

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2019 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

2019 Bass Tournament Summary

Mississippi's bass tournament anglers had another good year in 2019 based on 254 tournament reports. Average statistics for all lakes in 2019 were similar, but slightly lower than in 2016, 2017 and 2018. In 2019, the number of hours to catch a 5 lb bass or greater was lower than in 2016, 2017, and 2018. The number of bass weighed in per day was the same in 2019 as 2018. **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. Thirteen lakes were included in the lake rankings. In 2019, Pickwick Lake, Ross Barnett Reservoir, and Bay Springs ranked as some of Mississippi's best bass fishing lakes. Lake Bogue Homa once again offered excellent bass fishing opportunities at one of MDWFP's state fishing lakes. 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:

- Reports were submitted from 254 tournaments fishing 36 different waterbodies.
- In 2019, **Pickwick Lake** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Ross Barnett Reservoir**, **Bay Springs**, and **Aliceville Lake**.
- The largest bass weighed-in was 12.13 pounds from Lake Jeff Davis.

Statewide Tournament Statistics

1.84 - Number of bass caught per angler - day

3.63 - Pounds of bass caught per angler - day

2.06 - Average weight of bass caught

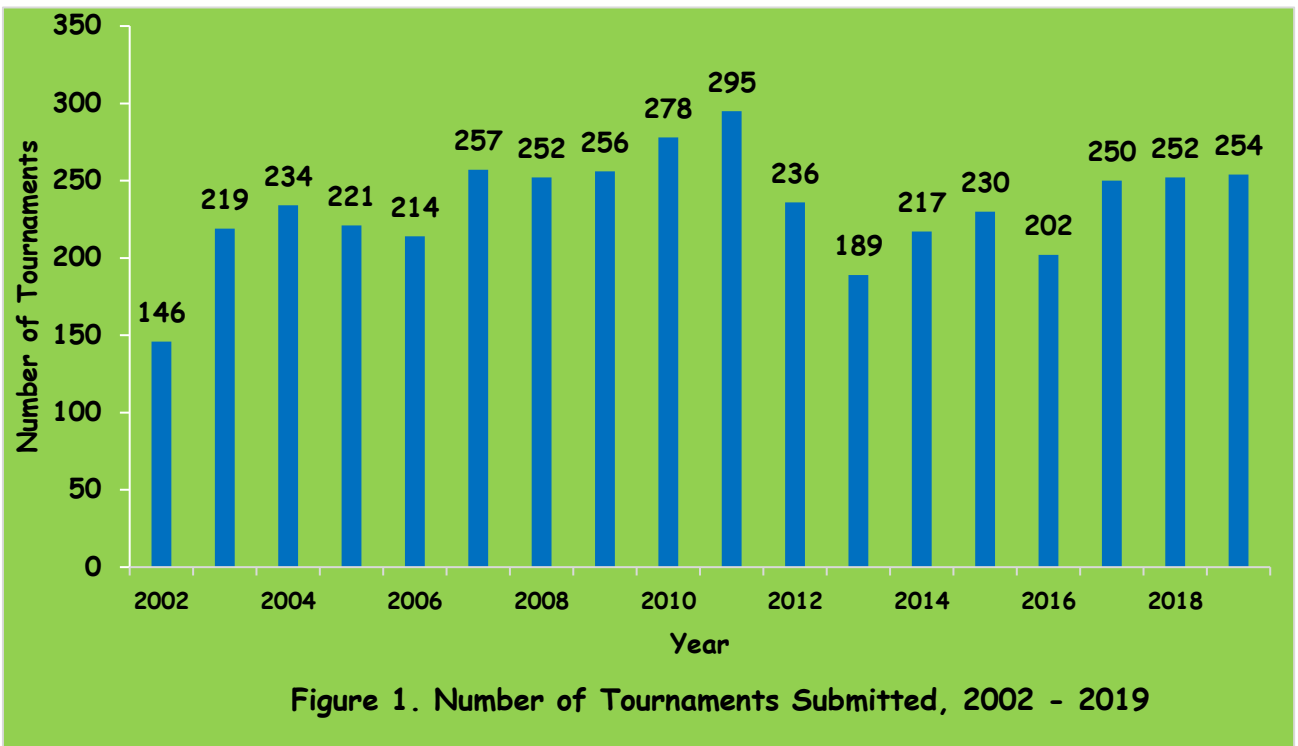
306 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass

4.80 - Average lunker, or big bass weight

13.15 - Average 1st place weight

239 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

- The total number of tournament reports was 254 in 2019 (Figure 1), and the highest number of reports came from Ross Barnett Reservoir (45). Over 8,594 anglers fished in tournaments and weighed-in 15,240 bass (Table 1).



