

OKLAHOMA BASS TOURNAMENTS

2002 ANNUAL REPORT

Oklahoma Department
Of Wildlife Conservation

Fisheries Division

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INTRODUCTION

This marks the ninth year the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) has gather statewide data on competitive bass fishing.

We thank the Tulsa District Corps of Engineers Project Offices; Oklahoma State Park Offices; the Grand River Dam Authority, Lake Patrol Office; and the many city offices that helped distribute *Tournament Report* cards in 2002. We especially want to thank the many organizations that voluntarily returned these cards following their events.

Tournament results are a valuable addition to the data our biologists collect on Oklahoma bass populations. It is the only measure we have of what anglers are actually catching. On lakes where electrofishing surveys cannot be performed each year, tournament results allow our biologists to monitor those bass populations - making it even more valuable.

We are working on an on-line system that will allow Tournament Directors to enter results via the Internet. Organizers will be sent detailed information on that system in the near future.

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Summary of Results:

Controlling authorities issued 1,252 event permits in 2002. We added 10% for non-permitted events and estimated there were about 1,375 tournaments this year. That's 115 tournaments every month, 26 per week, four per day!!!

- Permit numbers were down only 4% from 2001 but were down 29% from the record high set in 1998.
- Wereceived 685 Tournament Reports from 53 lakes (Table 1). This is a return rate of only 55% of the permitted tournaments.
- Reports were received from 91 organization. These returns are down from as many as 1,000 reports sent in by 180 organizations in years past.

The number of tournament entries (Table 1, Column 2) provides a measure of fishing pressure, not actual numbers of anglers, because most anglers fish more than one tournament.

- Tournament permits are down 29% since 1998 but the number of entries is down only 20%. Individual anglers are fishing more tournaments each year - but declining participation indicates that recruitment of new tournament anglers is not keeping pace with those dropping out.
- Team tournaments averaged 30 boats. Draw-for-partner events made up 24% of the contests (the highest percentage in nine years) and averaged 28 participants per event.

A total of 28,560 bass were brought to weigh-in totaling 59,112 pounds.

- Each tournament averaged 42 bass weighing 78.3 pounds compared to last year's 49 bass that weighed 99.5 pounds.
- The overall success rate (anglers or teams bringing at least one bass to weigh-in) was 55%, a drop of 2% from 2001.
- The average bass weighed 2.07 pounds, up slightly from 2.03 pounds in 2001.

Winning weights dropped to 9.30 pounds, down 0.67 pounds from last year. This was the lowest winning average in nine years.

- The heaviest five-bass limit weighed 21.56 pounds from Sardis Lake during a LeFlore Co. Bass Club meet.
- Limits of bass were weighed by 12% of all anglers or teams compared to the nine-year average of 14%.

- The largest bass reported this year weighed 10.06 pounds from Sportsman Lake caught during a Heart of Oklahoma club tournament (Table 3).
- Numbers of bass over 5 pounds were down 19% compared to last year. However, bass of 8 pounds or larger were up, increasing from 7 in 2001 to 13 in 2002.

CONCLUSIONS

Electrofishing surveys in 2002 showed declines in the bass populations in some of our lakes. Tournament results substantiate this decline. Biologists believe that these changes in fishing quality are in part due to poor recruitment (survival of young bass) during the drought years of 1998 and 1999. Poor survival then, resulted in fewer “keeper” bass in 2001 and 2002.

Unfortunately, with those weak year classes, those “holes” in the population structure, fishing quality for intermediate-sized and larger bass may be slow to recover in the next few years. However, those same surveys show good numbers of younger bass in most lakes. Given time, these fish should grow to keeper size and provide quality angling opportunities in the future.

TABLE 1. STATEWIDE SUMMARY OF BASS TOURNAMENT RESULTS BY LAKE FOR 2002.

