

Tournament Rules for Tucker W. Hipps Memorial Foundation Bass Fishing Tournament

March 8, 2025–Greenpond, Lake Hartwell

1. **PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY** Open to all individuals, male and female. The tournament director has the right to refuse entry to anyone for any reason.

2. **ENTRY FEES** Entry fees shall be \$200.00 per team at early registration. Entry includes Big Fish. There will be a \$30 fee charged on all checks returned for insufficient funds. Credit cards will be accepted during entry but will be subject to a convenience fee. Entry is not confirmed until both the registration form and deposit has been received. **NO REFUNDS.** Mail entry to: Tucker W. Hipps Memorial Foundation, 104 Homestead Dr., Piedmont, SC 29673 by **February 22, 2025.** Day of event registration is \$250. Online entry at www.Tuckergives.org

3. **PRIZE PAYOUT** First place is guaranteed \$5,000. Second Place is \$2,000 and Third place is \$1,000. Big Fish is \$1,000. School team \$1,000 if 5 or more teams.

4. Teams may not have the assistance of any non-competitor for the purpose of locating or catching fish. The use of electronic communication devices, for sharing fishing information during tournament hours, is prohibited.

5. **LAKE SPECIFIC OFF-LIMIT AREAS:** No off-limit areas of DNR or State waters marked as such can be used.

6. **TOURNAMENT HOURS** Tournament hours will be from safe light to 3:00 p.m. We reserve the right to assign flights and change hours if necessary. Flight times assigned by entry date.

7. **LAUNCH SEQUENCE** Starting positions will be determined by entry date. The sequence will be communicated prior to the tournament at the Friday night event.

8. **SAFETY** Safe boating conduct must always be observed. Each competitor is required to wear a Coast Guard approved personal flotation device securely fastened, at all times while the boat is being propelled by the combustion engine. Furthermore, a kill switch must be fastened to the driver anytime the combustion engine is propelling the boat. Failure to do so is grounds for disqualification of the offending team's catch. Running lights must be operational and turned on at the blast-off of each tournament. Each competitor's boat must be equipped with a live well system capable of keeping a tournament limit of bass alive. Any boat equipped with a motor that exceeds the horsepower rating of the boat according to the manufacturer is prohibited from being used. All **AUXILIARY** gas tanks and **BLADDER** tanks that are not installed by the boat manufacturer are prohibited. Additional gas tanks that are factory options and installed by a manufacturer's authorized dealer are legal. Boats that do not have factory-installed gas tanks are restricted to a maximum of 18 gallons of gasoline in tanks that meet U.S. Coast Guard regulations. Gas tanks must be properly secured or strapped in a boat. During the tournament, no portable gas tanks or containers capable of holding gasoline can be placed anywhere on the tournament waters or shoreline for use by any tournament competitor.

9. **SPORTSMANSHIP** Each contestant is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, and conservation. **NO TEAM MAY FISH WITHIN 50 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WHICH IS ANCHORED WITH THE TROLLING MOTOR UP. FURTHERMORE, NO TEAM MAY FISH WITHIN 25 YARDS OF ANY OTHER BOAT WITHOUT THE OTHER BOATER'S PERMISSION. PERMISSION MAY NOT BE GRANTED TO ANY TEAM AT THE EXCLUSION OF ANY OTHER TEAM.** No hole sitting by a non-competitor to aid a tournament participant will be allowed. Violators will have their catch disqualified.

10. **TACKLE AND FISHING METHODS** Only artificial baits may be used. No live or cut bait is permitted (pork baits are permitted). All bass must be caught alive in a legal and sporting manner. No snagging. Each competitor may only use 1 rod at a time. No more than 1 line in the water at a time per angler. Trolling with the combustion motor is not permitted. No competitor may leave the boat to land or catch fish. Alabama rigs are permitted.

11. **STATE AND FEDERAL GAME REGULATIONS** All participants are expected to abide by all state and federal laws and game regulations. Any team who intentionally violates a law or regulation in an attempt to gain an unfair advantage will have their catch disqualified. In the case of multiple governing authorities, the strictest law is applicable. Any participant who consumes, or is under the influence of alcoholic beverages, stimulants or depressants during this function will have their catch disqualified. (Prescribed medications taken per doctor's instructions are excluded.)

