

2026 Eastman Bass Club Rules

1. Tournament entry fee will be \$50.00 per boat with 88% payback, except for the out-of-town tournament which will be 100% payback. The 12% holdback from tournament entry fees is combined with the ERC Fishing section dues collected for that year. Trophy expenses and any other club-authorized expenses are paid from this total. The remaining balance is split 50/50 between the banquet for door prizes and the Classic for monetary awards. The boat of the officer running tournament will fish free of charge in 2026 with exception of the out of town and classic tournaments.
2. All state and local laws must be observed. Boating courtesy and water safety are stressed. Both front and back lights must remain on at all times during night events and also must be on at the blast off of all day tournaments, with no exceptions. Members are urged to help keep our lakes and shores clean. Please do not throw trash in the lake or around the landing.
3. One participant in each boat must be an ERC Hunting and Fishing Club member or Associate member (see rule #5) in good standing with a valid ERC pass upon request. Associate members and Non-ERC guests must fill out a one-time waiver form prior to fishing an ERC scheduled event. These forms are available from the Fishing Club Secretary upon request and will be filed upon completion. Club members are responsible for the actions of their guests.
4. For the out-of-town tournament, members are free to utilize local lake guides for practice, navigation, current fishing conditions, etc., but guides will not be allowed to participate in the out-of-town tournament.
5. Family members of employee's or retiree's may join the club as "Associate members". Also Program Affiliates may join the club as "Associate members". Program Affiliates must provide a valid pass at time of joining the club. To become an Associate member, a fee of \$10 must be paid. This fee will be good through the 2026 calendar year. This fee will be split and be added to our Classic and Banquet.
6. All participants are subject to random live well checks before the scheduled start time and leave from the designated launch site announced prior to each tournament. Any participants arriving after the scheduled launch time must check in with a club officer, have their live well checked and pay their entry fee. Fishing club officers are: Vice-President - Daryl Woodruff 423-677-3355, Secretary –Matt George 423-502-2705 and Tournament Committee – Jeff Powell, Harold Dye, Tim Smith, Andy Simm, Travis Bragg, Allen George, Eugene France, & Jerry McDavid. A phone list will be provided for club members to contact an officer to find their location to check in if arriving late to a tournament.
7. **Honor start:** All tournaments will be an honor start. This means that you may meet the club officer running the tournament that morning or night to pay your entry fee at the ramp. After you pay the entry fee, you may launch from any ramp on the lake and travel to the area you plan to start. The official start time will be stated in the tournament reminder and at that time you may begin fishing. The

weigh in for all tournaments and the location is posted on the schedule and in the reminder. You can trailer to the weigh in or travel by boat. The out-of-town tournament will remain the same format; we meet the night before the tournament to pay the entry fee.

8. All participants must wear a USCG approved life preserver with the kill switch attached at blast-off of the tournament. Participants will not be permitted to start without these. It is strongly recommended that life jackets be worn with a kill switch attached anytime the boat is under power.
9. No off-limits will be enforced in ERC bass tournaments unless otherwise specified in tournament announcements.
10. All fish must be caught live and in a conventional and sporting manner. Only artificial lures with the exception of pork trailers may be used. Only one fishing rod may be used at a time per person. Trolling is not allowed. Trolling is defined as fishing while a big motor is under power.
11. A catch and release program will be in effect. All fish must be brought to the scales alive; NO DEAD FISH will be weighed with no exceptions. Once fish are brought to the scales, you must weigh the fish you brought to the scales. All fish will become the property of ERC and will be released except for trophy fish and walleye caught during the combination tournaments. Walleye weighed in during combo tournaments do not have to be alive, can be kept on ice, and will be allowed to be taken home.
12. *The tournament creel limit is five (5) fish per boat for daytime tournaments and three (3) fish per boat for the night time tournaments. No one or team will be allowed to bring greater than five (5) fish to the scales for daytime tournaments or three (3) fish to the scales for night time tournaments. This will apply to all tournaments except the bass/walleye combo tournament (5 Bass and 5 Walleye limit per boat). The boat creel limit is 10 fish per boat provided two anglers are present in the boat. Anglers fishing solo must start culling their catch upon landing the sixth (6) keeper size fish per TWRA possession limits.
13. *Participants must check out and have their fish weighed by club officials. Fish will be brought to the scales in your own bags, but it is asked to limit the number waiting in line to a maximum of six teams. (The less time the fish spend in plastic bags, the greater their survival rate.) Anyone bringing a bag with more than five (5) fish per bag or three (3) fish per bag depending on day or night will be refused weighing until Rule No. 12 is complied with. No fish will be brought to the scales with clips or other items attached.
14. All bass weighed in must follow current TWRA length limits. You may ask an officer prior to weighing in if in doubt about identifying spotted bass. Guntersville size limit is 15" for all bass.

