

MISSISSIPPI BASS TOURNAMENT PROGRAM 2020 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 Jerry Brown
 1505 Eastover Drive
 Jackson, MS 39211

ph: 601-432-2208
 fax: 601-432-2203 Attn: Jerry Brown
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2020 Bass Tournament Summary

Mississippi's bass tournament anglers had a difficult 2020 due to Covid-19. In efforts to protect public health, Mississippi canceled bass tournaments for several weeks. Thankfully, Mississippi bass tournaments resumed in May 2020. Bass tournaments did come back strong in Mississippi following the cancellations based on locating 256 reports in 2020. Average statistics for all lakes in 2020 were slightly lower than in previous years. In 2020, the number of hours to catch a 5 lb. bass or greater was higher than in recent years. The number of bass weighed in per day was slightly lower than in 2018 and 2019. **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 2020, Pickwick Lake, Lake Ferguson, Lake Washington, and Ross Barnett Reservoir ranked as some of Mississippi's best bass fishing lakes. Based on rankings, average pounds caught in an 8-hour day was highest at Pickwick Lake in 2020. As in previous years, the Pascagoula River and Pearl 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 256 tournaments fishing 36 different waterbodies.
- In 2020, **Pickwick Lake** finished as the top lake in overall quality indicator rankings followed by **Lake Ferguson, Lake Washington, and Ross Barnett Reservoir.**
- The largest bass weighed-in was 10.35 pounds from Lake Jeff Davis.

Statewide Tournament Statistics

- 1.82 - Number of bass caught per angler - day
- 3.22 - Pounds of bass caught per angler - day
- 1.75 - Average weight of bass caught
- 386 - Hours to catch a 5 pound bass
- 4.34 - Average lunker, or big bass weight
- 11.47 - Average 1st place weight
- 180 - Number of bass 5 pounds and larger

- The total number of tournament reports was 256 in 2020 (Figure 1), and the highest number of reports came from Ross Barnett Reservoir (30). Over 8,177 anglers fished in tournaments and weighed-in 13,891 bass (Table 1).

