**St. Jude Kayak Bass Classic Rules**

**Watercraft**

a. Competitors may use only watercraft capable of human-powered propulsion and that are identified by their manufacturer or marketed as canoes, kayaks or stand-up paddleboards.

b. No gas-powered motors are permitted in competition.

c. Use of a single electric propulsion unit per watercraft is approved with the following restrictions: 1. Competitors must comply with all boating regulations pertaining to motorized kayak/electric-propulsion watercraft registration, use and operating restrictions for the designated fishing area. 2. Electric motor used to propel a watercraft must be attached to the watercraft in a safe manner for operation, and ii. May not exceed the lessor of a. Manufacturer’s labeled Maximum H/P thrust Capacity, b. 3 HP, OR c. 155 foot-pound thrust. (this does not pertain to wattage or capacity.)

d. All watercraft set up with a primary propulsion of a pedal drive or electric motor must have a backup form of propulsion. (IE. pedal drive + paddle, electric drive + pedal drive, electric drive + paddled. All fish must be taken from your vessel or by wading with the vessel tethered to the angler.

e. Only one paid entrant per vessel.

Violation of these conditions will result in disqualification from the Event.

**General Rules**

a. No fish will be kept in ice chests, baskets, stringers, etc.

b. All fish must be caught live.

c. Fish may be held with Fish Grips prior to photo, but must be free while photo is taken.

d. All fish will be immediately released unharmed after photo has been taken.

e. Each fish can only be submitted once.

f. Fish must be caught using conventional rod/reel only.

g. Snatching or snagging fish is not permitted.

h. Artificial lures only.

i. Only 1 rod may be used at one time, trolling as a method of fishing is permitted.

j. PFD must be vest-style and be visible on each angler at “All Times”

k. A light, visible 360 degrees, must be used before sunrise and after sunset.

l. A flag must be displayed for visibility (see Visi carbon, vinyl orange construction flag, bicycle flag)

m. Anglers must have all Coast Guard required safety equipment (light source, whistle or other audible signal device, Coast Guard approved chest-style life preserver (PFD).

n. Portaging: angler can portage over or around an obstruction as long as it is in the same waterway. No dragging across land to another body of water.

o. Competitors may launch from any public access shore. Public access is being defined as completely open to the public and eligible for everyone to access.

p. Anglers may not tow/shuttle another angler. However, in an emergency/safety situation an angler may tow an angler back to the ramp and report the incident to the tournament director. The towed angler may be subject to penalty.

**Qualifying Fish**

a. Black bass (largemouth, smallmouth, spotted) must be 12” in length.

b. Fish will be caught, measured, photographed, and released.

c. Fish will be photographed using a smartphone or digital camera.

**Weigh-In**

1. Anglers must return to the launch point (or designated check in location) at the designated time.
2. Anglers must turn in their identifier, verbally check in or sign-in with tournament director at designated time.
3. Failure to check in at designated time will result in tournament disqualification
4. If an angler must leave tournament early, angler must notify tournament director when leaving and arrange for fish to be judged

**Scoring**

a. Each angler will be given a unique identifier.

b. Identifier must be visible in each photo.

c. Fish will be measured to the nearest ¼”, rounding down.

d. Tail must clearly touch or cross the original designed ¼ markings of the approved measuring device to be measured at that length.

**Photo Criteria**

 a. Kayak must be visible in all photos.

b. Photo must include the entire fish, and Photo must be in its original unedited state (no cropping, enhancing, or rotating).

c. Fish must be facing left.

d. Lip of fish must be touching end of measuring device.

e. Mouth must be CLOSED (1/4” deduction for cracked mouth, 1” deduction for no attempt). If the Hawg Trough or Ketch Board can be seen between the lips, the mouth is cracked and will incur a ¼” deduction. If a fish measured at 12” receives a deduction that fish is disqualified.

f. Dorsal fin must be facing upward.

g. Tail must be centered and in a relaxed state

h. Fish visibly unharmed.

i. Markings on the measuring device must be clear and legible to the ¼”.

j. Photos must be taken directly from above, not at an angle.

k. Assigned identifier must be visible.

l. Photo must be taken by same angler who caught fish.

m. No restraining devices (stringers, fish grips, etc) allowed in any photos.

n. Hook must be removed from fish before taking photo.

o. Fish eye must be uncovered and visible.

p. No hands under fish gill plate.

**Measuring Device**

a. The Hawg Trough and the Ketch Measuring Boards are the only approved measuring devices.

b. Measuring devices may be checked at any time.

c. Measuring devices must be marked to the ¼”.

d. A sticker or other contrast must be applied to the lip of the Measuring devices.

e. Lines must be colored in or visible.

f. If measuring devices cannot be read, measurement will be rounded down to nearest legible mark.

g. Altering, to include but not limited to cutting and/or bending of any measuring board with the intent to increase a fish’s perceived measurement is strictly prohibited. Measuring board length may be shortened in length to aid with board positioning. Any violation will result in immediate disqualification of the fish and may result in further disciplinary action as deemed necessary

**Ties**

a. In the event of a tie, the angler with the longest fish breaks the tie

b. If the longest fish is equal, the next longest fish is compared to break the tie

c. In the event of a tie after comparing all fish, a drawing will determine the tie breaker

**Rules, Interpretations, and Protests**

1. All rules are decided on by tournament directors.
2. Prior to the awarding of prizes, all potential cash winners will be allowed to view submitted fish. Then before issuing awards time must be allotted for anglers to lodge a protest. Thus, awards should be made only after determining there are no protests. c. Any challenges to the tournament results or rules must be presented prior to awards d. Once prizes have been awarded, tournament results are declared final.

**Polygraph**

1. By participating, all anglers agree to all rules set forth.
2. If an angler believes cheating has occurred during the tournament, angler must challenge results prior to awards.
3. Concerns must be brought immediately to tournament director.
4. Challenging angler will be responsible for payment of polygraph.
5. Polygraph must occur no later than 1 week from date of challenge.
6. Refusal of polygraph is an admittance of guilt which will result in ban.

 **Competitor Conduct**

1. Competitors participating in this event must conduct themselves at all times in a manner that reflects favorably on the sport of kayak bass fishing, its members, officers or representatives, tournaments or sponsors. Competitors are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, integrity, safety and conservation in support of the sport of kayak bass fishing, especially when in the vicinity of non-Competitors who may be on or beside eligible waters. Any Competitor who violates these principles or behaves in ways the reflect unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters and courtesy, may forfeit tournament winnings, face suspension from future events, be permanently banned from competition, or any combination thereof deemed appropriate by tournament directors.