

TOURNAMENT ETTIQUETTE

For many years the Major Event Planning Meeting has been held on the first Thursday in November at a time and location that is determined prior. Every bass club and every bass fishing organization in Idaho is invited and **“strongly”** encouraged to attend. The attendance of every club and organization is needed to avoid conflicts on scheduled dates and waters.

We are all aware that there is a limited number of waters available for tournaments of any size and of extreme importance is the lack of conflict on Major Event days. There are 6 days in southern Idaho that no other event should ever be scheduled on top of. In northern and eastern Idaho those number of days and events may vary. In southern Idaho those days are C.A.S.T., Scales of Justice Tournament and any Federation Qualifier. Currently TBF qualifiers are scheduled on 4 different Saturdays throughout the season and we are currently discussing some changes to that format. Under any circumstances qualifier dates are shown on our web site by about November 15th of each year. These are the dates that every club should avoid, this includes any out of area clubs that might schedule on the waters designated for these activities.

The reasons for avoiding these conflicts are important. C.A.S.T. and Scales of Justice events are opportunities for us as a group of tournament anglers to show the public that we also serve a community purpose. These are generally, well publicized events that in some way help to abolish the bad image that some people hold of our organizations. Federation Qualifiers are the basis of why the Federation program was originally formed, “the opportunity for a weekend angler to progress into the professional ranks”. A limited number of state members desire to participate in qualifier tournaments and each clubs schedule should avoid conflicts to allow their members an opportunity to do so. Those in TBF are actually fishing for the opportunity to contend for a one million dollar, prize. For those who desire to do that we should all make the attempt to not create a conflict with that desire.

For several years one or more of the Southern Idaho Qualifiers have been faced with a club tournament presence. This has been primarily in Oregon waters and we can assume that it is caused by a more lax tournament permit requirement that does not, by itself, avoid the conflict. This is where it becomes extremely important that the Major Event Calendar be reviewed before scheduling club tournaments. For several years Idaho has been home to two major bass fishing organizations that hold qualifier events. Both of the organizations events are on the calendar and even though TBF club members are not likely to participate, the events hosted on waters by Idaho Bass Federation Nation should always be avoided.

The courtesies discussed here are steeped in long tradition and we should all honor them.

An additional courtesy that we should all consider is better sharing of the water when we are holding an event where there is more than one club on the water. A good suggestion is to share the blast off by alternating blast off sequence, i.e. club holding the permit sends the #1 boat and the second club sends theirs in an alternating sequence until all boats are launched. Even though your club holds the permit (especially in Idaho) it is most likely only by chance. Idaho Department of Fish and Game personnel choose a day (normally after January 1st) and process and schedule all of the tournaments that have been applied for prior to that date. If you are the only club on the water during your tournament it is only because no other club wanted that body and date. If there is more than one club present and you have the permit it is only because your envelope was the first one opened. Remember the roles could easily be reversed at your next event.

As a last note remember your boating ethics. There is no tournament anywhere for any amount of money that is worth risking your life or that of someone else in a race to beat others to that special place that all of us know about.

Courtesy extended today will pay big rewards in the future.