

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2018 ANNUAL REPORT



FISHERIES BUREAU



MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

1505 Eastover Drive
Jackson, MS 39211
www.mdwfp.com



Your purchase of fishing equipment and motor boat fuels supports Sport Fish Restoration and boating access facilities.

The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries, and Parks (MDWFP) began a program in 1998 for bass tournament anglers to help biologists monitor bass populations. These results continue to be a valuable addition to the data that MDWFP biologists use to manage bass populations. In some waters, it may be the only measure we have of what anglers are catching.

Bass clubs and tournament organizers are encouraged to provide tournament results to MDWFP on the form shown below. The form may be mailed, faxed or emailed to the address below. Forms, reports and data input can be accessed via internet at: <http://www.mdwfp.com/fishing-boating/tournaments>

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD

Lake: _____	Date: _____	Start: _____	Stop: _____
Tournament Type:	Individual ()	Team ()	Director: _____
Club or Organization: _____		Phone: _____	
Address: _____	City: _____	State: _____	Zip: _____
Total No. of Anglers or Teams: _____		Limits Caught: _____	
Number of bass weighed-in: _____			
Total Weight (all bass):		_____ Lbs.	_____ ozs./tenths
First Place Weight:		_____ Lbs.	_____ ozs./tenths
Tournament Lunker:		_____ Lbs.	_____ ozs./tenths
No. of Bass over 5 Pounds: _____		Bass Greater than 7 lbs. Individual Fish Wt. _____ _____	

By mail: Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries, & Parks
 C/O Larry Bull
 1505 Eastover Drive
 Jackson, MS 39211

ph: 601-432-2208
 fax: 601-432-2203 Attn: Larry Bull
 email: Stan.Crider@wfp.ms.gov

2018 Bass Tournament Summary

Mississippi's bass tournament anglers had another good year in 2018 based on 252 tournament reports. Average statistics for all lakes in 2018 were similar to those in 2016 and 2017. The winning weight and the average weight of bass were lower in 2018 compared to 2016 and 2017, but higher than 2015. In 2018, the number of bass weighed in per day were lower than the 2017 value, but higher than the 2016 value. **At least five reports** are needed from a lake to be included in the final "Lake Rankings." In addition, the five reports must include all of the information for each ranking metric. Fifteen lakes were included in the lake rankings. As in 2017, Lake Washington, Pickwick Lake, and Okatibbee Reservoir ranked as some of Mississippi's best bass fishing lakes in 2018. Even though Ross Barnett Reservoir did not rank as high as previous years, it still produced excellent bass fishing opportunities. Lake Bogue Homa offered excellent bass fishing opportunities in MDWFP's state fishing lake program, and Lake Jeff Davis produced some impressive lunkers in 2018. As in previous years, the Pascagoula River continued to provide the best numbers of bass per day. The following summarizes the most important points from this year's tournament report:

- 252 reports were submitted from 35 different lakes.
- In 2018, **Lake Washington** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Pickwick Lake**, **Okatibbee Reservoir**, and **Bay Springs**.
- The largest bass weighed-in was 11 pounds from Lake Jeff Davis.

Statewide Tournament Statistics

- 1.84 - Number of bass caught per angler - day
- 3.81 - Pounds of bass caught per angler - day
- 2.11 - Average weight of bass caught
- 321 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass
- 5.15 - Average lunger, or big bass weight
- 13.87 - Average 1st place weight
- 244 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

- The total number of tournament reports was 252 in 2018 (Figure 1), and the highest number of reports came from Ross Barnett Reservoir (41). Over 9,200 anglers fished in 252 tournaments and weighed-in 16,316 bass (Table 1).

