

# MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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MISSISSIPPI WILDLIFE, FISHERIES, AND PARKS

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[www.mdwfp.com](http://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 these 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.	_____ oz../tenths
First Place Weight:		_____ Lbs.	_____ oozes./tenths
Tournament Lunker:		_____ Lbs.	_____ oz../tenths
No. of Bass over 5 Pounds: _____		Bass Greater than 7 lbs. Individual Fish Wt.	
		_____	

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

ph: 601-432-2205  
 fax: 601-432-2203 Attn: Jerry Brown  
 email: Stan.Crider@wfp.ms.gov

## 2021 Bass Tournament Summary

Mississippi's bass tournament anglers had a good year in 2021 based on 297 tournament reports. Bass tournaments did come back strong in Mississippi following the tournament cancellations in 2020 due to Covid-19. Average statistics for lakes in 2021 were higher than in 2020. In 2021, the number of hours to catch a bass 5 lbs or greater was lower than in previous years. The number of bass weighed in per day during 2021 was slightly higher than in 2018, 2019, and 2020.

**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. Fourteen lakes were included in the lake rankings. In 2021, Pickwick, Lake Ferguson, Bay Springs, and Ross Barnett ranked as some of Mississippi's best bass fishing lakes. Based on rankings, average weight of bass was highest at Bogue Homa in 2021. As in previous years, the Pascagoula River continued to provide the highest numbers of bass per day. The following summarizes the most important points from this year's tournament report:

- Reports were submitted from 297 tournaments fishing 37 different waterbodies.
- In 2021, **Pickwick Lake** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Lake Ferguson, Bay Springs, and Ross Barnett Reservoir.**
- The largest bass weighed-in was 11.13 pounds from Lake Jeff Davis.

## Statewide Tournament Statistics

1.93 - Number of bass caught per angler - day

3.80 - Pounds of bass caught per angler - day

1.90 - Average weight of bass caught

239 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass

4.61 - Average lunker, or big bass weight

12.87 - Average 1<sup>st</sup> place weight

382 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

- There were a total of 297 tournament reports submitted in 2021 (Figure 1), and the highest number of reports came from Pickwick (40). Over 10,754 anglers fished in tournaments and weighed-in 19,760 bass (Table 1).

