



2016

**Thermal Belt
BassMasters**

**By-Laws
&
Tournament Rules**

*Revision:
March 8th, 2016*

Article I

Section 1: Name

Section 2: Purpose

Article II

Section 1: Number of Membership

Section 2: Requirements for Membership

Section 3: Membership Dues

Section 4: Meetings of Members

Article III

Section 1: Officers and their Duties

Section 2: Elections

Section 3: Eligibility of Vote

Section 4: Term of Office

Section 5: Vacancies

Section 6: Eligibility for Holding Office

Article IV

Article V

Article VI

Article VII

Section 1: Tournament By-Laws

Section 2: Annual Points System

Article IX

Tournament Rules

Article I

Name & Purpose

Section 1: Name

This chapter shall be called Thermal Belt BassMasters of Ellenboro, North Carolina.

Section 2: Purpose

Our purposes are as follows:

- To stimulate public awareness of bass fishing as a major sport.
- To offer our state conservation department political support and encouragement.
- To promote full adherence to all conservation codes and to demand adequate water standards.
- To detect and report any polluter and call public and political attention to the crime.
- To improve our skill as bass anglers through a fellowship of friendly exchange of expert bass fishing techniques and ideas.
- To promote and encourage youth fishing and conservation awareness.
- To function as a dynamic and effective link with other chapters from the State of North Carolina's embracing the principles and purposes of B.A.S.S..

Article II

Membership

Section 1: Number of Membership

The chapter shall begin with and maintain at least six charter members.

Section 2: Requirements for Membership

To become a member, a person shall:

- Voluntarily express a genuine interest in membership
- Be a member of B.A.S.S.. *(See Article VI for affiliation requirements.)*
- Be recommended by two members at a regular monthly meeting.
- Be voted on by membership. Vote shall be by secret ballot and affirmation must be unanimous.

- New members will be under a probationary period of six months, during which time membership may be revoked.
- Be at least sixteen years of age.

Section 3: Membership Dues

- The membership dues shall be determined annually based on B.A.S.S. membership dues. New members must pay dues initially upon being voted into the membership of this chapter. Twenty dollars of the dues will be kept by the club for its purposes. Sixty-five dollars will be B.A.S.S. Membership at the State (\$15) and National (\$50) level.
- Each member shall be an active member of B.A.S.S.. *(See Article VI, for State affiliation requirements.)*

Section 4: Meetings of Members

The membership shall hold regular meetings at pre-established times. Each member that attends meeting shall be awarded points *(See Article VIII, Section 2 for annual point system)*.

Article III

Officers, Elections, Vacancies & Eligibility

Section 1: Officers and their Duties

The officers shall consist of:

- **President:** The President shall preside and direct all official business. He or she shall appoint and be an ex-official of all committees and supervise all club functions.
- **Vice President:** The Vice President shall act as a program chairman, assist the President in his or her duties and preside in the absence of the President.
- **Secretary/Treasurer:** The Secretary/Treasurer will maintain accurate minutes of all regular and special meetings as called for by the chapter president. He or she will be a regular liaison between the Chapter and B.A.S.S. for the State Chapter. The Secretary/Treasurer will collect and disburse all monies and maintain accurate financial records and present a current balance report at each of the regular meetings. He or She must also prepare an annual audit for review by the Board of Directors.

Section 2: Elections

The election of Officers shall be held annually at the regular meeting during the month of October. Election shall be by simple majority of members present. Election for each Office will be held separately in order listed in Article III, Section 1.

Section 3: Eligibility of Vote

Each member is entitled to one vote; proxy votes are **not** permitted.

Section 4: Term of Office

The term of office for each elected official is for one year. This term shall begin on January 1, and end on the last meeting day in December or until the successor assumes office. Original State offices shall serve until the last day of the following December.

Section 5: Vacancies

In the event of an office becoming vacant, nominations shall be asked for and an election held to fill the unexpired term of the individual vacating the office. The National and State B.A.S.S. organizations shall be notified immediately of the change of officers.

Section 6: Eligibility for Holding Office

- 1) To be eligible for an office, a member must:
 - a) Have been a member for at least six months
 - b) Have attended at least 75% of the chapter meetings and 75% of chapter functions during a 12 month period.
 - c) Have shown an active interest in all chapter functions
 - d) Maintain current B.A.S.S. Membership.

Article IV

Standing Committees

All standing committees will serve for one year or until a new committee is appointed. The terms of the committee members will coincide with that of the President. Each committee shall elect a chairman as applicable.

