2027 USA Bassin Rules & Membership Form

Angler:_____
Address: _____
City:_____
State: _____
Zip: _____
Phone:_____
E-mail:_____

Kayak:_____
Model: _____ Model Year:_____
Motor: _____

Member ID:_____
Member Fee $30.00 ☐ (Check For Payment Received)
1st Year USA Bassin Member? YES ☐ or NO ☐

1. Membership and Eligibility

Participation in all USA Bassin Kayak Trail events is strictly limited to current USA BASSIN members who are 18 years of age or older. No youth anglers under 18 are allowed to participate in USA Bassin Kayak Trail events.

Membership Details

- Cost: $30.00 per person.
- Benefits: A USA BASSIN membership permits participation in any and all USA BASSIN Tournaments nationwide.
- Season: The official USA BASSIN season spans from September 1st through August 31st.
- Tournament Officials: The Tournament Director and other tournament officials are eligible to fish in all USA BASSIN events.

2. Tournament Entry Fees:

The entry fee varies by division.

- 5-Tournament Divisions: The cost is $50.00 per kayak for each tournament. Additionally there will be a $10.00 contribution to the Big Bass Pot for a entry fee total of $60.00.
- 10-Tournament Divisions: The cost is $25.00 per kayak for each tournament. Additionally there will be a $5.00 or $10.00 contribution to the Big Bass Po for a entry fee total of $30.00 to $35.00. (The Big Bass Pot on 10-Tournament Divisions will be the decision of the tournament Director)

A separate TourneyX/PayPal Fee of $7.25 will be added to all entry fees to cover the cost of the event software/app usage.

Please note that the Tournament Director reserves the right to adjust the stated entry fees for specific tournament locations that may impose an additional lake usage fee or require the collection of sales tax.

3. Eligible Watercraft:

- Vessels must be a minimum of 9 feet and a maximum of 15 feet in length.
- Catamaran-style personal fishing vessels are eligible, provided they comply with all other regulations.

The following vessels are prohibited: Homemade kayaks, sailboats, Jon boats, pirogues, coracles, rowboats, dinghies, skiffs, float tubes, inflatable rafts or rigid inflatable boats (e.g., Zodiac), pontoon boats, pontoon-style pond boats, twin-hull watercraft, or similar vessels.

4. Propulsion and Motor Restrictions:

- Propulsion is limited to paddle, pedal, pole, or electric motor.
- A maximum of one electric motor may be attached to the kayak.

The electric motor's output may not exceed the lesser of:

- The manufacturer's labeled Maximum HP/Thrust Capacity,
- 3 HP, or
- 155 foot-pounds of thrust.

The electric motor must be securely attached for safe operation.

- Competitors using a motorized kayak/electric-propulsion watercraft must adhere to all applicable boating regulations concerning registration, use, and operating restrictions for the designated fishing area.

Anchoring:

- The use of both manual and motorized anchor systems is permitted.

5. Tournament App:

- **TourneyX Account:** All competitions are conducted using TourneyX. Every participating angler must create a free TourneyX user account before the first day of competition.
- **Check-In/Check-Out: All anglers are required to check-in and checkout at each event. Failure to do so three times will result in disqualification from one USA Bassin Kayak Event.**
- **Backup Photo:** All anglers must take a backup photo of their kayak at the launch location. This will help resolve any issues or questions that may arise from a faulty GPS location on TourneyX. Failure to provide or follow proper check-in/checkout practices 3 times will lead to a 1 tournament suspension.

6. Point Scoring System:

For divisions with five tournaments, a 100-point scoring system will be used.

- 1st place: 100 points
- 2nd place: 99 points
- 3rd place: 98 points
- (and so on)
-

All anglers who do not weigh in a fish will receive 50 participation points.
10-Tournament Divisions= 50 points scoring system: All Anglers not weighing in a fish receive 50 participation points.

Divisional Champions: will be determined by the Angler that has the highest final total points in said division. The points an Angler receives from each tournament will be automatically added to the standings of the division you fished and to “National Points Standings” located on the home page of the USA BASSIN Web Site. All Anglers that finish the season with 250 National points will qualify for a USA Bassin Kayak Regional Tournament.