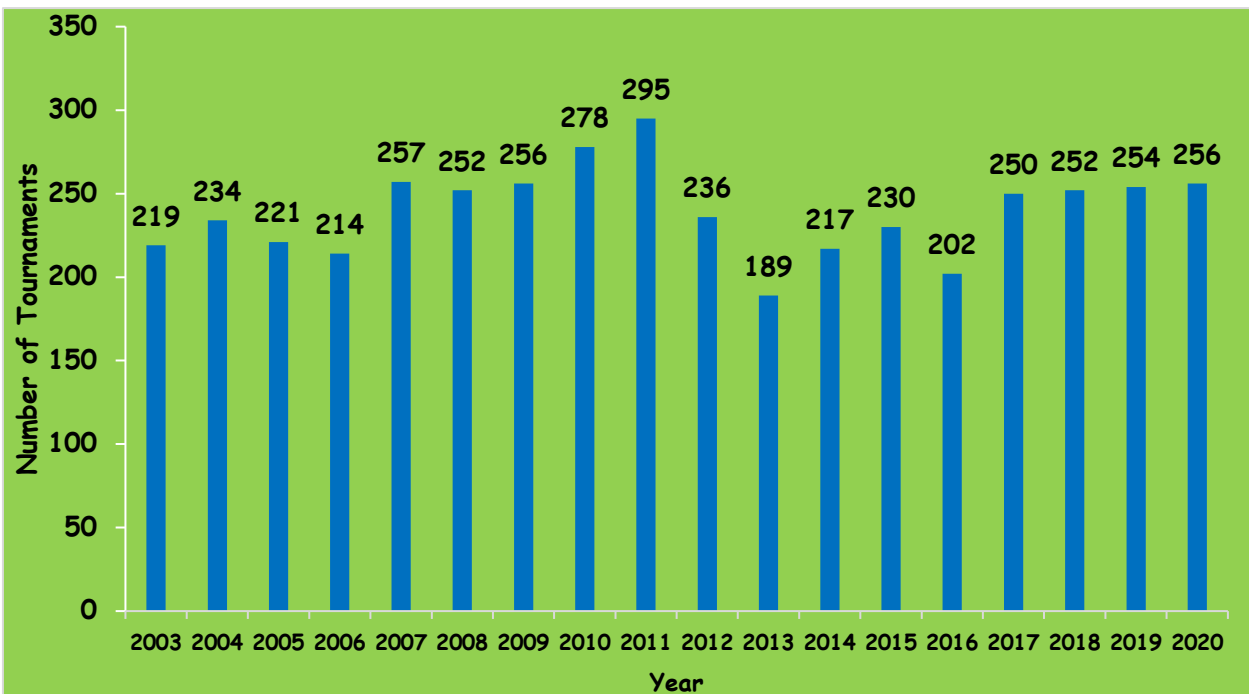


Figure 1. Number of Tournaments Submitted, 2003 - 2020

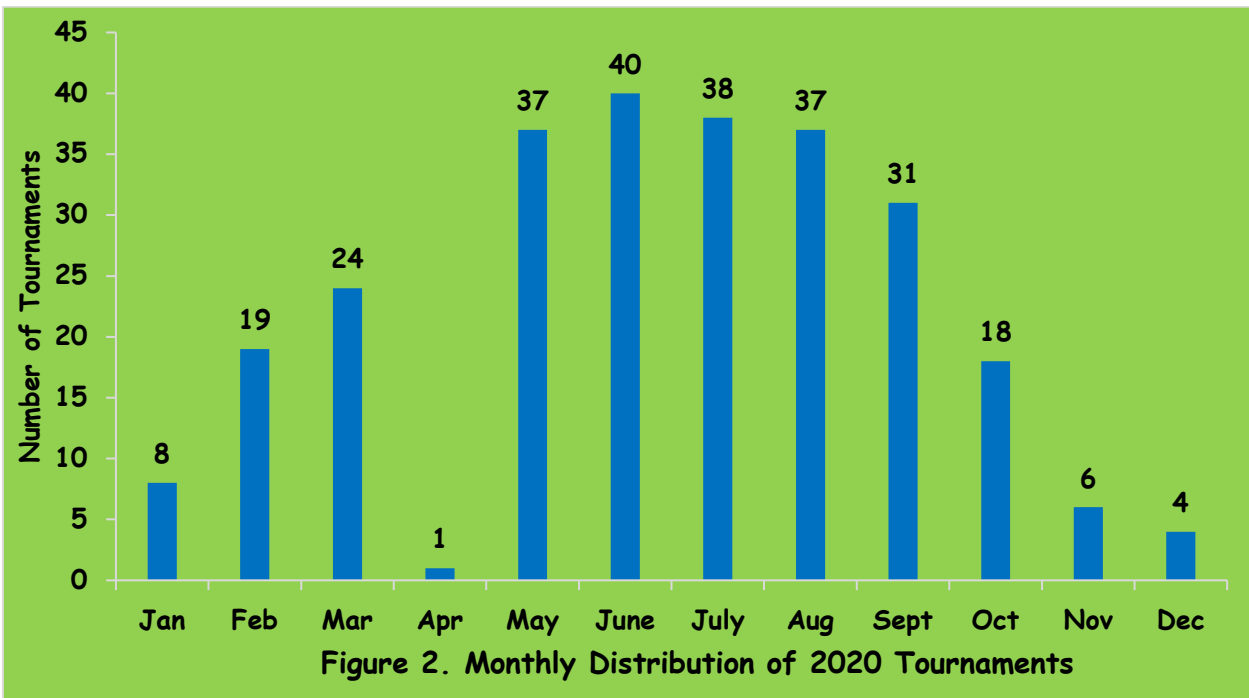
- It took an average of 11.47 pounds to win a tournament in 2020 (Table 1). Of lakes with at least five tournaments reported Lake Ferguson, Pickwick Lake, Ross Barnett Reservoir had the highest average winning weights.
- After reviewing water bodies with more than two tournament reports and using average length of tournaments to define an angler day, the numbers of bass caught per angler day ranged from 0.54 at Percy Quin to 3.08 on the Pearl River. The pounds of bass caught per angler day was highest at Bay Springs and the highest average weight was at Eagle Lake.
- The seasonal distribution of 2020 tournaments appears in Figure 2. May through September were the most popular months to conduct tournaments with at least 31 per month. Only one tournament report was submitted for April, it occurred the day before Mississippi bass tournaments were canceled due to Covid-19. May had 37 tournament reports submitted after bass tournaments resumed.

