

New York The Bass Federation

Volume 2, Issue 2

June 2015



*Casey Casamento wins
Lake Champlain Opener*

*St. Lawrence River Opens
& Mega Smallies*



*GOB Jr. Bass Club
Supports Community*

*Worm Fishing
with Sammy Lee*

Meet the Legacy Jr. Bass Club

*Perry Marvin & Alec Morrison
Head to Championship*



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Monday-Friday
all year long!



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WITH SAMMY LEE

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Cover Photo: Casey Casamento
19.05 lbs. June 14 Lake Champlain
(Plattsburgh, NY)

Editor: Burnie Haney

Contributors: Sammy Lee
Dom Maio
Sherri Michetti

Cape Vincent
CHAMBER of COMMERCE
"where lake and river meet"



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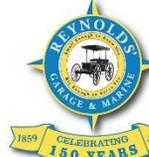
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2015 Tournament Schedule

Date	Location	Launch	Event
Oct 26, 2014	Lake Champlain	Ticonderoga NY	NYTBF Points <i>(completed)</i>
Jun 14	Lake Champlain	Plattsburgh NY	NYTBF Points <i>(completed)</i>
Jun 27	St. Lawrence River	French Creek, Clayton NY	Lions Club Tm Open <i>(completed)</i>
Jun 28	St. Lawrence River	French Creek, Clayton NY	NYTBF Tm Open <i>(completed)</i>
Jul 11	Mohawk River	St. Johnsville Marina	Youth Qualifier
Jul 12	Mohawk River	St. Johnsville Marina	State HS Qualifier
Aug 9	Oneida Lake	Oneida Shores, Brewerton NY	NYTBF Points
Sep 20	St. Lawrence River	Cape Vincent	NYTBF Points
Sep 27	TBA 30 days prior	Only the top five Boaters & Co-Anglers advance to STC	Wild Card Qualifier for STC
*Oct 10 & 11	St. Lawrence River	French Creek, Clayton NY	State Team Championship

Points Events are a \$100 entry fee per Boater and \$50 per non-boater (with a mandatory \$30 gas stipend payable to assigned boater). Additionally, each angler will be awarded points based place of finish, beginning with 100 pts for 1st, then 99 for 2nd, 98 for 3rd, 97 for 4th, and so on... All anglers that zero will receive no points. (* = \$150 entry for all anglers)

Angler and Co-Angler of the Year will be based on points amassed throughout the fishing season. The Boater and Co-Angler amassing the greatest number of points for the season will be awarded an automatic spot on the 2016 NYTBF Eastern Divisional State Team.

New York TBF 2015 Tournament Registration



Date: _____
 Name: _____ (please print)
 Address: _____ (please print)
 City: _____ State: _____ Zip code: _____ (please print)
 Home phone _____ Cell phone _____
 e-mail: _____



Events (please select one or more):

October 26, 2014 Lake Chaplain, Ticonderoga NY (*tournament complete*)

June 14, Lake Champlain, Plattsburgh NY (*tournament complete*)

- August 9, Oneida Lake, Brewerton NY
- September 20, St . Lawrence River, Cape Vincent NY
- September 27, Wild Card State Team Championship Qualifier (location TBA 30 Aug)
- October 10/11, State Team Championship (\$150 entry), St Lawrence River , Clayton NY

*****NOTE*** Boater entry fee: \$100 Co-Angler Entry Fee \$50**

Boater or Co-Angler (select one): Boater: _____ Co-Angler: _____

If Boater was selected:

Boat make _____ Boat model _____
 Boat length _____ Engine HP _____

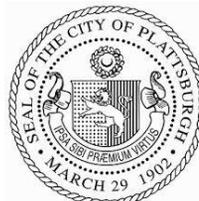
I have read all rules and regulations. I understand that if I am a boater I am required to provide proof in insurance prior to the events in question, either mailed with this application or provided at the ramp prior to the start any and all events. I understand that if I am a non-boater, I am responsible for any damage done to the boat, while it is under my control.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Make all checks or money orders payable to "NYTBF". **Must be mailed no later than 6 days prior to tournament date to ensure partner coordination.**

Mail to:

NYTBF
 P.O. Box 185
 LaFargeville, NY 13656





TBF, State Federation & TBF Club Event Participant Wavier.