7. Tackle and Fishing Methods

a. **Catch Requirement:** All bass must be caught alive by the competing angler, in a conventional sporting manner, and from their own vessel.

b. **Lure Regulations:** Only artificial lures are permitted, with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. All lures must also comply with state regulations.

c. **Rod and Line Usage:**

i. Anglers are limited to using only **ONE** fishing rod at a time.

ii. A new cast may not be initiated until the previous cast is fully completed.

iii. At no time may more than one lure from one rod be actively fishing in the water.

d. **Rig Types:** Alabama rigs, similar umbrella-type rigs, and the "Donkey Rig – Double Fluke" are allowed, subject only to the laws of the state where the competition is taking place.

e. **Prohibited Methods:** Trolling as a method of fishing is strictly prohibited. Long lining and drifting with the current or wind are permitted.

f. **Sight Fishing:** Any bass caught while sight fishing must be hooked inside the mouth.

g. **Fish Handling:** Fish must not be kept on stringers. Temporary fish gripping devices are acceptable for holding fish in the water.

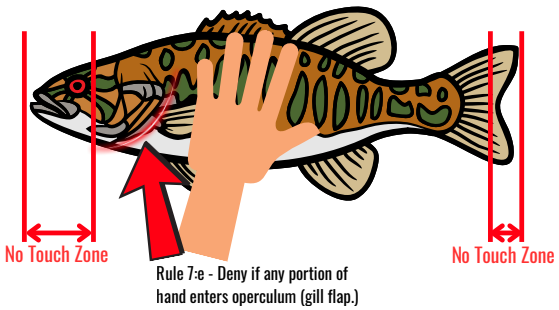
8. Official Photo Submission Guidelines:

These guidelines are strictly enforced to ensure the accurate scoring of all fish submissions. Failure to comply with these criteria may result in disqualification of the angler, the catch, or a reduction in the measured length.

A. Photo Quality and Content Requirements:

Each photo submission must meet the following criteria to avoid penalties or disqualification:

1. Measuring Device: The entire fish, from the tip of the lip to the end of the tail, must be clearly visible on an approved measuring device.
2. Identifier Code: The assigned unique identifier code must be visible in the photo.
3. Angle: The photo must be an overhead shot, taken directly down, not at an angle.
4. No Obstructions on Fish: The fish must be clear of any holding devices, fishing lures, or hooks.
5. **Critical Viewpoints:** The lip, eye, and tail end must not be obstructed. This includes obstructions by the angler's hand or the identifier code.
   - Tail: Pinching and holding the tail is permitted, provided no portion of the fish is covered. Tournament officials must clearly see the tip of the tail and the measuring board markings with no obstructions.
   - Eye: A covered eye will result in the disqualification of the catch, necessitating the submission of a better, legal photo.
6. **Hands/Fingers:** Hands and fingers must not be placed in the gill plate.



Rule 7:e - Deny if any portion of hand enters operculum (gill flap.)

The Competitor's hand may only be placed behind the eye, mouth and over the caudal peduncle. FISH WILL BE DENIED if any portion in the NO TOUCH ZONE is covered.

B. Photo and Video Integrity:

1. File Type: Only the original/raw photo file is acceptable. Screenshots, crops, duplicates, and edited photos will be disqualified.
2. Angler Responsibility: The quality of all submitted photos and videos is the sole responsibility of the angler.
3. Uploading: Anglers must be prepared to manually upload photos by transferring them via a USB port to the official judge's computer using the necessary cables, cords, and software.

C. Protocol for Questionable or Deceased Fish:

If a submitted fish has a glossy or damaged eye, appears to be dead, or has other unusual markings, the angler must take the following steps:

1. Video Documentation: Record a video showing the fish on the KETCH Board and clearly identifying the area(s) of concern.
2. Release Confirmation: Immediately following the documentation, the video must show the fish being placed back into the water and actively swimming away alive.
3. Recommended Release Video: Anglers are encouraged (though not required) to take a release video for every fish, starting with the fish on the measuring board, showing the identifier, and then showing the fish actively swimming away.

D. Tournament Scoring and Issues:

1. Single Count: A submitted fish will count only once toward an angler's aggregate score for the tournament.
2. Culling Rule: If a fish submitted on Day 1 is culled and does not appear in an angler's Top 5 fish, that fish can be caught again and counted toward a Day 2 total, provided the date and time stamp align with the current day.
3. **Immediate Reporting:** Any questionable issues concerning a fish must be immediately brought to the attention of a USA Bassin official.

