

# MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM



## 2003 ANNUAL REPORT

MISSISSIPPI DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE,  
FISHERIES AND PARKS

FISHERIES DIVISION



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

Mississippi Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MWFP) began a program in 1998 for bass tournament anglers to help biologists monitor bass populations along the Tenn-Tom Waterway. The number of reporting tournaments has increased each year and a statewide program was begun in 2002.

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 valuable tournament results to MWFP on the form shown below:

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD

At a minimum, the underlined items must be filled out to use your report card.

Lake: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ start- / / end- / /

Tournament Type: Individual ( ) -or- Team ( ) Director: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Total Fishing Time (hours) \_\_\_\_\_ Bag Limit (no. bass) \_\_\_\_\_

Total No. of Anglers or Teams \_\_\_\_\_ No. Over 8 Pounds \_\_\_\_\_

No. of Anglers or Teams Weighing Bass \_\_\_\_\_ No. Over 5 Pounds \_\_\_\_\_

Total No. of Bass Weighed In \_\_\_\_\_ Limits Caught \_\_\_\_\_

Total Weight (all bass) \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. \_\_\_\_\_ ozs./tenths Size Limit (inches) \_\_\_\_\_

First Place Weight \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. \_\_\_\_\_ ozs./tenths

Tournament Lunker \_\_\_\_\_ lbs. \_\_\_\_\_ ozs./tenths

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2003 Bass Tournament Program Results

A total of 219 tournaments reported 35,652 pounds of bass (Table 1). Report cards were received on 29 lakes. Bay Springs Lake had the most tournaments reported.

Average weight of bass ranged from 1.05 pounds in Gulfport Lake to 2.89 pounds in Lake Bogue Homa. The statewide average weight of tournament bass was 1.55 pounds. Using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, pounds caught/angler day were highest at Bay Springs Lake and Lock C (TTW).

It took an average of 12.26 pounds to win a tournament in 2003 (Table 1). Of lakes with a least five tournaments reported, Lake Ferguson and Ross Barnett Reservoir had the highest average winning weights.

Lakes (at least five tournaments reported) were ranked by averaging six "quality indicators" (Table 2). The top 3 lakes in 2003 were Bay Springs Lake, Lake Ferguson, and Ross Barnett Reservoir. Bay Springs replaced Pickwick this year and received high marks for number of bass and pounds of bass caught per day, as well as more bass over five pounds caught per day. Ferguson and Barnett scored well under average weight per bass and average winning weight. Columbus Lake and Lock D (Tenn-Tom Waterway) rounded out the top-5. This information is best used to follow trends on a particular lake. Natural fluctuations in bass abundance and size structure are normal, plus environmental conditions and angling pressure vary from year to year.

Thirty clubs or organizers submitted more than one report card (Table 3), compared to only 13 clubs or organizers in 2002. This represents over a 75% increase over reports received in 2002. More reports from any particular lake will increase the validity of the data for that lake.

Team tournaments made up 57% of the reports submitted and averaged 27 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments (e.g., club tournaments) accounted for 43% of the reports and averaged 40 participants per event.

On the average, it took 460 angler hours, or 54 angler days, to weigh-in a bass over five pounds during 2003 tournaments. A total of 184 bass five pounds or larger were reported.

Of these, fourteen were at least seven pounds (Table 4). More bass over five pounds were weighed-in at Bay Springs, Pickwick, and Ross Barnett. The largest bass reported weighed 8.93 pounds from Bay Springs Lake.

The heaviest five-bass limit weighed 23.69 pounds from Lake Ferguson. The heavy sack was weighed-in on April 12, 2003, during a Fishers of Men tournament.

Limits of bass were weighed-in by 31% of all anglers or team, similar to the number of limits reported in 2002.

Tournament bag limits varied from 5 to 7 bass and were more restrictive than state regulations. Most tournaments had a 12-inch minimum length limit.

Success of this program depends on more participation from clubs and tournament organizers with MWFP. We thank all those who voluntarily submitted report cards. Results can be used by tournament directors, anglers, and biologists to better manage and enjoy our fishery resources.

Angler involvement has been and remains the key to protecting and managing Mississippi's fishery resources.

