

## **Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine 2024 Open Tournament Series Rules**

- 1. Rules interpretations:** The rules committee shall be solely responsible for the interruption and enforcement of tournament rules. Its decision will be final in all instances. The tournament director is solely responsible for determining the final penalty in the case of a rules infraction after advising with the rules committee.
- 2. Eligibility:** By signing the entry form, I (also referred to as "Angler") hereby agree to be bound by and comply with all Tournament Rules and all other guidelines and regulations in the 2024 Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine rules or otherwise communicated to me in writing by Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine. I also understand when signing my entry form that I have read and understood all of the rules. I agree to hold Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine harmless should any injury or damage result to me or my property. I also agree to abide by the above rules and local DNR rules & lake rules. I also certify that I am a member in good standing with Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine, I am physically fit and that there are no health-related reasons or problems which preclude my participation in the tournament series.
- 3. Membership:** A one-time membership fee of \$30 is required before a contestant can fish a Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine Open Tournament.
- 4. Payment:** You can pay over the phone (304-525-4556), mail in your entry form (P.O. Box 130 Lavalette, WV 25535) or pay in store (4611 WV-152, Lavalette, WV 25535).
- 5. Registration:** All tournaments are pre-registration. Randomized boat draws for each tournament will be posted on our Facebook page and website ([www.thegreatoutdoorsmarinetournaments.com](http://www.thegreatoutdoorsmarinetournaments.com)) Thursday before each tournament. Registration is due THURSDAY at 5:30 p.m. EST before each tournament.
- 6. Rules committee:** Rules committee will consist of the tournament director, one randomly selected team member per each event and one Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine pro staff member per each event. The rules committee will determine the penalties for any rule infractions via a vote. Penalties will consist of but not limited to disqualification from the event, disqualification from Series, weight reductions or time in the penalty box at future events.
- 7. Sportsmanship:** All participants are required to comply with the game and fish regulations in effect at each tournament. Alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs will not be allowed in participants boat. All contestants are expected to conduct themselves in a sportsman-like manner at all times and shall observe high standards of ethics, sportsmanship, personal conduct and abide by all state rules and regulations. Random checks for fishing licenses will be given at each tournament.

8. **Insurance:** All participants must maintain liability insurance equal to \$100,000 or more of liability coverage for the boat they are using. By signing the entry form, the participant certifies that they have the required insurance for their vessel. Random checks will be given at each tournament.
9. **Tackle:** A participant may only use one rod at a time. No trolling or live bait.
10. **Boat & Motors:** There shall be no restriction on the size or type of boat used or the size of motor with the stipulation that all boats are judged seaworthy by the tournament committee and must have at least one aerated live well.
11. **Scoring:** Tournament scores will be based on the total weight in pounds caught by both contestants. Daily limits will be five bass per team. Only largemouth, smallmouth, and spotted bass may be weighed in. If any bass that is presented at the weigh-in that has been mashed, mauled or mangled that bass will not be accepted at the weigh-in. If smaller creel limits or changes in size limits are in effect, it will be announced at the tournament.
12. You must use our bags in order to weigh-in. We will not accept any other bags.
13. **Scoring Penalty:** 1.00 pound penalty on short fish. 0.50 pound penalty on dead fish. A courtesy bump board will be available before takeoff. All fish will be measured with mouth closed, tail fanned.
14. **Fishing locations:** All fishing must be done from the boat. Contestants must not leave the boat to land fish or gain access to water otherwise not accessible to boats. There will also be restricted areas at each lake. This will be announced by the tournament director before the tournament.
15. **Late penalty:** Contestants arriving late at the check-in will be penalized 1 pound per minute late. Any contestant more than 10 minutes late will be disqualified. Report to someone in the fishing tournament or tournament director if you leave before the weigh-in. Or leave your float on the weigh-in stage.
16. No fishing within 50 feet of another boat if anchored: must have the trolling motor out of water.
17. **Fishing and Conditions:** Tournaments will be held regardless of weather conditions. However, the tournament directors may change the starting time or location as it is deemed necessary for the safety of the contestants.
18. **Protests:** All protests must be made within five minutes after scales close.

19. **Established teams:** Partner changes may be allowed one time per year. You may fish by yourself if your partner cannot make it. You must fish the Championship with your original partner or one time alternate or by yourself.
20. **Ties:** In case of a total weight tie for 1st, big fish will break the tie. In case of a big bass tie, the team with the most total weight breaks the tie. In the case that both teams did not weigh a big fish and there is a total tie for 1st, both teams will relaunch on tournament waters and the first to boat a legal keeper will determine the winner. In the case of a total tie for Team of The Year, both teams will relaunch on the Team of The Year Championship waters and the first to boat a legal keeper will determine the winner.
21. **Life jacket and kill switch:** Must be worn at all times the outboard motor is running. Kill switch must be attached anytime the outboard motor is in gear.
22. If you fish a tournament, a member of the team must weigh your own fish in order to receive points and/or payback. In the case of an emergency if you need to weigh-in early please call the tournament director. Tournament director will need to approve an early weigh-in.
23. **Payback:** ALL Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine Open Tournaments are 90% payback. 10% goes directly towards Championship pot. \$150 entry fee per boat. \$30 membership fees also go directly to Championship pot.
24. **Championship Qualification:** To qualify for the Championship you must physically fish two out of six Open/Big Bass tournaments and must pay for three out of six Open/Big Bass tournaments to fish the Championship. Overall winner of the Big Bass Event will earn a berth into the Championship. Boat order for the Championship will be determined by your finish in the Team of the Year standings.
25. **Exemption:** Previous year Championship winners will gain berth to the Championship as long as they physically fish or pay for two out of five Opens tournaments.
26. **Point System:** 150 Points to 1st, 149 to 2nd, 148 to 3rd, etc. Once we reach the first team that does not weigh-in and the rest of the field that did not weigh-in will receive one less point than the team with the lowest weight. There will be no points awarded at the Big Bass tournament. One team from every 25 teams will qualify for the 2024 Bassmaster Team Championship. Qualification for the Bassmaster Team Championship will be determined by highest points earned by each team.
27. **Polygraph:** All participants agree that they will, if required by the tournament director, submit to a polygraph examination. Participants further agree that the results of the polygraph will be accepted without further appeal. Failure to take or successfully pass a polygraph examination will result in immediate disqualification without recourse.

28. **Right to refuse entries:** Ferguson's Great Outdoors Marine Open Tournament Series holds the right to refuse entries.

29. Failure to read and understand the rules will result in disqualification.

***Tournament Director - Chase Sansom (681) 888-1250***