Table 1. Summary of Bass Tournament results from the 2020 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program

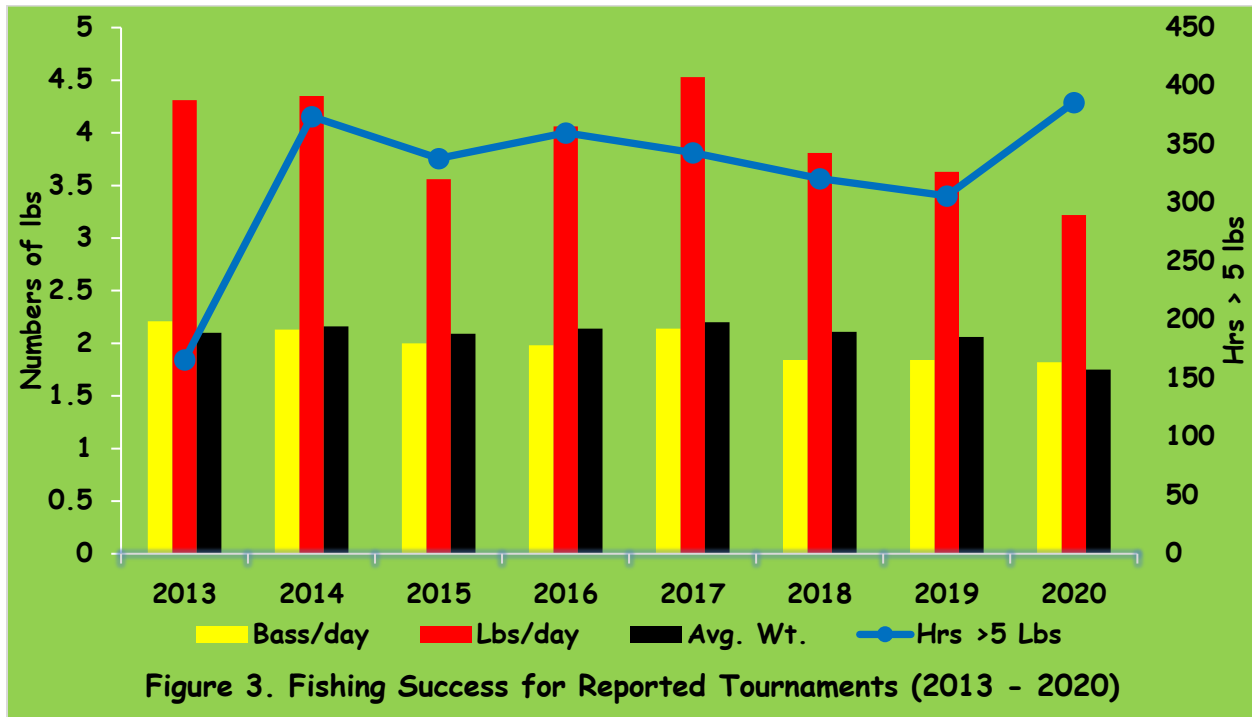
Waterbody	Report Cards	Entries	Bass Caught	Bass Per Day	Pounds Per Day	Percent Success	Average Weight	No. \geq 5 lbs.	Big Bass	Average 1st Place
Aberdeen	1	11	19	0.90	1.66	18	1.83	0	3.58	10.48
Aliceville	4	83	231	2.17	3.73	40	1.76	0	4.24	12.75
Back Bay	5	95	248	2.51	4.07	48	1.57	7	5.44	11.62
Bay Springs	4	51	187	2.43	5.60	61	2.33	2	5.23	16.39
Bee Lake	2	36	150	3.31	5.95	80	1.80	2	5.19	14.01
Bill Waller	8	70	264	2.13	1.47	61	0.69	3	3.03	5.31
Bogue Homa	2	45	0		3.02			8	6.55	15.89
Calling Panther	3	44	129	2.69	4.32	36	1.71	0	4.72	11.93
Columbia	16	120	260	1.26	1.52	18	1.20	0	2.73	6.61
Columbus	3	56	145	2.15	5.07	21	2.38	2	5.11	15.57
Deer Park	3	55	126	1.72	3.20	22	1.86	0	4.13	11.99
Desoto Lake	1	21	80	1.90	4.36	76	2.29	1	5.22	16.94
Eagle	3	43	97	1.60	5.40	19	3.37	5	6.83	17.28
Enid Lake	1	39	131	1.77	4.06	51	2.30	2	7.18	22.24
Ferguson	8	219	727	1.66	4.81	59	2.93	10	5.98	20.26
Flint Creek	1	15	61	2.10	3.21	60	1.53	1	5.08	9.59
Jeff Davis	23	506	643	1.31	1.25	13	0.95	4	3.39	6.27
Jourdan River	2	26	80	2.97	4.54	47	1.57	1	5.06	11.10
Kemper County	1	5	18	1.80	1.43	60	0.79	0	1.31	5.75
Lake Lincoln	2	53	165	2.35	5.94	38	2.61	5	7.56	24.35
Maynor Creek	1	21	82	2.05	4.41	62	2.15	1	6.51	17.80