Compliance with the criteria above is mandatory to avoid possible penalty or disqualification.

9. Video Release Protocols for Conservation and Scoring Integrity:

All participants must adhere to the following video recording protocols, which are essential for maintaining the highest standards of conservation, fish health, and scoring accuracy.

Mandatory Video: Compromised Fish

A video is MANDATORY for any fish exhibiting signs of compromise to be eligible for scoring. Failure to provide a clear, valid video for a compromised fish will result in immediate disqualification of that entry.

When a Video is Required:

- Eye Damage: Cloudy, glossy, opaque, or "popped" eyes.
- Physical Anomalies/Markings: Unusual sores, blood, unique deformities, or damaged eyes.
- Signs of Distress/Health Issues: Lethargic, unresponsive, or dying behavior.

The video must be continuous and clearly document the following:

1. On the Measuring Board: Clearly show the fish on the measuring board with the Identifier Code visible, specifically highlighting the area(s) of concern (e.g., cloudy eye, sore).
2. The Release & Recovery: Immediately follow with the uninterrupted release into the water. The video must conclude by documenting the fish actively swimming away under its own power (the "resumption of swimming").

Why this Matters: This rule protects you. By documenting the successful release, you provide undeniable proof of CPR (Catch, Photo, Release) compliance, even with a pre-existing injury.-----
Standard Release Video: The "Gold Standard" (Highly Recommended for ALL Fish)
While mandatory only for compromised fish, it is strongly advised that anglers record a release video for every fish submitted to prevent scoring disputes.

Standard Release Video Best Practices:

1. The Setup (Start on the Board): The fish positioned correctly on the measuring board with the Identifier Code clearly visible.
2. The Action (The Release): The uninterrupted transition from the board to the water.
3. The Recovery (The Kick): Clear footage of the fish actively swimming away under its own power.

Pro Tip: No video of a "compromised" fish = No Score. When in doubt, film the release!

10. Official Measuring Device

a. The mandatory and official measuring devices for the USA Bassin Kayak Trail Series and its subsidiaries are the BUBBA, KETCH, and YAKATTACK Leaderboard measuring boards.
b. Each contestant is responsible for providing their own official measuring device.
c. USA Bassin staff reserves the right to inspect measuring devices at any time (before, during, or after the tournament).
d. Use of an unauthorized or illegal measuring device will result in the competitor's disqualification from the tournament.

11. Scoring Rules

a. Method: Scoring is based on the cumulative length of each contestant's longest verified catches, utilizing the Catch, Photograph, and Release (CPR) method.
b. Measurement: Fish length is measured in 1/4-inch increments and will be rounded down to the nearest 1/4 inch.
c. Eligible Species: Only Black Bass species are eligible, which include Largemouth, Spotted, Guadalupe, Shoal, Smallmouth, and any hybrid of these species.
d. Minimum Length & Validity: All scored fish must measure a minimum of 12 inches with the mouth completely closed. Any fish failing to meet this minimum length will not be scored. A submitted fish may only count once toward an angler's total score for the entire tournament.
e. Tournament Score: An angler's score will be the total length of their five longest verified catches. This constitutes the daily limit of the best five fish.

12. Scoring Deductions and Rules:

- Mouth Open: A deduction of 1 inch will be applied.
- Minimum Length: All measurements are rounded down to the nearest quarter-inch (e.g., 20 7/8" becomes 20 3/4"). Fish below the 12" minimum required length will not be scored.
- Contact with Board: The fish's lip or tail must be touching the measuring board to be scored; otherwise, it will result in "No Score." The entire “fence” of the measuring board must be visable in all angler photos.

13. Tie-Breakers:

- USA BASSIN Kayak Tournaments: Ties will be resolved by comparing the lengths of the longest fish first, then the next longest, continuing this process until all fish that contribute to the anglers' limits have been compared.
- USA BASSIN KAYAK TRAIL Divisional Champion: In the event of ties for the Divisional Champion title, the angler with the greatest total length of fish accumulated over the entire season will be favored.