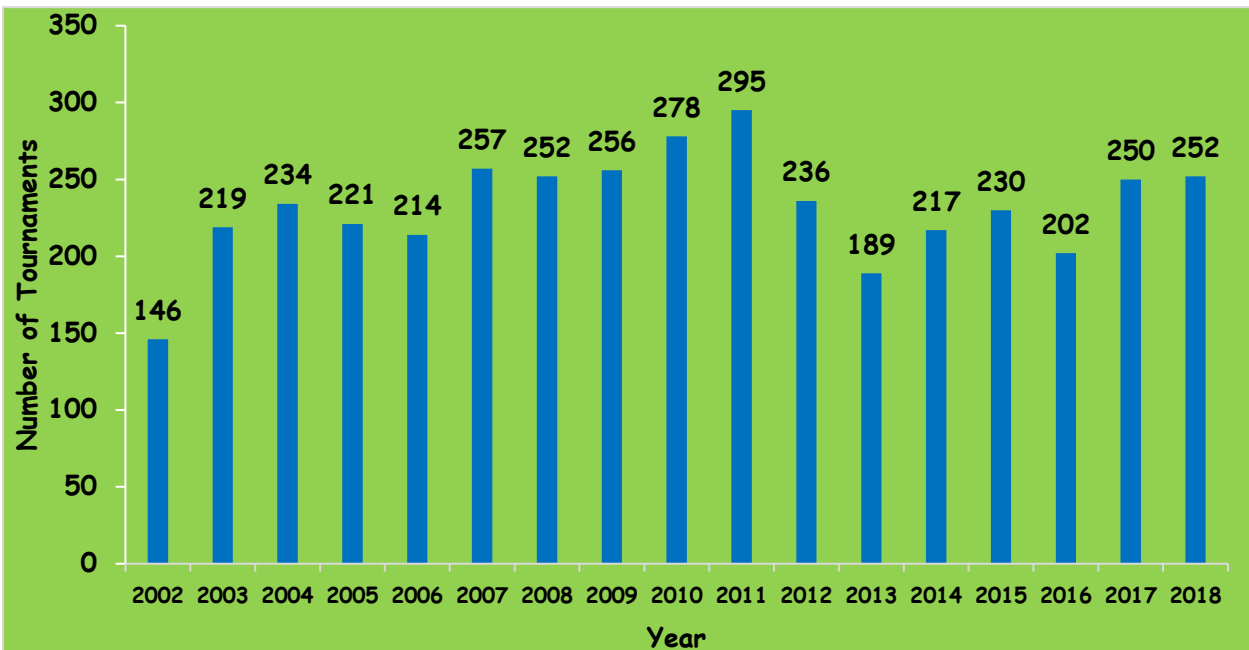


Figure 1. Number of Tournaments Submitted, 2002 - 2018

- It took an average of 13.87 pounds to win a tournament in 2018 (Table 1). Of lakes with at least five tournaments reported Pickwick Lake, Lake Washington, and Okatibbee Reservoir had the highest average winning weights.
- Average weight of bass ranged from 0.97 pounds at Lake Mike Connor and the Jourdan River to 3.13 pounds at Eagle Lake (Table 1). The statewide average weight was 2.11 pounds. After reviewing water bodies with more than one tournament report and using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, the number of bass caught per angler day was highest on the Pascagoula River and the pounds caught per angler day was highest at Lake Lincoln.
- The seasonal distribution of 2018 tournaments appears in Figure 2. March through July were the most popular months to conduct tournaments with at least 28 per month. Tournament reports were submitted from all 12 months.