Having fully acquainted myself with the rules. In signing this application, and by my presence at the events, I hereby agree to be bound by and comply with all event rules and safety regulations. I expressly assume all risks associated with the events and I hereby release The Bass Federation, Inc., (TBF) its parent, and affiliate companies, its licensees and affiliates, including their affiliated State Federations, and Clubs and all their respective officers, directors, agents, employees, and stockholders, the tournament hosts, sponsors and tournament officials from all claims of death, injury and/or property damage incurred in connection with this their events. If I am using a boat during the official practice days or during the tournament, I certify that I now have or will obtain prior to the event, property damage\ watercraft liability insurance having a limit of at least \$300,000.00. Said insurance must be issued by a reputable insurer and must cover injury and/or damage incurred in connection with a tournament. Upon request, I will provide satisfactory evidence of that insurance. I hereby waive my rights of privacy or publicity with regard to the unconditional right to use my name, voice, photographic likeness, video and biographical information and fishing tips and instructions in connection with any reproduction of same, video\audio productions and/or articles and press releases by NYTBF, National TBF, its parent or affiliate companies, and those acting under their permission, anywhere at any time, through any medium or media. I shall not be entitled to receive any royalties or other compensation in connection with such use. I further understand and agree that the tournament officials reserve the right to reject my application for any reason. I am currently a member in good standing of my home state federation, an affiliated TBF member club, TBF and FLW Outdoors. I agree if I qualify for a State Team, The Federation National Championship or any other event representing TBF to use any and all "Official" products and equipment so specified and provided, and be bound by the terms and conditions of a STATE TEAM CONTRACT, If applicable.

Date: _____

Name: _____

(First, MI, Last) printed

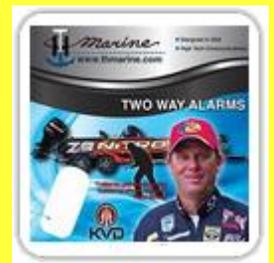
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T-H Marine Supplies Inc. is excited to announce the return of the Atlas Awards™ Program for the 2015 tournament fishing season! T-H Marine will award cash prizes to Atlas Awards members who are the winners or highest qualifying finisher of sanctioned events, giving everyone the opportunity to win like the top-level pros!

The Atlas Awards program is just **\$24.95 for a one year (Jan. 1, 2015 – Dec. 31, 2015)** membership and gives all anglers the chance to compete for, and win, extra money just for having T-H Marine parts on their boat.

Parts that are eligible for payouts are:



MORE WAYS TO WIN IN 2015!!!

Highest Finisher Awards - If an Atlas Awards member does not win the event, T-H Marine will pay the highest finishing Atlas Awards member \$100. Highest finisher awards are given to the highest placing Atlas Awards finisher within the top 10 of a sanctioned event. Please see official rules for more details.

Grand Slam Bonus - If all eight eligible parts are present on the winning boat - Atlas Hydraulic Jack Plate and all seven others - the angler will be eligible for the GRAND SLAM BONUS of up to \$250 per event if winning the tournament!

Co-Angler Program - Back again for 2015, the Co-Angler program costs just \$17.95 and has its own events, payouts, and qualifying products. [Click here for full details](#)

CASEY CASAMENTO WINS NY THE BASS FEDERATION LAKE CHAMPLAIN (PLATTSBURGH) TOURNAMENT

June 14, Plattsburgh NY... New York The Bass Federation (NYTBF) held their first points tournament of the 2015 season on Lake Champlain with launch and afternoon weigh-in out of the Plattsburgh Dock Street Boat Ramp. Lake Champlain continually rates as one of the top bass fishing destinations in the country and this weekend was no exception.

Due to excessive rainfall leading up to tournament day the lake was a bit muddier than usual and littered with floating debris. The lake conditions were tougher than usual for this time of year but plenty of five fish limits crossed the scales with the majority of anglers reporting bed fishing as their primary technique.

