



Ultimate Angler Championship — Official Tournament Rules

1. Eligibility

- Participation is limited to qualified anglers in good standing with Unified Pros.
 - Unified Pros Membership must be in good standing
 - Anglers must have earned their spot by:
 - Being the highest-placing Unified Pros member in a sanctioned event, or
 - Receiving a formal invitation from Unified Pros.
 - A valid Alabama freshwater fishing license is required.
 - All non-resident participants must possess a valid Alabama Boater's Education Certificate.
 - It is each angler's responsibility to know and follow all applicable Alabama state boating laws.
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2. Tournament Format

- **Important Dates:**
 - Mandatory Marshal Meeting: Wednesday 7:00 PM
 - Angler Meeting: Sunday 6:00 PM
 - **Practice Days:** Two official practice days. **(October 7-8)**
 - **Competition Days (October 9-11):** Two full-field competition days **(Friday, October 10th Top 50 Cutoff)** followed by a final championship day for the top 50 anglers.
 - **Marshals:** Required on all three competition days.
 - Competitors are responsible for providing a qualified marshal (18+ years, physically fit).
 - Marshals are randomly paired and will not ride with the angler they were provided by.
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3. Communication

- All anglers must provide a working cellphone number and email.
- Tournament updates will be sent via text; this will be the primary communication method.



4. Insurance & Documentation

- \$300,000 liability boating insurance (per occurrence) is required. Proof must be presented.
- A signed and dated W-9 form must be submitted prior to the tournament.

5. Rule Enforcement & Polygraph

- The Tournament Director has full authority over rule interpretation and penalties. All decisions are final.
- Polygraph or truth verification tests may be administered at any time. Participation is mandatory.

6. Mandatory Pre-Tournament Meetings

- **Marshal Meeting:** 5:00 PM
- **Angler Meeting:** 6:00 PM
- Attendance is mandatory. Missing this meeting will result in disqualification unless cleared in advance due to emergency circumstances.

7. Reporting Rule Violations

- Anglers must report any observed rule violations, including those involving themselves.

8. Off-Limits & Information Rules

- **7-Day Off-Limits:** Begins one week before the first official practice day.



- **Off-Limits Start Date: September 30th** at 12:01 a.m. local time (exactly seven days before the first official practice day).
 - No fishing or information-sharing once the off-limits period begins.
 - **Zero-Info Rule:** Once the off-limits period begins—and throughout the official practice days **and all competition days**—there shall be **absolutely no soliciting, listening, receiving, giving, or exchanging of information of any kind** intended to help an angler find or catch bass. This includes, but is not limited to, waypoints, GPS coordinates, depths, lure choices, techniques, or patterns, whether communicated in person, by phone, text, radio, social media, or any other electronic means.
 - **Marshal Information Prohibition:** Do not solicit or accept any information from a Marshal, whether that Marshal was arranged by the angler or assigned by tournament officials.
 - **Angler-to-Angler Conversation:** Competitors may talk fishing among themselves, but may NOT share specific fishing locations such as GPS waypoints or any other location-identifying details.
 - **Pre-fishing:** Allowed anytime **before** off-limits begins; however, hiring guides or paying for fishing information is prohibited.
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9. Tournament Waters

- Any waters deemed posted, off-limits, or “no fishing” by any local, state, or federal agency are off-limits.
 - Only waters legally open to public fishing may be fished.
 - Lake Guntersville only. No locking into Lake Wheeler or Lake Nickajack.
 - No-fishing/no-boating zones per local/state/federal law are off-limits.
 - The live release area at Goose Pond Colony is off-limits.
 - Additional off-limit areas will be disclosed during the pre-tournament meeting.
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10. Practice Days

- Launch permitted at any Lake Guntersville ramp.
- Practice allowed from 30 minutes before sunrise to 30 minutes after sunset.
- Marshals may fish during the official two day practice period with the Angler who has invited them to participate as their provided Marshall, but may not fish during the competition.



11. Safety Requirements

- USCG-approved flotation devices must be worn when the combustion engine is in operation.
- Kill switch must be attached to angler or their life vest.
- Inflatable PFD users must also have a USCG-approved standard PFD on board.
- No alcohol or controlled substances allowed during practice or competition.
- All passengers in your boat must have their feet in the floor of the boat while engine is running in gear.