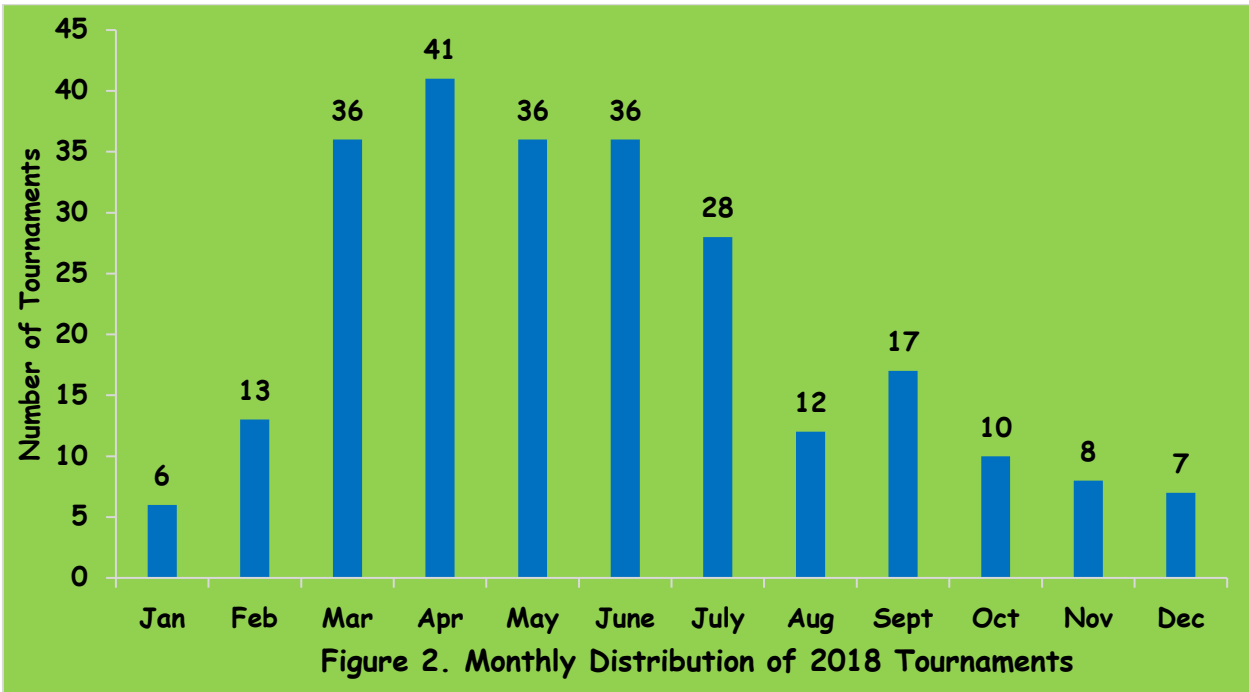
Table 1. Summary of Bass Tournament results from the 2018 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program

Waterbody	Report		Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. > 5 lbs. Bass	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
	Cards	Entries								
Aberdeen	2	23	55	2.40	4.74	18	1.96	1	4.63	11.76
Alliceville	2	56	188	2.29	4.32	48	1.90	3	4.82	15.28
Archusa	1	18	72	2.06	3.72	72	1.81	0	4.98	14.17
Back Bay	3	50	121	2.45	4.61	38	1.77	2	5.36	13.18
Bay Springs	9	103	358	2.25	4.45	58	2.04	7	5.07	15.39
Bee Lake	3	63	217	2.89	4.78	57	1.64	0	3.86	11.37
Biloxi River	1	10	41	4.10	7.21	70	1.76	0	4.15	13.16
Bogue Homa	14	234	429	1.02	3.25	23	3.03	22	5.90	15.50
Calling Panther	3	67	168	1.92	4.32	29	2.27	7	6.82	15.49
Columbus	7	175	338	1.42	3.92	11	2.28	4	4.91	13.75
Eagle Lake	6	128	225	1.11	3.52	14	3.13	6	5.68	14.52
Enid Lake	1	19	61	3.21	6.42	53	2.00	1	5.32	18.50
Ferguson	18	621	2196	2.17	5.19	46	2.42	18	5.60	17.24
Flint Creek	1	23	99	2.20	4.35	78	1.98	1	5.24	14.32
Grenada	1	22	52	1.27	2.62	36	2.06	1	5.14	13.86
Lake Jeff Davis	19	256	484	1.12	1.45	19	1.38	15	5.73	8.99
Jourdan River	1	30	64	2.13	2.07	20	0.97	0	3.08	8.16
Lake Columbia	8	86			2.04			6	5.76	11.56
Lake Lincoln	3	61	116	2.33	6.67	37	2.84	7	8.37	21.25
Little Eagle	1	29	90	3.10	5.62	28	1.81	0	4.04	14.47
Manor Creek	1	20	71	1.82	3.64	50	2.00	1	5.25	21.37