Boater Division

[Casey Casamento](#) took top honors with a limit of smallmouth weighing 19.05 lbs. Casamento reports a successful practice period where he found multiple locations holding bedding fish. He had every intention of fishing south of Plattsburgh, but on Saturday's practice session he found his primary areas blown out with muddy water so he scrapped that and fished north of Plattsburgh to catch all of his fish. Casamento used a Keitech Swing Impact on a lead head jig to catch fish in the 3-14 ft. zone.



Newcomer to the NYTBF tournament trail [Charles Sim](#) of Ontario Canada took second place with a weight of 18.20 lbs. Sim reports catching all of his fish off beds. He located 12-15 fish in practice and said when he got them the boat he was surprised that they were much bigger than he originally thought. Sim also took home the Ranger Cup contingency money.

Third place went to [Jason Karol](#) with a weight of 17.85 lbs. winning the tiebreaker (via big bass) over Mike Czaplinski. Karol reports during practice he found post spawn fish on main lake shoals with a jerkbait, but tournament morning his fish weren't hitting well so he fished a bit deeper off the edges in 18-24 ft. with a drop shot and he quickly re-located his fish culling up to his final weight.

Rounding out the top five were Mike Czaplinski 17.85 lbs. and Jim Schneider with 17.75 lbs. The Boater Division Lunker went to Dale Brown with a solid 4.85 lb. smallmouth.

LAKE CHAMPLAIN (PLATTSBURGH) TOURNAMENT

continued

Co-Angler Division

[Matthew Yankowski](#), Plattsburgh Fishing Team took top honors with a weight of 16.30 lbs. Yankowski reports fishing a 4 inch grub on a lead head near the bottom between 9-15 ft. to catch his fish. He also thanked his boater Dave Blankenship Sr. for locating the fish.

Taking second place with a weight of 16.20 lbs. was [Andrew Bechard](#). Bechard reports fishing with Jason Karol and using a jerkbait early in the morning then switching to a drop shot off the edge of shoals to close out his limit.

Brendon Bolis brought in 15.75 lbs. to take third place Rounding out the top five were Ted Appleton 15.10 lbs. and Ricky Lee with 14.75 lbs.& lunker 4.95 lbs.



TFO Rod Winner

At each tournament NYTBF holds a participants draw for a Temple Fork Outfitters rod and today's lucky winner was Gary Woodruff. Woodruff was also recognized as the NYTBF 2014 Sportsman of the Year for his dedicated service to the organization

NYTBF Sponsors

Minnkota, Lowrance, LANZ's, Keitech, Cabelas, Evinrude E-Tec, Berkley, Humminbird, Ranger Boats, FLW Outdoors, Temple Fork Outfitter (TFO) rods, The BASS University, DICK'S Sporting Goods, STORMMR, Power-Pole, T&H Marine, Angler's Choice Marine, Ticonderoga Chamber of Commerce, Cape Vincent Chamber of Commerce, Clayton Chamber of Commerce, City of Plattsburgh, Adirondack Coast, Jak's Baits, D2Fishing.com, Reynolds' Garage & Marine.

For additional information on the NYTBF tournaments contact President Bobby Williams at 315.408.8472 or Tournament Director Brian Winchill at 518.222.2503 or gofishnytbf@yahoo.com or nytbfinfo@gmail.com or go to www.nythebassfederation.com



MOTEL, COTTAGES & RV CAMPGROUND

Lanz's Motel, Cottages and Campground, located directly on the St. Lawrence River, is dedicated to making your stay in the Thousand Islands a memory you can share with family and friends for years to come.

Lanz's is open from May 1 through October 12. [We have twenty motel units and sixteen one, two, and three bedroom cottages. We offer group rates for bus tours. We also have a full hook-up campground, a boat launch and dockage.](#) For your enjoyment there is an in ground swimming pool, a playground, beach front bonfire pits and a sandy beach on the premises. We also provide a beach front picnic area with barbeque grills and a 70' riverfront deck that offers panoramic views of the St. Lawrence River.

