

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2014 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/fishing-tournaments.aspx>

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: _____			

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2014 Bass Tournament Summary

2014 was another good year for Mississippi's bass tournament anglers based on 217 tournament reports. Average statistics for all lakes in 2014 were very similar to those in 2013 and still above the previous eight years of reporting. Average lunker weight, and numbers and pounds of bass caught per day were higher than 2013 values. At least five reports were received from eight lakes that are included in the "Final Rankings." Anglers are raving about the quality of the fishing at Bay Springs Lake; Pickwick Lake is still cranking out high numbers of bass over seven pounds; and the coastal rivers continue to provide the best numbers of bass per day. The following summarizes the most important points from the 2014 Tournament Report:

- 217 reports were submitted from 25 different lakes
- **Bay Springs Lake** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Pickwick Lake**, **Ross Barnett Reservoir**, and the **Pearl River**.
- 39 bass over seven pounds were weighed-in; the largest bass was 10.63 pounds from Pickwick Lake.

Statewide Tournament Statistics

2.13 - Number of bass caught per angler-day

4.35 - Pounds of bass caught per angler-day

2.16 - Average weight of bass caught

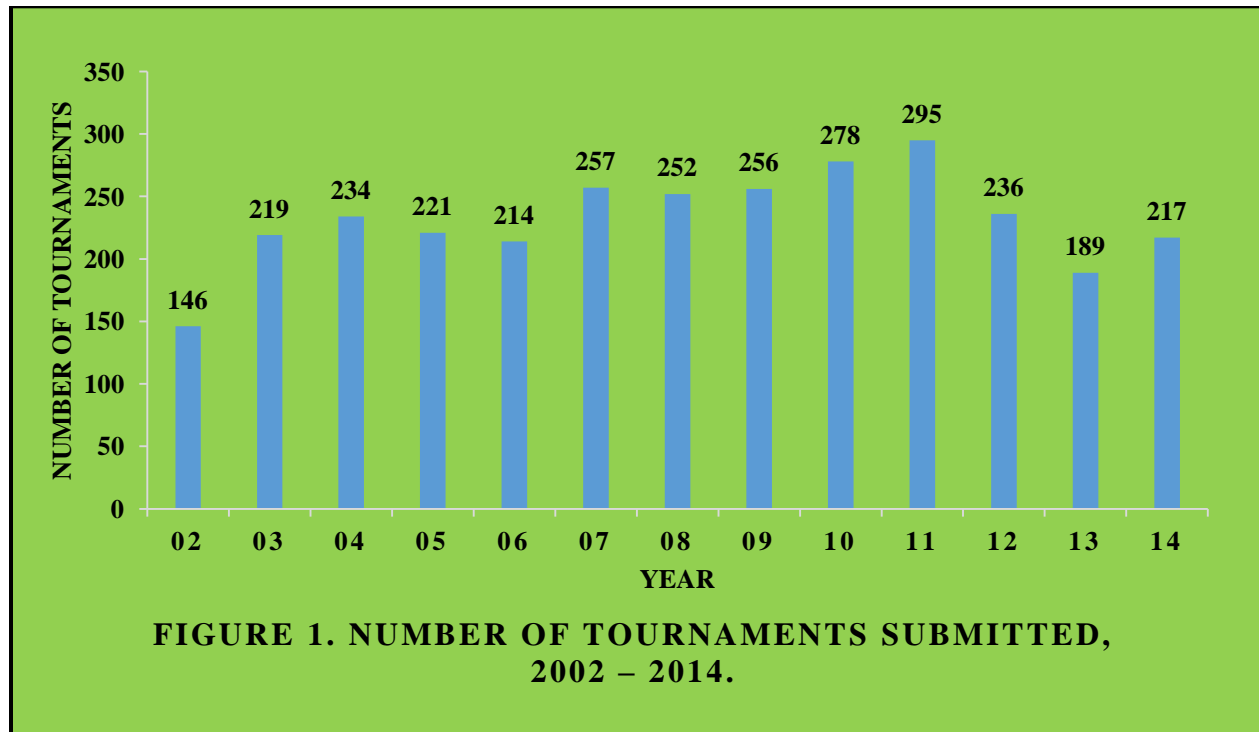
374 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass

5.48 - Average lunker, or big bass weight

14.62 - Average 1st place weight

222 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

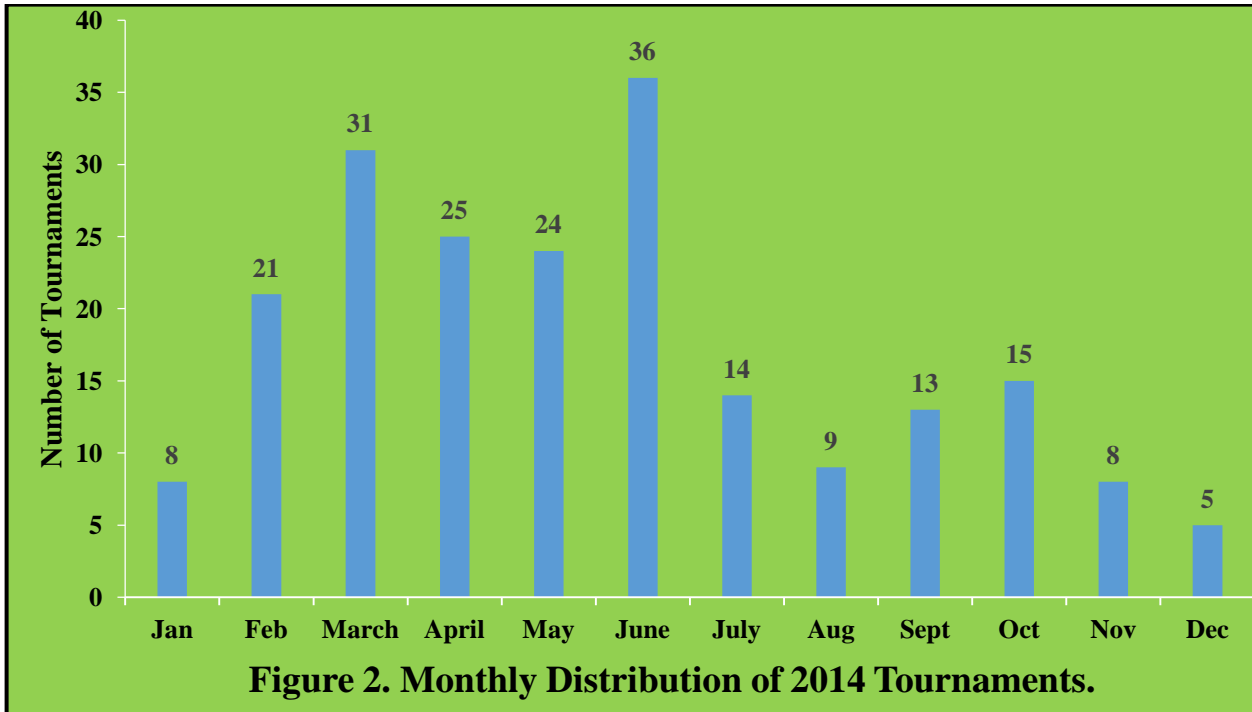
- A total of 217 tournaments reported 10,145 anglers that weighed-in 18,036 bass (Table 1). The number of tournament reports increased in 2014 (Figure 1). The most reports came from Pickwick Lake.



