

OKLAHOMA BASS TOURNAMENTS

2009 ANNUAL REPORT



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.

Don't be a Law Breaker by Spreading Aquatic Nuisance Species



Oklahoma law now makes it illegal to leave a body of water with plant or animal hitch-hikers attached to your boat, trailer or gear!

- Zebra Mussels have been found in the Arkansas River Navigation System, Claremore, Eufaula, Grand, Kaw, Keystone, Oologah, Sooner, and Texoma.
 - Hydrilla has become established in Arbuckle, Murray and Sooner.
 - Largemouth Bass Virus has spread to over 30 Oklahoma lakes.
 - White Perch are in Kaw, Keystone & Sooner with unknown impacts to native fish.
 - Golden Algae hit Texoma causing fish kills and threatening sport fisheries.
 - Asian Carp have been caught in several Oklahoma rivers.
 - Invasive Didymo algae has been found in the Lower Mountain Fork River
- **Inspect** your boat, trailer & equipment at the ramp
 - **Remove** any plant or animal materials
 - **Drain** the motor, bilge, livewell, bait containers
 - **Clean** using hot pressure wash or **Dry** for five days

For more information on Aquatic Nuisance Species prevention, consult the Oklahoma Fishing Regulations Guide or www.wildlifedepartment.com/nuisancespecies.htm

CONTENTS

Introduction 3

Summary of 2009 Bass Tournament Results..... 4

Table 1. Statewide Results by Lake..... 7

Table 2. The Top-20 Tournament Lakes in 2009..... 9

Table 3. Trophy Bass Weighed During 2009 Tournaments..... 10

On-line Tournament Reporting Procedures..... 11

INTRODUCTION

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) has gathered standardized statewide data on competitive bass fishing for 16 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 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 2009.

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

Gene Gilliland
Okla. Fishery Research Lab
500 E. Constellation
Norman, OK 73072
405-325-7288
ggillokla@aol.com



SUMMARY OF 2009 RESULTS

We received reports from 439 tournaments. This is up slightly from 405 in 2008 but still far below the average of over 700 we have received prior to 2005. Reports came from 46 lakes compared to as many as 61 lakes in previous years.

Cooperating agencies and municipalities reported issuing 963 tournament permits in 2009. We generally add about 10% to that number for those tournament organizations that fail to get permits or fish on lakes that do not require permits. Our estimate of total tournament activity for 2009 is around 1,060 events.

Our response rate from organizations sending in reports was 45%. This is down considerably from the 60-70% response rate we have had in the past. Many lakes had even lower response rates. We received reports from only 23 tournaments (15%) of those that were permitted on Grand and only 4 of 83 events (5%) from Hudson. Keystone had 45 permits issued but only 5 reports were submitted (11%). We received only 12 of 45 from McGee Creek (27%) and only 13 of 55 from Murray (24%).

There were some lakes for which permits were issued that we received no reports at all so they are not listed in the tables. For example, Chimney Rock (also known as the Pumpback or W. R. Holway) had 15 tournaments but we received no reports.

Table 1 shows the averages for each of the data categories. The values in the table from lakes with few reports should be viewed with caution because the success or failure from those few tournaments could skew the averages. In such cases, the results may not give a true representation of the fishing quality for those bass populations. In other words, the results we report are only as good as the data we receive from tournament organizations.

- There were **13,583 tournament entries**. This does not represent individual anglers since many anglers fish several tournaments per year. However, when we multiply the number of entries by the average length of a tournament day (7.1 hours) we get an estimate of tournament fishing pressure (183,562 angler-hours). This value increased by 42% from last year. Taking into account the reduced number of reports, it appears that total tournament activity was up in 2009.
- The **average tournament had 31 boats**, on par with previous years. Draw-for-partner or individual angler tournaments made up 14% of the reports. This percentage has been declining in recent years from the peak of 25% on the late 1990s.
- A total of **32,052 bass were weighed in 2009**, up by over 49% from 2008, back to a level near the long-term average. Those fish weighed a total of 74,064 pounds. This was an increase from 2008 of over 68%.

