



MLF RSA National Championship 2023

Tournament Rules

Venue: Loskop Dam, MP

Date: 28, 29, 30 September 2023 - It is a three day, full field tournament. Participation is by invitation only.

Loskop Dam is off limits to all participants effective from sunset on Sunday, 24 September 2023.

TOURNAMENT RULES

These rules supersede any previously published set of rules for this event and intended to further the best interests of bass fishing in general and not to benefit any individual, team or competitor. Please make sure you understand the rules and regulations.

1. INTERPRETATION & ENFORCEMENT

Interpretation and enforcement of these rules will be left exclusively to the tournament director. Decisions of the tournament director are final in all matters and are not subject to appeal. Each contestant agrees to report any rule violation to the tournament organiser immediately upon discovery of the violation. Failure to report violations may be cause for disqualification. Any complaint is to be submitted in writing, or by providing video footage, to the tournament organiser within 15 minutes of the check-in time of the final flight of each tournament day.

2. GENERAL

All anglers enter the MLF RSA National Championship voluntarily and at their own risk. MLF South Africa, SA BASS, the Cast-for-Cash tournament organisers, tournament sponsors and its proprietors and all resort proprietors and their employees at all levels, are indemnified from any personal liabilities whatsoever that may be incurred by any person while travelling to, or from, or during the tournament. The emphasis is on team, rather than individual, competition. Only one team per boat is allowed and a team consists of maximum two persons on one boat. (A team may however consist of just one person.) Anglers are not allowed to keep the official weigh-bags, tags or boat flags used at the championship.

3. QUALIFICATION

The MLF RSA Championship is compiled pro rata from each Cast-for-Cash region (minimum top 30% of the region's end season point standings); and

For the 2022/2023 season there were nine (9) qualifying tournaments in each region and individual team members had to fish six (6) events during the season, to qualify for the top five prizes and MLF National colours at the MLF RSA National Championship

In case members from two different teams fish together from one boat they will have to fish under one of the original team names as one team.

Any angler under the age of 16 entering must have written permission and be signed by a parent or legal guardian.

(Forms are available on request).

4. SAFETY

Any person who, in the judgment of the tournament organiser is disabled or handicapped in such a manner as to unfairly hinder his or her skipper or co-angler partner or compromise his or her safety or the safety of his or her skipper or co-angler partner may not be eligible to participate. Safe boating must be observed at all times and remains the responsibility of every skipper. Any angler may be ordered off the water by the tournament organisers for safety reasons. Any information regarding possible dangers of a venue or problems with safety should be reported to officials immediately. Each contestant is required to wear a fastened personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is running from boat check until weigh-in each day of the tournament. All boats must be equipped with an emergency ignition-shutoff device that must be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is running. All persons must be seated and a driver must be behind the steering wheel in full control of the boat whenever it is on plane or the combustion engine is running and in gear. At the discretion of the tournament director, tournament days may be shortened, postponed or cancelled due to



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unsafe weather or water conditions. Competitors may leave their boat and seek shelter in bad weather or when danger is eminent. However, teams must stay within sight of each other.

5. PURCHASING of INFORMATION

The purchasing of, or bartering for, information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters, including but not limited to GPS waypoints (other than through commercially available sources) and the hiring of fishing guide services is not permitted within FIVE days prior each tournament. The sharing of tournament winnings with non-contestants in exchange for information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters is strictly prohibited and will be cause for disqualification from the entire tournament. The purchasing of, or bartering for, fishing locations from another contestant is strictly prohibited and will be cause for both contestants to be disqualified from the entire tournament.

Contestants may not ask for and/or receive information about locating or catching fish on tournament waters from anyone, including publicly available sources (quasi-public websites, blogs and/or social media pages set up for the specific purpose of sharing information with individuals or a small group of individuals, either private or public).

Flights over tournament waters, including drones, are not permitted beginning with the start of the off-limits period, extending through practice and competition days.

6. TOURNAMENT PRIZES

Note: All prize money is based on the number of entries.

Each angler has to be at the prize giving ceremony to receive his prize. No prizes will be kept for collection and non attendance will result in a forfeiting the prize.

In the event of a tie, the team who had the heaviest bag on day three will have the benefit. If there is still a tie, the team who had the heaviest bag weight on day 2.

MLF International colours will be awarded to anglers representing MLF South Africa in international tournaments.

MLF National colours will be awarded to anglers finishing in the top five positions.