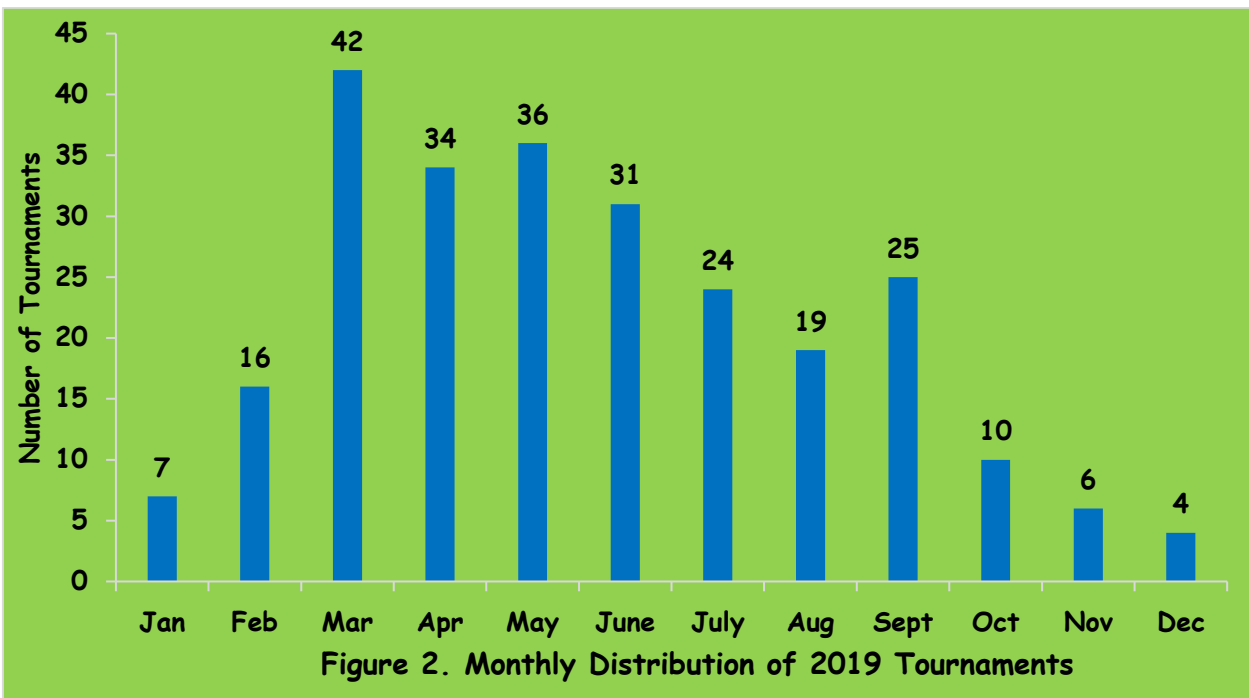
- It took an average of 13.15 pounds to win a tournament in 2019 (Table 1). Of lakes with at least five tournaments reported Pickwick Lake, Lake Ferguson, and Lake Washington had the highest average winning weights.
- After reviewing water bodies with more than one tournament report and using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, the pounds caught per angler day ranged from 1.43 lbs. at Lake Jeff Davis to 6.38 lbs. at Pickwick Lake. The number of bass caught per angler day was highest on the Pascagoula River and the highest average weight was at Eagle Lake.
- The seasonal distribution of 2019 tournaments appears in Figure 2. March through July were the most popular months to conduct tournaments with at least 24 per month. Tournament reports were submitted from all 12 months.

Table 1. Summary of Bass Tournament results from the 2019 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program