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
Mike Conner	23	210	596	1.72	1.76	43	0.97	5	3.03	6.84
Moon Lake	1	26	120	2.50	5.62	92	2.25	0	4.62	16.26
Okatibbee	2	42	178	2.29	4.78	69	2.09	5	5.97	18.75
Okhissa	2	54	143	2.10	3.53	39	1.67	2	4.96	11.51
Pascagoula River	25	323	1033	2.86	4.21	51	1.50	7	3.98	10.31
Paul B. Johnson SP	12	106	196	0.97	1.34	21	1.37	1	2.80	8.22
Pearl River	6	146	481	3.08	4.84	42	1.56	0	4.11	12.10
Percy Quin	16	278	143	0.54	0.76	0	1.45	8	4.02	4.17
Pickwick	24	1248	3091	2.09	5.53	35	2.66	39	5.88	18.43
Prentiss Walker	7	72	236	1.63	0.90	60	0.57	0	1.26	4.27
Ross Barnett	30	1201	2910	1.63	4.04	35	2.53	46	5.96	16.24
Sardis Lake	1	6	22	2.00	5.83	67	2.92	1	6.14	20.66
Tunica Cutoff	2	69	211	1.60	3.91	48	2.43	2	5.24	18.13
Washington	7	183	483	1.73	4.95	32	2.94	8	6.22	16.12
TTW Locks	4	55	205	2.46	4.77	60	2.05	2	5.00	16.37
Totals	256	5633	13891					180		
Average				1.82	3.22	36	1.75	0.70	4.34	11.47

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



- The average weight of bass weighed-in since 2017 had remained stable, but in 2020 the average weight was lower at 1.75. Pounds per day (3.22) in 2020 was a low value compared to recent years. The hours to weigh-in a five pound bass increased from 306 in 2019 to 386 in 2020 (Figure 3). Values were impacted by Covid-19 and bass tournament cancelations during prime fishing months.



- In 2020, six of the 10 heaviest 5-bass limits came from Pickwick Lake (Table 2). The largest sack (26 pounds) was weighed-in at Lake Lincoln during a Sumrall Bass Club event in March. Three of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during May, and two of the 10 big sacks were weighed-in during December and also during March.