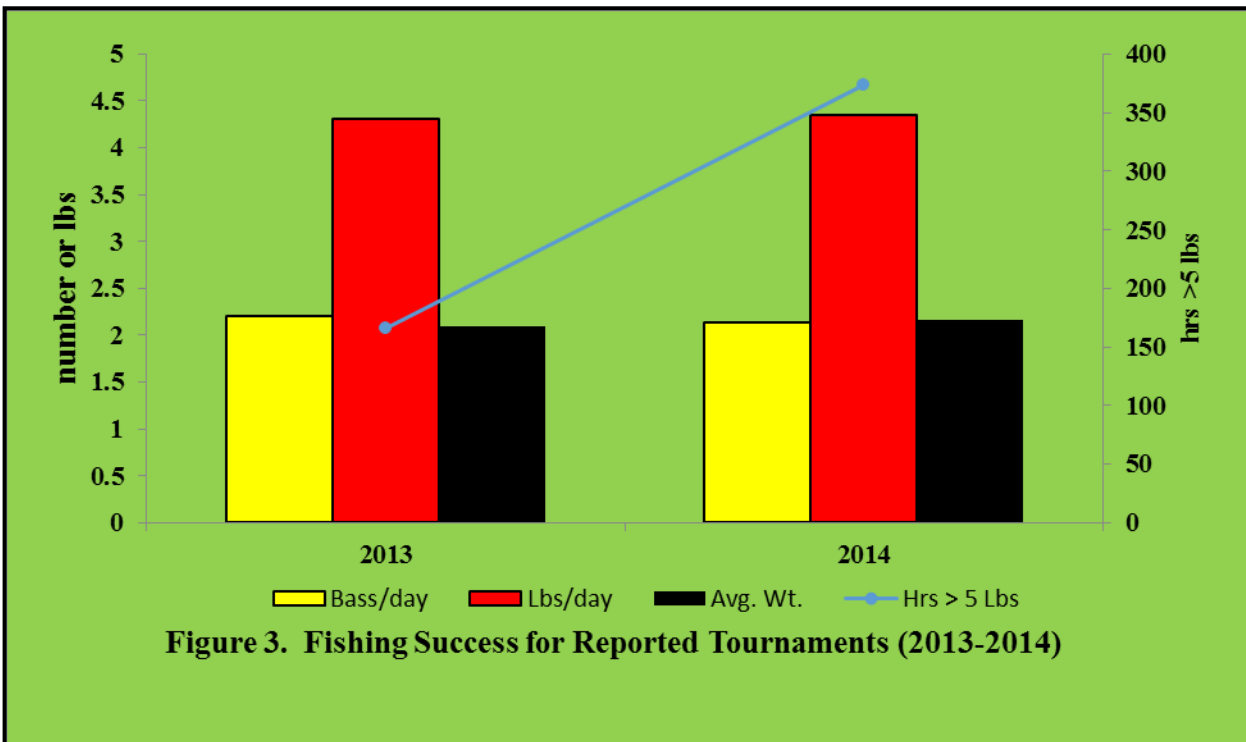
- It took an average of 14.62 pounds to win a tournament in 2014 (Table 1). Of lakes with a least five tournaments reported, Bay Springs, Pickwick and Ross Barnett had the highest average winning weights.
- Average weight of bass ranged from 1.35 pounds at Jourdan River to 3.23 pounds at Ohkissa Lake (Table 1). The statewide average weight was 2.39 pounds. Using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, the number of bass caught per angler day was highest on Back Bay Biloxi and pounds caught per angler day was highest at Pickwick Lake.
- The seasonal distribution of 2014 tournaments appears in Figure 2. February through June was the most popular months to conduct tournaments with over 20 per month reported. Tournament reports were submitted from all 12 months.

Table 1. Summary of bass Tournament results from the 2014 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. > 5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Aliceville	3	100	225	3.06	5.49	48	1.72	2	4.26	10.77
Back Bay	4	112	136	3.50	4.60	44	1.44	2	4.30	12.15
Bay Springs	8	222	463	2.39	5.25	64	2.26	15	6.32	20.45
Bee Lake	2	24	61	2.54	4.64	33	1.81	1	5.38	14.78
Eagle Lake	4	131	212	1.41	4.36	32	3.03	5	6.27	16.21
Enid Lake	2	24	33	1.35	2.60	21	1.84	1	3.62	9.57
Lake Ferguson	3	195	300	1.81	4.42	14	2.42	1	4.70	13.70
Flint Creek	1	4631	61	1.97	3.07	56	1.56	1	5.42	11.31
Gulfport Lake	6	113	301	2.87	4.52	50	1.55	3	4.67	10.06
Jourdan River	6	68	165	3.04	3.95	45	1.35	2	3.60	9.13
Bogue Homa	20	1,741	747	0.62	1.83	15	2.87	22	5.88	14.78
Lake Chicot	1	65	119	1.83	5.30	55	2.89	2	8.43	20.94
Lake Ferguson	4	193	206	1.03	2.78	33	2.88	4	5.38	16.61
Lake Lincoln	1	22	42	1.91	5.76	55	3.02	1	8.36	28.09
Washington	4	135	187	1.82	4.39	28	2.45	3	4.68	13.48
Lock D TTW	1	20	44	2.20	4.69	80	2.13	1	5.86	15.65
Maynor Creek	2	28	55	1.90	3.16	41	1.65	1	4.33	10.97
Ohkissa Lake	2	26	48	1.85	5.96	15	3.23	1	6.69	17.25
Okatibbee Lake	4	182	292	1.90	4.25	56	2.25	12	7.01	18.86
Pascagoula	17	481	861	2.44	4.14	49	1.68	5	4.23	12.36
Pearl River	18	344	545	2.90	5.43	54	1.63	0	3.55	11.84
Pickwick Lake	63	3,403	8,183	2.24	6.34	32	2.91	80	6.64	16.92
Ross Barnett	37	2,063	4,683	2.08	4.39	56	2.21	55	5.87	15.33
Sardis Lake	3	409	36	2.09	3.45	53	1.65	1	4.58	13.69
TTW Pools A-E	1	13	31	2.38	3.94	23	1.65	1	7.09	10.54
Totals	217	10,145	18,036					222		14.62
Average				2.13	4.35	42	2.16	1.02	5.48	25.53



- Both pounds per day (4.35) and average weight of bass weighed-in (2.16) were slightly higher than 2013 values. The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass increased to 374 (Figure 3).