- 1) Board of Directors: The Board of Directors will consist of six members: President, Vice President, Secretary/Treasurer, immediate past-President, and two members elected at large by a majority of vote of the members present at the October meeting.
 - a) The President will call all meetings of the Board of Directors and preside at these meetings.
 - b) The Secretary/Treasurer will record the minutes of these meetings.
 - c) The Board will decide all protests and rule on the violation of tournament rules and By-Laws of the Chapter when appropriately received.
 - d) The Board will develop agendas for the monthly meetings.
- 2) Youth Committee: The purpose of this committee is to plan, organize, and implement a Chapter Youth Project. It's additional purpose to introduce young people to the goals of this Chapter; to give them a basis for respect of our National heritage and an appreciation of the basic rules of honesty, integrity, fair play, good sportsmanship, and to give them an introduction to the sheer joy of fishing.
- 3) Conservation Committee: The purpose of this committee shall be to protect our natural environment from harmful change; to document and report to the proper authorities violations of local, State and/or Federal anti-pollution law statutes, regulations, ordinances, and/or other regulatory devices; to take legal action where appropriate; undertake informational and educational programs to bring awareness to threats to our environment; and to take a leadership role in repairing the harm that has already been done to the life-giving waters of America.
- 4) Tournament Committee: The purpose of the Tournament Committee shall be to plan, organize, and operate all Chapter tournaments. The tournament committee will draft tournament rules which must be approved by the general membership. The committee will keep tournament records, enforce all tournament rules, and investigate protests concerning tournaments and make recommendations to the Board of Directors.

Article V

Removal of Membership

A member shall be dropped from the membership of this Chapter for the following:

- Failure to pay dues.
- Any action which would reflect dishonor and disgrace on this Chapter and/or B.A.S.S..
- Disqualification for any reason from participating in B.A.S.S. sponsored events including disqualification for use of drugs or alcohol.

Article VI

Requirements for Affiliation

The club will apply for and maintain affiliation with B.A.S.S.. B.A.S.S. affiliation requires:

- Approval of Chapter Charter by B.A.S.S..
- Update B.A.S.S. with a chapter membership roster once a year upon receipt of current roster at year's end.
- Names and addresses of new members joining chapter during the year must be submitted to B.A.S.S. as they occur. *(See Article II, Section 3, for dues requirements)*
- Maintain 100% B.A.S.S. membership.

Affiliation with the NC B.A.S.S. and support of its conservation and youth programs will be maintained. Any additional requirements that the NC B.A.S.S. establishes for chapters, such as membership, dues, attendance at meetings, etc., would be necessary for the chapter to participate in the State qualifying tournament(s), and any other sponsored tournaments or events.

Article VII

Amending the Bylaws

The By-Laws may be amended at any regular meeting by 2/3 vote of the members present; provided written notice of the proposed amendment has been presented to the membership at least one regular meeting prior to the vote.

Article VIII

Tournament By-Laws & Annual Point System

Section 1: Tournament By-Laws

- 1) Tournament Entry Fees: Entry Fee:
 - \$15 per person
 - Big Fish Fee: \$5 *(When fishing for Big Fish only and not entering the tournament, the fisherman will pay an additional \$5 Club fee)*
- 2) Members may fish for points only. *(When fishing for points only, \$5 club fee will be paid by the fisherman.)*
- 3) A guest may fish in the boat with a member. Each guest will pay an additional \$5 per tournament. A guest may fish only if the number of boats is enough to accommodate members first.
- 4) Individuals with no previous association with the club will not be allowed to join or fish at a tournament site. They must attend a meeting prior to a tournament or fish as a member's guest. Previous members may join again at a tournament.
- 5) The number of Tournaments will be set annually by the Tournament Committee.
- 6) Requirements for North Carolina Western Qualifier Tournament will be as follows:
 - a) The top six fishermen (8 if 30 or more members), based on Club point system will qualify. *(See Article VIII, Section 2 for Point System.)*
 - b) At least one worker will be provided to the Western Qualifier Tournament if necessary.
- 7) Payback:
 - a) Tournaments will be 80% payback.
 - b) \$5 from each entry will be given to the Club.
 - c) First place will receive 60% of the remaining money.
 - d) Second place will receive 40% of the remaining money
 - e) Should there be no second place finish; the money for second place will go to the club.
 - f) If more than 20 members are present, three places will be paid.
- 8) Club may hold open tournaments to help raise money:

- a) In an open tournament with over 25 boats, Club members will not fish in the open tournament.
 - b) Open tournaments will be held on local lakes only.
- 9) Winners in regional, state, and National tournaments will be required to return their share of the entry fee paid by the club on winnings over \$100.
- 10) Life jackets must be worn at all times while the primary (*big*) motor is running. The kill switch must also be used except while in the “no wake” area while launching and loading the boat. For the first violation the competitor(s) will receive a verbal warning. Subsequent violations during the tournament will result in disqualification.
- 11) If a competitor should have engine or other malfunction that renders his vessel incapable of returning within the allotted time frame, the competitor must:
- i. Notify an officer of the club. If that is not possible, contact must be then made with another competitor who is a member of the club.
 - ii. Should the boat/vessel not be able to be pulled to the weigh-in location before competition end time, the competitor may ask another competitor to take them and their fish to the “weigh-in”. Each competitor must escort their fish in a legal manner in accordance with State and Federal Laws to the weigh-in.
 - iii. All fish must be at the weigh-in location within the legal time.
- 12) All live fish are to be released except for trophy fish and those for club use.
- 13) Entry fees should be paid at the tournament prior to “blast off”. Entry fees should be submitted in correct change.