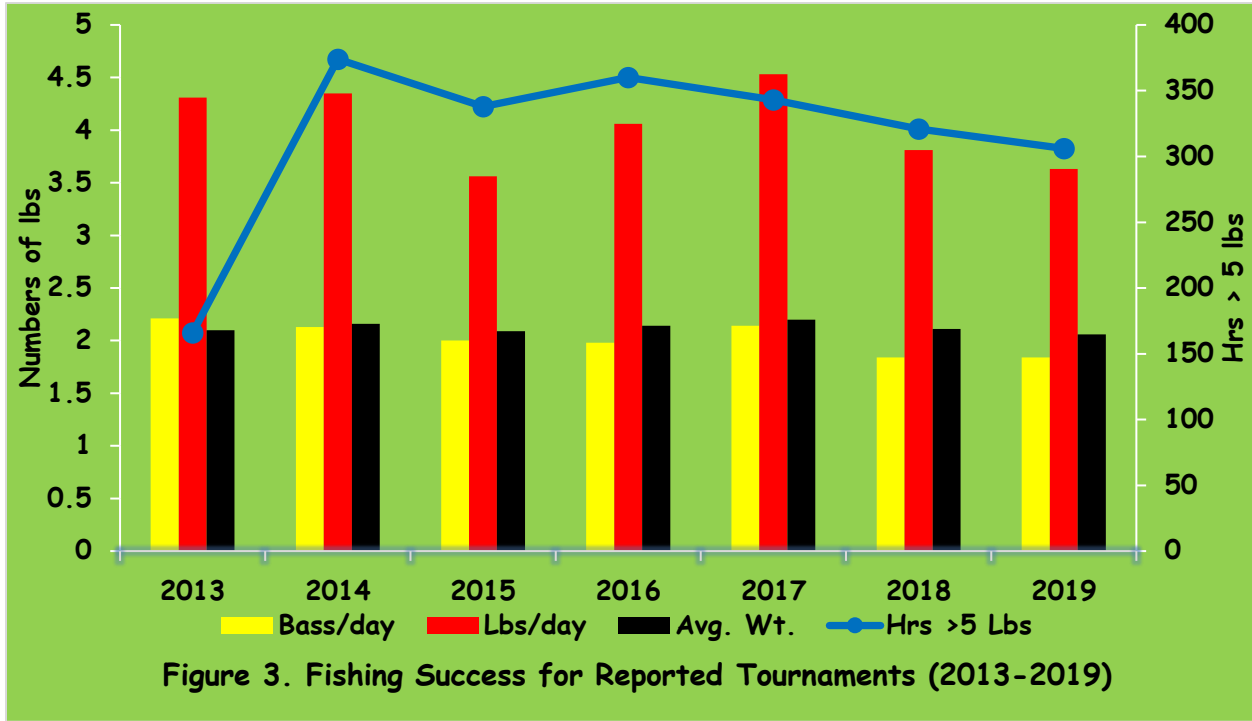
Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. >5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Aberdeen	2	31	34	1.16	2.39	7	1.99	0	3.22	7.63
Aliceville	5	89	325	2.57	4.61	53	1.84	1	4.6	13.19
Back Bay	3	51	156	1.45	2.34	46	1.58	1	4.73	12.11
Bay Springs	8	139	448	1.78	4.16	40	2.35	15	5.44	13.12
Bee Lake	6	121	285	2.23	3.49	22	1.58	1	4.20	10.74
Bill Waller	1	5	16	2.67	1.16	40	0.44	0	0.98	2.76
Bogue Homa	17	306	406	0.83	2.47	13	3.10	30	6.04	15.68
Calling Panther	4	113	283	2.10	4.34	31	2.08	12	5.50	13.71
Columbus	5	124	232	1.79	4.17	6	2.31	4	4.75	11.57
Eagle Lake	2	46	51	1.13	3.51	9	3.17	1	4.84	17.61
Enid Lake	2	44	98	1.36	3.55	26	2.61	3	6.12	22.01
Ferguson	6	150	447	1.62	3.91	36	2.39	4	5.23	19.20
Flint Creek	3	77	266	2.84	4.14	53	1.50	1	6.03	11.62
Gulfport Lake	1	30	46	1.53	1.81	7	1.18	1	5.80	9.90
Lake Jeff Davis	28	363	756	1.59	1.43	25	0.93	5	3.46	6.70
Jourdan River	1	20	87	2.18	3.18	60	1.46	1	6.14	13.37
Lake Lincoln	2	50	140	2.06	4.94	36	2.49	4	6.98	20.01
Lit Blk Cr Cmpgrd Lk	3	24	78	1.90	2.05	30	1.08	1	3.67	5.82
Little Eagle	1	24	76	3.17	8.17	50	2.58	1	5.62	15.64
Manor Creek	1	19	90	2.37	4.05	95	1.71	1	5.90	13.19
Mike Conner	5	27			1.44			1	2.59	6.31
Moon Lake	3	82	307	1.99	3.92	63	1.95	1	4.87	15.17
MS River	1	23	67	1.46	3.77	65	2.59			16.26

