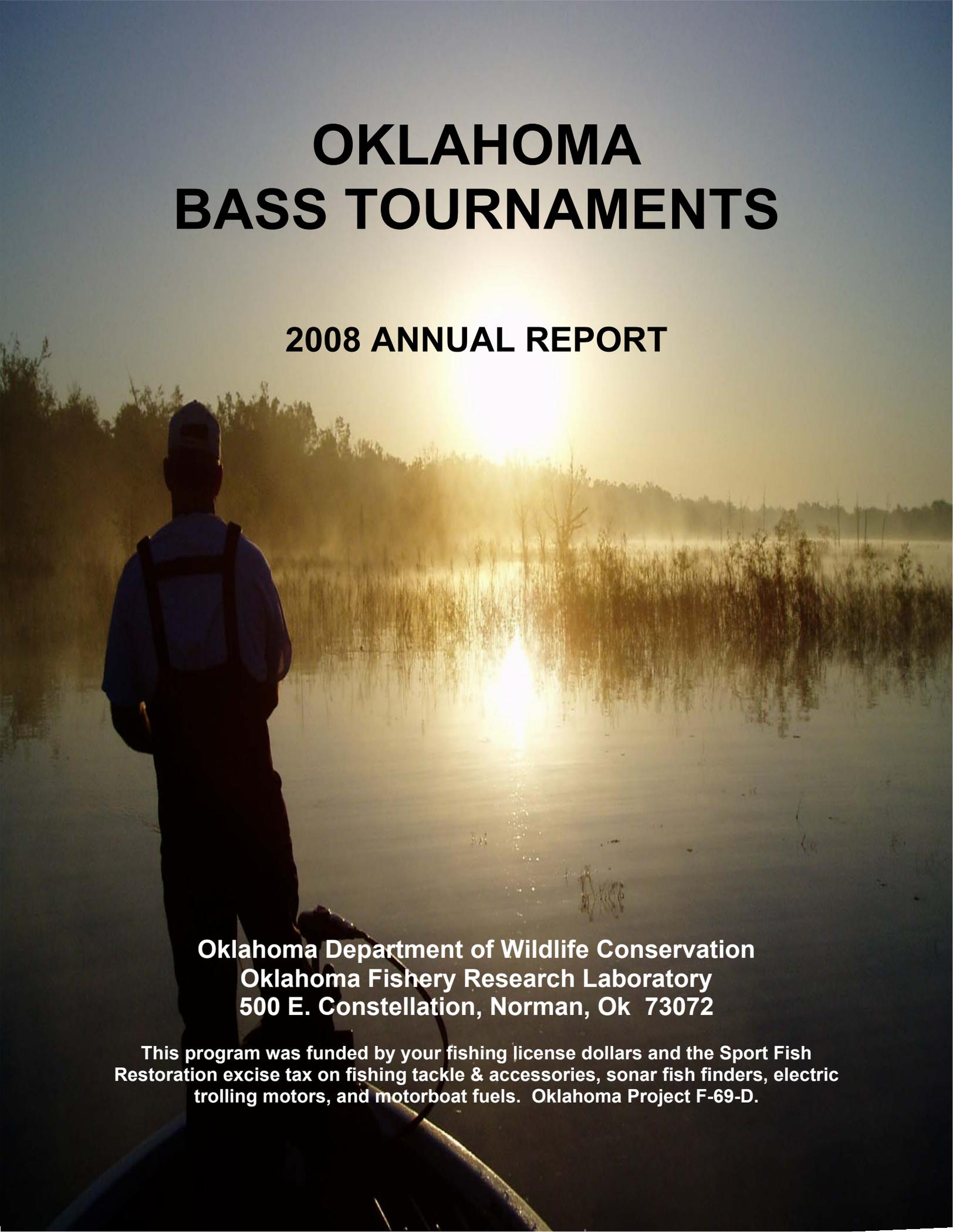


OKLAHOMA BASS TOURNAMENTS

2008 ANNUAL REPORT

A silhouette of a person wearing a cap and overalls, standing in a boat on a misty lake at sunrise. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow and reflecting on the water. The background shows a line of trees and reeds.

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation
Oklahoma Fishery Research Laboratory
500 E. Constellation, Norman, Ok 73072

This program was funded by your fishing license dollars and the Sport Fish Restoration excise tax on fishing tackle & accessories, sonar fish finders, electric trolling motors, and motorboat fuels. Oklahoma Project F-69-D.



HELP STOP THE INVASION!!!

Don't be a Party to the of Spread of Aquatic Nuisance Species

Zebra Mussels have been found in Sooner, Grand, Kaw, Claremore, Keystone, Oologah, Texoma and the Arkansas River Navigation System. **Hydrilla** has become established in Arbuckle, Murray and Sooner. **Largemouth Bass Virus** has spread to over 30 Oklahoma lakes. **White Perch** have invaded Kaw and Keystone with unknown impacts to native fish. Blooms of toxic **Golden Alga** hit Texoma causing fish kills and threatening sport fisheries. **Asian Carp** have been caught in several Oklahoma rivers. It is likely that some of these invaders were spread by **anglers & boaters!** They can be transferred in bilge or livewell water, on carpeted trailer bunks or frames.



ZEBRA MUSSELS CARPET THE BOTTOM OF ELDORADO LAKE DURING LOW WATER LEAVING NO PLACE FOR BASS TO SPAWN

Do your part to prevent the spread of aquatic nuisance species:

- inspect • clean • drain



STOP AQUATIC HITCHHIKERS!

Prevent the transport of nuisance species.
Clean all recreational equipment.
www.ProtectYourWaters.net

When you leave a body of water:

- Remove any visible mud, plants, fish or animals before transporting equipment.
- Eliminate water from equipment before transporting.
- Clean and dry anything that comes into contact with water (boats, trailers, equipment, clothing, dogs, etc.).
- Never release plants, fish or animals into a body of water unless they came out of that body of water.



POWER WASH BOATS & TRAILERS TO REMOVE HITCHHIKING PLANTS OR ANIMALS BEFORE YOU TRAVEL TO OTHER LAKES

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INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) has gathered standardized statewide data on competitive bass fishing for 15 years. Tournaments are a vital source of information that biologists rely on in managing Oklahoma bass fisheries.

Because our biologists cannot conduct electrofishing surveys on every lake, every year, tournament results are often the only information we have on what is actually being caught by anglers. The data collected are used in making analyzing the effectiveness of length limits and the need for habitat enhancement efforts. The numbers and size of bass caught, especially trophy bass, figures into the Department's Florida bass stocking criteria. Without this information, some lakes may rank lower and be passed over when stocking allocations are made. This is why it is so important for Tournament Directors to send in their results.