State daily creel limits are 5 bass per angler unless otherwise specified below:

Boone – smallmouth 15" & largemouth 15", spots 12"

Cherokee- June 1st – October 15th smallmouth 18" (one per angler), largemouth 15", spots 12"

October 16th – May 31st smallmouth 15" (five per angler), largemouth 15", spots 12"

Douglas – October 1-May 31 (5) per angler smallmouth 12", largemouth 12", spots 12"

June 1st – September 30th Only one (1) Largemouth or Smallmouth Bass over 16" per person, spots 12"

Ft. Patrick Henry – smallmouth 15", largemouth 12", spots 12"

South Holston – smallmouth 15", largemouth 12", spots 12"

Watauga – smallmouth 15", largemouth 12", spots 12"

15. Fish will be measured with the mouth closed on the Golden Rule board. Two official keeper boards will be available prior to weigh-in. Fish brought to the scales more than 1/4" short of the size limit will result in the loss of short fish plus one pound from the creel weight per short fish. Fish become the property of the ERC Hunting and Fishing Club once in the weigh-basket and the above rule will be applied.
16. Participants arriving late to the designated starting area at the conclusion of the event will be penalized as follows: up to 5 minutes' late results in loss of biggest fish, 6 – 10 minutes' loss of next biggest fish, after 10 minutes' disqualification will occur. You must have boat on the trailer, or be at the ramp waiting to take boat out of the water at official end time. A tournament official will announce the official end of each tournament at the ramp. After this, you will be considered late if you are not at one of the before mentioned areas.
17. Any protest must be made to a club officer at official weigh-in time.
18. If there is a rule infraction, a meeting of club officers and tournament committee members present will be held. Their decision will be final before any finishing positions will be determined or prize money distributed. Violations of tournament rules will be subject to disqualification without refund.
19. The point system and payoff will be determined by total boat weight. Points awarded as follows:
 - 1st Place Boat - 100 Points per angler
 - 2nd Place Boat - 99 Points per angler
 - 3rd Place Boat - 98 Points per anglerOne (1) bonus point will be awarded to the angler with the Big Fish of the tournament. Only (1) bonus point will be awarded for the overall big fish on the out-of-town tournaments. All anglers present to fish a tournament will have awarded points for participation. Anglers that zero will be awarded 1 point less than the last boat to weigh in fish.

20. Payoff of tournament winners will be made by the following schedule:

<u>Place & Percentage</u>		<u>1st</u>	<u>2nd</u>	<u>3rd</u>	<u>4th</u>
1-5 boats		100%			
6-10 boats		55%	45%		
11-15 boats		44%	33%	23%	
16+ boats		40%	30%	20%	10%

21. * The best seven (7) tournament scores will count toward the year end point total. A trophy will be awarded to the top angler according to the greatest point total. In the event of a tie, the angler with the greatest point total for all tournaments fished will be deemed Angler of the year. Trophies will be awarded for "Big-Fish" of the year, Angler of the year and "Classic" champions. Big Fish award will come from the regularly fished local lakes, fish caught at the out-of-town tournament will not count toward this award.

22. *The "Classic" will be held in the same calendar year as the tournament schedule. To qualify for the Classic, you must pay entry fees for 7 tournaments. Only Classic qualifiers will vote on the Classic Lake and can participate in the event. The tournament committee will determine the weigh in site once the lake has been selected.

23. *All regular tournament rules apply for the Classic. In addition, the Classic Lake will be off-limits for practice starting on the Monday before the Classic event. The Classic will be judged by total boat weight, 5 fish limit per boat. Qualifiers may choose to fish solo if desired. There is no charge for entry into the Classic, but a side big fish pot for the Classic will be \$10 per person for Big Smallmouth and \$10 per person for Big Largemouth of the event. Top 4 boat weights will be paid at 40, 30, 20, and 10 %. The Classic will be an honor start and weigh in will be at 4pm.

24. If you fish a club event, you may only weigh your fish for the club event. You may not keep your fish and use them to weigh in at another event. Members can still pay for a club event to gain entry into the classic and fish another event on the same body of water as the club event.

25. There will be no changes in the tournament schedule during the season except in emergency situations.

26. *The Eastman Bass club will utilize email, the Eastman Bass club Facebook page, and the ERC TV info. to relay any form of club announcement.

27. *Optional Big Fish Side pot:

- a. \$20 dollars per person to enter
- b. Payments for the optional Big fish Pot made on tournament day will not allow an angler to count their big fish catch for that tournament, they will be eligible on the next event. The exception to this is the very first club event.
- c. Teams must have **both anglers paid in** to be eligible
- d. Out-of-town fish do not qualify for the side pot
- e. This is 100% payback and will be awarded at the banquet.

***Indicates rule change or clarification for 2026**