14. Tournament Limits:

Competitors are limited to a maximum of five fish per tournament. While anglers may submit more than five fish, the TourneyX system will automatically select and display only the five longest bass for each angler's final score.

15. Tournament Hours and Operation:

Official fishing hours are determined by and based on legal sunrise and sunset. No tournament activities will occur between legal sunset and sunrise.

Pre-Launch and Lighting

Anglers may pre-launch and float their kayaks no more than 30 minutes before the official start time; however, no fishing activity is permitted until the tournament officially begins. A 360-degree light is required for anyone launching or floating before legal sunrise or after legal sunset. Anglers using motors must also adhere to all state regulations regarding vessel lighting.

Tournament Start and End (Lines In/Out)

The tournament "Start" and "End" times correspond directly to the "Lines In" and "Lines Out" times on the TourneyX app. No fishing activities are allowed before the designated start time or after the designated end time. Any fishing activity conducted or fish caught outside of this timeframe will result in immediate disqualification.

Weigh-In and Awards

Please ensure you allocate enough time for the weigh-in and awards ceremony as scheduled by the tournament director.

16. Safety / Personal Flotation Device (PFD) Requirements:

- Safety on the water is crucial. All contestants must wear a properly fastened, chest-type, U.S. Coast Guard-approved personal flotation device (PFD) while fishing or maneuvering their kayak during tournament hours. Inflatable belt-type PFDs are not allowed.
- Each kayak must also be equipped with an emergency whistle and either a 360-degree light or installed LEDs that are visible from all angles.
- Please note that all kayaks operating with a motor of any kind must comply with state kill switch requirements regarding the operation of a motorized vessel.

The Tournament Director reserves the right to shorten, postpone, or cancel tournament days if weather or water conditions are deemed unsafe. Competitors may leave their boats to seek immediate shelter when faced with severe weather or imminent danger (e.g., lightning, strong winds, hazards from pleasure boaters or hunters, etc.). Competitors are expected to use sound judgment and are personally responsible for their actions in potentially hazardous situations.

17. Sportsmanship:
Contestants are expected to uphold high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation throughout the event. Immediate disqualification will result from drunkenness. The possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages or illegal drugs is strictly prohibited in boats during tournament hours.

18. Off-Limits and Proximity to Competitors
Off-Limits Areas:
The tournament director will announce all off-limits areas during the mandatory pre-tournament meeting. Please be advised that fishing in any designated off-limits area will result in immediate disqualification.

Additionally, fishing is strictly prohibited in any area marked "No Entry," "No Boats," or "No Fishing" by the waterway's governing body.

Proximity to Competitors:
Anglers are prohibited from fishing closer than 50 yards to another competitor who is anchored. If an angler grants permission for another competitor to fish closer, this permission extends to all other competitors.

Holding Spots:
Using a non-contestant to "hold" or reserve a fishing location for a team or angler is strictly forbidden and will result in disqualification.

19. Leaving Your Boat
Competitors are required to remain in their boats throughout the duration of the tournament. The only exceptions permitted are in the event of:

- Illness.
- Brief excursions for necessities ("nature calling").
- Severe storms or other comparable hazards.

Should an angler need to leave the tournament waters early for any reason, they must attempt to contact the Tournament Director before departing.

20. Cheating and Protests

- **Cheating:** Anyone found cheating in any tournament will face immediate disqualification from all U.S.A. BASSIN events.
- **Compliance**: Compliance with all State rules and regulations is mandatory.
- **Protests:** Any protests must be submitted to the Divisional Tournament Director within 24 hours of the "lines out" call.
- **Payouts**: No payouts will be digitally submitted until the end of the protest period.

22. Refusal of Membership and Entry:
USA BASSIN Tournament Trail Events reserves the right to refuse membership or deny entry into any of its events.

23. Tournament Rules:
Tournament rules and regulations are subject to change at any time before the event begins. Any information presented orally or in print, including but not limited to details found on USA BASSIN's website and flyers, should be considered an indication of expected rules and may not be the final, accurate version used at the tournament. For the most up-to-date rules, please check the USA BASSIN website or contact the tournament director.

