



## Battle of the Brands Rules

1. Battle of the Brands Rules: Tournament rules are included herein with special notations. It is each participant's responsibility to read all items before entering. Battle of the Brands rules will apply in all events unless superseded by federal, state or local laws. GSM Outdoors/Xtreme Bass Series reserves the right to refuse any tournament entry fees or entry forms for any reason. GSM Outdoors/XBS officials, directors, and staff decisions will be final in all matters.
2. Laws: State, Federal, and Local Laws must be obeyed.
3. Safety: Safety is of the utmost importance, and anglers must recognize that; Fishing from an open boat is inherently dangerous, and as a result XBS seeks to limit those hazards with reasonable safety rules
  - a. Safe boat conduct and speed limits, where applicable, must always be observed by competitors. Anglers must realize that riding in an open boat is inherently dangerous, and all safety precautions must be adhered to.
  - b. Tournament officials may delay, shorten, restrict tournament waters, or cancel the start of an official tournament day due to bad weather or other factors that would endanger the safety of the competitors.
  - c. In the event of an emergency, competitors should call 911 immediately and then notify tournament officials. Competitors may leave the boat and seek safe shelter in bad weather conditions when danger may be imminent, at which time all fishing must cease.
4. Any lures CURRENTLY made by GSM Outdoors brands; Bill Lewis Lures, Yamamoto Baits, Buckeye Lures, Big Bite Baits, and Steel Shad. Discontinued products by any of these brands is not allowed. **NO UMBRELLA RIGS. CUSTOM PAINTING YOUR LURE IS NO LONGER PERMITTED AS IT HAS BEEN IN YEARS PAST.** Changing your hooks is permitted. Modifying internal shot loads of Bill Lewis branded baits is NOT allowed. You are permitted to use your own hooks/weights for use of soft plastics but must only use approved jigs/jig heads currently made by Buckeye Lures. If your modification is in question then it is advised you seek permission from the tournament director prior to tournament.
5. Anglers do not have to remove non-GSM Outdoors lures/tackle from their boats. However, ONLY GSM Outdoors lures CURRENTLY approved in #4 above can be out on the boat deck during the tournament. Non-GSM Outdoors lures of any kind

placed on the deck while participating in this tournament will result in immediate disqualification.

6. Insurance: All boats used in GSM Outdoors/XBS tournaments must have adequate liability insurance coverage. This is the user/owners responsibility. Failure to have insurance will result in disqualification. A minimum of \$100,000.00 coverage is suggested.
7. Eligibility & Participation: Any person age 17 or under may be a team partner with a parent or a person age 18 or older, or if a team consist of two persons 17 or under, a third person may be allowed in the boat strictly as a Captain. The Captain shall at no time pick up a fishing rod during tournament hours. Persons under 18 must have the signature of his/her parent or legal guardian on the tournament entry form.
8. Tournament Entry Fees, payment dates, and late fees:  
Pre-registration is **STRONGLY ENCOURAGED**. Boat numbers will be issued in order of registration.
  - a) Early Registration: Before February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024. \$120.00 per boat (1 or 2 man team) with 100% Payback. \$20.00 of entry will go towards Big Bass side pot.
  - b) February 1<sup>st</sup> 2024-February 11<sup>th</sup> 2024: Entries received February 1<sup>st</sup> through February 11th, 2024 will be \$130.00
  - c) Teams registering after February 11th will be \$150.00.
9. Payout and prizes: 100% payback event. 1 in 5 payout. Winners will be determined by the heaviest five (5) fish on Lake Guntersville....Big Fish (side pot) – NO DEAD FISH can be considered for BIG FISH. Only live fish will count towards BIG FISH category. Top 3 Big Bass prizes will be awarded. Only one fish from a team's bag will count towards big bass, however, a team can weigh multiple fish to establish big bass for their bag. Sponsor boats, if used, will not be included as part of payout.
10. Ties: Prize money for tied positions will be combined and distributed equally among the tied teams.
11. Fishing Licenses: Each contestant will observe fish and game laws and have in his or her possession a valid State fishing license. Participants without a fishing license as required by law will be disqualified from competition.
12. Pre-registration & Sign Up: Online registration is available at [www.xbseries.com](http://www.xbseries.com). ONSITE REGISTRATION and Check-in will begin at 3:00 pm the day prior to the tournament at the Guntersville Middle School gym. It will conclude at

6 pm. We will open up registration again the morning of the tournament at 6 am at CIVITAN PARK. Check or money order must be received SEVEN DAYS PRIOR TO TOURNAMENT DATE.

