

**American Bass Anglers Inc.**  
**Tournament Rules for the**  
**2009 American Couples Series National Championship**  
**Columbus Pool, Columbus, Mississippi**  
**3 – 8 August, 2009**

**NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP RULES ANNOUNCEMENT:** The 2009 American Couples Series rules remain enforce and are supplemented as follows for the 2009 Championship.

**PARTICIPANTS AND ELIGIBILITY:** Contestants must have qualified from the 2009 Divisional events (See 2009 rules). DURING THE OFFICIAL PRACTICE AND COMPETITION DAYS OF AN American Bass Anglers TOURNAMENT, NO COMPETITOR MAY OPERATE A BOAT UNLESS THAT CONTESTANT HAS DOCUMENTED PROOF OF A MINIMUM OF \$100,000 BOATING LIABILITY INSURANCE ON THAT PARTICULAR BOAT WITH VALID EXPIRATION DATE. PROOF OF INSURANCE MUST BE WITH THE BOAT BEING USED AND MUST COVER THE COMPETITOR USING THAT BOAT. RANDOM CHECKS WILL BE CONDUCTED THROUGHOUT THE TOURNAMENT. A properly completed and signed official entry form and the entry fee must be presented prior to the tournament. Tournament officials reserve the right to refund any membership and/or entry fee, if they shall choose for any reason not to accept the application for entrance. Any person entering a tournament that is under 18 years of age must have the signature of his/her parent or legal guardian on the entry form.

**OFF-LIMITS:** Individuals who have been on the tournament waters during the off-limit period (after midnight, 19 July 2009 and prior to safelight, 3 August 2009) are not eligible to compete in the American Couples Series National Championship.

**PRE-TOURNAMENT PRACTICE:** Pre tournament practice will be from safe light until dusk on Monday, 3 August 2009 thru Wednesday, 5 August 2009, and from safe light until 3:00PM, Thursday, 6 August, 2009. All contestants must be registered prior to going on the water for practice. There will be a MANDATORY SAFETY AND RULES MEETING at 7:00PM on Thursday, 6 August 2009, at the Trotter Convention Center, 402 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, Columbus, MS 39701. At least one team member must attend this meeting. Failure to attend the safety and rules meeting may result in immediate disqualification. No contestant may enter the tournament water for the purpose of catching or locating possible fishing locations after each day's weigh-in.

**REGISTRATION:** On-site registration will be conducted at the Trotter Convention Center, 402 2<sup>nd</sup> Avenue North, Columbus, MS 39701 on Thursday, 6 August 2009 from 4:00PM until 6:00PM. Failure to register may result in disqualification. At least one team member must check-in during the allotted times.

**PERMITTED FISHING LOCATIONS:** Columbus Pool has been designated as the official tournament waters for the 2009 American Couples Series National Championship. Launch and weigh-in will be from the East Bank Boat Ramp (aka City Ramp), Columbus, MS. Locking will be permitted, with the following limitations; anglers may lock-up to Fulton, Mississippi (MS Highway 78) and may lock-down to Gainsville, AL (AL Highway 39). Fishing is not permitted

within 50 yards of a marina gas pump. Additional off-limits areas may be designated and explained at pre-tournament meeting by the tournament director.

**OFFICIAL CHECKPOINT:** Boats will be launched in boat number order. There will be only one official point for check-out in the morning and check-in in the afternoon, Located at the East Bank Boat Ramp (City Ramp), Columbus, MS. Competitors not at the checkpoint at the designated time will be penalized at the rate of one (1) pound per minute, deducted from their total weight for the day. Any team more than 15 minutes late for send-off or check-in will be disqualified for the day. Official start and weigh-in times will be announced at the pre-tournament meeting. Our best effort will be given to allow at least 8 hours fishing time.

**SCORING:** Pounds and ounces of each team's catch (two-day total) will determine tournament standings and placement. Only largemouth, spotted, red eye or small mouth bass will be weighed. The creel limit shall be five (5) unless the prevailing state limit is less. At no time shall a competitor have in his/her possession more than the tournament limit. Culling must be done immediately. **CULLING OF DEAD BASS IS PROHIBITED.** Minimum length will be 12 inches (measured on a flat board). A penalty of one (1) pound will be deducted from the total weight for each short fish and a penalty of eight (8) ounces or one-half (.50) pound will be deducted from the total weight for each dead fish. Penalty weights will be subtracted from the scale weight. A contestant that presents more fish than the tournament limit will be disqualified immediately. Mangled, mashed, mauled or otherwise altered fish will be grounds for immediate disqualification. No regurgitated baitfish will be weighed. Fish will not be put on a stringer at any time. All fish presented at the weigh-in become the property of American Bass Anglers. All live fish will be returned to the lake and the tournament director will dispose of any dead fish. Only weigh-in bags provided by the tournament director will be used for official weigh-in.

**AMERICAN COUPLES SERIES NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP: The championship tournament waters will be off-limits from midnight, 19 July until safelight, 3 August 2009.** Contestants must be registered prior to going on the water to practice. During official practice contestants may only pre-fish alone, with a member of his/her immediate family, another contestant of the tournament, a sponsor of American Bass Anglers or a member of American Bass Anglers staff. **Starting at midnight, central time, 19 July 2009, continuing through the final weigh-in of the American Couples Series National Championship, 8 August 2009, other than using publicly-available information (e.g. newspaper and Internet reports) 2009 American Couples Series National Championship contestants cannot solicit, receive, or gather any information via phone, electronic devices or any other means about locating or catching fish on Championship waters unless that information comes from another contestant in the 2009 Championship. NO EXCEPTIONS.** The championship will be a six day event. Monday thru Thursday will be official practice and Friday and Saturday will be the official tournament days. All teams will fish both days of the event.