Whatever your pleasure may be, the friendly staff at Lanz's would be happy to arrange reservations for you at any attraction, restaurant or boat rental facility. The Clayton Area Chamber of Commerce along with the citizens of the Clayton community have been hard at work through the past several years in bringing many attractions to Clayton. **The Annual Vintage & Classic Street Meet held in September is always a great success with classic cars, trucks, motorcycles and snowmobiles lining the streets of downtown Clayton. Please call for this years date. Check out our video: [Burnout](#)** A complete list of each year's events can be found at the [Clayton Area Chamber of Commerce website.](#)

Lanz's Motel, Cottages & Campground is located two miles from downtown Clayton. There you will find a variety of shops, and restaurants and after dinner you might want to consider watching a waterfront concert at Frink Park or a performance at the newly renovated Clayton Opera House

Phone: (315) 686-5690
[e-mail: lanzsj@juno.com](mailto:lanzsj@juno.com)

St. Lawrence River & Mega Smallies



June 27 & 28 Clayton NY.... The Clayton Lions Club partnered with NY The Bass Federation to present two Open Team events based out of French Creek Marina. Due to the cooler waters of the mighty St Lawrence Seaway this time of year most all of the competitors knew to look for pre-spawn and spawning bass and the big river lived up to it's reputation.

Teams brought in many limits of smallmouth in excess of 20 lbs. and winning Day 1 was the team of Casey Casamento & Ryan Latinville with an impressive limit weighing 25.70 lbs. Second place went to the team of Scott & Chris Wedel with 24.15 lbs. Ken Sweeney & Jack Murphy brought in 23.80 lbs. for third place and they anchored that limit with a 5.60 lb. kicker that tied the team Bobby Williams & Dave Hart for lunger. Rounding out the top five teams were Bobby Williams & Dave Hart with 22.80 lbs. and Al Rapsher & David Compton with 22.05 lbs.



Latinville & Casamento, 25.70 lbs.



Day-2 (28 June) saw the weights fall off a bit with the winning weight of 21.25 lbs. brought in by Ken Sweeney with a 5.20 lb. fish good for lunger.

Brendan Bolis & Andrew Bechard took 2nd with 19.30 lbs. Bobby Williams & Ricky Lee took third with 17.95 lbs. Rounding out the top five were Dave Hart & Jim Picunas with 16.65 lbs. and Perry Marvin Sr. & Perry Marvin Jr. with 16.20 lbs.