Table 1. continued										
Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. >5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Okatibbee	3	82	273	2.24	3.77	42	1.76	7	5.56	14.77
Okhissa	1	22	64	2.91	5.30	23	1.82	2	7.12	12.38
Pascaguola River	21	186	436	2.95	4.31	44	1.46	2	3.59	10.05
Paul B. Johnson SP	23	191	430	1.25	1.92	30	1.53	8	3.60	9.11
Pearl River	5	67	237	2.82	4.26	44	1.52	0	3.66	11.63
Pickwick	25	1,208	3,476	2.24	6.38	40	2.85	48	6.18	20.00
Ross Barnett	45	1,754	4,523	1.83	4.34	28	2.36	65	5.74	15.85
Sardis Lake	1	18	43	1.23	3.02	28	2.46	1	5.40	21.10
TTW	4	57	214	2.15	4.16	57	2.04	4	4.85	15.79
Tunica Lake	1	26	18	0.37	0.58	4	1.59	0	3.22	6.44
Turkey Creek	1	18	30	1.67	2.83	11	1.70	0	4.04	9.61
Washington	12	309	645	1.20	3.61	21	3.13	13	5.77	16.20
Wolf Lake	2	47	157	2.66	4.95	42	1.81	0	3.70	11.34
Totals	254	5,943	15,240					239		
Average				1.84	3.63	32	2.06	0.94	4.80	13.15

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



- The average weight of bass weighed-in since 2017 has remained stable, fluctuating between 2.06 in 2019 and 2.20 in 2017. Pounds per day (3.63) in 2019 was the lowest value recorded since 2015 (3.56 pounds). The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass decreased from 321 in 2018 to 306 in 2019 (Figure 3).



- In 2019, seven of the 10 heaviest 5-bass limits came from Pickwick Lake (Table 2). The largest sack (32.13 pounds) was weighed-in at Pickwick Lake during an AL BAIT event in March. Three of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during February, and two of the 10 big sacks were weighed in during January and also during March.

Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in 2019 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report

Lake	Date	Tournament	1st Place Weight (lbs)
Pickwick	23-Mar	AL BAIT	32.13
Pickwick	26-Jan	PWBT	29.18
Pickwick	11-May	AL BAIT	29.04
Pickwick	2-Mar	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	28.48
Lake Lincoln	23-Feb	Media Bass MS	27.84
Pickwick	9-Feb	PWBT	26.92
Ross Barnett	16-Feb	American Bass Anglers	26.55
Ferguson	27-Jul	Media Bass MS	25.53
Pickwick	24-Apr	Fishers of Men	23.96
Pickwick	12-Jan	PWBT	22.65

- The number of bass weighing at least five pounds decreased slightly from 244 in 2018 to 239 in 2019. Bass ≥ 5 pounds represented 0.94% of fish caught per tournament during 2019. On average, it took 306 angler hours to weigh-in a bass equal to or over five pounds.
- In 2019 there were 27 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds. The largest lunker was caught at Lake Jeff Davis on July 1 and weighed 12.13 pounds (Table 3). The second largest lunker was caught on Pickwick Lake on May 11 and weighed 10.33 lbs. Pickwick Lake accounted for 26% of the bass seven pounds or bigger. Another 22% were caught at Ross Barnett Reservoir and Lake Jeff Davis accounted for 19% of the big bass.
- Thirty-seven clubs or tournament organizations submitted reports (Table 4). Twenty-six clubs submitted five or more reports and 9 clubs submitted 10 or more. The average number of reports received per club or organization was seven.

Table 3. Summary of bass weighed-in that were seven pounds or larger from the 2019 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
12.13	7/1/2019	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
10.33	5/11/2019	Pickwick	AL BAIT
9.34	2/23/2019	Bogue Homa	Dixie Bassmasters
9.32	6/9/2019	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
9.25	5/13/2019	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.75	2/24/19	Washington	MRAA 2019
8.75	3/23/2019	Pickwick	AL BAIT
8.50	6/3/2019	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.30	Mar. 2019	Calling Panther	Southwest Bass Club
8.28	3/16/2019	Ross Barnett	American Bass Anglers
8.14	4/15/2019	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
8.13	12/7/2019	Ross Barnett	American Bass Anglers
8.10	3/2/2019	Pickwick	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.
8.09	2/9/2019	Pickwick	PWBT
7.77	5/29/2019	Flint Creek	Media Bass MS
7.68	5/20/2019	Lake Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.
7.60	7/13/2019	Pickwick	American Bass Anglers
7.55	1/12/2019	Pickwick	PWBT
7.47	2/16/2019	Ross Barnett	American Bass Anglers
7.44	3/14/2019	Paul B. Johnson SP	Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar
7.34	2/23/2019	Lake Lincoln	Media Bass MS
7.23	3/9/2019	Bay Springs	Attala County Bass Club
7.21	8/3/2019	Ross Barnett	Weekend Warrior
7.12	6/1/2019	Okhissa	Sumrall Bass Club
7.11	3/31/2019	Ross Barnett	Media Bass MS
7.11	8/3/2019	Enid Lake	Attala County Bass Club
7.00	1/26/2019	Pickwick	PWBT

Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2019 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
AL BAIT	5	282
American Bass Anglers	14	463
Attala County Bass Club	8	166
Bass Fishing Federation - High School	1	72
Bogue Homa Fruit Jar	10	284
Brookhaven Bass Club	5	75
Catch A Dream Foundation	1	264
Clinton Bass Club	5	94
Collinsville Bass Club	5	207
Dixie Bass Club	2	72
Fishers of Men	9	506
FLW	12	1,035
Hol-Mac Corporation	1	51
Jackson Bass Club	1	16
Jared Mann Memorial Bass Tourn	1	102
Jeff Davis Lake Tourn.	28	517
Jones County Bassmasters	1	20
Lee County Bass Club	4	54
Lit Blk Cr Cmp Grd Fruit Jar	3	42
Lowndes Co. Bass Club	9	151
Magnolia Bassmasters	6	68
Marion County Bass Club	1	6
Marsh Masters	9	274
Media Bass MS	17	1,172
MRAA 2019	11	570
MS Bass Assassins	6	86
MS Bass Nation	4	105
Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar	23	349
Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	8	402
Picayune Poplarville PRC	1	25
Prentiss Bass Club	5	46
Pride of the South Ross Barnett Div	1	27
PWBT	3	131
Singing River Bassmasters	10	51

Table 4 continued

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
Southwest Bass Club	2	73
Sumrall Bass Club	13	363
Weekend Warrior	9	373

- Team tournaments were more popular than individual tournaments with 58% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 19 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 42% of the reports and averaged 28 participants per event. Five-fish limits of bass were weighed-in by 31% of all anglers or teams during 2019.
- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven quality indicators" (Table 5). In 2019, the top five lakes in order were Pickwick Lake, Ross Barnett Reservoir, Bay Springs, Aliceville, and Lake Ferguson. Lake Washington received high marks for average weight of individual bass weighed in. As in 2017 and 2018, the Pascagoula River received high ranks for the number weighed-in per day. Pounds of bass weighed-in per day was highest in Pickwick Lake. Bay Springs 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 Aliceville Lake.
- Tournament bag limits of five bass 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 2019 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	
LW	3.13	PS	2.95	PK	6.38	BS	1.35	PK	6.18	PK	20.00	ALC	53	1	PK
BH	3.10	PR	2.82	ALC	4.61	BH	1.48	BH	6.04	LF	19.20	PS	44	2	RB
PK	2.85	ALC	2.57	RB	4.34	PK	2.45	LW	5.77	LW	16.20	PR	44	3	BS
LF	2.39	PK	2.24	PS	4.31	COL	2.64	RB	5.74	RB	15.85	BS	40	4	ALC
RB	2.36	BL	2.23	PR	4.26	RB	3.33	BS	5.44	BH	15.68	PK	40	5	LF
BS	2.35	RB	1.83	COL	4.17	LW	3.65	LF	5.23	ALC	13.19	LF	36	6	LW
COL	2.31	COL	1.79	BS	4.16	PJ	3.71	COL	4.75	BS	13.12	PJ	30	7	BH
ALC	1.84	BS	1.78	LF	3.91	LF	5.84	ALC	4.6	PR	11.63	RB	28	8	PR
BL	1.58	LF	1.62	LW	3.61	JD	8.79	BL	4.20	COL	11.57	JD	25	9	PS
PJ	1.53	JD	1.59	BL	3.49	PS	10.71	PR	3.66	BL	10.74	BL	22	10	COL
PR	1.52	PJ	1.25	BH	2.47	ALC	11.99	PJ	3.60	PS	10.05	LW	21	11	BL
PS	1.46	LW	1.20	PJ	1.92	BL	11.99	PS	3.59	PJ	9.11	BH	13	12	PJ
JD	0.93	BH	0.83	JD	1.43	PR	None	JD	3.46	JD	6.70	COL	6	13	JD

ALC=Aliceville; **BH**=Bogue Homa; **BL**=Bee Lake; **BS**=Bay Springs; **COL**=Columbus; **JD**=Jeff Davis;
LF=Lake Ferguson; **LW**=Lake Washington; **PJ**=Paul B. Johnson SP; **PK**=Pickwick; **PR**=Pearl River;
PS=Pascagoula River; **RB**=Ross Barnett