We want to thank the Tulsa District Corps of Engineers Project Offices, Oklahoma State Parks, the Grand River Dam Authority, and the many City offices that helped distribute *Tournament Report* cards in 2008.

This report may be reproduced and distributed freely to other interested parties. For more information, call, write or E-mail:

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SUMMARY OF 2008 RESULTS

We received reports from 405 tournaments. This is down from 457 in 2007 and down from the average of over 700 we have received prior to 2005. Reports came from 45 lakes compared to 49 in 2007 and 61 lakes in 2006.

Table 1 shows averages for each lake. We received very few reports from some lakes. The values in the table from lakes with few reports could be skewed high or low depending on the success or failure from those few tournaments and the values may not give a true representation of the fishing quality.

- There were **18,134 tournament entries**. This does not represent individual anglers since many anglers fish several tournaments per year. However, multiply entries by the average length of a tournament day (7.1 hours) to get an estimate of tournament fishing pressure (128,751 angler-hours). This value declined by 29% from last year and only 11% of that can be due to the lower reporting rate, so it appears that tournament activity was down in 2008.
- The **average tournament had 25 boats**, on par with previous years. Draw-for-partner or individual angler tournaments made up 19% of the reports. This percentage is slightly below the historic average of 25%.
- A total of **21,530 bass were weighed in 2008**. Those fish weighed 44,440 pounds. This was a decrease from 2007. Obviously with fewer tournaments reporting, these totals were lower than average.
- Tournaments averaged weighing **53 bass per event** for a total weight of 110 pounds per tournament. These values are at or above the long-term average.
- The overall **Success Rate** (anglers or teams bringing at least one bass to weigh-in) was **64%**, up 1% from last year but equal to the long-term average.
- The average angler caught **1.5 bass per day** that **weighed 2.2 pounds**. Bass per day was down from 1.9 last year but the average size was about the same.
- **Average winning weight** rose again in 2008 to **12.93 pounds**, the highest it has been since we began compiling these statewide statistics in 1994.
- The heaviest one-day **5-bass limit** weighed **28.73 pounds** from Arbuckle Lake.
- **The largest bass** reported this year **weighed 11.55 pounds** from Arbuckle. This lake also produced seven other bass over eight pounds in 2008. Sardis produced several trophy bass as it tries to regain its place among Oklahoma trophy lakes.

- Total numbers of **Bass over 5 pounds** increased over last year and bass over eight pounds made a huge jump from 19 in 2007 to **35 in 2008**.

Lakes were ranked on the Top-20 List if we received a minimum of 8 reports (Table 2). The ranking combined Percent Success, Average Weight, Average First Place Weight, Average Number Caught per Day, and Average Hours per 5-pound Bass.

- **Hudson** reclaimed the top spot in our tournament list after being knocked down to 9th place last year. This marks Hudson's second first place ranking.
- Second place went to **Wes Watkins** followed in 3rd by **Sooner and Eucha** (tied).
- **Lawtonka** was 4th, **Grand** in 5th, **Sardis** in 6th and **Murray** in 7th were followed by **Thunderbird, Arbuckle, and Broken Bow** rounding out the Top-10.



Fifteen Year Trends in Oklahoma Tournament Catches

The charts on Pages 11 through 14 show the long-term trends in selected tournament statistics. The metrics chosen are those that are not dependant on the number of tournament reports received that year.

These charts clearly show the downturn in tournament success in 2001 and 2002 following the Largemouth Bass Virus (LMBV) outbreak in 2000....but they also show the recovery! In most cases, these fisheries are back to pre-LMBV levels, if not better.

Figure 1. The number of tournament permits issued has been declining since 1998. Tournaments numbers have been declining but the average size has increased.

Figure 2. The number of bass caught per angler per day has risen sharply since 2005 but slipped back slightly in 2008. This statistic did not seem to be as strongly impacted during the LMBV years.

Figure 3. The Success rate, percent of anglers weighing at least one fish has been variable, bottoming in 2002 but rebounding since then.

Figure 4. The average weight per bass was relatively steady until 2001 when it dropped. It has been rising slowly since then as those year classes grow up.

Figure 5. Numbers of larger bass (over 5 pounds) declined sharply in 2001 following the LMBV years and have been slowly recovering.

Figure 6. The average “Big Bass” of each tournament was steady through 2000 then it fell but has been climbing back to pre-2000 levels.

Figure 7. First Place winning weights ranged from a little over 10 pounds to 12 pounds through 2000, took a dive in 2001 and 2002 but have risen since then with the 2008 value being the highest seen in the 15-year program.

Figure 8. Total pounds of bass weighed per tournament varied from 80 to 120 pounds. This is influenced some by the larger average size of tournaments in recent years.

Table 4. All Time Top-20. Lake Hudson ranks as the overall best bass lake in the state based on fifteen years of tournament statistics. It edged out its bigger upstream neighbor Grand Lake by just a few points.



TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF BASS TOURNAMENT RESULTS BY LAKE FOR 2008.