Liability Release: In consideration of membership in U.S.A. BASSIN Tournament Fishing Circuit (“ USA BASSIN”) as well as being granted permission to participate in the fishing tournaments and other events held or sponsored by USA BASSIN (the “Events”), THE UNDERSIGNED HEREBY RELEASES, DISCHARGES, WAIVES AND RELINQUISHES ANY AND ALL ACTIONS OR CAUSES OF ACTION INCLUDING, BUT NOT LIMITED TO, PERSONAL INJURY, PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR WRONGFUL DEATH OCCURRING TO HIM/HERSELF ARISING OUT OF, RELATED TO , OR CONNECTED WITH IN ANY MANNER ENTRY OR PARTICIPATION IN THE EVENTS, wherever or however the same may occur and for whatever period said activities may continue, and the undersigned agrees that under no circumstances will he/she or his/her heirs, executors, administrators, and assigns prosecute or present any claim for personal injury, property damage, or wrongful death against USA. BASSIN, LLC, USA BASSIN: The Next Generation, Inc. or any of their principals, officers, directors, employees, or agents (“Released Persons”) for any of said causes of actions, whether the same shall arise by the negligence of any of said persons, or otherwise. The undersigned further and separately agrees to indemnify, save, and hold harmless Released Persons from any loss, liability, damage, or cost, including but not limited to court costs and attorney’s fees, that they may incur, in connection with participation in Events, whether caused by the negligence of Released Persons or otherwise. This release is intended to be as broad and inclusive as permitted by the applicable law. The undersigned further states that he/she has carefully read the foregoing, knows the contents thereof, and has signed this release as his/her own free act. Any member agrees, by his or her signature on this agreement, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination, commonly referred to as a truth verification test, and to abide by its conclusion. Truth verifications test(s) will be used at USA BASSIN’S sole discretion and administered by it or its agents. Refusal to take or failure to pass the examination as determined by USA BASSIN will result in disqualification, at the sole discretion of USA BASSIN. The undersigned HEREBY WAIVES TRIAL BY JURY in any action, proceeding, or counterclaim brought by or against the undersigned regarding any matter whatsoever in connection with the tournament. Verification of liability insurance: I, the undersigned, further state that I am a current member of USA BASSIN and that I maintain liability insurance on the boat I will use in any USA BASSIN Tournament Fishing event. Attorney’s Fees: Only USA BASSIN and Released Persons are entitled to recover their attorney’s fees. The undersigned is not entitled to recover attorney’s fees regardless of the outcome of any litigation or settlement. The laws of the State of Indiana, excluding only its choice of law provisions, shall govern the validity, enforcement, and interpretation of this Contract. Any dispute or cause of action under this Contract shall exclusively be filed and resolved in a state court located in Lawrence County, Indiana and the undersigned irrevocably agrees to submit to personal and subject matter jurisdiction in the same. I signify by my signature that I have read and understand the above agreement and all USA BASSIN Rules.

Signature: _____ Date:_____

Mail Membership form to Tournament Director
Contact USA BASSIN at usabassinfishing@gmail.com for details on becoming a director!!
All Federal, State, and Local laws, rules, markings, orders, and warnings must be followed. Violation of any laws may be cause for disqualification.

Weeknight Tournament
Additional Rules and FAQ's

Tournament Hours: 4:00pm or 5:00pm est. or cst. to Official Sunset

Eligible Water: Any Public Lake or River In The State you are competing in.

Points: Each weeknight tournament awards a maximum of 50 points for achieving 1st place.

Division Champion: Division Champion will be based on the overall points total all tournaments of all 10 tournaments.

Will There Be A List of Eligible Waters?

No, USA Bassin and our Tournament Directors will not be providing a list of lakes for these events. We recommend using Google Earth to explore potential locations, just as you would for any other tournament. If you have questions about a specific body of water that you're considering for fishing but are unsure if it qualifies, please reach out to the tournament director for clarification.

How Will USA Bassin Verify My Location?

To ensure precise location verification, USA Bassin will use the Tourney X platform. All participants are required to check in and out for each event, which allows us to confirm the exact location where you are fishing.