- Three of the top-10 heaviest 5-bass limits came from Pickwick Lake in 2014, with one of the limits surpassing 30 pounds (Table 2). Bay Springs, Lake Bogue Homa, and Ross Barnett Reservoir each had two sacks in the top-10 heaviest 5-bass limits. The remaining big sack was caught at Lake Lincoln State Park. The largest sack was weighed-in at Pickwick by American Bass Anglers during August. The second biggest sack was caught at Bay Springs in May by Fishers of Men. Four of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during March.

Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in from 2014 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report.

Lake	Date	Tournament	1 st Place Weight
Pickwick Lake	9-Aug	American Angler	30.82
Bay Springs	31-May	Fishers Of Men	28.20
Lake Lincoln	24-May	Media Bass	28.09
Pickwick Lake	6-Sept	Daryl Worley	26.73
Bay Springs	22-Mar	Belmont Bass Anglers	26.09
Ross Barnett Reservoir	1-Mar	C G M Trail	25.88
Ross Barnett Reservoir	15-Mar	Media Bass	25.58
Lake Bogue Homa	22-Mar	Media Bass	24.45
Lake Bogue Homa	22-July	Bogue Homa Tournament	24.18
Pickwick Lake	18-Jan	Pickwick Winter Trail	24.16

- The number of bass weighed-in over five pounds slightly decreased in 2014. On average, it took 374 angler hours to weigh-in a bass over five pounds. There were 222 bass five pounds or larger (1.2% of the total number) weighed-in in 2014.
- In 2014 there were 39 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds, and one lunker caught at Pickwick was over 10 pounds (Table 3). As in 2013, sixty-seven percent of the big bass came from either Pickwick or Ross Barnett. Pickwick alone had 51% of the lunkers over seven pounds.
- Twenty-two clubs or tournament organizations submitted 217 reports (Table 4). Seventeen clubs submitted five or more reports and ten clubs submitted 10 or more. The average number of reports received per club or organization was ten.

Table 3. Summary of bass weighed-in that were seven pounds or larger from the 2014 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report.

<u>LUNKER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LAKE</u>	<u>TOURNAMENT</u>
10.63	5-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
9.88	8-Mar	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
9.50	6-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
9.39	18-Jan	Pickwick Lake	Pickwick Winter Trail
9.29	7-Aug	Lake Bogue Homa	Bogue Homa Tourney
8.90	8-Nov	Pickwick Lake	Pickwick Winter Trail
8.74	22-Jul	Lake Bogue Homa	Bogue Homa Tourney
8.70	6-Sep	Pickwick Lake	Daryl Worley Tourney
8.50	3-May	Pickwick Lake	American Bass Angler
8.49	Fall	Pascagoula River	Kings of the River
8.44	5-Apr	Lake Bogue Homa	Bogue Homa Tourney
8.43	12-Apr	Lake Chicot	Media Bass
8.36	24-May	Lake Lincoln	Media Bass
8.33	9-Aug	Pickwick Lake	American Bass Angler
8.13	14-Jun	Pickwick Lake	American Bass Angler
8.09	30-Mar	Bay Springs Lake	MS Bass Busters
8.06	6-Dec	Pickwick Lake	Pickwick Winter Trail
7.98	6-Dec	Okatibbee Lake	Collinsville Bass Club
7.81	21-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
7.80	24-May	Ross Barnett Reservoir	C G M Tournaments
7.75	5-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
7.69	12-Jul	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
7.63	13-Sep	Pickwick Lake	FLW
7.60	15-Mar	Pickwick Lake	American Bass Angler
7.59	18-Jan	Pickwick Lake	Pickwick Winter Trail
7.44	6-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
7.33	15-Mar	Eagle Lake	Media Bass
7.31	22-Mar	Ross Barnett Reservoir	FLW
7.21	22-Mar	Bay Springs Lake	Belmont Bass Anglers
7.20		Ross Barnett Reservoir	Sunset Bass Club
7.19	4-Jan	Pickwick Lake	Pickwick Winter Trail
7.11	1-Mar	Ross Barnett Reservoir	C G M Tournaments
7.09	31-May	Bay Springs Lake	Fishers Of Men
7.09	15-Nov	TTW Trailer Pools A-E	Belmont Bass Anglers
7.07	13-Sep	Okatibbee Lake	Collinsville Bass Club
7.06	21-Jun	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.
7.03	22-Mar	Pickwick Lake	AL DNR B.A.I.T.