Ken Sweeney, 1st Place & Lunger

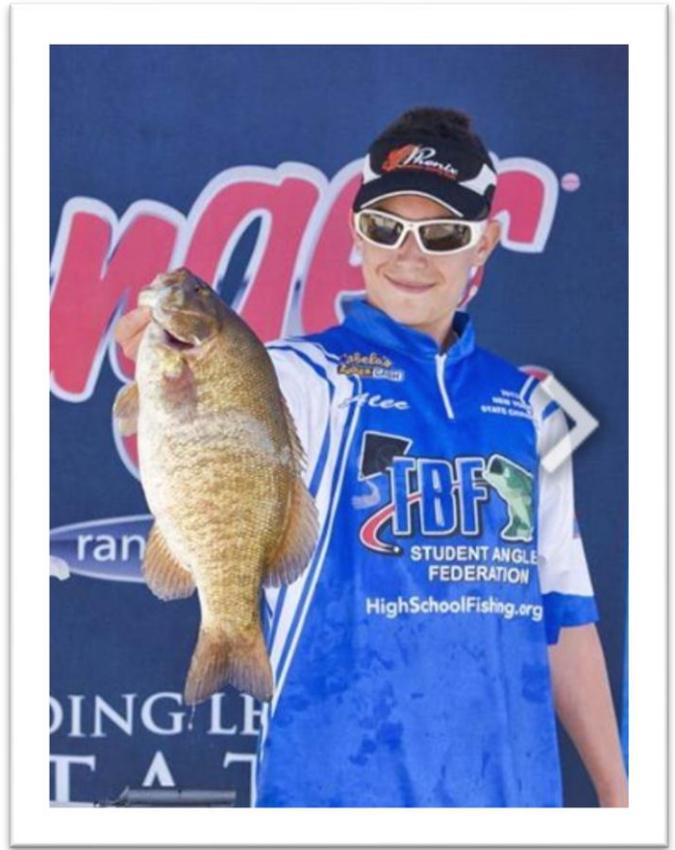


Ken Sweeney, 5.20 lb. Lunger

Marvin & Morrison
Head to 2015 High School Fishing World Finals
7-11 July on Pickwick Lake



Perry Marvin



Alec Morrison

These two anglers are no strangers to state, regional and national level competition. Both of anglers have enjoyed success at the highest levels of competitive bass fishing and each brings their own unique style of fishing each time they hit the water.

By the time this issue is released to our membership these two will be in Florence Alabama on Pickwick Lake participating in the 2015 High School World Finals. In our next issue we'll have in-depth interviews highlighting their angler careers and experiences at the 2015 finals.

**HIGH SCHOOL
FISHING**
TBF • STUDENT ANGLER FEDERATION • FLW





By Dom Maio

At the beginning of 2015, the Good Ole Boys once again began the many ventures we hope to continue each year. We began working on our next Trained Service Dog in our YOUTH BASED MISSION / fundraising campaign to assist some of our Veterans of war here in New York State. We purchased 2 dogs in 2014 and presently have enough funds to purchase a 3rd dog.

Additionally, we have raised 75% of the funds needed towards a 4th dog. Our jump-start cost to purchase each Trained Service Dog is \$2,000.00 per canine.

In February, we successfully conducted our 5th annual Applebee's Flapjack Breakfast again raising over \$1,385.00.

Our club also continued our annual community service by donating our time and efforts towards the Earth Day & Canal Clean-sweep campaign on April 18th by removing many large bags of trash and debris from alongside the canal. 2015 was the 7th year that our club participated in this event.



G.O.B. crew displays the trash removed in during the Earth Day & Canal Clean-Sweep campaign

G.O.B. crew assembled after a successful Earth Day & Canal Clean-Sweep campaign



(continued on pg. 14)

Our annual Dunn's Mountain Goat Training weekends again ran for 5 consecutive weekends which began in April and culminated on RACE DAY, May 3, 2015. Every Saturday morning during the month of April, our club members traveled to Syracuse and set up water stations at 4 different sites across the city to bring water and energy drinks to the runners participating in the practice events. On RACE DAY, the GOB Juniors set up tables at two separate water stops, mixed energy drinks in coolers, poured the fluids into paper cups and then handed the drinks and ice cubes to the runners as they raced by our water stops.



Cont. from Page 13



Our GOB members & parents gathered for a family portrait after the Mountain Goat race.

On Saturday and Sunday May 16th and 17th we supported our sponsor Bass Pro Shop in Auburn as they invited youngsters of all ages to their store so that they could enjoy the Trout Pond bonanza where our boys, girls and parents assisted many first time anglers in the art of catching and releasing trout. The pond was set up, maintained and stocked with trout from Carpenter's Brook Fish Hatchery. As many of our group worked with the youngsters, we also conducted a 50/50 Raffle and also raffled off a Bass Pro Tackle Bag filled with Lures.

(continued on pg. 15)



Cont. from Page 14

A proud youngster pointing to his trout as a GOB member carefully handles the trout before returning it to the pond



On Friday afternoon, May 29th we traveled up to the campus of Onondaga Community College, where we once again split into two groups to handle the runners during the Runapalooza Race. This is an annual race hosted by FleetFeet Sports, one of our most active sponsors.

A young lady sets the hook along with the help of her grandmother as a GOB member gets prepared to assist in getting a quick look at the trout before its returned back into the water.

These particular community service events and fundraisers have been a fixed part of our GOB program for at least the past 5 years.