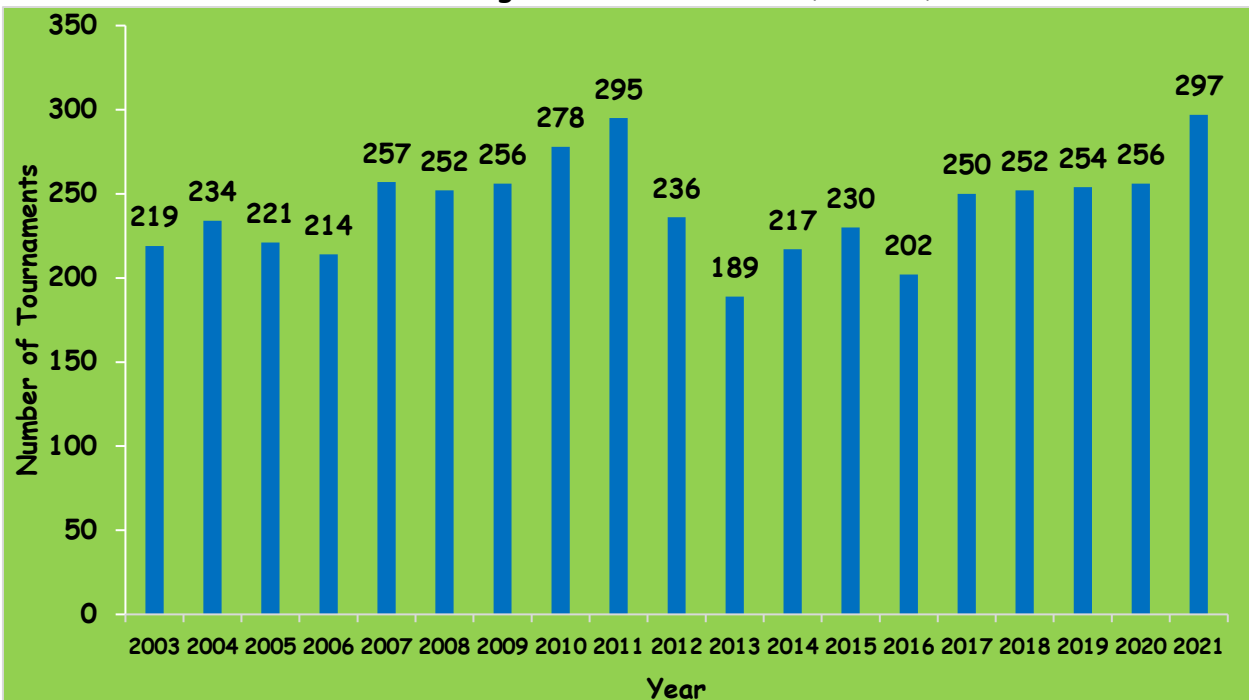


Figure 1. Number of Tournaments Submitted, 2003 - 2021

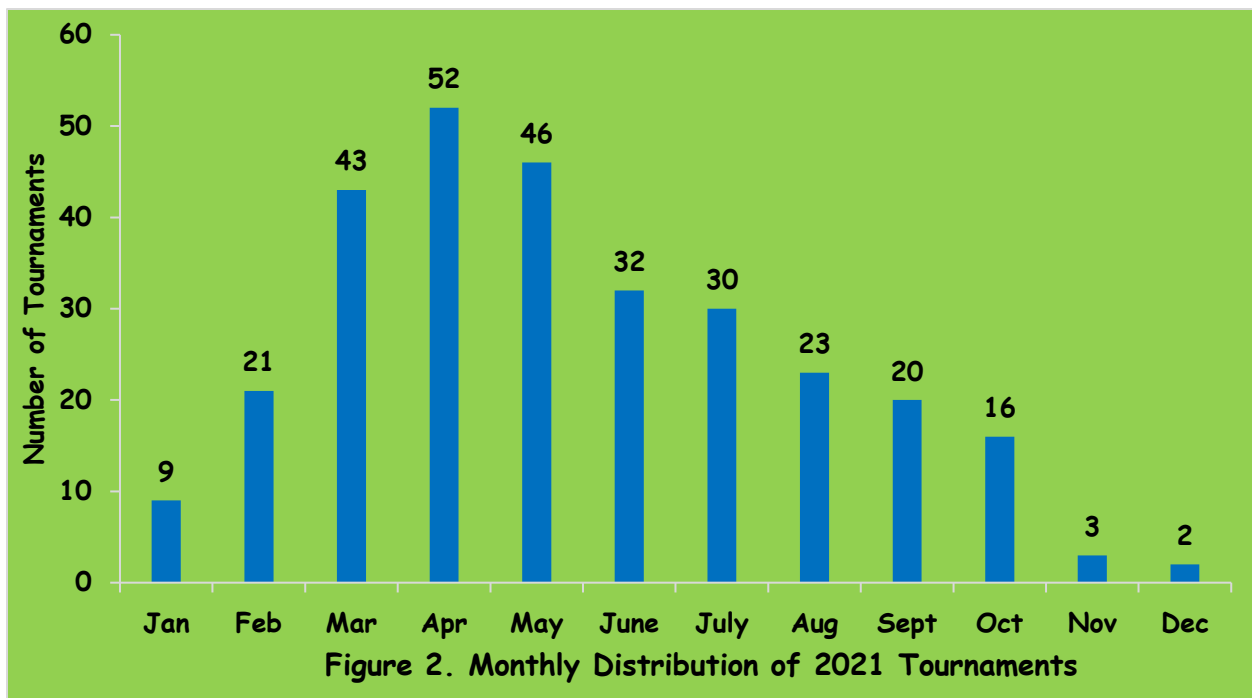
- It took an average of 12.87 pounds to win a tournament in 2021 (Table 1). Of lakes with at least five tournaments reported Lake Ferguson had the highest winning weight followed by Pickwick and Lake Washington.
- After reviewing water bodies with more than three tournament reports and using average tournament length to define an angler day, the number of bass caught per angler day ranged from 1.01 at Paul B. Johnson State Park to 3.09 on the Pascagoula River. Pounds of bass caught per angler day was highest at Lake Ferguson and the greatest average weight was recorded at Eagle Lake.
- The seasonal distribution of 2021 tournaments appears in Figure 2. March through July were the most popular tournament months with at least 30 per month. April had the highest number of reports submitted at 52.