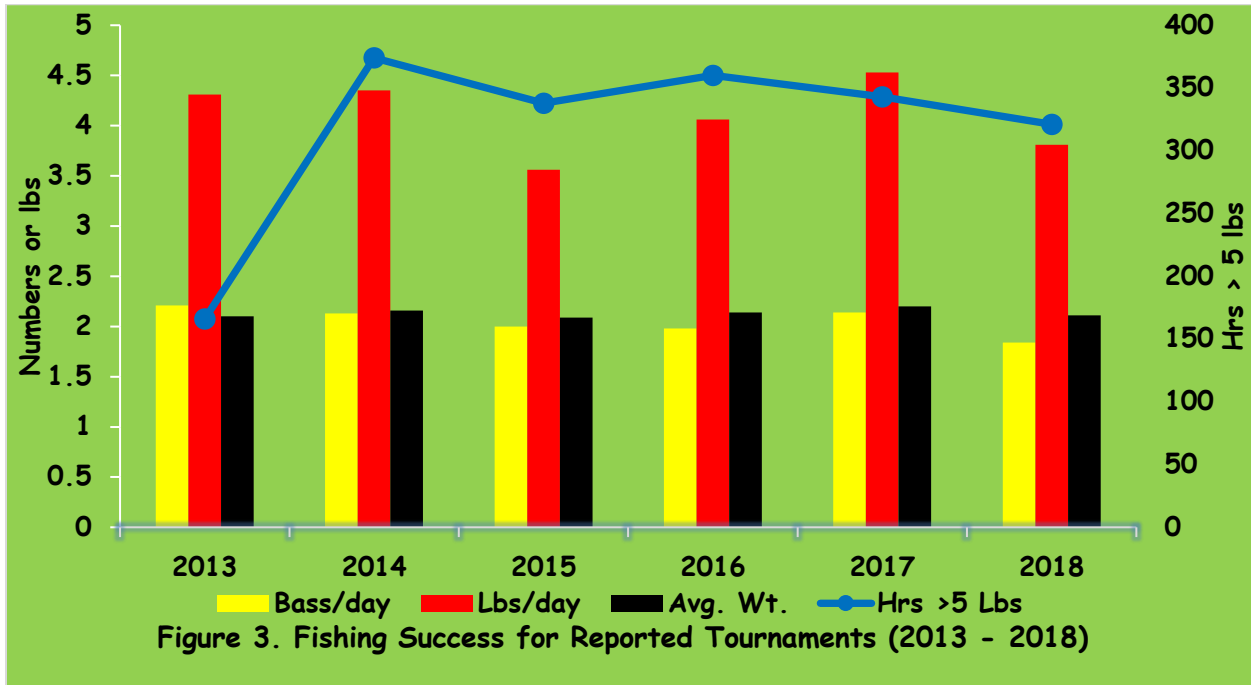
Table 1. continued

Waterbody	Report		Bass	Bass	Pounds	Percent	Average	No.	Big	Average
	Cards	Entries	Caught	Per Day	Per Day	Success	Weight	> 5 lbs.	Bass	1st Place
Mike Conner	6	46	115	1.40	1.38	17	0.97	0	2.55	5.99
Okatibbee	8	186	704	2.52	4.89	57	1.93	12	5.83	17.59
Okhisa	1	20	52	2.60	3.76	15	1.45			8.52
Pascagoula River	19	262	795	2.93	5.01	44	1.64	5	4.20	11.25
Paul B. Johnson SP	19	205	453	1.26	1.88	25	1.51	8	3.86	8.97
Pearl River	4	67	227	2.79	3.98	36	1.43	0	3.79	8.98
Pickwick	25	1175	2656	1.83	4.99	28	2.84	54	6.28	19.52
Ross Barnett	41	2089	5010	1.74	4.34	26	2.49	52	5.98	16.78
Sardis Lake	1	30	23	0.38	0.85	7	2.22	1	5.10	16.82
TTW	5	56	185	2.69	4.17	41	1.53	0	3.64	10.26
Washington	5	106	362	2.22	6.09	42	2.84	8	5.83	17.81
Wolf Lake	1	15	38	2.53	3.46	33	1.37	0	2.50	9.06
Lit Blk Cr Cmpgrd Lk	12	116	251	1.21	1.44	22	1.19	2	2.96	6.58
Totals	252	6467	16316					244		
Average				1.84	3.81	32	2.11	0.97	5.15	13.87

All calculations for Waterbodies, Totals, and Averages are based upon individual tournaments



- The average weight of bass weighed-in since 2013 has remained very stable, fluctuating between 2.1 and 2.2 pounds. Pounds per day (3.81) in 2018 was the lowest value recorded since 2015 (3.56 pounds). The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass decreased from 343 in 2017 to 321 in 2018 (Figure 3).



- In 2018, five of the 10 heaviest 5-bass limits came from Pickwick Lake (Table 2). The largest sack (30.96 pounds) was weighed-in at Pickwick during a PWBT event in November. Lake Bogue Homa had two stringers in the top ten. Three of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during March and three were in May.

Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in 2018 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report

Lake	Date	Tournament	1st Place Weight (lbs)
Pickwick	17-Nov	PWBT	30.96
Pickwick	7-Apr	AL BAIT	30.94
Pickwick	19-May	Fishers of Men	28.81
Bay Springs	10-Mar	Lee County Bass Club	28.26
Bogue Homa	31-Mar	Jones County Bass Club	26.30
Pickwick	10-Mar	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	25.70
Bogue Homa	26-May	Media Bass MS	25.08
Okatibbee	May. 2018	Sumrall Bass Club	24.90
Pickwick	1-Dec	PWBT	24.85
Lake Lincoln	6-Jan	Sumrall Bass Club	24.84

- The number of bass weighing at least five pounds decreased slightly from 250 in 2017 to 244 in 2018. Bass \geq 5 pounds represented 0.97% of the total number weighed-in during 2018. On average, it took 321 angler hours to weigh-in a bass equal to or over five pounds.
- In 2018 there were 52 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds. The largest lunker was caught at Lake Jeff Davis on April 9 and weighed 11.00 pounds (Table 3). The second largest lunker was also caught on Lake Jeff Davis on July 30 and weighed 10.70 lbs. There were two additional lunkers caught greater than 10 lbs. both were caught at Lake Jeff Davis. Lake Jeff Davis accounted for 29% of the bass seven pounds or bigger. Another 25% were caught at Pickwick Lake, and Ross Barnett Reservoir accounted for 17% of the big bass.
- Forty-four clubs or tournament organizations submitted reports (Table 4). Twenty two clubs submitted five or more reports and 9 clubs submitted 10 or more. The average number of reports received per club or organization was six.