LAKE	REPORTS RECEIVED	ENTRIES	BASS CAUGHT	BASS PER DAY	PERCENT SUCCESS	AVERAGE WEIGHT	NUMBER > 5 lbs.	NUMBER > 8 lbs.	BIG BASS	1 ST PLACE
AMERICAN HORSE	3	95	13	0.17	24	1.59	0	0	4.97	2.98
ARBUCKLE	33	1437	1006	1.34	50	1.26	8	0	7.79	7.27
ARDMORE	3	68	35	0.47	35	2.13	0	0	3.73	5.47
BIRCH	8	190	314	1.68	84	0.90	2	1	9.06	7.74
BLACKWELL	9	217	148	0.68	50	2.65	14	0	7.83	11.32
BROKEN BOW	5	149	400	1.96	84	1.76	1	1	9.18	18.70
CHICKASHA	1	90	1016	1.52	27	1.38	2	0	7.07	15.73
CHIMNEY ROCK	2	70	45	0.63	53	4.19	7	0	7.36	10.56
CHOUTEAU	2	28	70	1.38	72	2.04	0	0	3.12	14.15
CLAREMORE	18	729	161	0.53	35	2.37	7	0	7.78	5.80
CLEAR CREEK	3	361	58	0.30	27	2.13	0	0	4.86	7.32
DUNCAN	3	301	47	0.39	37	2.64	1	0	5.02	9.80
ELLSWORTH	15	329	178	1.08	56	2.43	7	1	9.14	8.90
EUCHA	15	817	1243	1.21	76	1.35	2	0	5.90	9.44
EUFAULA	44	4527	2777	0.72	53	2.13	9	0	6.71	8.98
FT COBB	4	102	75	0.75	50	2.83	7	0	6.88	11.76
FT GIBSON	25	894	611	0.67	59	2.22	13	0	6.00	8.90
FOSS	1	16	32	1.33	81	2.95	2	0	7.14	19.80
FUQUA	8	503	195	0.73	52	1.72	0	0	4.80	7.77

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GRAND	45	4968	5041	0.74	64	2.43	64	0	7.06	13.22
GREENLEAF	20	612	367	0.98	44	2.38	6	0	6.05	9.43
GUTHRIE	21	296	86	0.86	26	2.19	0	0	4.97	3.45
HUDSON	26	1160	832	0.75	66	2.19	25	0	7.10	11.55
HUGO	6	202	346	1.74	85	2.14	4	0	5.68	16.29
HUMPHREYS	3	272	56	0.36	38	2.81	2	0	6.04	12.46
KAW	4	118	75	0.62	58	2.15	2	0	5.88	11.89
KERR	10	370	542	1.26	79	2.21	10	0	6.62	15.77
KEYSTONE	19	813	643	0.68	61	2.37	1	0	5.01	10.41
KONAWA	9	1059	1156	2.26	59	0.91	1	0	5.45	5.02
LAWTONKA	20	490	243	0.95	50	2.49	18	1	8.00	8.90
LONE CHIMNEY	5	124	79	0.56	57	1.90	1	0	5.91	6.14
MURRAY	20	763	1168	1.79	79	1.25	10	1	8.24	9.31
McGEE CREEK	26	1321	3152	2.23	86	1.16	30	1	9.00	11.17
McMURTRY	5	127	98	0.67	58	2.04	3	0	6.42	7.37
OKEMAH	2	40	9	0.29	27	3.04	1	0	5.87	5.31
OOLOGAH	2	55	54	0.95	61	2.22	0	0	4.20	12.45
PINE CREEK	6	426	455	1.12	68	1.76	6	0	5.16	10.86

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PONCA CITY	2	32	14	0.68	40	1.93	0	0	4.00	5.35
PRAGUE	4	103	74	0.84	57	2.84	4	1	8.56	11.57
SARDIS	18	693	488	0.65	51	2.53	20	5	9.13	10.87
SHAWNEE TWIN	15	532	213	1.08	46	1.62	3	0	7.28	6.23
SKIATOOK	42	4412	1407	0.43	34	2.02	27	0	7.86	7.27
SOONER	5	94	64	0.65	52	2.38	1	0	6.94	7.40
SPAVINAW	1	48	36	0.50	67	2.12	0	0	3.9	10.53
SPIRO	1	12	13	1.08	67	2.00	0	0	4.36	13.03
SPORTSMAN	2	50	55	1.27	72	1.92	0	1	10.06	11.25
TENKILLER	87	3656	2420	0.84	54	1.99	8	0	6.31	8.68
TEXOMA	18	870	820	0.72	70	2.00	7	0	6.69	12.73
THUNDERBIRD	26	1330	321	0.69	35	2.89	19	0	6.66	7.28
VANDERWORK	1	16	5	0.31	50	5.00	1	0	6.27	13.65
WAURIKA	4	84	50	0.64	42	2.21	1	0	5.06	10.92
WEBBERS FALLS	7	252	245	0.83	55	2.05	1	0	5.06	10.92
WISTER	1	10	17	1.70	100	2.02	0	0	3.18	12.72
TOTALS	685	37074	28560				360	13		
AVG. PER TOURNAMENT		54	42	0.93	55	2.07	0.52	0.02	10.06	9.30