**Table 1. Summary of Bass Tournament results from the 2021 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program**

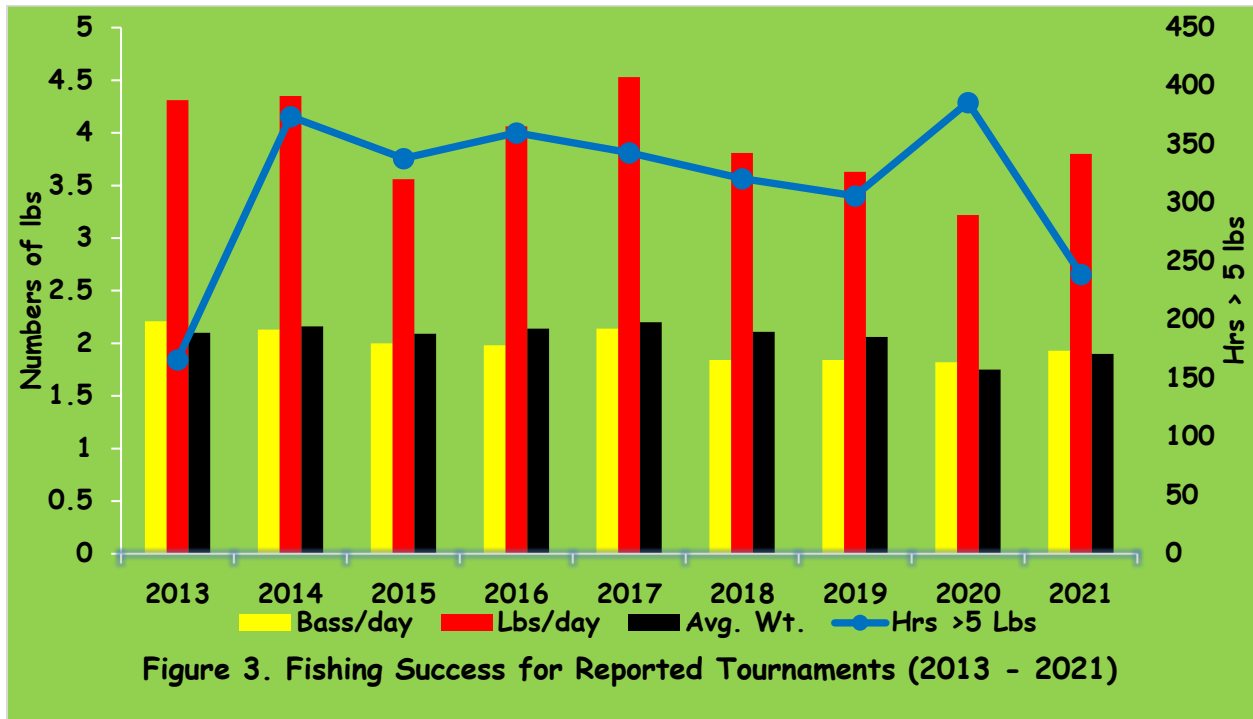
Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. $\geq$ 5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Aberdeen	1	19	58	3.05	4.01	32	1.31	0	3.81	10.63
Aliceville	3	69	196	2.21	3.88	31	1.77	1	4.66	12.24
Back Bay	6	106	398	2.70	4.12	66	1.63	3	4.80	12.76
Bay Springs	6	84	319	2.57	5.37	63	2.21	6	5.51	16.28
Bee Lake	1	21	90	2.37	5.19	86	2.19	1	5.44	16.20
Bill Waller	22	168	491	1.97	1.32	49	0.72	3	2.78	5.06
Bogue Homa	8	107	256	1.22	4.51	31	2.99	13	5.94	17.05
Columbia	2	13	31	1.85	1.41	50	0.93	0	3.60	8.55
Columbus	9	415	809	1.76	3.56	19	2.02	3	4.79	13.90
Deer Park	1	14	37	2.64	5.80	21	2.20	1	5.60	12.80
Desoto Lake	2	32	71	1.12	2.44	20	2.06	1	4.77	14.83
Eagle Lake	4	86	206	1.46	4.57	25	3.12	9	6.36	18.06
Enid	3	42	164	2.60	5.42	92	2.08	2	6.24	15.65
Ferguson	6	271	895	2.42	6.44	53	2.65	5	5.59	20.47
Flint Creek	1	23			5.49					12.38
Grenada	4	208	480	1.92	3.62	38	1.90	3	5.26	14.87
Gulfport Lake	5	86	147	2.42	3.89	29	1.45	0	4.00	9.72
Jeff Davis	25	594	813	1.38	1.39	15	1.00	2	2.87	6.35
Jourdan River	2	29	118	2.97	5.17	66	1.74	0	4.26	13.32
Kemper County	2	15	65	3.30	5.04	91	1.58	0	2.97	8.97
Lake Archusa	0	18	59	1.84	3.79	44	2.06	1	8.06	15.54
Lake Lincoln	2	54	112	1.46	3.42	32	2.30	3	5.98	19.71
Mary Crawford	3	34	28	0.84	0.96	6	1.12	0	1.69	5.17

Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. >5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Maynor Creek	2	36	123	1.87	3.59	53	1.90	1	5.45	14.48
Mike Conner	16	125	196	1.69	1.43	32	0.79	0	2.49	5.62
Moon Lake	3	67	296	2.25	4.28	81	1.90	1	4.98	15.17
Okatibbee	4	98	367	2.51	4.62	63	1.93	13	6.54	16.88
Pascagoula River	20	269	1019	3.09	4.63	63	1.52	8	4.00	12.39
Paul B. Johnson SP	17	157	278	1.01	1.45	21	1.43	3	3.10	8.07
Pearl River	15	219	294	1.28	4.37	26	1.68	0	4.08	10.37
Pickwick	40	2461	5585	1.99	5.72	36	2.79	203	6.07	18.94
Ross Barnett	37	1291	4497	2.08	4.93	49	2.37	64	5.98	17.31
Sardis Lake	9	140	266	1.10	3.27	22	2.14	18	5.27	14.42
TTW Locks	4	62	253	2.67	4.64	73	1.80	2	4.95	13.10
Tunica Lake	2	40	165	2.14	5.58	62	2.61	2	5.65	18.13
Washington	8	177	493	1.74	5.18	45	2.90	10	5.51	18.34
Wolf Lake	2	51	185	2.03	3.56	74	1.74	0	3.68	11.43
Totals	297	7669	19760					382		
Average				1.93	3.80	40	1.90	1.29	4.61	12.87

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



- The average weight of a weighed-in bass increased from 1.75 in 2020 to 1.9 in 2021. Pounds per day (3.80) in 2021 was higher than 2019 (3.63) and 2020 (3.22). The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass decreased from 386 in 2020 to 239 in 2021 (Figure 3).



- In 2021, of the 10 heaviest 5-bass limits four came from Pickwick and four came from Ross Barnett (Table 2). The largest sack (29.28 pounds) was weighed-in at Ross Barnett during a Media Bass MS event in March. Four of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during May, and three of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during March.

**Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in 2021 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report**

Lake	Date	Tournament	1st Place Weight (lbs)
Ross Barnett	27-Mar	Media Bass MS	29.28
Pickwick	27-Feb	AL BAIT	27.79
Enid	23-May	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	26.70
Pickwick	13-Mar	FLW	25.50
Pickwick	27-Mar	AL BAIT	25.00
Pickwick	30-Jan	PWBT	23.99
Ross Barnett	27-Feb	Media Bass MS	23.33
Ross Barnett	8-May	Media Bass MS	23.28
Sardis Lake	15-May	Fishers of Men	22.87
Ross Barnett	22-May	American Bass Anglers	22.69

- The number of bass weighing at least five pounds increased from 180 in 2020 to 382 in 2021. Bass  $\geq 5$  pounds represented 1.29% of fish caught per tournament during 2021. On average, it took 239 angler hours to weigh-in a bass equal to or over five pounds.
- In 2021 there were 27 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds. The largest lunker was caught at Lake Jeff Davis on March 29 and weighed 11.13 pounds (Table 3). The second largest lunker was caught at Pickwick on April 10 and weighed 10.24 lbs. Pickwick and Ross Barnett each accounted for 29% of the bass seven pounds or bigger. Another 7% were caught at three separate lakes: Bill Waller, Lake Jeff Davis, and Okatibbee Lake.
- Forty-six clubs or tournament organizations submitted reports (Table 4). Twenty-three clubs submitted five or more reports and 13 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 2021 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report**

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
11.13	3/29/2021	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament
10.24	4/10/2021	Pickwick	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.
9.38	3/13/2021	Pickwick	FLW
9.34	3/14/2021	Ross Barnett	Weekend Warrior
9.11	4/24/2021	Ross Barnett	Fishers of Men
8.80	7/31/2021	Bill Waller	Bill Waller Fruit Jar
8.38	6/10/2021	Paul B. Johnson SP	Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar
8.13	July. 2021	Bill Waller	Bill Waller Fruit Jar
8.06	7/31/2021	Lake Archusa	Media Bass MS
7.89	5/15/2021	Pickwick	Lee County Bass Club
7.81	6/12/2021	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.7	9/25/2021	Pickwick	AL BAIT
7.66	2/27/2021	Pickwick	AL BAIT
7.62	3/7/2021	Pickwick	Hawg Catchers
7.54	3/27/2021	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.44	3/21/2021	Pickwick	Bassmaster
7.40	4/24/2021	Okatibbee	Media Bass MS
7.37	9/18/2021	Okatibbee	Collinsville Bass Club
7.30	3/21/2021	Washington	Pride of the South Tournaments
7.29	4/3/2021	Ross Barnett	Fishers of Men
7.27	4/12/2021	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament
7.25	3/23/2021	Pickwick	Bassmaster
7.14	5/15/2021	Sardis Lake	Desoto County Team Trail
7.11	5/8/2021	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.10	6/12/2021	Eagle Lake	Brookhaven Bass Club
7.10	3/6/2021	Ross Barnett	American Bass Anglers
7.07	3/20/2021	Ross Barnett	Pride of the South Tournaments

**Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2021 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.**

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
2021 Catch A Dream	1	232
St. Jude	1	50
American Bass Anglers	12	336
AL BAIT	9	897
Bass Tactix	4	177
Bassmaster	4	260
Beat 3 Bass Club	1	24
Bill Waller Fruit Jar	21	262
Bogue Homa Fruit Jar	2	66
Brookhaven Bass Club	4	59
Collinsville Bass Club	6	266
Columbia Fruit Jar	2	20
Cooperative Energy	1	36
Delta State Bass Club	1	30
Desoto County Team Trail	5	196
Fayette Co. Bass Club - TN	8	76
Fishers of Men	16	758
FLW	12	1296
Hawg Catchers	8	182
Jeff Davis Fruit Jar	1	11
Jeff Davis Tournament	24	588
Jones County Bassmasters	1	30
Kemper Fish Club	1	8
Kings of the River	6	275
Lee County Bass Club	3	90
Lowndes Co. Bass Club	7	168
Magnolia Bassmasters	10	107
Marshmasters	7	198
Mary Crawford Fruit Jar	3	34
Media Bass MS	17	1193
Mike Conner Fruit Jar	16	206
MS Bass Federation	2	107
Myrick Booster Club	2	40
Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar	17	294
Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	10	415
Pearl River County Bass Club	1	3
Picayune Bass Club	10	137
Pride of the South Tournaments	10	418

