be announced by the Tournament Director. If an angler/team declines to compete in the fish off, the other team will be awarded first place. Should a tie still exist following a fish-off period, the highest ranked team in the Team Of-The Year standings will win, except at the first event of the year where if a tie still exists after the first off, the tie will be broken by a coin toss. For all other ties, including a tie for big bass, in both the regular season events and the championship, the tie breakers will be: largest number of fish, largest number of fish alive, heaviest single days catch, second heaviest single days catch. If ties still exist, ties for cash prizes will be split equally among the tied teams involved and their points will be awarded equally.

24. Polygraph: Polygraph exams will be administered on-site at each event. The first-place team and a team randomly selected will automatically be tested. By your presence at, and participation in the event, each contestant who fishes a TXTT event also agrees to submit to a polygraph examination should it be deemed necessary at a time and location determined by the Tournament Director following the competition. Refusal to submit to an examination or failure to pass the examination will result in disqualification.

25. Protest and Reporting Procedure: All protests must be submitted in writing along with a \$100 cash deposit within fifteen (15) minutes of the last flight check-in to the tournament director or designated tournament official. The protestor also agrees that if there is a question with regards to verifying the protest charge, he or she may be subject to a polygraph exam and agree to testify in a court of law if necessary. If the Tournament Director, or polygraph, upholds the protest, the cash deposit shall be returned to the contestant submitting the protest.

26. Team of the Year: Points will include the championship points and be awarded as follows: Winning team receives 250 points, 2nd receives 249 points, 3rd receives 248 points in descending order until the last team that weighed a fish during that event is awarded points. If more than 250 teams enter a regular season event, then the 250th place receives 1 point.

The TXTT championship points are awarded as follows: Winners receive 150 points, 2nd receives 148, 3rd receives 146 points in descending order by 2 points per place until the last team that weighed a fish during that event is awarded points. All teams that enter but do not participate will receive zero points for that event. Teams must weigh in a fish to earn points. The team accumulating the most points following the championship event will be awarded the prestigious title of "Bass Pro Shops Team of the Year" and will receive all awards associated with this title.

27. Media Coverage: Contestants are required to comply with all requests (included but not limited to video, still camera, access to boat and access to fishing area) made by TXTT production crew for the purpose of gathering media coverage throughout TXTT events. Failure to coordinate with and accommodate the TXTT production crew's requests will result in disqualification of that event and possibly future TXTT events.