Table 2. The top 10 heaviest limits weighed-in 2020 MDWFP Bass Tournament Report

Lake	Date	Tournament	1st Place Weight (lbs)
Lake Lincoln	7-Mar	Sumrall Bass Club	26.00
Ross Barnett	14-Mar	Media Bass MS	25.49
Pickwick	22-Feb	PWBT	24.07
Pickwick	28-May	FLW	24.06
Pickwick	5-Dec	PWBT	23.81
Pickwick	19-Dec	PWBT	23.72
Pickwick	13-Nov	2020 TNT BASS Nation Championship	23.19
Ferguson	13-Jun	Media Bass MS	22.98
Lake Lincoln	30-May	Media Bass MS	22.70
Pickwick	29-May	FLW	22.63

- The number of bass weighing at least five pounds decreased from 239 in 2019 to 180 in 2020. Bass ≥ 5 pounds represented 0.70% of fish caught per tournament during 2020. On average, it took 386 angler hours to weigh-in a bass equal to or over five pounds.
- In 2020 there were 25 lunkers that weighed at least seven pounds. The largest lunker was caught at Lake Jeff Davis on October 5 and weighed 10.35 pounds (Table 3). The second largest lunker was also at Lake Jeff Davis on June 15 and weighed 10.25 lbs. Pickwick Lake accounted for 24% of the bass seven pounds or bigger. Another 16% were caught at Lake Jeff Davis and Ross Barnett Reservoir. Percy Quin accounted for 12% of the big bass.
- Forty-one clubs or tournament organizations submitted reports (Table 4). Twenty-two clubs submitted five or more reports and 7 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 2020 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program Report

<u>Lunker</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Lake</u>	<u>Tourney</u>
10.35	10/5/2020	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament
10.25	6/15/2020	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament
8.63	12/5/2020	Eagle	Brookhaven Bass Club
8.58	8/4/2020	Percy Quin	Percy Quin Fruit Jar
8.52	3/14/2020	Ross Barnett	Media Bass
8.46	6/4/2020	Paul B. Johnson SP	Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar
8.39	6/23/20	Percy Quin	Percy Quin Fruit Jar
7.98	3/7/2020	Lake Lincoln	Sumrall Bass Club
7.84	8/8/2020	Ross Barnett	Weekend Warrior
7.52	1/25/2020	Pickwick	PWBT
7.50	3/14/2020	Bogue Homa	Jones County Bassmasters
7.44	6/27/2020	Pickwick	Lee County Bass Club
7.42	6/27/2020	Pickwick	LBAA Womens Pro Bass Tour
7.38	2/29/2020	Washington	Jackson Bass Club
7.20	6/20/2020	Washington	MRAA
7.19	5/30/2020	Pickwick	Fishers of Men
7.18	5/30/20	Enid Lake	Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.
7.17	7/19/2020	Pickwick	American Bass Anglers
7.15	2/22/2020	Ross Barnett	Media Bass
7.14	5/30/2020	Lake Lincoln	Media Bass
7.13	8/17/2020	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament
7.13	11/21/2020	Pickwick	PWBT
7.13	7/11/2020	Ross Barnett	Fishers of Men MS
7.10	7/21/2020	Percy Quin	Percy Quin Fruit Jar
7.06	7/6/2020	Jeff Davis	Jeff Davis Tournament

Table 4. Organizations that submitted reports in the 2020 MDWFP Bass Tournament Program.

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
2020 TNT BASS Nation Championship	1	49
AL BAIT	2	49
American Bass Anglers	10	498
Back Bay Beat Down	1	31
Back Bay Fruit Jar	1	17
Bill Waller Fruit Jar	8	124
Brookhaven Bass Club	5	80
Calling Panther Fruit Jar	2	21
Collinsville Bass Club	2	91
Columbia Fruit Jar	16	215
Dixie Bass Club	1	48
Duncan Marine	1	43
Fishers of Men	8	532
FLW	8	866
Hawg Catchers	8	163
Jackson Bass Club	2	37
Jeff Davis Tournament	23	516
Jones County Bassmasters	1	39
Jourdan River Fruit Jar	1	10
Kemper Bass Club	1	10
Kings of the River	1	67
LBAA Womens Pro Bass Tour	2	46
Lee County Bass Club	5	57
Lowndes Co Bass Club	8	190
Magnolia Bassmasters	9	108
Media Bass MS	17	1095
Mike Conner Fruit Jar	23	379
Miss Bass Nation - Pro	3	77
MRAA 2020	7	411
Paul B. Johnson SP Fruit Jar	12	203
Peanut Craft Lures Tourn. Tr.	7	410
Percy Quin Fruit Jar	16	278
Prentiss Walker Fruit Jar	7	144
Pride of the South Tournaments MS	6	167
PWBT	5	409