Table 3 (continued)

<u>LUNKER</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>LAKE</u>	<u>TOURNAMENT</u>
7.00	22-Mar	Ross Barnett Reservoir	FLW
7.00	26-Apr	Ross Barnett Reservoir	FLW

Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2014 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number Of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
AL DNR B.A.I.T.	30	2,114
American Bass Angler	10	317
Attala Co Bass Club	5	108
Bass Shamps	6	166
Believers Bassmen	12	148
Belmont Bass Anglers	9	222
Bogue Homa Tournament	19	1,709
C G M Tournaments	13	482
Collinsville Bass Club	3	196
Daryl Worley Tourney	1	63
Fishers Of Men	16	492
FLW	12	1,260
Kings of the River	6	310
Media Bass	24	919
MS Bass Busters	6	59
Ocean Springs Bassmasters	12	92
Pearl River Singles Circuit	8	106
Pickwick Winter Trail	11	242
SMABC	7	90
St. Jude's Tournament	3	544
Sunset Marina	3	246
2014 Catch-A-Dream Bass Classic	1	260

- Team tournaments were only slightly more popular than individual tournaments with 52% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 27 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 48% of the reports and averaged 43 participants per event. Limits of bass were weighed-in by 42% of all anglers or teams during 2014.

- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven "quality indicators" (Table 5). The top five lakes in 2014 were Bay Springs, Pickwick, Ross Barnett, Pearl River and Gulfport Lake. Bay Springs received the highest ranks for three of the seven quality indicators and Pickwick Lake received the highest ranks for two quality indicators. Bay Springs received high marks for winning weight, hours to catch a bass over five pounds, and percentage of limits weighed-in. Pickwick received high marks for average weight and pounds of bass weighed-in per day. Ross Barnett scored high for the percentage of limits weighed-in and hours to catch a bass over 5 pounds. The Pearl River and Gulfport Lake both received high ranks for number and pounds weighed-in per day. Bay Springs replaced Pickwick as the top lake in 2014, with Pickwick a close second. Ross Barnett had a good year and moved up to third from fifth. The Pearl River remained in fourth and Gulfport Lake rounded out the top five. Natural fluctuations in bass abundance and size structure are normal, plus environmental conditions and angling pressure vary from year to year.
- 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 on 2014 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 of hours to catch a bass > 5 lbs.	Average big bass weight (lbs.)	Average 1st place weight (lbs.)	Overall Rank
Pickwick 2.91	Jourdan R. 3.04	Pickwick 6.34	Bay Springs 1.26	Pickwick 6.64	Bay Springs 20.45	1 Bay Springs
Bogue Homa 2.87	Pearl R. 2.90	Pearl R. 5.43	Jourdan R. 2.89	Bay Springs 6.32	Pickwick 16.92	2 Pickwick
Bay Springs 2.26	Gulfport 2.87	Bay Springs 5.25	Ross Barnett 3.19	Bogue Homa 5.88	Ross Barnett 15.33	3 Ross Barnett
Ross Barnett 2.21	Pascagoula 2.44	Gulfport 4.52	Gulfport 3.20	Ross Barnett 5.87	Bogue Homa 14.78	4 Pearl R.
Pascagoula 1.68	Bay Springs 2.39	Ross Barnett 4.40	Pickwick 3.62	Gulfport 4.67	Pascagoula 12.36	5 Gulfport
Pearl R. 1.63	Pickwick 2.24	Pascagoula 4.14	Bogue Homa 6.73	Pascagoula 4.23	Pearl R. 11.84	6 Pascagoula
Gulfport 1.55	Ross Barnett 2.09	Jourdan R. 3.95	Pascagoula 8.18	Jourdan R. 3.60	Gulfport 10.06	7 Bogue Homa
Jourdan R. 1.35	Bogue Homa 0.62	Bogue Homa 1.83	Pearl R.	Pearl R. 3.55	Jourdan R. 9.13	7 Jourdan R.