- Tournaments averaged weighing **73 bass per event** for a total weight of 168 pounds per tournament. And despite the lower reporting rate and poor representation from powerhouse lakes like Grand and Hudson, these values are the highest in the 16 years ODWC has been collecting tournament statistics.



- The **70% Success Rate** (anglers or teams bringing at least one bass to weigh-in) was up 5% over last year. This was also the highest recorded in 16 years.
- The average angler caught **1.5 bass per day** that weighed **2.36 pounds**. Bass per day was equal to 2008 but down from the peak years. However, the weight of the average bass was the heaviest since this program started.
- **Average First Place Weight** rose again in 2009 to **14.19 pounds**, the highest on record, eclipsing last year's record by slightly more than a pound. Forty percent of lakes had average winning weights that were greater than 15 pounds and this includes several lakes that host only 3-hour evening jackpots with three-fish limits.
- The heaviest one-day **5-bass limit** weighed **31.78 pounds** from Arbuckle Lake. In all, there were 52 winning bags that weighed over 20 pounds, including, two over 30 pounds!



- The largest bass reported weighed **12.18 pounds from McGee Creek**. Arbuckle however, was the trophy champion in 2009, giving up 15 bass over eight pounds in tournaments that sent in reports.
- Total numbers of **Bass over 5 pounds** increased for the fourth year in a row as the effects of the Largemouth Bass Virus outbreak in 2000-2002 became a distant memory. The number of **Bass over 8 pounds** also increased to **39**, the highest number we have recorded.

Each year we use the tournament report data to rank the lakes based on five “Fishing Quality” indicators. The ranking combines **Percent Success** (the number of anglers or teams weighing at least one bass), **Average Weight** per bass weighed, **Average First Place Weight**, **Average Number** caught per day per angler, and **Average Hours per 5-pound Bass** which takes into account the total hours fished by all anglers and the number of 5-pound or larger bass reported for that tournament. **Lakes were ranked on the Top-20 List only if we received a minimum of 8 reports to reduce the chance that a few extremes would skew the rankings (Table 2).**

- **Arbuckle** claimed the top spot in our tournament list on the strong showing of trophy bass and heavy bags in 2009. Despite a 13-16 inch slot length limit that requires anglers to release many fish that would be “keepers” on other waters, Arbuckle produced both quantity and quality. In addition to bags with good numbers of bass above the slot limit, Arbuckle has taken over the top spot in trophy bass production from perennial trophy factories like Sardis and McGee Creek. Tournament bags with 6 to 9 pound bass and the occasional 10 pounder were quite common in 2009.
- Second place with only one point less went to **Hugo**, Long known as a crappie hot-spot in southeast Oklahoma, Hugo’s bass population has enjoyed a resurgence following several years of favorable water levels that resulted in strong year classes of bass.
- In third place in 2009 was **Ft. Gibson**, continuing a strong showing the past several years as evidence of the LMBV outbreak disappears. **Oologah** and **Okemah** fill out the top five lakes with low numbers of hours fished to catch a 5-pound bass.
- Rounding out the Top-10 were **Broken Bow, Sardis, Elmer Thomas, Grand and Sooner**. Readers may wonder why Grand Lake, regarded by many as the best bass lake in Oklahoma, only earned a ninth place rank. The answer lies in the law-of-averages. With over 150 tournaments and so many anglers fishing so many hours, not every angler does well. High winning weights and good average size are offset by a middle-of-the-pack percent success and a higher than average total hours required to catch a 5-pound bass.