Section 2: Annual Points System

- 1) Meeting Points:
- a) Ten points will be awarded for attendance of local and regional meetings. All members are invited to attend. Regional meeting points will be used only when needed to replace local meeting points.
 - b) Members that are over 15 minutes late for a meeting will not be awarded meeting points.
- 2) Tournament Points:
- a) Tournament points will be based upon a 300 point scale.
 - b) First place will be awarded 300 points, 10 meeting/appearance points, and the total weight of the fish caught, minus any penalties. Points will decrease from 300 in 5 point increments

as each place decreases by one.

- c) All members attending a tournament will receive 10 meeting/attendance points.
 - d) Any member attending a tournament that catches no fish will receive 90 points in addition to their 10 points for their attendance.
- 3) All members who attend meetings and/or other Club functions will receive 10 points.
- 4) Yearly Prizes:
- a) Points Champion, Service Award Recipient and the angler weighing the big fish of the year will receive plaques.
 - b) A plaque will be awarded to an angler that finishes in first place at a tournament. *(First time winners)*
 - c) All winners after their first time will receive an add-on plate.

Article IX

Boating Operations & Expenses

A full discussion must be held between the two partners prior to a morning departure as to the schedule of the boat operations. This schedule must permit each partner equal time to fish from the front of the boat and to operate the trolling motor, so as to afford each partner the opportunity to fish his selected waters an equal amount of time. Distance traveled to fishing locations must be considered in order not to deprive each partner fishing time while traveling to and from fishing waters. If a competitor waives the above rights, he shall retain the right to select the fishing waters for one-half the tournament day. Any competitor who, in the judgment of the officials, operates a boat in a manner as to unfairly handicap his partner shall be disqualified. In view of the large expense involved in the operating and maintaining of a boat, it is suggested that the non-owner partner share part of the cost of gas and oil for the competition day.

Tournament Rules

Livewells will be checked by the Club President, Vice President and/or designee prior to Tournament “blastoff”.

- 1) Artificial bait only. No live bait or trolling.
- 2) The Vice President shall be responsible for measuring and weighing fish. “Flat Board” / “Golden Rule” shall be used for measuring. The tail may be fanned or compressed to make it touch, but it must touch the line. Should the Vice President be absent from a weigh-in, another member of the Board of Directors or a Club officer shall weigh and measure.
 - a) Should a competitor want to “re-measure” his/her fish prior to weigh-in, a rule will be provided at the “weigh in” table. If the fish in question does not meet the required length, it cannot be weighed and must be released immediately.
- 3) South Carolina Lake Tournament Rules: Each tournament will be governed by the South Carolina State Law for that tournament.
- 4) North Carolina Tournament Rules: Five fish per competitor with two fish at a minimum of twelve inches and three fish at a 14 inch minimum unless otherwise mandated by NC State Law.
- 5) For each fish brought to the scales to be weighed by a competitor that is less than the minimum length, a one pound penalty for each fish not meeting the minimum length will be deducted from the total weight submitted by the competitor.
- 6) There will be a limit of five fish per competitor for each tournament. This weight will be recorded and counted toward the yearly trophies.
- 7) There will be a limit of five fish per team for each team tournament.
- 8) If a member fishes a team tournament by him or herself, he or she shall pay a double entry fee.
- 9) All tournaments are subject and guided by rules, laws, and regulations in the State in which the Tournament is held.
- 10) There will be a .2 pound penalty deducted from the total weight for each dead fish weighed.
- 11) For each minute a boat is late, one pound will be deducted from that competitor’s weight. A boat must be in the “No Wake” buoys at the time for weigh-in, or it will be considered “late” and penalties will be implemented. A late boat will forfeit their competition for “Big Fish”.
- 12) No fishing within 50 yards of another competitor except by agreement between the competitors.

13) Weigh-in Procedure:

- a) No fish will be weighed unless in bags with water.
- b) Partners must bring their fish to the scales at the same time and one must weigh right after the other. Partners' fish must be weighed separately if they are to be weighed at all.
- c) Members and guests are required to keep live fish off the ground and handle their catch with care. All live fish are to be returned to the water as soon as possible.
- d) Competitors must report to the weigh-in station within fifteen minutes of the conclusion of the tournament.