LAKE	REPORTS	PERMITS	AVG BOATS TOURN	AVG BASS/ TOURN	AVG BASS/ ANGLER	AVG NUM >5 LBS	AVG NUM >8 LBS	AVG 1ST PLACE	AVG BIG BASS	AVG WT/ FISH	PERCENT SUCCESS	HOURS/ 5# BASS
ARBUCKLE	30	31	20	34	1.9	3.50	0.40	15.41	7.45	2.17	60	117
BIRCH	10	26	16	16	1.8	0.30	0.00	5.77	3.63	1.41	1	0
BLACKWELL	3	30	12	11	0.5	0.00	0.00	6.03	2.92	1.68	37	163
BROKEN BOW	8	12	26	83	1.8	0.38	0.00	14.88	4.48	1.80	80	441
CLAREMORE	20	26	19	11	0.7	0.35	0.00	7.45	4.59	2.83	41	113
CLEAR CREEK	1	7	24	3	0.1	0.00	0.00	3.15	3.15	2.57	13	192
COPAN	1	1	12	3	0.7	0.00	0.00	3.30	3.30	2.54	25	36
CUSHING	2	2	11	14	0.7	0.50	0.00	12.51	4.96	2.76	72	157
ELLSWORTH	9	na	11	7	0.7	0.22	0.00	6.92	3.64	2.45	33	79
ELMER THOMAS	9	na	13	18	1.6	0.44	0.00	9.08	4.70	2.20	53	82
EUCHA	24	22	14	46	1.9	1.25	0.04	15.68	5.04	1.90	71	149
EUFAULA	25	58	60	164	1.3	2.00	0.04	18.15	5.70	2.26	73	520
FAIRFAX	1	1	7	14	0.9	0.00	0.00	6.90	2.50	1.84	86	126
FOSS	2	6	21	42	1.0	1.00	0.00	16.82	5.06	2.60	66	328
FT. COBB	3	6	17	25	1.0	1.33	0.00	13.97	5.33	2.91	62	159
FT. GIBSON	4	35	73	122	0.9	1.50	0.00	15.39	5.84	2.49	64	934
FUQUA	2	6	13	22	1.4	0.00	0.00	13.15	3.76	2.44	72	128
GRAND	12	141	55	106	1.4	2.50	0.00	18.07	5.67	2.39	79	296
GUTHRIE	13	na	9	5	1.5	0.00	0.00	4.69	2.97	2.04	38	27
HOMINY	2	1	19	1	0.0	6.50	0.00	10.34	3.85	2.33	0	69
HUDSON	11	77	23	76	1.5	2.10	0.00	18.34	5.41	2.50	84	204
HUGO	5	6	16	69	3.0	0.80	0.00	19.88	4.73	2.17	86	164
KAW	2	4	7	10	1.1	1.00	0.00	12.83	6.43	2.78	93	112
KERR	2	6	35	81	1.1	1.00	0.00	17.30	4.99	2.53	78	372
KEYSTONE	6	26	18	35	1.1	0.50	0.00	12.98	4.56	2.18	68	191
KONAWA	4	na	15	43	1.9	0.75	0.00	10.78	5.24	1.56	76	186
LAWTONKA	10	na	14	26	2.4	0.40	0.10	13.02	5.10	2.16	66	122

TABLE 1. SUMMARY OF BASS TOURNAMENT RESULTS BY LAKE FOR 2008 (continued).

LAKE	REPORTS	PERMITS	AVG BOATS TOURN	AVG BASS/ TOURN	AVG BASS/ ANGLER	AVG NUM >5 LBS	AVG NUM >8 LBS	AVG 1ST PLACE	AVG BIG BASS	AVG WT/ FISH	PERCENT SUCCESS	HOURS/ 5# BASS
LONE CHIMNEY	3	6	7	10	1.1	1.00	0.00	12.83	6.43	2.78	93	112
LONG	1	na	49	141	1.4	0.00	0.00	11.43	4.42	1.34	80	784
MCGEE CREEK	18	40	29	84	2.3	0.50	0.17	11.04	4.72	1.28	82	398
MCMURTRY	2	8	10	16	1.7	0.00	0.00	11.20	3.34	2.03	69	76
MURRAY	15	71	26	89	1.8	3.33	0.13	15.78	5.56	1.45	87	263
OKEMAH	7	28	33	40	1.4	1.14	0.14	12.92	5.49	2.45	72	405
OOLOGAH	2	18	99	111	1.1	2.00	0.00	14.93	5.15	2.54	53	249
PAWNEE	2	5	13	10	0.5	0.00	0.00	5.57	3.35	2.16	46	134
PINE CREEK	1	18	65	38	0.3	4.00	0.00	5.53	5.53	3.30	58	293
PONCA	2	26	11	11	0.8	0.00	0.00	10.70	3.73	2.24	57	105
SARDIS	10	30	27	57	1.3	2.30	0.70	18.35	6.82	2.35	69	220
SKIATOOK	5	48	19	43	0.7	0.20	0.00	9.84	3.47	1.77	62	371
SOONER	10	na	23	48	1.3	1.60	0.10	15.72	5.65	2.74	76	221
SPAVINAW	4	4	9	16	0.8	2.00	0.00	13.79	5.15	2.91	58	126
TENKILLER	42	79	20	51	1.5	0.45	0.12	11.72	4.26	1.86	54	258
TEXOMA	17	48	33	92	1.2	1.94	0.00	16.48	5.25	1.96	72	422
THUNDERBIRD	18	56	27	25	1.4	1.89	0.06	11.58	5.81	2.89	54	120
WEBBERS FALLS	5	2	48	124	1.0	2.20	0.00	12.44	4.52	2.27	56	230
WES WATKINS	20	26	18	18	1.6	1.45	0.00	10.38	4.96	3.15	57	61
Totals	405	1043				460	35					
Averages			25	53	1.46	1.14	0.09	12.71	5.01	2.21	64	225

TABLE 2. THE TOP-20 OKLAHOMA TOURNAMENT LAKES IN 2008

These rankings are only as accurate as the information we receive from tournament organizations. The table summarizes the results from 20 lakes for which we received at least eight tournament reports. While lakes with fewer reports may have had good (or even great) years, we feel that including them in this ranking is not fair because if a tournament or two had exceptionally good catches, it could artificially increase the averages and may not accurately represent the overall quality of the fishing in that lake.