Table 1. Summary of bass tournament results from the 2003 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

<b>Waterbody</b>	<b>Report Cards</b>	<b>Entries</b>	<b>Bass Caught</b>	<b>Bass Per Day</b>	<b>Pounds Per Day</b>	<b>Percent Success</b>	<b>Average Weight</b>	<b>No. &gt;5 lbs.</b>	<b>Big Bass</b>	<b>Average 1<sup>st</sup> Place</b>
Aberdeen	22	669	1496	2.35	3.79	37	1.62	10	4.55	11.68
Aliceville	12	338	729	1.99	3.41	25	1.67	8	4.84	10.88
Back Bay	3	92	281	2.81	3.94	47	1.34	2	4.32	10.77
Bay Springs	39	1379	2367	2.70	5.09	34	1.86	43	5.09	12.83
Bee Lake	1	22	85	3.86	.	68	.	1	5.56	14.12
Bogue Homa	3	89	72	0.81	2.34	4	2.89	5	6.28	13.52
Chotard	2	43	75	1.76	3.60	17	2.03	1	5.26	11.60
Columbus	17	1532	3011	2.29	4.28	33	1.85	19	5.45	13.82
Enid	1	20	50	2.50	3.15	15	1.26	.	.	8.34
Ferguson	5	308	474	1.67	3.79	29	2.38	6	5.73	17.62
Flint Creek	3	90	143	1.71	2.40	46	1.39	0	3.71	8.92
Grenada	6	277	387	1.31	2.53	24	1.91	2	4.58	13.96
Gulfport	1	15	28	1.87	1.96	7	1.05	0	2.66	6.30
Jordan River	3	107	223	1.94	2.82	34	1.42	1	3.89	10.68
Lake Mary	1	26	87	3.35	.	42	.	0	4.43	11.31
Little Black	1	12	.	.	3.48	.	.	.	.	8.93
Lock B	7	147	348	2.39	3.70	55	1.54	2	4.62	10.67
Lock C	2	39	101	2.85	4.99	33	1.76	2	7.38	13.11
Lock D	7	138	361	2.53	4.24	45	1.75	5	5.40	10.05
Maynor Ck	1	26	45	1.73	3.27	39	1.89	0	4.38	14.12
Mobile Delta	2	89	139	1.56	2.58	34	1.64	2	5.29	12.94
Okatibbee	1	28	43	1.54	2.80	29	1.82	2	5.84	14.68
Pascagoula	15	489	1320	2.79	3.88	45	1.37	2	3.89	11.68
Pearl River	6	172	491	2.99	4.31	51	1.50	1	4.14	13.27
Pickwick	34	2504	4767	2.24	3.84	45	1.74	41	5.25	13.03
Ross Barnett	17	1216	1971	1.54	4.25	29	2.57	25	4.83	15.66
Sardis	4	184	268	1.52	2.69	40	1.77	3	5.48	14.54
Tunica	2	120	74	0.62	1.30	20	2.09	1	4.93	14.12
Turkey Fork	1	12	27	2.25	2.53	8	1.12	0	4.54	5.85
<b>Totals</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>10,183</b>	<b>19,463</b>					<b>184</b>		
<b>Average</b>		<b>46</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>2.04</b>	<b>3.22</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>1.55</b>	<b>0.84</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>12.26</b>

Table 2. Final rankings of tournament lakes in Mississippi based on 2003 reports.