TABLE 1. RESULTS FROM OKLAHOMA BASS TOURNAMENTS REPORTED IN 2009

LAKE	REPORTS	PERMITS	BOATS/ TOURN	BASS/ TOURN	BASS/ ANGLER	NUM >5 LBS	NUM >8 LBS	AV 1ST PLACE	AV BIG BASS	LBS/ FISH	PERCENT SUCCESS	HOURS/ 5 LB BASS
AMERICAN HORSE	2	na	13.50	23.50	1.59	0.00	0.00	10.14	2.88	1.48	77.47	122.00
ARBUCKLE	14	38	16.00	56.36	1.89	3.14	1.14	17.70	7.30	2.11	85.69	93.41
BIRCH	7	7	15.71	14.71	1.12	0.00	0.00	5.52	3.37	1.58	58.60	122.57
BLACKWELL	1	na	9.00	30.00	1.67	1.00	0.00	10.06	5.03	1.87	100.00	144.00
BROKEN BOW	8	36	43.75	160.63	2.10	0.63	0.13	18.70	5.39	2.05	87.28	645.17
CANTON	1	na	21.00	87.00	3.68	1.00	0.00	14.55	5.50	1.74	95.24	189.00
CHICKASHA	1	na	18.00	28.00	1.56	3.00	0.00	17.13	5.14	2.43	61.11	48.00
CLAREMORE	22	21	22.68	17.86	0.99	0.91	0.00	7.46	4.92	2.71	52.91	116.32
COPAN	8	14	24.25	10.75	0.57	0.38	0.00	3.92	3.92	2.25	42.62	133.88
CUSHING	3	na	11.33	27.33	1.57	1.00	0.00	12.71	4.85	2.18	84.18	110.44
DUNCAN	1	5	11.00	8.00	0.34	0.00	0.00	10.32	2.96	2.46	63.64	187.00
ELLSWORTH	6	na	17.33	13.17	1.12	0.83	0.00	11.88	4.98	2.69	37.32	78.83
ELMER THOMAS	9	na	19.33	33.44	2.06	1.44	0.00	13.88	6.25	2.16	60.08	115.17
EUCHA	17	13	13.82	42.00	1.52	1.94	0.06	13.61	5.67	1.87	82.51	153.58
EUFAULA	21	49	84.24	156.81	1.43	5.14	0.10	18.25	6.12	2.33	72.58	240.14
FAIRFAX	1	na	8.00	25.00	2.08	0.00	0.00	13.60	4.50	2.21	87.50	96.00
FOSS	2	5	20.50	44.00	0.98	1.50	0.00	13.50	6.10	2.67	63.97	200.00
FT. COBB	3	7	20.33	20.67	0.51	1.67	0.00	16.69	5.60	2.72	45.25	221.47
FT. GIBSON	17	42	41.35	103.00	1.68	5.94	0.00	18.07	5.90	2.76	83.75	190.25
FUQUA	7	7	9.57	9.86	1.29	0.00	0.00	7.48	4.70	2.85	85.81	64.57
GRAND	23	151	128.78	351.91	1.63	6.22	0.04	17.87	5.91	2.35	81.10	302.43
GREENLEAF	1	40	26.00	61.00	2.09	0.00	0.00	13.81	4.13	2.16	80.77	234.00
HUDSON	4	83	32.50	127.00	1.75	8.75	0.25	21.41	6.47	2.90	95.24	115.76
HUGO	9	11	23.89	90.00	2.23	0.67	0.00	19.07	4.76	2.37	83.46	316.33
HULAH	6	na	22.00	14.50	0.65	0.00	0.00	4.92	3.75	2.77	40.26	149.00