PERCENT SUCCESSFUL ANGLERS		AVERAGE WEIGHT PER BASS (lbs.)		AVERAGE 1 ST PLACE WEIGHT (lbs.)		AVERAGE NUMBER CAUGHT PER 8-HOUR DAY		ANGLER-HOURS PER BASS OVER 5 lbs.		OVERALL RANK	
MURRAY	87	WES WATKINS	3.15	SARDIS	18.35	LAWTONKA	2.4	GUTHRIE	27	HUDSON	75
HUDSON	84	THUNDERBIRD	2.89	HUDSON	18.34	MCGEE CREEK	2.3	WES WATKINS	61	WES WATKINS	65
MCGEE CREEK	82	CLAREMORE	2.83	EUFAULA	18.15	EUCHA	1.9	BIRCH	70	EUCHA	62
BROKEN BOW	80	SOONER	2.74	GRAND	18.07	ARBUCKLE	1.9	ELLSWORTH	79	SOONER	62
GRAND	79	HUDSON	2.50	SOONER	15.72	MURRAY	1.8	ELMER THOMAS	82	LAWTONKA	60
SOONER	76	ELLSWORTH	2.45	EUCHA	15.68	BIRCH	1.8	CLAREMORE	113	GRAND	59
EUFAULA	73	GRAND	2.39	BROKEN BOW	14.88	BROKEN BOW	1.8	ARBUCKLE	117	SARDIS	58
TEXOMA	72	SARDIS	2.35	TEXOMA	14.66	WES WATKINS	1.6	THUNDERBIRD	120	MURRAY	56
EUCHA	71	EUFAULA	2.26	ARBUCKLE	14.33	ELMER THOMAS	1.6	LAWTONKA	122	THUNDERBIRD	53
SARDIS	69	ARBUCKLE	2.21	MURRAY	14.28	HUDSON	1.5	EUCHA	149	ARBUCKLE	52
BIRCH	69	ELMER THOMAS	2.20	LAWTONKA	13.02	GUTHRIE	1.5	HUDSON	204	BROKEN BOW	51
LAWTONKA	66	LAWTONKA	2.16	TENKILLER	11.72	TENKILLER	1.5	SARDIS	220	EUFAULA	49
ARBUCKLE	60	TEXOMA	2.09	THUNDERBIRD	11.58	THUNDERBIRD	1.4	SOONER	221	MCGEE CREEK	49
WES WATKINS	57	GUTHRIE	2.04	MCGEE CREEK	11.04	GRAND	1.4	TENKILLER	258	BIRCH	47
TENKILLER	54	EUCHA	1.90	WES WATKINS	10.38	SOONER	1.3	MURRAY	263	ELMER THOMAS	47
THUNDERBIRD	54	TENKILLER	1.86	ELMER THOMAS	9.08	SARDIS	1.3	GRAND	296	CLAREMORE	42
ELMER THOMAS	53	BROKEN BOW	1.80	CLAREMORE	7.45	EUFAULA	1.3	MCGEE CREEK	398	GUTHRIE	40
CLAREMORE	41	MURRAY	1.45	ELLSWORTH	6.92	TEXOMA	1.2	TEXOMA	422	TEXOMA	40
GUTHRIE	38	BIRCH	1.41	BIRCH	5.77	CLAREMORE	0.7	BROKEN BOW	441	ELLSWORTH	37
ELLSWORTH	33	MCGEE CREEK	1.28	GUTHRIE	4.69	ELLSWORTH	0.7	EUFAULA	520	TENKILLER	36

TABLE 3. TROPHY BASS REPORTED IN 2008 TOURNAMENTS.

Arbuckle	07/17/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	11.55
Murray	05/04/08	Fisherman's Choice	10.83
Eufaula	03/08/08	FOM Legend	10.47
McGee Creek	06/29/08	Fish 'N Frenzy Bass Club	9.77
Arbuckle	02/23/08	Hobart Anglers	9.63
Arbuckle	06/13/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	9.44
Arbuckle	02/24/08	Cash-4-Bass	9.29
Sardis	03/29/08	Bartlesville Bassmasters	9.20
Arbuckle	06/19/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	8.88
Sardis	04/12/08	Great Plains Coca-Cola	8.82
Sardis	04/05/08	His And Her Bass Club	8.75
Arbuckle	07/03/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	8.74
Sooner	04/19/08	Northern Oklahoma FOCAS	8.62
Okemah	05/10/08	Osborne Electric	8.56
McGee Creek	06/21/08	Push. Co. Sportsman Club	8.49
Eucha	04/06/08	Webb Bass Club	8.34
Sardis	06/28/08	Backyard Bassin	8.34
Thunderbird	04/16/08	Thunderbird Wed. Night Tournament	8.31
Arbuckle	07/10/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	8.30
McGee Creek	04/19/08	Texoma Christian Bass Club	8.23
Arbuckle	06/05/08	Arbuckle Jackpot	8.14
Sardis	03/18/08	Bass Assassins	8.11
Murray	03/16/08	Chisholm Trail Bass Club	8.10
Lawtonka	04/22/08	Lawton Fort Sill Bass Anglers	8.10
McGee Creek	02/24/08	High Time Bassmasters	8.01



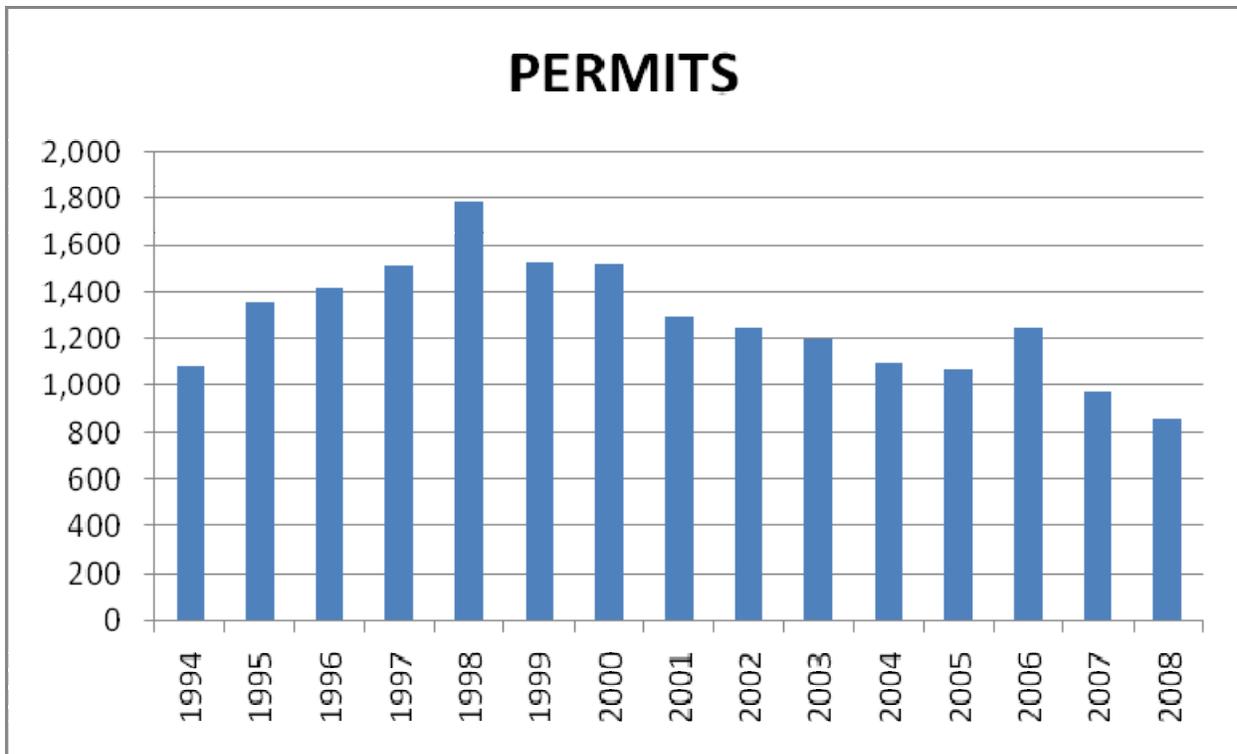


Figure 1. Number of bass tournament permits issued by controlling authorities each year to Oklahoma organizations