Ranked by "Fishing Quality Indicators" from lakes with 5 or more tournament reports											
Average weight/bass (lbs.)	Average Number Caught per 8-hour day	Average Pounds Caught per 8-hour day	Index of hours to catch a bass > 5 lbs.	Average big bass weight (lbs.)	Average 1 <sup>st</sup> place weight (lbs.)	Overall Rank					
Ross Barnett 2.57	Pearl River 2.99	Bay Springs 5.09	Bay Springs 2.29	Ross Barnett 2.57	Ferguson 17.62	<b>#1 Bay Springs</b>					
Ferguson 2.38	Pascagoula 2.79	Pearl River 4.31	Lock D 2.35	Ferguson 2.38	Ross Barnett 15.66	<b>#2 Ferguson</b>					
Grenada 1.91	Bay Springs 2.70	Columbus 4.28	Aliceville 3.59	Grenada 1.91	Grenada 13.96	<b>#3 Ross Barnett</b>					
Bay Springs 1.86	Lock D 2.53	Ross Barnett 4.25	Ross Barnett 4.14	Bay Springs 1.86	Columbus 13.82	<b>#4 Columbus</b>					
Columbus 1.85	Lock B 2.39	Lock D 4.24	Ferguson 4.36	Columbus 1.85	Pearl River 13.27	<b>#5 Lock D</b>					
Lock D 1.75	Aberdeen 2.35	Pascagoula 3.88	Pickwick 5.19	Lock D 1.75	Pickwick 13.03	<b>#6 Pickwick</b>					
Pickwick 1.74	Columbus 2.29	Pickwick 3.84	Lock B 5.31	Pickwick 1.74	Bay Springs 12.83	<b>#7 Pearl River</b>					
Aliceville 1.67	Pickwick 2.24	Aberdeen 3.79	Aberdeen 5.70	Aliceville 1.67	Pascagoula 11.68	<b>#8 Aliceville</b>					
Aberdeen 1.62	Aliceville 1.99	Ferguson 3.79	Columbus 6.85	Aberdeen 1.62	Aberdeen 11.68	<b>#9 Grenada</b>					
Lock B 1.54	Ferguson 1.67	Lock B 3.70	Grenada 11.82	Lock B 1.54	Aliceville 10.88	<b>#10 Aberdeen</b>					
Pearl River 1.50	Ross Barnett 1.54	Aliceville 3.41	Pearl River 14.62	Pearl River 1.50	Lock B 10.67	<b>#11 Lock B</b>					
Pascagoula 1.37	Grenada 1.31	Grenada 2.53	Pascagoula 20.36	Pascagoula 1.37	Lock D 10.05	<b>#12 Pascagoula</b>					

Table 3. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2003 MWFP Bass Tournament Program.

<b>Club</b>	<b>Number of tournaments</b>	<b>Number of anglers</b>
Aberdeen TTW Bassmasters	12	346
Anglers Choice Couples (Central)	6	141
Anglers Choice East MS	7	565
Anglers Choice Gulf Coast	7	274
Anglers Choice North MS	5	51
Anglers Choice NW AL	2	112
Anglers Choice SE MS	6	187
Anglers Choice South	6	621
Attala Bassmasters	7	159
BAIT tournament trail	8	238
B.A.S.S.	3	904
Belmont Bass Club	25	558
Brookhaven Bass Club	4	81
Camp Shelby Bass Club	4	50
Dog River Bassmasters	6	204

Fish America Couples N MS	6	410
Fishers of Men (Central)	5	498
Fishers of Men (North)	5	322
Fishers of Men (South)	4	94
Wal-Mart FLW	8	852
Wal-Mart BFL	6	632
Houston Hawgcallers	8	156

Table 3 (continued)

Lowndes County Bass Club	2	20
Media Bass Trail N MS	2	114
Monroe County Bassmasters	11	229
Mountain Dew Buddy Trail	9	1,432
Ocean Springs Bassmasters	2	42
South MS Assoc. Bass Clubs	7	264
Starkville Bass Club	7	104
Tupelo Bass Club	7	56
West Point TTW Bassmasters	8	217

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Table 4. Summary of bass weighed-in that were seven pounds or larger from the 2003 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report.

Weight (lbs.)	Date	Lake	Tournament/Club
8.93	4/19/03	Bay Springs	Mountain Dew Buddy Trail
8.36	2/22/03	Aliceville	Angler's Choice East MS
8.25	3/12/03	Pickwick	Wal-Mart FLW
8.18	3/15/03	Pickwick	Mountain Dew Buddy Trail
7.94	5/31/03	Ross Barnett	Fisher's of Men (Central)
7.70	3/11/03	Lock C	Cooper Tire Bass Club
7.61	5/10/03	Pickwick	Mountain Dew Buddy Trail
7.60	5/18/03	Ross Barnett	Angler's Choice South MS
7.45	2/22/03	Bay Springs	Mountain Dew Buddy Trail
7.25	6/28/03	Columbus	Fisher's of Men (Central)
7.24	4/26/03	Pickwick	Monroe County Bassmasters
7.06	6/07/03	Lock C	Aberdeen TTW Bassmasters
7.02	5/04/03	Bogue Homa	Angler's Choice SE MS
7.00	2/22/03	Ross Barnett	Wal-Mart BFL