Table 3. Summary of bass weighed-in that were seven pounds or larger from the 2018 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
11.00	4/9/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
10.70	7/30/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
10.50	4/23/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
10.20	3/26/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
9.92	2/24/2018	Lake Lincoln	Forrest County Bassmasters
9.90	7/23/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
9.88	7/30/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
9.70	4/9/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
9.37	5/12/2018	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
9.18	2/17/2018	Eagle	Media Bass MS
9.14	3/26/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
9.00	4/9/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.75	5/14/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.74	3/10/2018	Pickwick	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.
8.40	5/19/2018	Pickwick	Fishers of Men
8.38	3/2/2018	Ross Barnett	Bassmaster
8.38	3/3/2018	Ross Barnett	Bassmaster
8.37	11/17/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
8.31	11/17/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
8.31	12/15/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
8.30	6/4/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.13	3/26/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.06	5/12/2018	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
8.06	3/1/2018	Ross Barnett	Bassmaster
7.98	2/17/2018	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.89	5/24/2018	Lake Columbia	Lake Columbia Fruit Jar
7.86	2/3/2018	Ross Barnett	Fishers of Men
7.80	5/7/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
7.79	12/29/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
7.75	6/5/2018	Lit Blk Cr Cmp Grd Lake	Lit Blk Cr Cmp Grd Fruit Jar
7.65	6/7/2018	Lake Columbia	Lake Columbia Fruit Jar
7.62	Dec. 2018	Lake Lincoln	Sumrall Bass Club
7.58	1/6/2018	Lake Lincoln	Sumrall Bass Club
7.50	Mar. 2018	Bogue Homa	Sumrall Bass Club
7.50	4/7/2018	Pickwick	AL BAIT
7.48	Dec. 2018	Lake Lincoln	Sumrall Bass Club
7.45	3/10/2018	Bay Springs	Lee County Bass Club

Table3 Continued

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
7.44	3/31/2018	Bogue Homa	Jones County Bass Club
7.44	6/23/2018	Pickwick	Fishers of Men
7.44	1/27/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
7.32	6/23/2018	Pickwick	Fishers of Men
7.27	2/10/2018	Pascagoula River	Magnolia Bassmasters
7.24	3/31/2018	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.21	11/17/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
7.19	2/17/18	Calling Panther	Southwest Bass Club
7.18	4/7/2018	Okatibbee	Collinsville Bass Club
7.14	3/26/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
7.13	1/27/2018	Pickwick	PWBT
7.05	5/12/2018	Bogue Homa	Benefit Tourn.
7.04	9/22/2018	Pickwick	AL BAIT
7.00	3/31/2018	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.00	6/25/2018	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.

Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2018 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
AL BAIT	4	233
American Bass Anglers	7	140
Attala County Bass Club	8	183
Bass Tactix	1	65
Bassmaster	3	362
Benefit Tourn.	1	24
Blackwater Bass Club	1	30
Bogue Homa Fruit Jar	6	214
Charity Bass Tourn.	1	42
Clinton Bass Club	8	127
Collinsville Bass Club	4	211
Fishers of Men	13	674
FLW	12	1454
Forrest County Bassmasters	3	26
Hol-Mac Corporation	1	46
Jackson Bass Club	5	94
Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.	19	454

Table 4 continued

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
Jones County Bass Club	1	26
Lake Columbia Fruit Jar	8	163
Lee County Bass Club	5	94
Lit Blk Cr Cmp Grd Fruit Jar	12	211
Magnolia Bassmasters	10	129
Media Bass MS	17	1319
Mike Conner Fruit Jar	4	53
Mississippi Bass Nation	2	68
Monroe County Bassmasters	10	121
MRAA 2018	5	298
MS Bass Assassins	7	106
MS Bass High School	1	48
MS Bass Nation College Championship	2	44
Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar	19	366
Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	5	311
Pearl River Bass Club	1	34
PWBT	5	255
Ram American Fishing Tournaments MS	4	57
RAM Open Truck Series Division MS	3	185
Ricky Johnson Team Trail Tourn	1	14
Seminary High School	1	32
Singing River Bassmasters	5	33
Southern Freshwaters	1	12
Southwest Bass Club	4	160
Sumrall Bass Club	12	291
Sumrall High School Club Fishing	1	21
Weekend Warrior	9	381