Our Promotions & Fund Raising Director will also insert additional fundraisers into the open dates in between those that are already committed so that all of our events & fundraisers are handled for the most part, in the spring of each year. Once all these activities are completed, our youngsters begin concentrating on fishing our Club & State tournaments!



To conclude the 1st tournament of the year we enjoyed hotdogs, hamburgers, beverages, chips, watermelon, cookies, etc., and our members posed with their new TBF Jerseys for a photo with NYTBF President Bobby Williams

Meet The Legacy Jr. Bass Club

By Sherri Michetti

The Legacy Jr. Bass club was formed by Sherri Michetti and her husband Robert Michetti in March 2015. The club is based in Red Hook, NY and holds events in the Hudson Valley area. "We had a great turnout at our kick off/sign up event on March 22 and we have members from 3 surrounding schools. We had our first meeting on April 7 and our membership is currently at 17 kids" stated Sherri.



Legacy Jr. Bass

Our first event of the year was our "Spring Practice" event. Each of the kids decorated their own measure boards that Mr. Michetti made for all of them to use this year. They all enjoyed practicing tying different fishing knots and swapped some gear. But the hit of the day was "casting practice", and the Plastic Bass they all caught! The weather was beautiful and it was a great first event and a great turnout!

Our first tournament was May 30th on Copake Lake and it featured 4 bass boats and several V hulls and John boats for the Minnow division. The kids were so excited and they had such an awesome day!

Brian Winchell, the Tournament Director for NYTBF made the trip down to mentor our kids and also spoke afterwards with the parents. We also had 2 bass boats join us from our local HV Bass Anglers Club of which the 2 boaters are the fathers of 2 of our junior members. The fish were cooperating and our kids caught lots of Large and Smallmouth Bass. The rock bass were definitely biting so the all the kids were catching fish like crazy! Our Lunker of the day was 4.78lbs and was caught by 6 year old Abby in our Minnow division! Everyone enjoyed a tasty Hot Dog and Hamburger BBQ afterwards.

On Father's Day, we held our second tournament at Lake Taconic State Park. We had to delay our start from 7am to 11am because of severe rain and thunderstorms in the early AM. But the weather cooperated enough to allow us to fish from 11 to 2:30 and have a great pot luck Father's Day lunch afterwards. Many Dads took their children out in boats alone and were able to enjoy time with them while fishing. We had 13 participate, with 11 boats. It rained again in the late afternoon, but we were able to squeeze our event in! Unfortunately not many fish were caught because of the heavy rain and storms right before our event. The kids still had a great time and our Lunker of the day was 3.50lbs ... AGAIN caught by our 6 year old Abby!!

We are looking forward to our Monday evening "Fun Fish" on June 29 at a private pond at Wethersfield Gardens in Amenia, a beautiful location with lots of shore fishing available and a great bass fishery!

Legacy Jr. Bass is sending 4 of our Juniors to the TBF Junior State Qualifier on July 11th at St. Johnsville Marina on the Mohawk River. Three of our four youngsters placed in the top 3 positions in the first 2 tournaments.

Our next tournament will be combined with a family campout on July 25. Dutchess County Campground will host our tournament on Sylvan Lake. NYTBF will be visiting us with some bass boats, and their new wrapped trailer and running an official weigh in for the kids. The event will be the highlight of the year for our new club! The kids can't wait!

We meet once per month on Tuesday nights at the Town Hall in Milan, NY. Our website is www.legacyjrbass.com. See our website for more information. Visit our Facebook page "legacyjrbass". ...there are lots of photos of our events posted there.

(continued on pg. 17)

Meet The Legacy Jr. Bass Club

continued



Legacy Jr. Bass

Legacy Jr. Bass members in action





New York – The Bass Federation presents the *Collegiate Cup Challenge*

2015 Tournament Schedule

August 23, 2015 Qualifier #1

Mohawk River, Schoharie Crossing, Hartley Lane, Fort Hunter

Take-off at 7:00am, Weigh-in at 2:00pm
\$75 per boat – 2 anglers per boat
BBQ to follow for all contestants

September 27, 2015 Qualifier #2

Lake Champlain, City Ramp, Dock Street, Plattsburgh

Take-off at 7:00am, Weigh-in at 2:00pm
\$75 per boat – 2 anglers per boat
BBQ to follow for all contestants

NOTE Entry fee will be collected for each qualifier. Top 12 teams advance to championship. If top 12 in qualifier #1, anglers do not need to participate in qualifier #2.