Advancement to the MLF Series Championship in the USA will be allocated as follows:

a. The nominated "skipper" of each team finishing in the top two positions will be awarded the "pro-angler" spots at the MLF Series Championship. If any "skipper" in the final top two positions cannot attend the MLF Series Championship then the "skipper" of the team finished in third position will be awarded the "pro-angler" position without any compensation to the angler who didn't accept. (MLF will provide boats for use by pro-qualifiers from the Republic of South Africa during the MLF Series Championship. No boats will be provided for practice.)

b. The nominated "co-angler" of each team finishing in the top two positions will be awarded the "co-angler" spots at the MLF Series Championship. If any "co-angler" in the final top two positions cannot attend the MLF Series Championship then the "co-angler" of the team finished in third position will be awarded the "co-angler" position without any compensation to the angler who didn't accept.

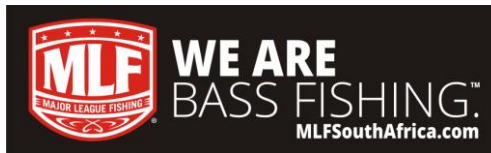
If no such an agreement can be reached among the winning team members just before the MLF South Africa National Championship prize giving, the MLF Series Championship "pro-angler" and "co-angler" entries for that specific winning position in dispute will be awarded to the next following winning team, without any compensation.

c. The slots to represent MLF South Africa and compete in the International Friendship Tournament during MLF Series Championship, will be allocated to the top four places at the TBC National Championship.

8. REGISTRATION & PRE-TOURNAMENT MEETING

Participation at the MLF RSA National Championship is by invitation only and each contestant has to pay a MLF membership fee for the upcoming championship as stipulated under "[Entry Fees](#)".

Any angler under the age of 16 entering must also have written permission and be signed by a parent or legal guardian.



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Upfront MLF RSA National Championship entry fees (per team) must be paid as stipulated under "[Entry Fees](#)". (*The entry fee exclude launching and accommodation fees.*)

Invitation to participate will be done pro rata, based on each team's number of events fished and the team's regional end-of-season-points for the season.

Entries must be made on the official entry form, which will be available on our web site and at registration. (Please write clearly!) By filling in the entry form, submitting and participating in the MLF RSA National Championship, contestants agree to abide by all the rules and have acknowledged and have accepted the indemnity at the bottom of the entry form.

Each contestant must register in person at the designated site. In an emergency or due to an MLF sponsor obligation, contestants may request permission from the tournament director to send a person who is 16 years of age or older to represent them.

If permission is granted, non-contestants can represent one person; contestants can represent themselves and one other person. This representative must attend the pretournament meeting to record flights, takeoff time, check-in time, off-limits areas, size and limits, and any other relevant tournament rule information. Non-attendance at a briefing will not be accepted as an excuse for ignorance of the arrangements and/or rules in the event of a complaint or objection being raised.

9. STARTING POSITIONS

All team numbers will be randomly drawn out of a hat on a first come first serve basis during registration. Only Cast-for-Cash teams who have pre-registered for the 2022/2023 season will be allowed to draw two numbers at once and choose the better number. The number drawn will be valid for the duration of the tournament.

No contestant may be on tournament waters for the purpose of locating fish or testing boats or equipment or be on potential fishing waters after the opening of registration except during tournament hours.

Each day there will be three flights and starting positions during each flight will be according team numbers. Every registered team must collect their corresponding boat flag number for display when boats are lining up for the start. Skippers must beach their boats in the designated flight areas and separate themselves on the water while co-anglers display their team's starting number so that all skippers can arrange themselves for a single boat start. Teams will only be allowed to set off once the team number is called and a GREEN flag has been raised. No team may set off whilst the RED flag is raised. Teams failing to comply with the starting procedure will be disqualified immediately and no tournament entry fees will be refunded. When a team's number is called out, the team must idle out and is only allowed to go on the plane from the point the organiser has appointed.

There will be only one official checkpoint for boat check in the morning and one official check-in point in the afternoon. Failure to go through boat check in and checkout in the morning or failure to check-in at the check-in point will result in disqualification.

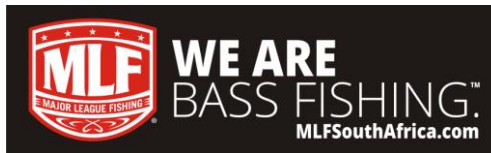
10. BOAT & HORSEPOWER REGULATIONS

All boats participating must be fitted with a minimum of 15hp (fifteen horsepower) outboard engine, must be propeller driven and be a minimum of three meter (10ft) in length. No kayaks, jet skis, barges or similarly cumbersome craft will be permitted. Each boat must have all required safety equipment and must be equipped to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live-well of some sort. All vessels should be equipped with an emergency ignition shut-off device that should be securely attached to the driver's body whenever the combustion engine is in operation.