- Team tournaments were more popular than individual tournaments with 62% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 19 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 38% of the reports and averaged 37 participants per event. Five-fish limits of bass were weighed-in by 31% of all anglers or teams during 2018.
- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven "quality indicators" (Table 5). In 2018, the top five lakes in order were Lake Washington, Pickwick Lake, Okatibbee Reservoir, Bay Springs, and Lake Ferguson. Eagle Lake received high marks for average weight of individual bass weighed in. As in 2017, the Pascagoula River received high ranks for the number weighed-in per day. Pounds of bass weighed-in per a day was highest in Lake Washington. Lake Bogue Homa received high marks for hours to catch a bass equal to or over five pounds. Pickwick Lake received high marks for big bass weight and winning weight. The highest percentage of anglers weighing in a 5-fish bag was at Bay Springs.
- Tournament bag limits varied from three to five bass and were more restrictive than state regulations. Most tournaments had a 12-inch minimum length limit.
- Success of this program depends on participation from clubs and tournament organizers. We thank all those who voluntarily submitted report cards. Higher numbers of reports allow better estimates of fishing conditions; not just a good or bad day's fishing by one or two clubs. Results can be used by tournament directors, anglers and biologists to better manage and enjoy our fisheries resources. Angler involvement has been and remains the key to protecting and managing Mississippi's fisheries resources.

**Table 5. Final rankings of tournament lakes in Mississippi based upon 2018 reports.
Ranked by "Fishing Quality Indicators" from lakes with five or more tournament reports**

Average weight/bass (lbs.)		Average Number Caught per 8-hour day		Average Pounds Caught per 8-hour day		Index Hours to Catch a Bass \geq 5 lbs.		Average big bass weight (lbs.)		Average 1 st place weight (lbs.)		Percentage of anglers with a 5-fish bag		Overall Rank	
EA	3.13	PS	2.93	LW	6.09	BH	1.75	PK	6.28	PK	19.52	BS	58	1	LW
BH	3.03	TTW	2.69	LF	5.19	LW	1.77	RB	5.98	LW	17.81	OK	57	2	PK
LW	2.84	OK	2.52	PS	5.01	BS	2.14	BH	5.90	OK	17.59	LF	46	3	OK
PK	2.84	BS	2.25	PK	4.99	OK	2.18	LW	5.83	LF	17.24	PS	44	4	BS
RB	2.49	LW	2.22	OK	4.89	PK	2.30	OK	5.83	RB	16.78	LW	42	5	LF
LF	2.42	LF	2.17	BS	4.45	JD	2.57	JD	5.73	BH	15.50	TTW	41	6	RB
COL	2.28	PK	1.83	RB	4.34	EA	2.68	EA	5.68	BS	15.39	PK	28	7	BH
BS	2.04	RB	1.74	TTW	4.17	PJ	3.89	LF	5.60	EA	14.52	RB	26	8	PS
OK	1.93	COL	1.42	COL	3.92	COL	4.19	BS	5.07	COL	13.75	PJ	25	9	EA
PS	1.64	MC	1.40	EA	3.52	LF	4.38	COL	4.91	PS	11.25	BH	23	10	TTW
TTW	1.53	PJ	1.26	BH	3.25	RB	4.56	PS	4.20	TTW	10.26	LBCR	22	11	COL
PJ	1.51	LBCR	1.21	PJ	1.88	PS	5.97	PJ	3.86	JD	8.99	JD	19	12	JD
JD	1.38	JD	1.12	JD	1.45	LBCR	8.97	TTW	3.64	PJ	8.97	MC	17	13	PJ
LBCR	1.19	EA	1.11	LBCR	1.44	MC	None	LBCR	2.96	LBCR	6.58	EA	14	14	LBCR
MC	0.97	BH	1.02	MC	1.38	TTW	None	MC	2.55	MC	5.99	COL	11	15	MC

BS=Bay Springs; BH=Bogue Homa; COL=Columbus; EA=Eagle; LF=Lake Ferguson; LW=Lake Washington; JD=Jeff Davis; MC=Mike Conner; OK=Okatibbee; PS=Pascagoula River; PJ=Paul B. Johnson SP; PK=Pickwick; RB=Ross Barnett; TTW=Waterway Locks; LBCR=Little Black Creek Cmp Grnd Lake