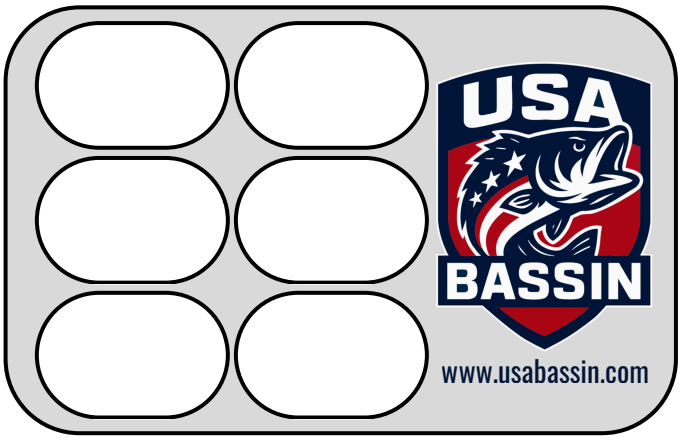
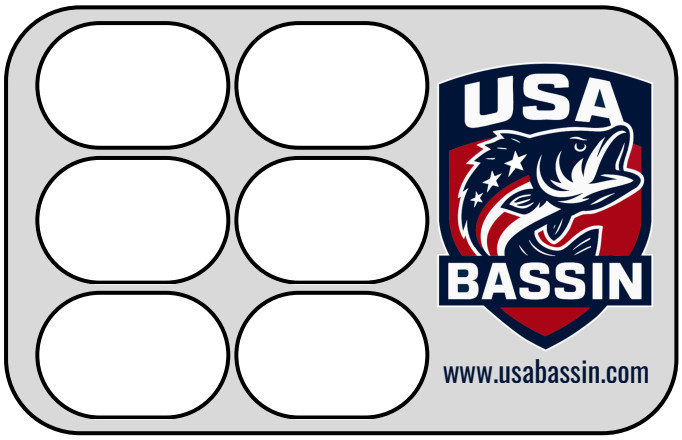
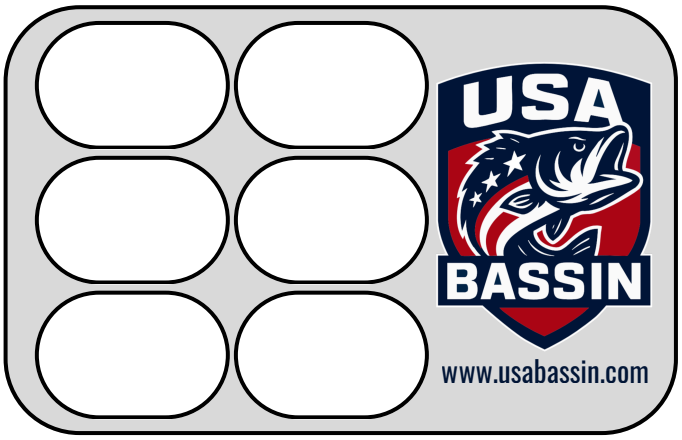
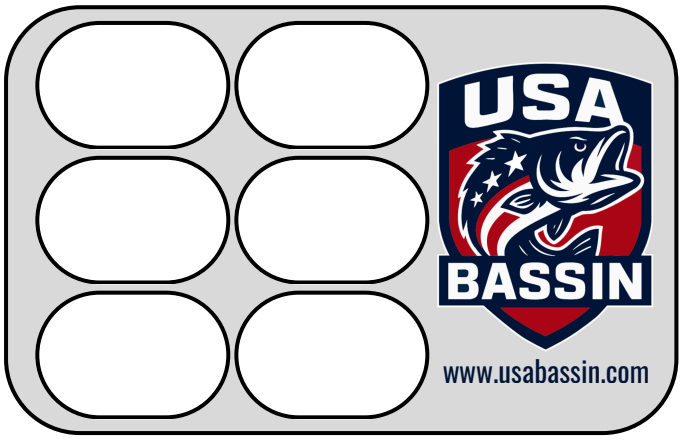
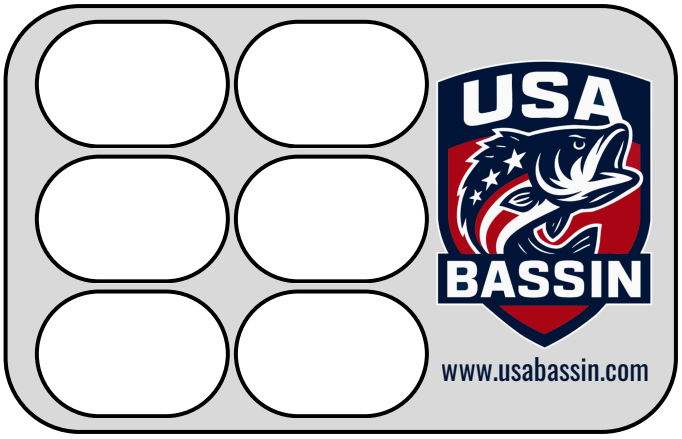
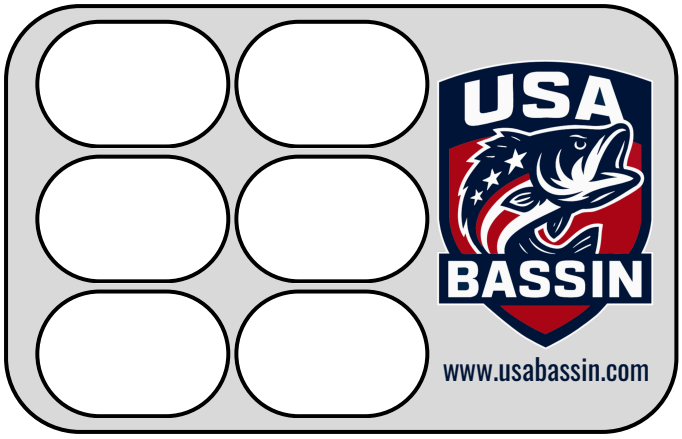
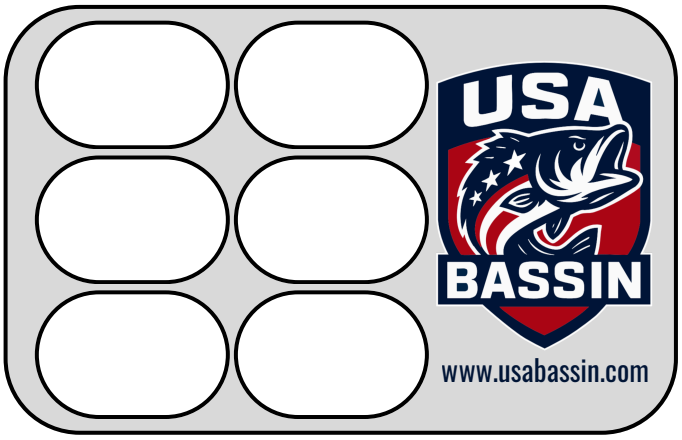
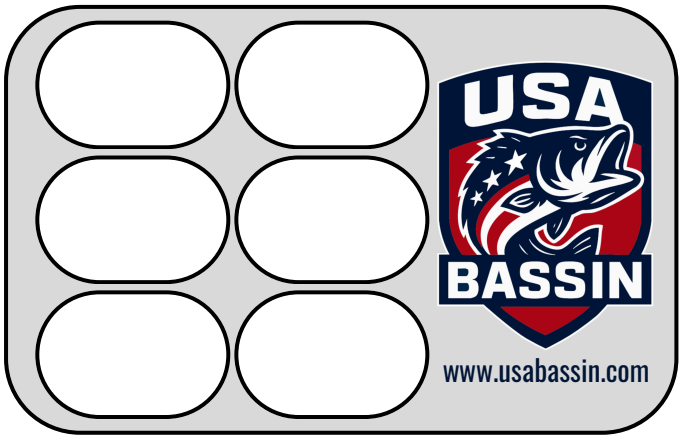
If an angler decides to relocate to a nearby lake, they must check in and out using the Tourney X app.

Failure to document any transitions from one body of water to another will lead to disqualification.

How Will Awards Work?

Awards will be presented during the USA Bassin Kayak LIVE Awards show. All winning anglers from the events will be invited to join the livestream, where they can share insights about the tournament. This LIVE show aims to spotlight the accomplishments of the anglers participating in USA Bassin Tournaments.

How Will Payout Be Done?

Payouts will be distributed via PayPal to the anglers who placed in the money after the protest period has ended following the conclusion of the tournament.

Tournament Identification Tag