The use of generators, other than solar or wind-powered generators, is prohibited in contestant boats during tournament hours on all competition days.

11. BOAT OPERATION

In the event of an emergency, please call the tournament director. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. Contestants must leave and return to the official checkpoint by boat. Please contact the tournament organiser in the event of equipment failure or emergency. There will be only two permitted



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methods of returning to the official check-in: (1) By both partners remaining in their boat and being towed, or (2) By one partner boarding the boat of another tournament contestant with their entire catch kept in a weigh bag. Under these two conditions the contestant's catches may be counted without a penalty (except for late penalties, dead-fish penalties or other penalties pertaining to other tournament rules). Contestants who elect to return to the official check-in by any other means than cited above will forfeit their day's catch. A 100 meter radius from the weigh station must be treated as a no-wake zone. Boats are not allowed to beach directly at the release point. There is a "No Fishing Zone" at the weigh station as indicated by the tournament organiser. Tournament officials reserve the right to board any participating boat before, during or after the tournament.

12. LIVE FISH

The target fish are largemouth, smallmouth or spotted bass only. The MLF RSA Championship is a catch, weigh and release event. Every effort must be made to keep bass alive through the use of a properly aerated live-well of some sort. MLF South Africa and all its sponsors recommend the use of live-well additives that promote the healthy return of bass to their natural habitat. (No stringers, keep nets or fish nets are allowed).

Any fish presented to the weigh master with a white circle in the eye or a fish, or obviously dead, or a fish that is not gilling or finning within (10) ten seconds on a wet towel in the shade; will be regarded as "dead" and therefore be penalised and a 1000 gram will be deducted from the total bag weight for each "dead fish" as decided upon by the weigh master alone.

MLF South Africa also recommends the use of non-puncturing culling clips like the new T-H Marine G Force Conservation Cull for marking fish and live-well additives like G-Juice to help promote the healthy release of bass. Intentional damaging of fish (fin clipping, illegal tagging, or disfiguration of any kind) will lead to instant disqualification.

13. LIMITS

All live-wells must be empty prior to commencement of any fishing session. The daily bag limit is FIVE bass per team, on the boat at any one time. Anglers possessing more than the tournament limit of five fish per team per day will be disqualified.

There is minimum weight of one kilogram (1kg) per fish to be weighed.

Bass presented for weigh-in that fail to measure the prescribed weight will be penalized at the rate of 500 gram for each bass presented.

14. PERMITTED FISHING METHODS

Any team can only start to fish after he has gone through the starting gate. Fishing is defined as having a lure attached to a line and a rod and reel with the rod in hand. All bass must be caught alive in a conventional sporting manner. All fishing must be conducted from the boat and only artificial lures may be used, with the exception of pork trailers and biodegradable soft baits. Only one wet rod with one main line and one lure / bait per angler at any given time is allowed. The rod must be hand held (no rod holder may be used).

Trolling as a method of fishing is strictly prohibited. Trolling is defined as operating the combustion engine or using the trolling motor to extend a cast, or lengthen a retrieve, or give action to a lure. All bass caught must be hooked inside the mouth. Creating feeding spots by dumping bait either artificial or natural, or any other attractant in order to attract fish to a specific location is prohibited. Tournament ethics, courtesy and good conduct are unwritten "golden rules" and core responsibilities of all anglers on all levels. No live-baiting is permitted.

15. PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS

Contestants may fish anywhere on tournament waters available to the public and accessible by boat, except areas designated as "off limits" or "no fishing" by local, provincial or tournament officials, or within 45 metres of a competitor's boat. Anglers may be disqualified if encroachment is made on out-of-bounds areas, which have been declared as such at the competition briefing. At no time may a contestant leave the boat to land a fish or to make the boat more accessible to fishing waters. The cutting of trees, bushes and/or logs after the start of registration to make an area more accessible by boat is



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strictly prohibited and may result in disqualification from the tournament. Contestants must leave and return to the check-in by boat.

Marker buoys are permitted by anglers but if an angler allows any one angler into his casting distance radius, they are then obliged to allow other anglers into this area.