12. Sonar Use

- Forward-facing and 360-degree sonar are prohibited during practice and competition.
- Units and transducers must be removed from the boat prior to practice.
- Lock boxes will be provided and forward facing capabilities will be suspended for the duration of this event both practice and competition days

13. Scoring

- **Daily Bag Limit:** 5 black bass (Largemouth, Smallmouth, Spotted), 15" minimum length.
 - All fish must be caught legally and ethically.
 - **Dead Fish Penalty:** 4 oz per fish.
 - **Late Penalty:** 1 lb per minute up to 15 minutes; beyond 15 minutes = disqualification.
 - **Tie Breakers:**
 1. Total number of fish weighed.
 2. Heaviest Day 1 weight.
 3. Heaviest Day 2 weight.
 4. Combined weight from Days 1 & 2.
 5. Championship round tie = 1-hour sudden death fish-off.
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14. Landing Fish

- Landing nets allowed. Only other legal method: hand landing.
 - No grippers or mechanical grabbers allowed.
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15. Tackle & Techniques

- One rod and reel in use at any time.
 - If a lure is stuck underwater, retrieve or break off before casting another.
 - Sight fishing: hook point must be inside the mouth and verified by the marshal.
 - Trolling, strolling, and umbrella rigs are prohibited.
 - Only artificial lures may be used.
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16. Culling Rules

- **Possession Limit:** Anglers may possess no more than five (5) bass at any time.
 - **Immediate Culling Requirement:** If a sixth bass is caught, the angler must cull before making the next cast.
 - **Cull Order:** When reducing to the five-fish limit, release fish in descending size order—largest bass first, then the next largest, and so on—until only five bass remain.
 - **Over-Possession Line Penalty:** Casting or fishing while holding more than five bass will result in a one-pound (1 lb) penalty assessed against the day's total weight.
 - **Post-Cull Penalty:** After the excess fish have been released and the limit restored to five, an additional one-pound (1 lb) penalty will be imposed.
 - **Weigh-In Violation:** Bringing more than five bass to the scales carries the same penalties as over-possession during fishing (see above).
 - **Culling Tag Restriction:** The use of mouth-puncturing tags for culling is prohibited.
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17. Boat Rules

- Anglers may only exit the boat in emergencies (bathroom breaks included).
- No exiting to gain access to fishing spots.



- Marshals cannot assist with pushing or operating boats unless in emergencies.
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18. Marshal Responsibilities

- Observe the pro angler at all times and report any potential rule infractions.
 - No assistance to anglers. Cannot hold or drive the boat except in emergencies.
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19. In-Tournament Communication

- Cell phone use limited to emergencies or urgent family matters.
 - No competitor-to-competitor communication via phone or text during tournament hours.
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20. Boat & Engine Requirements

- Maximum 250 HP engine limit, regardless of manufacturer rating.
 - Boat must have a visible Coast Guard max HP and load capacity plate.
 - Modifying engine horsepower is strictly prohibited.
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21. Take-Off & Weigh-In

- **Running Lights:** All boats must have navigation (running) lights on and operating before take-off and they must remain on throughout the entire launch sequence.
- **Take-Off:** Begins at safe light (~6:30 AM).
 - Boat checks and kill switch demos conducted by marshals.
 - Day 1: Boats 1–200.
 - Day 2: Field inverted.
 - Day 3: Top 50 launch in ranked order.
- **Flights:** 8 flights on Days 1–2, 3 flights on Day 3.
- **Weather Delays:** Start may be postponed; weigh-in times remain unchanged.



22. Boat Breakdowns

- Broken boats may be swapped with approval and valid insurance verification.
- Fish must be transferred under marshal supervision into a separate LiveWell in the ride-along boat.
- No fishing allowed after entering another competitor's boat.

23. Payout Structure

The Ultimate Angler Championship will award over **\$1 million** in guaranteed payouts as follows:

- **1st Place:** \$500,000
- **2nd Place:** \$130,000
- **3rd Place:** \$80,000
- **4th Place:** \$70,000
- **5th Place:** \$50,000
- **6th Place:** \$45,000
- **7th Place:** \$40,000
- **8th Place:** \$35,000
- **9th Place:** \$30,000
- **10th Place:** \$25,000
- **11th–25th Place:** \$7,500 each
- **26th–50th Place:** \$5,000 each
- **51st–100th Place:** \$1,000 each

All winnings are subject to verification of eligibility, rules compliance, and IRS reporting requirements. A completed W-9 form is required for all payouts.

24. Rule Amendments



Rules are subject to change at the discretion of tournament officials. Any updates or modifications will be communicated to all participants in a timely manner prior to or during the event as necessary.

Acknowledgment & Polygraph Agreement

By signing below, I certify that I have read, understand, and agree to abide by every rule and regulation established by Ultimate Anglers. I further agree, if requested by tournament officials, to submit to a polygraph or other truth-verification test and to accept the test results as final and binding.

Angler Signature _____

Date _____