Table 4 continued

<u>Club</u>	<u>Number of Tournaments</u>	<u>Number of Anglers</u>
Singing River Bassmasters	8	40
Southwest Bass Club	4	147
Sth MS Bass Nation High Sch Div	1	43
Sumrall Bass Club	4	121
Weekend Warrior	8	297
Wounded Warrior - Pasc River	1	49

- Team tournaments were more popular than individual tournaments with 59% of the reports submitted from team events. These tournaments averaged 18 teams per tournament. Individual tournaments accounted for 41% of the reports and averaged 27 participants per event.
- Lakes with at least five tournament reports were ranked by averaging seven quality indicators" (Table 5). In 2020, the top five lakes in order were Pickwick Lake, Lake Ferguson, Lake Washington, Ross Barnett Reservoir, and Pascagoula River. Lake Washington received high marks for average weight of individual bass weighed in. In 2020, the Pearl River received high ranks for the number weighed-in per day. Pounds of bass weighed-in per day was highest in Pickwick Lake. Percy Quin received high marks for hours to catch a bass equal to or over five pounds. Lake Washington received high marks for big bass weight and Lake Ferguson received high marks for winning weight. The highest percentage of anglers weighing in a limit bag was at Bill Waller.
- Tournament bag limits varied from three to five bass were more restrictive than state regulations. Most tournaments had a 12-inch minimum length limit. Due to Covid-19 impacts on Bass Tournaments, many tournaments were canceled or tournament criteria changed.
- 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 2020 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	2.94	PR	3.08	PK	5.53	PQ	2.95	LW	6.22	LF	20.26	BW	61	1	PK
LF	2.93	PS	2.86	LW	4.95	RB	3.45	LF	5.98	PK	18.43	PW	60	2	LF
PK	2.66	BW	2.13	PR	4.84	PK	3.48	RB	5.96	RB	16.24	LF	59	3	LW
RB	2.53	PK	2.09	LF	4.81	BW	3.51	PK	5.88	LW	16.12	PS	51	4	RB
PR	1.56	LW	1.73	PS	4.21	LW	3.53	PR	4.11	PR	12.10	MC	43	5	PS
PS	1.50	MC	1.72	RB	4.04	LF	3.67	PQ	4.02	PS	10.31	PR	42	6	PR
PQ	1.45	LF	1.66	MC	1.76	PS	5.70	PS	3.98	PJ	8.22	RB	35	7	BW
PJ	1.37	PW	1.63	LC	1.52	MC	6.44	JD	3.39	MC	6.84	PK	35	8	MC
LC	1.20	RB	1.63	BW	1.47	JD	10.97	BW	3.03	LC	6.61	LW	32	9	PQ
MC	0.97	JD	1.31	PJ	1.34	PJ	17.26	MC	3.03	JD	6.27	PJ	21	10	PJ
JD	0.95	LC	1.26	JD	1.25	PW	None	PJ	2.80	BW	5.31	LC	18	11	JD
BW	0.69	PJ	0.97	PW	0.90	LC	None	LC	2.73	PW	4.27	JD	13	12	LC
PW	0.57	PQ	0.54	PQ	0.76	PR	None	PW	1.26	PQ	4.17	PQ	0	12	PW

BW=Bill Waller; JD=Jeff Davis; LC=Lake Columbia; LF=Lake Ferguson; LW=Lake Washington; MC=Mike Conner; PJ=Paul B. Johnson SP; PK=Pickwick; PQ=Percy Quin; PR=Pearl River; PS=Pascagoula River; PW=Prentiss Walker; RB=Ross Barnett