October 17, 2015 CHAMPIONSHIP

Lake Champlain, Ticonderoga Boat Launch, NY Route 74, Ticonderoga

Take-off at 7:00am, Weigh-in at 2:00pm
Must have qualified – no fee – 2 anglers per boat
BBQ to follow for all contestants

Eligibility: The Collegiate Cup Challenge is open to all undergraduate and graduate students that are enrolled full-time or last year's participants since graduated for one (1) fishing season. Exceptions can be made if the angler is graduating that semester or is taking a graduate level class. These requirements are put in place to insure the fairness and integrity of the 2015 Collegiate Cup Challenge.

Entries: On-line at NYTBF.com, Collegiate Cup, payment on-line or mail

OR CollegiateBassChampionship.com, mail only

Payment must be mailed no later than 7 days prior to tournament.

Mail to: NYTBF c/o Sandy Williams, PO Box 185, La Fargeville, NY 13658



Any questions: contact Bobby Williams, email labob1995@gmail.com or Cell 315-408-8472

Worm Fishing

By Sammy Lee

What is generally thought of as the most productive bass lure ever created? Well, I guess it would have to be the plastic worm. Few lures in fishing history have ever made it to the top faster than the plastic worm.

Statistics compiled in professional bass tournaments prove that the plastic worm is truly the all-time deadliest bass catching lure. So, for a lure to be this good, it must be simple to fish, right? Hardly, as almost every angler who has ever picked one up will tell you!

The key ingredients to you becoming a successful plastic worm fisherman are:

1. Confidence
2. Feel
3. Endurance
4. Patience

To me, the first two (Confidence and Feel) are the most important. You simply must have confidence! A correct mental attitude plays a major role in catching, or not catching bass, regardless of the lure you're throwing. Now, developing a "feel" for worm fishing plays a key part in building this confidence. You've got to feel that worm working down there, along the bottom contours, to the point you can visualize its every move in your mind's eye. But there are other reasons why the plastic worm is so unique:

1. The plastic worm maintains a contour depth. By that, I mean it can be fished to follow the exact bottom terrain.
2. The plastic worm imitates natural food. A plastic worm crawling along the bottom, to a bass, looks like a hamburger steak to an all-night truck driver.
3. The plastic worm is dispensable. In other words, most fishermen can afford to throw this lure where the fish are. Most folks won't hesitate investing a 15 cent worm in tangled brush piles in hopes of catching a 5-pound bass.

And that brings me to my next point:

4. The plastic worm builds confidence. This might sound like I'm repeating myself but, as I've often said, "Confidence is the best lure you can have in your tackle box". Even better than a plastic worm!

But believe it or not, most people have a difficult time learning how to fish the worm at first and I suppose that's why more people ask me how to tell the difference between a fish and a stump than anything else about worm fishing and my answer to that question is simple: "How many times has a tree or rock hit your worm and moved off with it"? If your line moves, it's past time to jerk! If there's a doubt, don't sweat it...set the hook!

But what is it like to get that first strike if you've never experienced one on a plastic worm?

I'll never forget the first time I tried a plastic worm. I'd noticed a few hanging around the tackle shops where I lived so I picked up the color that everyone said was the "hot" one for my local lake.



This bass fell for a Texas-rigged worm

Worm Fishing (continued)

Well, much to my surprise, the fish ate it up on my next visit to my favorite fishing hole. Luckily, the fish were hitting so hard that day that I don't think I could've missed any fish if I'd wanted to!

Over the years, I've discovered several ways of fishing the plastic worm and I'd like to share my favorites:

Texas Style:

Without a doubt the most popular form of rigging a plastic worm is the "Texas" style!