LAKE	REPORTS	PERMITS	BOATS/ TOURN	BASS/ TOURN	BASS/ ANGLER	NUM >5 LBS	NUM >8 LBS	1ST PLACE	BIG BASS	LBS/ FISH	PERCENT SUCCESS	HOURS/ 5 LB BASS
KAW	2	2	8.50	18.00	1.07	0.00	0.00	11.15	3.12	2.31	77.08	136.00
KERR	2	1	37.00	71.50	0.94	2.50	0.00	16.54	5.94	2.39	55.62	329.60
KEYSTONE	5	45	16.60	36.40	1.43	0.20	0.00	12.56	4.25	2.26	75.76	232.60
KONAWA	8	na	13.88	43.88	1.99	0.38	0.00	10.01	4.79	1.75	79.25	184.38
LAWTONKA	6	na	17.83	15.67	1.06	0.33	0.00	9.89	4.27	2.27	45.57	176.33
LONE CHIMNEY	3	na	7.00	15.33	1.28	0.00	0.00	6.38	3.13	1.28	76.19	98.00
MCGEE CREEK	12	45	21.67	72.92	1.78	2.42	0.17	10.70	6.50	1.24	83.57	221.86
MCMURTRY	1	na	6.00	14.00	1.17	0.00	0.00	9.90	2.40	1.89	66.67	96.00
MURRAY	13	55	22.00	81.85	2.01	0.85	0.00	11.40	4.22	1.45	88.23	226.13
OKEMAH	17	26	14.94	38.29	1.27	3.94	0.12	17.84	6.61	3.14	78.40	72.31
OOLOGAH	9	18	9.00	27.56	1.83	1.78	0.00	16.72	5.71	2.81	77.59	102.52
PAWNEE	2	na	11.00	28.00	2.08	4.50	0.00	20.17	7.03	3.09	89.52	62.56
PINE CREEK	2	22	56.33	121.33	1.20	12.00	0.00	17.28	6.75	3.26	86.13	85.82
PONCA	2	na	13.00	45.50	2.65	0.50	0.00	11.50	5.06	1.77	90.97	128.00
PRAGUE	1	na	10.00	19.00	1.90	1.00	0.00	15.29	5.95	2.67	70.00	80.00
SARDIS	14	30	27.15	66.85	1.50	3.00	0.15	18.66	6.24	2.17	73.62	132.29
SCOTT KING	1	na	12.00	14.00	0.93	0.00	0.00	9.52	3.65	2.32	58.33	120.00
SKIATOOK	5	23	13.40	39.80	1.61	0.40	0.00	12.69	4.09	1.62	85.50	215.80
SOONER	14	na	26.36	79.36	1.47	3.36	0.36	16.46	6.45	2.35	79.86	168.68
SPAVINAW	2	1	14.00	62.00	2.17	3.50	0.50	22.20	6.95	2.83	100.00	77.00
SPORTSMAN	1	na	11.00	20.00	1.45	0.00	0.00	10.32	2.87	1.29	72.73	110.00
TENKILLER	74	99	25.16	54.16	1.43	0.85	0.00	14.25	4.77	2.28	54.70	233.53
TEXOMA	15	36	27.21	111.86	1.84	1.36	0.00	16.37	5.64	2.13	82.77	291.43
THUNDERBIRD	28	29	24.18	20.04	1.03	2.57	0.18	14.03	6.52	3.38	47.84	97.10
WAURIKA	1	2	18.50	23.50	0.65	0.50	0.00	11.25	4.53	2.12	51.47	296.00
WEBBERS FALLS	5	na	22.00	68.20	1.62	0.80	0.00	13.48	4.95	2.28	88.39	262.40
Totals	439	963	30.87	72.85	1.48	2.19	0.09	14.19	5.42	2.36	69.56	188.95

TABLE 2. TOP-20 OKLAHOMA BASS LAKES BASED ON 2009 TOURNAMENT REPORTS. ONLY LAKES FOR WHICH EIGHT OR MORE REPORTS WERE RECEIVED ARE INCLUDED IN THE RANKINGS.