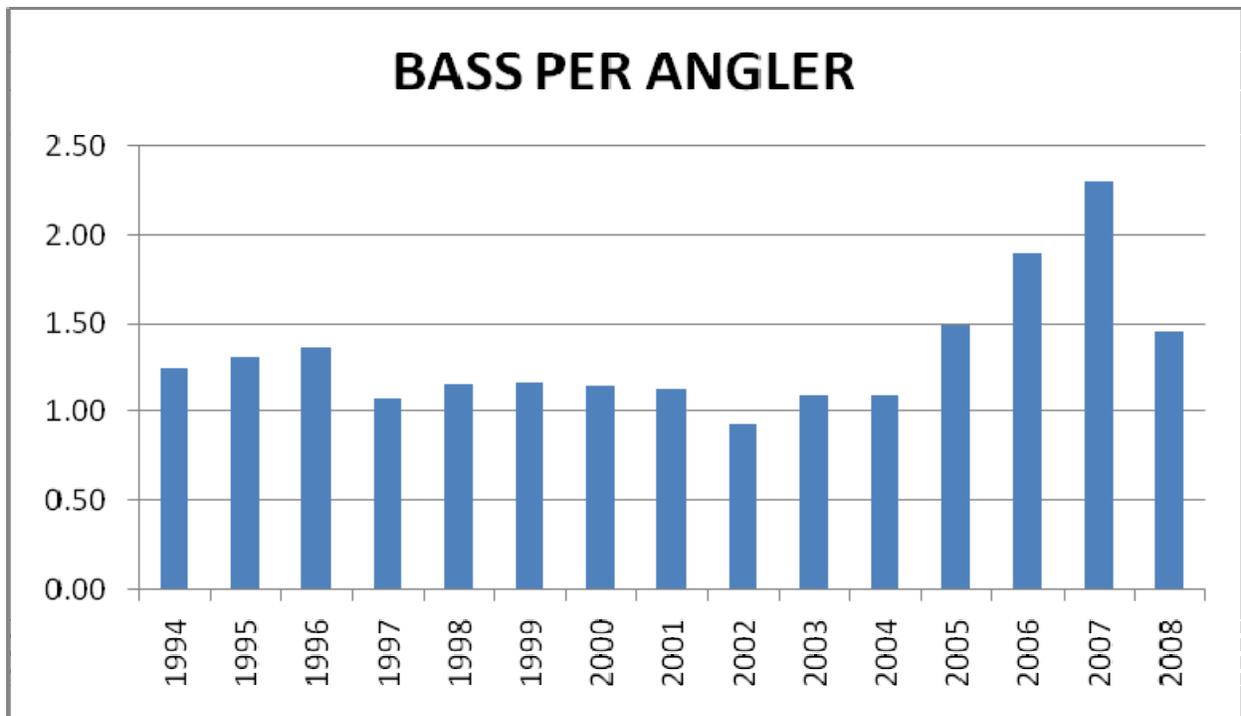


Figure 2. Average number of bass caught in one day by an angler during Oklahoma bass tournaments

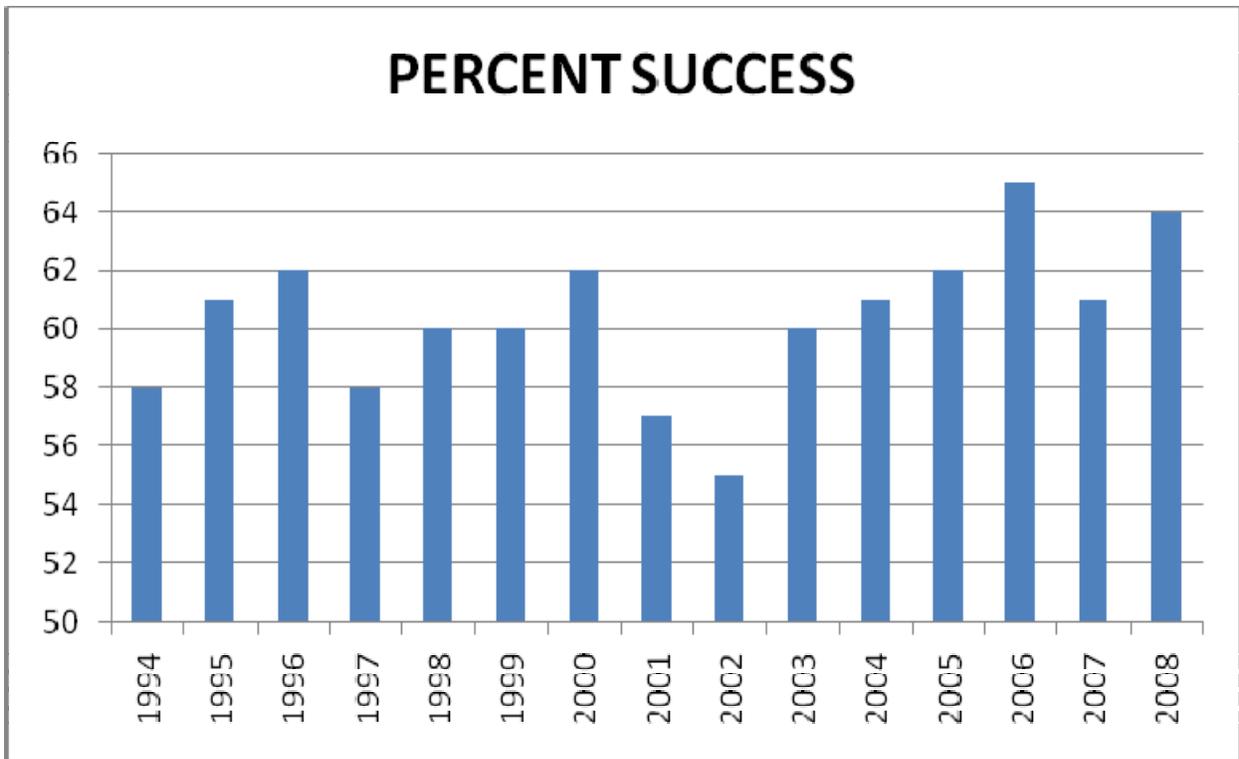


Figure 3. Average percent of anglers weighing at least one fish during Oklahoma bass tournaments