Table 4 continued

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
PWBT	5	428
Ridgeland Hills Bass Club	1	11
Singing River Bassmasters	3	14
Stone Co. Bassmasters	2	46
Sumrall Bass Club	5	114
Tennessee River Anglers	1	34
Tri-County Bass Club	3	58
Weekend Warrior	11	504

- Team tournaments were more popular than individual tournaments with 60% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 19 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 40% of the reports and averaged 36 participants per event.
- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven quality indicators" (Table 5). In 2021, the top five lakes in order were Pickwick, Lake Ferguson, Bay Springs, Ross Barnett, and Lake Washington. Bogue Homa ranked first in average weight of individual bass. In 2021, the Pascagoula River ranked first for the number weighed-in per day. Pounds of bass weighed-in per day was highest in Lake Ferguson. Sardis Lake ranked first for hours to catch a bass equal to or over five pounds. Pickwick ranked first for big bass weight and Lake Ferguson ranked first for winning weight. The highest percentage of anglers weighing in a limit bag was recorded at Back Bay.
- Tournament bag limits used in the report were five bass which 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 2021 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 <sup>st</sup> place weight (lbs.)		Percentage of anglers with a 5-fish bag		Overall Rank	
BH	2.99	PS	3.09	LF	6.44	SL	1.11	PK	6.07	LF	20.47	BB	66	1	PK
LW	2.90	BB	2.70	PK	5.72	PK	1.22	RB	5.98	PK	18.94	BS	63	2	LF
PK	2.79	BS	2.57	BS	5.37	BH	1.37	BH	5.94	LW	18.34	PS	63	3	BS
LF	2.65	LF	2.42	LW	5.18	BS	2.01	LF	5.59	RB	17.31	LF	53	4	RB
RB	2.37	RB	2.08	RB	4.93	LW	2.62	LW	5.51	BH	17.05	RB	49	5	LW
BS	2.21	PK	1.99	PS	4.63	RB	2.97	BS	5.51	BS	16.28	BW	49	6	BH
SL	2.14	BW	1.97	BH	4.51	PS	4.32	SL	5.27	SL	14.42	LW	45	7	BB
COL	2.02	COL	1.76	BB	4.12	BB	5.3	BB	4.80	COL	13.90	PK	36	8	PS
BB	1.63	LW	1.74	COL	3.56	LF	5.98	COL	4.79	BB	12.76	MC	32	9	SL
PS	1.52	MC	1.69	SL	3.27	PJ	8.33	PS	4.00	PS	12.39	BH	31	10	COL
PJ	1.43	JD	1.38	PJ	1.45	BW	8.44	PJ	3.10	PJ	8.07	SL	22	11	BW
JD	1.00	BH	1.22	MC	1.43	COL	13.23	JD	2.87	JD	6.35	PJ	21	12	PJ
MC	0.79	SL	1.10	JD	1.39	JD	25.46	BW	2.78	MC	5.62	COL	19	13	MC
BW	0.72	PJ	1.01	BW	1.32	MC	None	MC	2.49	BW	5.06	JD	15	14	JD

**BB**=Back Bay; **BH**=Bogue Homa; **BS**=Bay Springs; **BW**=Bill Waller; **COL**=Columbus; **JD**=Jeff Davis;  
**LW**=Lake Washington; **MC**=Mike Conner; **PJ**=Paul B. Johnson SP; **PK**=Pickwick; **PS**=Pascagoula River;  
**RB**=Ross Barnett; **SL**=Sardis Lake