13. Contestants may pay at pre-registration meeting the afternoon prior to event or cash at Civitan Park the morning of the tournament. Cash or Debit/Credit cards only at onsite registration. **NO CHECKS WILL BE ACCEPTED AT ONSITE REGISTRATION.**
14. Fish Limits & Penalty: All contestants must use care in handling and keeping fish alive for release after weigh-in. All fish will be brought to the weighmaster in official weigh bags with enough water to keep the fish covered until weigh-in. A tournament limit for Lake Guntersville will be FIVE (5) fish, minimum legal length of 15 inches, measured on a PRO RULE with mouth closed and tail compressed (pinched) in accordance with State law.  
No culling of dead Fish. No culling at ramp or in host marina. No retaining bass in live well and not weighing those fish is the same as culling at the ramp. Dead fish penalty will be .50 pounds per dead fish. Teams must not have more than (5) fish in the live well at any time.
15. Life Jackets & Kill Switch: Safe boating practices must be observed by all times. Life Jackets or Vest will be worn by both team members any time the outboard motor is in gear and running above IDLE. Kill switch will be connected to boat operator any time the outboard motor is running and in gear.
16. Tackle & Equipment: No live or prepared bait is permitted. You may not fish on or from any structure above the deck. All fishing must be done from boat deck. Only current GSM Outdoors family of lures may be used per item #4 above. No multiple lures of any kind; i.e. NO UMBRELLA RIGS. No wading or trolling is allowed. All fish must be caught from the boat. Only one rod and reel may be used at any given time by each angler. No rod may be left unattended with line or lure in water.
17. Permitted Fishing Locations: No “hole sitting” or reserving a fishing area is permitted. Anglers may not leave their boat except in a dire emergency or trailering to another ramp. You must fish water that is available to all competitors. No fishing within 50 yards of any boat anchored, with trolling motor up. No fishing in areas designated off limits by governmental agencies. No fishing within 50 yards of Launch Site. No fishing within 50 yards of a marina gas pump. There are NO off-limits days for practice.
18. Team check-in: Contestants must check in and out at the official Check Point. All contestants will be assigned a boat number. Any team checking in after his announced check-in time will be disqualified.

19. **Tournament Hours:** The week of the tournament, the director will determine the time for safe-light. An official start time will then be announced at the mandatory meeting the evening prior to the tournament. Each boat must have one working cell phone in order to be sure they don't start fishing prior to the official start time. When the clock on each boat's cell phone reaches the official start time then it will be time to start fishing. Trailering will be allowed in this tournament. You may be on the water prior to your start time, but are not permitted to make casts for any reason prior to your start time. The weigh-in will begin at 3:00 pm for the 1st flight of boats. The following flights will be assigned weigh-in times. Each team will be assigned a boat number at the mandatory meeting. At check-in, all teams must return their boat chip prior to their designated return time.
20. **Emergency or Break Down:** Anglers are not permitted to leave their boat or touch another boat with the exception of an emergency or equipment failure. It is permitted to be towed either to safety or the weigh-in area by any safe means available. One or both anglers must identify their fish with some sort of marker or separation system before entering the rescue boat with fish, to return to launch site. (No fishing from the rescue boat, both teams may be subjected to a polygraph test).
21. **Boat & Horsepower Regulations:** Each boat must have all required U.S. Coast Guard safety equipment. All boats must contain a properly aerated live well space to maintain a live limit catch of bass. All boats must have an operating kill switch that must be attached to the operator at all times when the outboard motor is running and in gear. Violation of any of the above rules may be cause for disqualification. GSM/XBS officials or directors reserve the right to refuse entry to any boats that does not meet tournament standards. No airboats, canoes, or pontoon boats are permitted.
22. **Sportsmanship:** Each team is expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, safety, courtesy, and conservation. Any team found in violation of these rules or any federal, state, or local laws may be disqualified. The use, possession, or consumption of any alcoholic beverages during tournament hours, which conclude upon the completion of payout, will not be tolerated and shall be cause for disqualification from current and future GSM Outdoors events.
23. **Protest & Polygraph Test:** Battle of the Brands contestants may submit a protest during the tournament morning prior to launch or immediately following the weigh-in of the last team's catch, but before the start of the awards presentation. Protests shall be in writing and accompanied by a \$100.00 deposit. The burden of proof of a rules infraction will be the responsibility of the angler filing the protest. This deposit will be refunded providing

the protest be upheld, otherwise, the deposit shall be forfeited to GSM Outdoors. Any contestant may be required to submit to a Polygraph or truth verification test. Failure to submit to either of these tests will result in disqualification from this tournament and will not be eligible to fishing any future GSM Outdoors/XBS tournaments. Any angler making an accusation against another contestant without submitting a written protest accompanied by a \$100.00 deposit may be subject to disqualification from current and future GSM Outdoors/XBS events.

24. Cellular phones and radios are encouraged for safety reasons. During the official competition days of the tournament a competitor may not make cell calls for the purpose of locating or catching fish on tournament waters. Cell phones may be used for emergencies or to communicate with the tournament director. Competitors are allowed to use smart phones for global maps, weather, power generation, tidal charts, notes, etc.