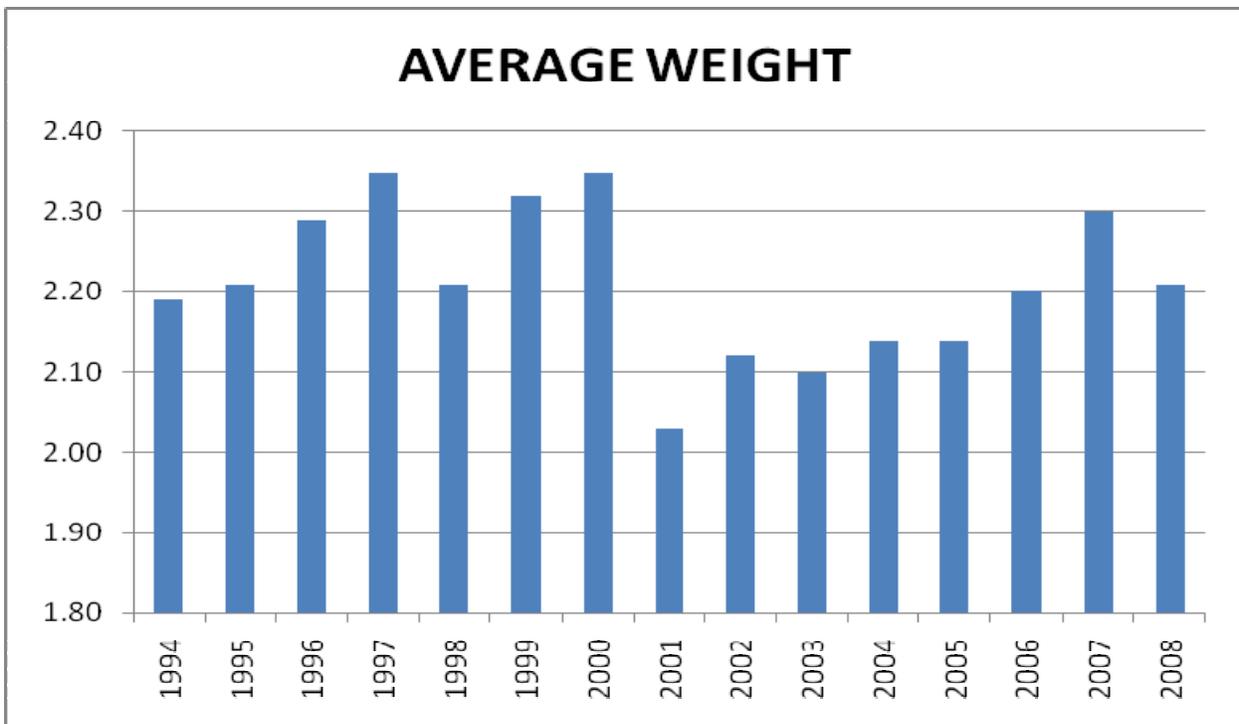


Figure 4. Average weight of bass (pounds) caught during Oklahoma bass tournaments.

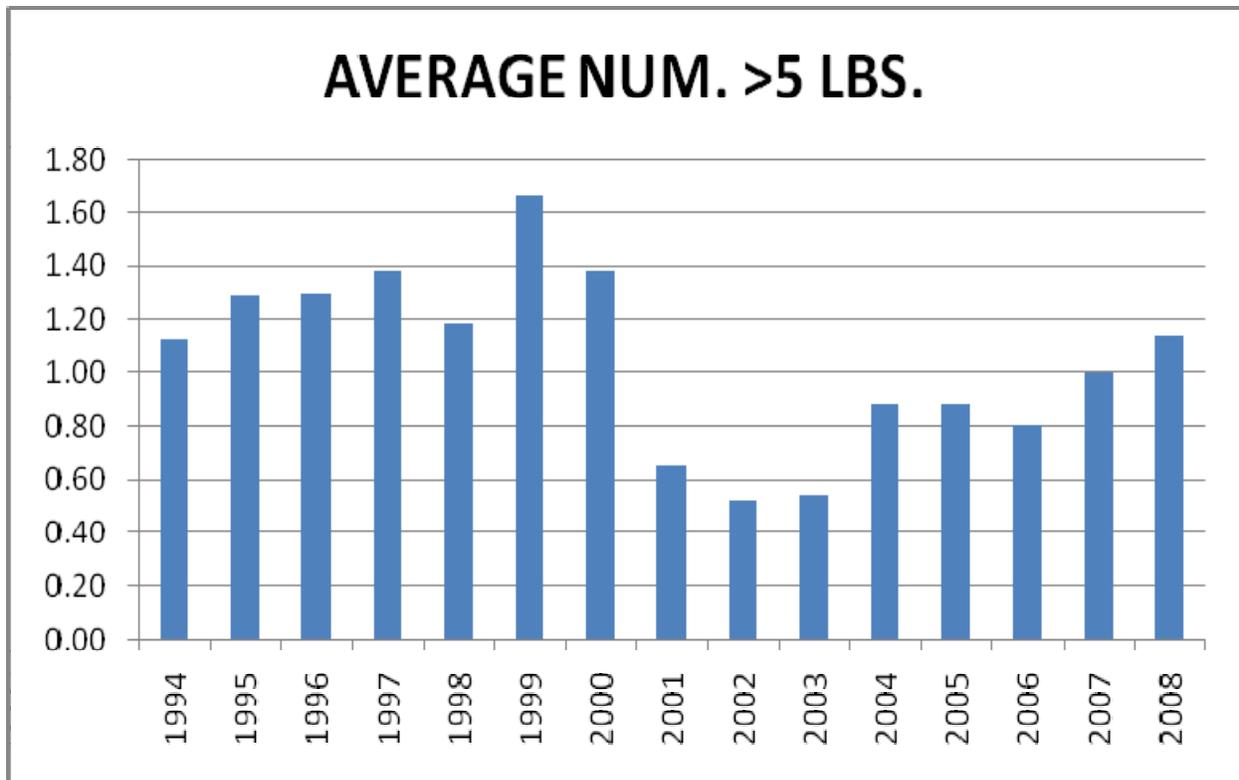


Figure 5. Average number of bass per tournament over 5 pounds reported during Oklahoma bass tournaments.