16. OFF-LIMITS, PRACTICE & COMPETITION

Contestants may not enter tournament waters to locate bass or potential fishing waters or sightsee after registration has opened, except during tournament hours. No testing of equipment on tournament waters after registration is permitted. During competition days contestants may not place brush or other physical fish attractors, including chum or holding nets with bait fish of any kind, in tournament waters. During competition days teams may not follow a non-contestant's boat or participate in the placing of markers, brush or other fish attractors including holding nets by non-contestants or the practice of "hole sitting" by anyone. Disqualification will be enforced if there is a breach of this rule.

17. CHECK-IN and WEIGH-IN SPECIFICATIONS

Check-in: All tags must be returned and be back at the weigh station, on the tag board before the cut off time for the particular flight. Even though a team's bag could have been weighed but their tag is not on the board at the time, the team will be deemed late and their catch for the day will be disqualified. Any team who is late solely due to them rendering emergency assistance to another team may, at the discretion of the tournament organiser, have their catch weighed if they provide satisfactory proof of such assistance given.

Weigh-in: The weigh-station will be open through the day, but once the flights start to come in - then only teams in that particular flight may weigh their bags.

Weight will be measured in kilogram. Any fish presented for weigh-in must be brought in a weigh bag filled with water. Any fish brought lip-landed to the scale will NOT be weighed. No culling of fish at the weigh station is allowed.

Only a team member may handle his team's catch to be weighed and presented for scoring by an MLF official. No angler may allow any fish caught by him to be added to the score of any other team. In such an event both teams shall be disqualified and subject to disciplinary procedures. Each team's catch must be presented in an official weigh-in bag and verified by the signature of a team member. Failure to have a verified signature may result in disqualification of that day's catch. The team's boat flag must be weighed along with their fish. All fish are weighed together to determine the total bag weight. (No points per fish.) MLF members are encouraged to nominate, weigh-in and claim record size bass during tournaments and apply for official MLF record recognition.

Any fish weighed before the weigh-in time will be noted on the team's score card and once it has been noted it cannot be removed for any reason whatsoever.

The intentional introduction of any material, including vegetation, that cause an increase in weight/mass of a fish by any angler shall be deemed just cause for the disqualification of the team concerned. Any foreign object protruding in any way from the fish must be safely removed and not count towards the weight. For the avoidance of doubt such foreign objects will include partially swallowed or regurgitated prey / food and any fishing tackle. Winners are determined by the heaviest cumulative weight from days 1, 2 and 3.

18. PENALTIES & DISQUALIFICATIONS

There will be three penalty levels:

a. Minor offences - penalized at the rate of 500 gram per penalty

For each fish that weighed less than 1kg on its own.

Going on the plane within 100 meter radius from the weigh station - must be treated as a no-wake zone.

Smoking in the weigh-in line

Weighing short fish

b. Serious offences - penalized at the rate of 1000 gram per penalty



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Failure to wear an approved personal flotation device anytime the combustion engine is running: warning for first offence but instant disqualification for 2nd offense.

A 1000 gram will be deducted from the total bag weight for each "dead fish".

No angler may hand to, or exchange, any article with any other boat and, excepting in an emergency situation, may not leave the boat during the fishing session.

c. Disqualification

Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the Championship rules except for minor and serious offences.

Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration or tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure and prize giving.

Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.

Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.

Anglers possessing more than the tournament limit of five fish per team per day will be disqualified.

Teams who beach directly at the release point.

The intentional introduction of materials that cause an increase in weight/mass of a fish by an angler.

Intentional damaging of fish (fin clipping, illegal tagging, or disfiguration of any kind).

A tag that is not on the tag board by the closing time of the event will result in the entire catch being disqualified. (In case of a lost tag the team must identify itself to the tournament director and inform him of a lost tag before the dedicated cut-off time, to avoid disqualification.)

Fishing in an off limits area.

In the event that a team is found guilty of cheating, the team members will be immediately banned from all SA BASS, Cast-for-Cash® or MLF Championship tournaments and legal action will be taken against the team members

19. MEDIA COMMENTS, PUBLIC ATTACKS

The favourable public reputation of MLF South Africa as a sanctioning organization in the sport of fishing, the integrity of its officials, and the reputation of its media properties are valuable assets and tangible benefits for SA BASS and MLF South Africa. Accordingly, it is an obligation of competitors to refrain from comments to the news media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members and fellow anglers. Responsible expressions of legitimate disagreement with MLF South Africa and/or SA BASS policies are encouraged as opposed to attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials. However, public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of MLF South Africa, SA BASS, its officials or sponsors shall be considered conduct unbecoming an angler and will result in disciplinary action.