TABLE 2. THE TOP-20 (+1) TOURNAMENT LAKES IN OKLAHOMA BASED ON 2002 REPORTS

RANKED BY "FISHING QUALITY INDICATORS" FROM LAKES WITH TEN OR MORE TOURNAMENT REPORTS											
% Success		Avg Wt./Bass		Avg No./Day		Index of Hrs/5 lb		Avg. 1 st Place		OVERALL RANK	
McGee Creek	86	THUNDERBIRD	2.89	MCGEE CK	2.23	LAWTONKA	1.2	KERR	15.77	#1	KERR
MURRAY	79	SARDIS	2.53	MURRAY	1.79	ELLSWORTH	1.8	GRAND	13.22	#2	HUDSON
KERR	79	LAWTONKA	2.49	ARBUCKLE	1.34	THUNDERBIRD	1.9	TEXOMA	12.73	#3	MCGEE CK
EUCHA	76	HUDSON	2.44	KERR	1.26	SARDIS	2.9	HUDSON	11.55	#4	ELLSWORTH
TEXOMA	70	ELLSWORTH	2.43	EUCHA	1.21	CLAREMORE	3.8	MCGEE CK	11.17	#5	LAWTONKA
HUDSON	66	GRAND	2.43	ELLSWORTH	1.08	KERR	3.9	SARDIS	10.87	#6	GRAND
GRAND	64	GREENLEAF	2.38	SHAWNEE	1.08	MCGEE CK	4.3	KEYSTONE	10.41	#7	SARDIS
KEYSTONE	61	CLAREMORE	2.37	GREENLEAF	0.98	HUDSON	4.5	EUCHA	9.44	#8	MURRAY
FT. GIBSON	59	KEYSTONE	2.37	LAWTONKA	0.95	GREENLEAF	4.6	GREENLEAF	9.43	#9	GREENLEAF
ELLSWORTH	56	FT. GIBSON	2.22	GUTHRIE	0.86	SHAWNEE	5.3	MURRAY	9.31	#10	TEXOMA
TENKILLER	54	KERR	2.21	TENKILLER	0.84	FT. GIBSON	5.9	EUFAULA	8.98	#11	EUCHA
EUFAULA	53	GUTHRIE	2.19	HUDSON	0.75	MURRAY	6.1	ELLSWORTH	8.90	#12	THUNDERBIRD
SARDIS	51	EUFAULA	2.13	GRAND	0.74	GRAND	8.2	LAWTONKA	8.90	#13	SHAWNEE
LAWTONKA	50	SKIATOOK	2.02	TEXOMA	0.72	SKIATOOK	8.9	FT. GIBSON	8.90	#14	CLAREMORE
ARBUCKLE	50	TEXOMA	2.00	EUFAULA	0.72	ARBUCKLE	9.5	TENKILLER	8.68	#15	KEYSTONE
SHAWNEE	46	TENKILLER	1.99	THUNDERBIRD	0.69	TEXOMA	15.7	THUNDERBIRD	7.28	#16	FT. GIBSON
GREENLEAF	44	SHAWNEE	1.62	KEYSTONE	0.68	TENKILLER	32.3	ARBUCKLE	7.27	#17	EUFAULA
CLAREMORE	35	EUCHA	1.35	FT. GIBSON	0.67	EUFAULA	39.3	SKIATOOK	7.27	#18	ARBUCKLE
THUNDERBIRD	35	ARBUCKLE	1.26	SARDIS	0.65	EUCHA	40.7	SHAWNEE	6.23	#19	TENKILLER
SKIATOOK	34	MURRAY	1.25	CLAREMORE	0.53	KEYSTONE	75.3	CLAREMORE	5.80	#20	GUTHRIE
GUTHRIE	26	MCGEE CK	1.16	SKIATOOK	0.43	GUTHRIE	N/A	GUTHRIE	3.45	#21	SKIATOOK

TABLE 3. TROPHY BASS REPORTED IN 2002 TOURNAMENTS.

LAKE	ORGANIZATION	DATE	WEIGHT
Birch	Tulsa Police Bass Club	3/23/02	9.06 lbs.
Broken Bow	Tri Lakes Bass Club	6/02/02	9.81 lbs.
Ellsworth	Lawton/Ft. Sill Bass Anglers	4/09/02	9.14 lbs.
Lawtonka	Lawton/Ft. Sill Bass Anglers	10/06/02	8.00 lbs.
McGee Creek	Bass Assassins	5/06/02	9.00 lbs.
Murray	Hawg Haven	4/07/02	8.24 lbs.
Prague	Mini Pro Boat Assoc.	2/23/02	8.56 lbs.
Sardis	Bartlesville Bassmasters	3/23/02	8.88 lbs.
Sardis	Leflore County Bass Club	3/16/02	8.21 lbs.*
Sardis	Ada Bassmasters	4/07/02	9.13 lbs.*
Sportsman	Heart of Oklahoma	4/13/02	10.06 lbs.

* One other 8 lb.+ bass was weighed in each of these tournaments but individual weights were not reported.

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