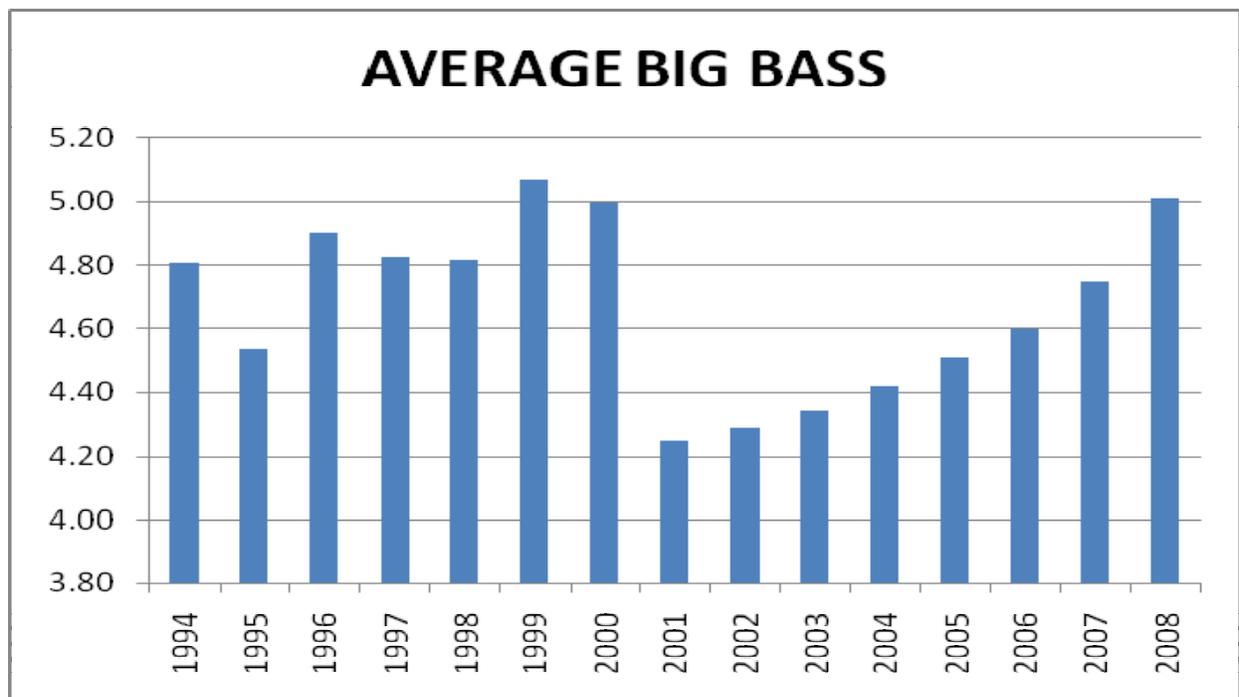


Figure 6. Average weight (pounds) of the "Big Bass" weighed in Oklahoma tournaments.

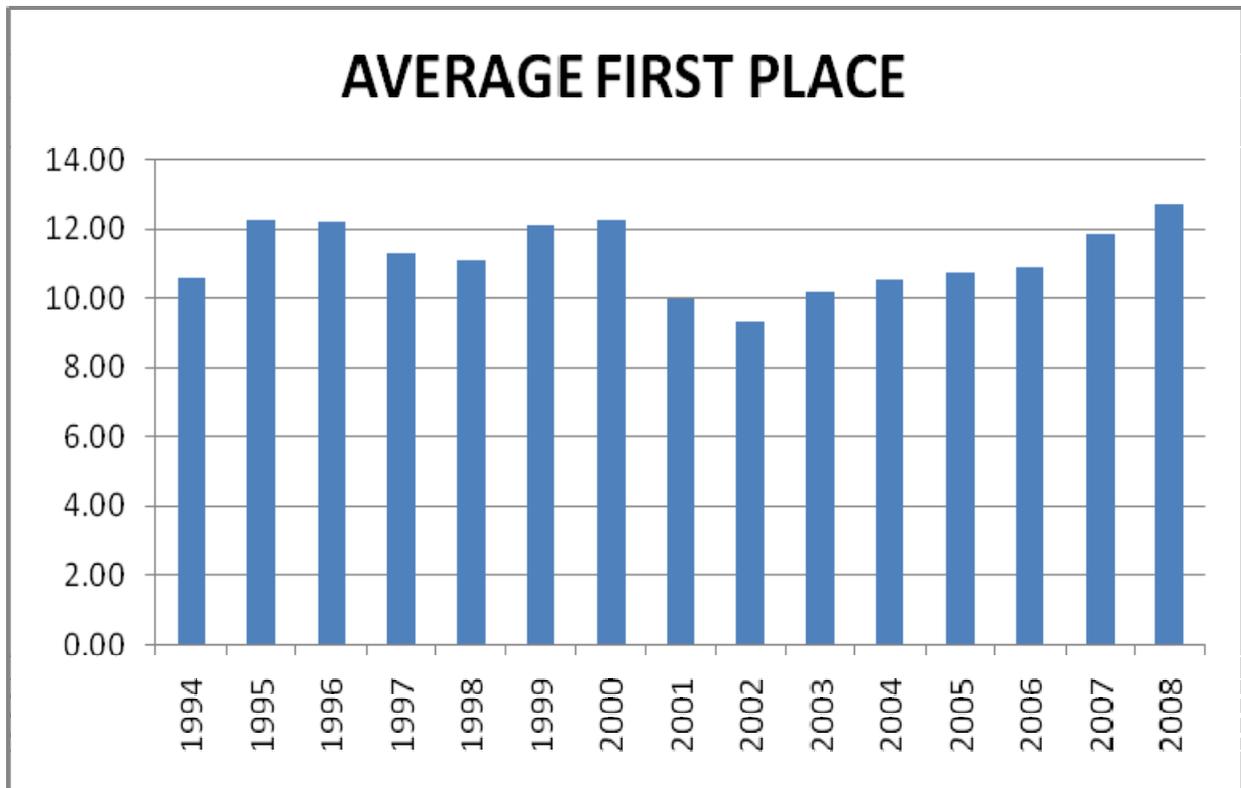


Figure 7. Average First Place weight (pounds) from Oklahoma bass tournaments.