20. SPORTSMANSHIP

All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to MLF South Africa, our sponsors, the sport of fishing and MLF's efforts to promote the sport. Conduct not complying with these standards includes, but is not limited to, the following:

- Violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the championship rules
- No angler may hand to, or exchange, any article with any other boat and, excepting in an emergency situation, may not leave the boat during the fishing session.
- Consumption and/or possession of alcoholic beverages or any kind of mind-altering substance during registration or tournament hours extending through the weigh-in procedure and prize giving.
- Abuse of, or addiction to, mind-altering substances.
- Smoking is not allowed in the weigh-in line.
- Conviction of a felony within the past 36 months.
- Suspension/disqualification, probation or ban from any tournament or fishing organization.



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- Any other words, conduct or actions reflecting unfavourably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition and compliance with tournament rules, or which fail to comply with the standards set in this rules. In case of any conduct not complying with the standards outlined above, MLF South Africa shall have the right to refuse an application to compete, to deny a confirmed application to compete by returning the entry fee, to disqualify a contestant or impose any penalty outlined in these rules. All disputes will be handled and finalised immediately after each leg. The organisers may at their discretion co-opt persons to assist in settling disputes.

21. MISBEHAVIOURS

- a. Fighting, pulling pushing and threatening each other and abusive language will not be tolerated, this includes officials as well. (*Minimum 3 months ban up to 12 months*).
- b. Deliberate or intentional actions of a member, official, competitor (including the competitor's family, relatives or friends), publishing negative comments towards fellow competitors, administrators, officials or tournament partners on social media, using foul language (including officials) towards spectators, officials, competitors, tournament partners or employees of the venue. The competitor (official) may be banned for a period for a period of *minimum 3 up to 12months* if found guilty by a special committee appointed to investigate the matter. The decision of the special committee is final.

22. COMMUNICATION and SOCIAL MEDIA

Contestants may not use mobile communication devices, including but not limited to, cell phones, tablets, marine radios, walkie-talkies, CBs, etc., to communicate with anyone about locating or catching fish on tournament waters during tournament hours. Mobile communication devices may be used during tournament hours to communicate with the tournament director. At no time during tournament hours may contestants read or discuss social media posts from other contestants.

22. RIGHT OF ADMISSION

Right of admission is reserved: the MLF South Africa tournament is a showcase for bass angling! All contestants are required to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy and conservation and to conduct themselves in a manner that will be a credit to themselves, to MLF South Africa, SA Bass, sponsors, the sport of fishing and MLF's efforts to promote the sport examples of conduct not complying with those standards include, but are not limited to, the following: violation of, or failure to comply with, any of the official rules for the MLF RSA Championship.

23. LOGO DISPLAY & MEDIA COVERAGE

During all days of competition any and all tobacco logos are prohibited and may not be worn or displayed. Anglers may wear their own apparel every day, except when anglers represent MLF South Africa in any event. MLF South Africa reserves the right, in its sole discretion, to prohibit any angler's apparel that it finds to be offensive. All decisions are in tournament organisers' sole discretion.

Only official MLF South Africa sponsors and benefit providers are entitled to publicity at the championship as jointly agreed. No competitor may offer publicity, guaranteed or incidental, on behalf of SA Bass magazine or MLF South Africa in exchange for sponsorship.

In the event of any television coverage of any sort, SA BASS owns the rights to all camera footage. SA BASS and MLF South Africa are under no obligation to remunerate, whether it be cash or any other means, what so ever, to any competitors should they appear in the production.



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24. TRUTH VERIFICATION

Each contestant agrees to submit, by signature on the tournament entry form, to a polygraph or voice stress analysis examination and to abide by its conclusion. Failure to pass an examination will result in disqualification from the tournament. Truth verification tests will be used at MLF South Africa's sole discretion and the decision based on the findings will be made solely by MLF South Africa. All costs for such a polygraph test will be for the competitor's account, despite the outcome.

25. POWER OF DISQUALIFICATION

Under any of the above rules, tournament organisers are empowered to disqualify any competitor, after due consideration of the facts, deemed to have broken these rules at their level and/or apply disciplinary measures as defined in the MLF RSA Championship rules. The tournament organiser may recommend the banning of any angler for serious breach of rules. In the event of a dispute MLF South Africa may make use of a polygraph test for both anglers on the boat.

26. CAPTIONS

The captions at the beginning of each paragraph are intended to facilitate convenience in referring to the various rules. The captions are not part of the substance of the paragraph and should not be used in construction of any paragraph or of this overall set of rules

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