12. **SCORING** A limit of 5 bass (largemouth, small-mouth, spotted bass) may be weighed in. Minimum lengths will be set at the discretion of the Director but at no time will be less than 12 inches. Lengths will be measured with mouth closed. A short fish brought to the scales will not be weighed and will result in a 1-pound penalty. Dead fish will be penalized .25 (1/4) pound. The dead fish penalty will also apply to any fish weighed as a Big Fish if that fish is dead. All culling must be

done at the time the 6th fish is caught; no team may continue fishing with more than the tournament limit in the live well at any time during the tournament, with the exception of dead fish that is not included in their limit. On any water where State or local laws prohibit culling or impose limits of less than 5 fish, the state or local laws will replace the above as the rule.

13. **EMERGENCIES** Competitors shall remain with their partners in the boat at all times during the tournament, except in the event of sickness or brief excursions for "nature calling", severe storm or other such hazard. It is permitted for a competitor to leave the boat for marina services. Competitors may leave the boat to dislodge it, but only to return the boat in the direction it came from. If for any reason either team member decides to leave the tournament waters early, his or her partner must also stop fishing and return to the dock. In case of a breakdown, one partner may return with fish by another tournament boat while the other partner is permitted to stay with the disabled boat.

14. **WEIGH-IN PROCEDURES** Weigh-in will be on a first come first serve basis. Once fish have been presented to a Tournament Official to be weighed-in, all fish become the property of the tournament and no additional fish may be brought to the scales. Bags may be limited in order to avoid a bottleneck at the weigh-in tanks. Teams not weighing any fish are still required to check in with tournament officials in order to account for all teams. If a team does not return their tournament float, they will not receive points for the tournament. Once a team member has checked in or left the boat for the purpose of checking in, neither team member may fish or continue fishing. **SCALES WILL CLOSE 30 MINUTES AFTER THE LAST FLIGHT'S CHECK IN TIME.** Anglers must be in line with their fish by that time. Teams that launch at the tournament site may trailer their boat prior to weighing fish. Teams who launch at an alternate ramp must weigh their fish prior to trailering.

15. **LATE PENALTY** Competitors who are not checked in by the check in deadline will be penalized at a rate of 1 pound per minute, up to 15 minutes at which time their catch will be disqualified. Late penalties will be deducted from "Big Fish" weight as well as total weight. Key floats labeled with boat numbers will be issued at check in. To be considered "checked in", your float must be turned in to the check in station prior to your scheduled check in time.

16. **USE OF SUBS** Substitutes are permitted as long as the name is submitted prior to tournament start.

17. **PROTEST AND POLYGRAPH TEST** Any protest must be submitted in writing to the Tournament Director within 15 minutes of the close of the weigh-in. The tournament reserves the right to give a polygraph test to any participant at any time. Any angler who has failed a polygraph exam in the past 7 years will not be allowed to enter event. This test does not have to be administered on site and may be set up by the Tournament Director at his discretion. All participants agree to abide by the results of any polygraph test administered. In the event of a protest and an off-site polygraph test, the Tournament Director will have the option of mailing all the checks to the teams in the money pending the outcome of the polygraph.

21. **LIABILITY INSURANCE** All members must carry a minimum of \$100,000 of liability insurance on any boat they use during each Tournament. Failure to do so, or reporting of false information will result in disqualification of catch.

22. **VIOLATION OF RULES AND DISQUALIFICATION** The violation of a tournament rule by either team member may result in weight loss, the loss of weight up to a particular time in the tournament day (eligible for a restart), loss of weight for the entire day, disqualification for the entire tournament or, in an extreme circumstance, ineligibility to participate in future events. If a team is disqualified from a tournament their weight will be recorded as 0 lb. If the director feels that their violation was a willful attempt to gain an unfair advantage or to intentionally cheat, then the director has the right to refuse entry from that team or team members in the future and will inform all members of the situation.

23. **RULES INTERPRETATION** Interpretation of the rules will be left to the Director. Infractions of any rule may result in disqualification of catch. All decisions by the tournament director are final.

24. **LIABILITY RELEASE:** By signing this Official Entry Form, signing the sign in form at the ramp, and/or participation in this tournament, I hereby release and agree to hold harmless Tucker W. Hipps Memorial Foundation, David Stout Outdoors, its officers, sponsors, hosts, employees, and anyone working in association with them from any damages, injuries, or death that may occur as a result of competing in these events, whether by negligence of the said parties or otherwise to the fullest extent of the law.

25. All proceeds from this fundraiser will go to The Tucker W. Hipps Memorial Foundation, Friends of Palmetto Boys State who support the American Legion's Boys program designed to offer a unique way for young men to learn about the American system of government, politics and servant leadership while developing leadership skills. Also benefitting are The Bridge Fishing Outreach and The Outdoor Dream Foundation who support children with special needs and other vulnerabilities to learn to fish.