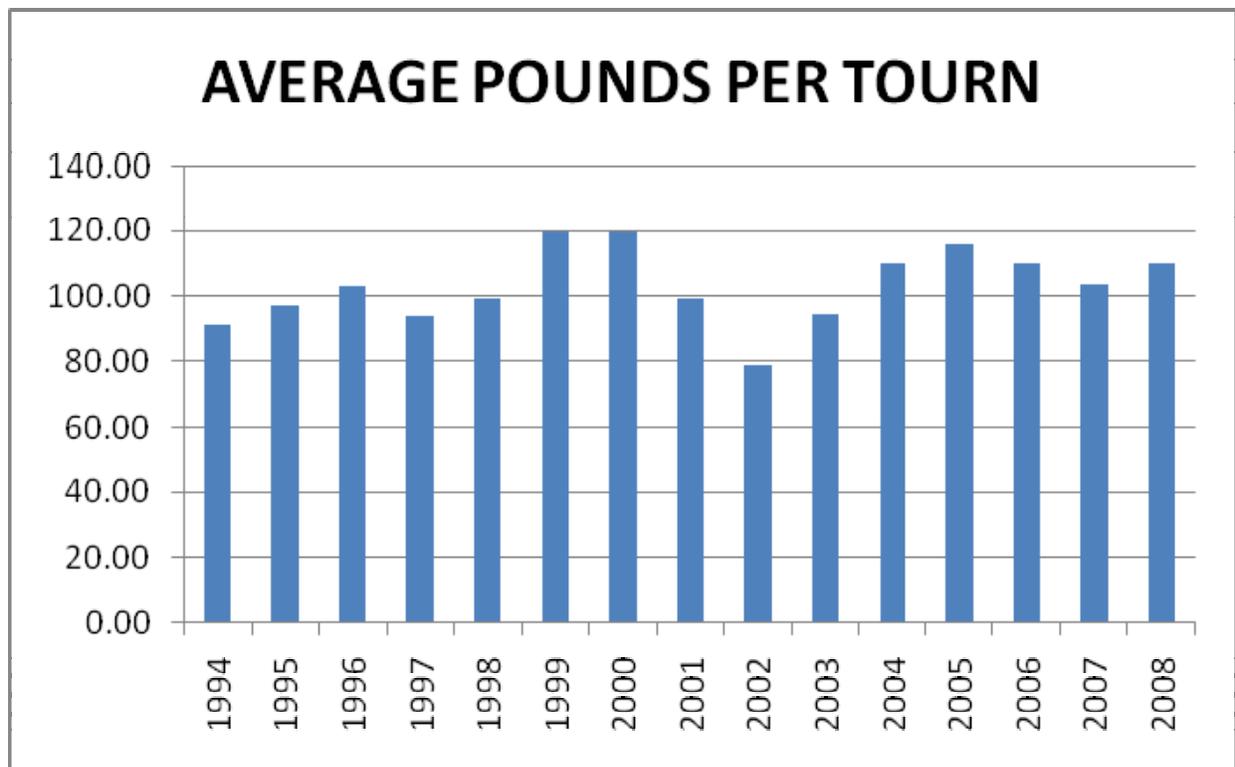


Figure 8. Average pounds of bass weighed-in during Oklahoma tournaments.

Table 4. The All-time Top-20 Oklahoma Tournament Lakes (based on the average of their annual ranks. We only included lakes that had been in the annual rankings at least nine times in the last 15 years. Blank cells in the table indicate that there were too few reports received that year to rank a lake).

LAKE	RANK															
	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	AVG.
HUDSON	1	4	3	2	2	3	6	3	2	14	7	6	7		1	4.36
GRAND	2	1	2	3	3	4	7	4	6	13	13	3	12	4	5	5.47
KERR	5	5	4	5	11		2	9	1	15						6.33
MCGEE CREEK			9	4	4	6	9	2	3	7	8	15	10	10	11	7.54
GIBSON	3	2	1	3	5	7	12	15	16	20	9	1	13	1		7.71
TEXOMA	4	8	7	10	7	15	8	10	10	4	12	9	8	5	15	8.80
EUCHA		7	5	15	9	10	15	5	11	6	6	14		9	3	8.85
OOLOGAH	20		6	9	4	11	4	7			5	16	9			9.10
SARDIS	12	15	19	8	6	14	14	1	7	3	11	6	1	13	7	9.13
GREENLEAF	15	13	21	13	13	8	5	8	9	5	3	4				9.75
THUNDERBIRD		6	16	12	10	12	13		12	9		11	4	9	8	10.17
EUFAULA	8	3	10	7	8	9	19	12	17	12	15	19	18	7	11	11.67
WEB. FALLS	6		8	16	8	1	21	14				13	19			11.78
LAWTONKA				19	16	17			5	19		2	17	11	4	12.22
MURRAY	10	20	12	22	21	18		13	8	18	4	10	14	4	6	12.86
TENKILLER	11	14	14	14	12	19	10	19	19	8	10	8	15	9	16	13.20
KEYSTONE	19	18	20	14	19		3	6	15	16	16	17	3	8		13.38
ARBUCKLE	18		14	11	17			11	18	17	18	18	6	6	9	13.58
CLAREMORE				17	18	21	17		14	18	17	20		12	13	16.70
GUTHRIE	13	16		25	25	13	20	17	20	11	14	22	20	16	14	17.57
SKIATOOK	17		17	24	22	20	22	20	21	21	18	21	21			20.33

Other lakes with high averages but did not have 9 or more years of ranking include Broken Bow, Hugo, Okemah, Sooner and Wes Watkins.

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING BASS TOURNAMENT RESULTS TO ODWC

We still accept the postage-paid *TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD* from organizations that want to send in result. However, to save you time and us money, you can submit your results via the Internet directly to ODWC. This system enters your results directly into our database so we don't have to type them in later.

Log on to:

<http://129.15.97.18/bass/tournament.htm>

There is **no "www" in the address** and there is **no user name or password**.

Call up the site and enter results as you would on the *TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD*. Be sure to include contact information, including an E-mail address so we can send you the end-of-the-year report when it is completed.

Enter your results as soon after the event as possible so the information is fresh and accurate. If that is not possible, you may submit reports weekly, monthly or at the end of the season (please try to get all reports submitted by November 1st).

To enter several reports at one time:

- Fill in the data from your first report and click on the **"Submit"** button at the bottom of the page. You will be taken to a "Confirmation" page.
- From the Confirmation Page click on the **"Back"** button of your browser and it will take you back to the data you just entered.
- Change the information in the appropriate fields such as "Lake Name" and "Date" and the catch statistics, leaving other information such as your organization name and address the same,
- Click on the **"Submit"** button again to send the new data. Repeat as often as necessary to get all your tournament results entered. Use the "Reset" button only if you want to start over completely with all blanks fields.