LAKE	BASS/ ANGLER	AVG 1ST PLACE	AVG WEIGHT	PERCENT SUCCESS	HOURS/ 5LB BASS	OVERALL RANK	
OKEMAH	1.27	17.84	3.14	78.40	72.31	ARBUCKLE	73
ARBUCKLE	1.89	17.70	2.11	85.69	93.41	HUGO	72
THUNDERBIRD	1.03	14.03	3.38	47.84	97.10	FT. GIBSON	70
OOLOGAH	1.83	16.72	2.81	77.59	102.52	OOLOGAH	68
ELMER THOMAS	2.06	13.88	2.16	60.08	115.17	OKEMAH	66
CLAREMORE	0.99	7.46	2.71	52.91	116.32	BROKEN BOW	63
SARDIS	1.50	18.66	2.17	73.62	132.29	SARDIS	56
COPAN	0.57	3.92	2.25	42.62	133.88	ELMER THOMAS	54
EUCHA	1.52	13.61	1.87	82.51	153.58	GRAND	54
SOONER	1.47	16.46	2.35	79.86	168.68	SOONER	53
KONAWA	1.99	10.01	1.75	79.25	184.38	MURRAY	51
FT. GIBSON	1.68	18.07	2.76	83.75	190.25	THUNDERBIRD	51
MCGEE CREEK	1.78	10.70	1.24	83.57	221.86	TEXOMA	49
MURRAY	2.01	11.40	1.45	88.23	226.13	EUFAULA	46
TENKILLER	1.43	14.25	2.28	54.70	233.53	EUCHA	44
EUFAULA	1.43	18.25	2.33	72.58	240.14	KONAWA	42
TEXOMA	1.84	16.37	2.13	82.77	291.43	MCGEE CREEK	41
GRAND	1.63	17.87	2.35	81.10	302.43	CLAREMORE	38
HUGO	2.23	19.07	2.37	83.46	316.33	TENKILLER	35
BROKEN BOW	2.10	18.70	2.05	87.28	645.17	COPAN	26



TABLE 3. TROPHY BASS REPORTED IN 2009 TOURNAMENTS.

MCGEE CREEK	04/18/09	Texoma Christian Bass Club	12.18
SOONER	06/14/09	Sooner Bass Club	11.16
ARBUCKLE	01/25/09	Backyard Bassin Team Tournament Trails	11.04
THUNDERBIRD	03/30/09	Fish 'N Frenzy Bass Club	10.80
MCGEE CREEK	03/15/09	Tri-Lakes Bass Club	10.77
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	10.06
ARBUCKLE	04/18/09	OKC Bass Trail	9.64
SOONER	03/22/09	FFA March Madness	9.50
OKEMAH	06/07/09	Okemah Team Trail	9.47
ARBUCKLE	01/25/09	Backyard Bassin Team Tournament Trails	9.43
ARBUCKLE	01/25/09	Backyard Bassin Team Tournament Trails	9.30
SOONER	05/16/09	Northern Oklahoma FOCAS	9.30
SPAVINAW	03/15/09	wilderness bass club	9.30
THUNDERBIRD	05/06/09	Thunderbird Wednesday Night Tournament	9.22
ARBUCKLE	04/02/09	Bass Assassins	9.15
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	9.15
BROKEN BOW	02/22/09	Got Bass Team Trail	9.06
SARDIS	04/26/09	Backyard Bassin Team Tournament Trails	9.00
SARDIS	04/11/09	Leflore County Bass Club	8.86
ARBUCKLE	03/28/09	Texoma Christian Bass Club	8.84
ARBUCKLE	04/18/09	OKC Bass Trail	8.79
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.59
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.57
OKEMAH	04/25/09	Seminole Bass Club	8.50
EUCHA	04/04/09	Ozark Mountain Bass Club	8.50
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.50
SOONER	05/02/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.38
EUFAULA	03/08/09	Got Bass Team Trail	8.36
SOONER	05/13/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.33
SOONER	05/13/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.27
ARBUCKLE	04/18/09	OKC Bass Trail	8.27
THUNDERBIRD	11/01/08	USA Bassin	8.24
GRAND	03/22/09	Triton Team Series	8.16
ARBUCKLE	04/18/09	OKC Bass Trail	8.13
EUFAULA	10/18/09	Got Bass Team Trail	8.13
ARBUCKLE	05/09/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.08
HUDSON	03/15/09	Sooner Bass Club	8.07
THUNDERBIRD	12/06/09	OKC Bass Trail	8.02
THUNDERBIRD	06/03/09	Thunderbird Wednesday Night Tournament	8.00

PROCEDURES FOR SUBMITTING BASS TOURNAMENT RESULTS TO ODWC

The results in this report are only as good as the data we receive from tournament organizations. Please submit your results so we can provide accurate and fair representation of the quality of the bass fishing in Oklahoma lakes.

We still accept the postage-paid *TOURNAMENT REPORT CARD* from organizations that want to send in results. 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://129.15.97.41/Bass/>

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

Log on to 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 blank fields.