All that's needed to rig a worm "Texas" style is a plastic worm; a hook in sizes 2/0-to-6/0, depending on the length of the worm, and a cone-shaped sliding slip sinker.

The size of the slip sinker will vary, depending on the size of the worm you're fishing, the size of your line, the depth you intend to fish and the type and amount of cover you'll be fishing around.

To rig the worm, first slide the slip sinker on your line, with the pointed end forward. Then, tie your monofilament to your hook eye with a good, non-slip knot, like an Improved Clinch or a Palomar. Then, insert the hook point into the fake wiggler's head and down about half an inch into the worm. After you do this, bring the hook out from the worm's head and pull the hook back through the worm until the eye of the hook remains embedded about half-an-inch into the worm.

Next, turn the hook around until the barb faces the worm and can be inserted into the soft plastic. By rigging the worm this way, you've created a weedless lure. Remember though, for the best action and to reduce line twist, the worm should be completely straight with the line.

Just a moment ago, I mentioned that you need to use a "sliding slip sinker" and this is true. But remember that the size of your weight will vary greatly, according to the conditions you're fishing around.

One rule of thumb I use, is to always use the lightest piece of weight I can get away with. If I'm using a 1/4-ounce piece of lead and I can feel the same thing on bottom using a 3/16-ounce slip sinker, then go to it, because ole' mossy jaws is a pretty smart critter and if he picks up your fake offering and it doesn't feel just right to him, he'll spit it out faster than you can blink an eye.

But how do you fish a Texas style worm?

After I cast the plastic worm out, I wait until the worm hits bottom. Then, I watch the line where it enters the water, because very often you'll see the line jump, or move sideways and this is a sure sign that a fish has taken the lure.

Worm Fishing

(continued)

If I don't notice anything, then I start working the worm back to the boat by moving the rod from about a 45-degree angle to vertically straight about my head.

Then, I let the worm settle back to bottom, drop the rod tip, take up the slack line and repeat the process, always pulling the worm with the rod and then take up the slack, being sure to let the rod tip do the work.

When a fish hits the worm, lower the rod until you're pointing it at the fish, take up the slack and set the hook!

Weightless Spawning Rig:

This is nothing but a plastic worm, a 2/0 hook, and no weight, rigged Texas style, with the hook imbedded in the middle of the worm.

I use this rig strictly during the spawning season, because spawning bass normally aren't hungry and normally don't hit out of reflex action. Instead, they're hitting out of protective instinct and merely trying to move that worm out of the spawning nest.

Keep in mind that spawning bass usually pick a worm up near the middle, so you'll need to place the hook back down the worm toward the tail and set the hook pretty quickly, after the fish hits. Most of the spawning bass I've ever found have been around some type of cover such as weeds, stumps or logs, and have been in the northern coves on a lake.

Another thing I do during the spawning season is to continually use a new worm. This way if I miss a strike I can examine the worm and determine from the teeth marks where it was bitten and adjust the position of the hook to increase the chances of getting the bass to take my offering.

Some of my favorite colors and sizes of plastic worms at this time of year are 7-to-8 inch worms in black, purple or electric grape colors.

Also, remember that when you spot an area you feel will have spawners in it, make a habit to cast beyond any object that might be showing. This way you don't run the risk of spooking any fish.

Once the worm enters the water, start working it back to the boat in short, slow jerks, because without any weight you're going to find that the worm sinks much slower and will stay in front of the bass for a longer period of time.

The "Weightless Spawning Rig" will help you increase you catch of spawning (and also summertime weed-bed) bass, so give it a try.

Worm Fishing

(continued)

The last way I really enjoy fishing a plastic worm, especially in clear water and when going for smallmouth or spotted bass is the Slider Style.

Slider Style of Bassin':

A method of plastic worm fishing that I really enjoy is the "Slider" style of wormin'. This method isn't necessarily for lunkers, but on days when the bass have lockjaw, I've found that crazy lookin' flathead "Slider" and mini worms can turn the trick.

This lure consists of a 4-inch, pencil shaped, worm and an 1/8th-ounce glide head, weighted worm hook that can be shaved down to only a hint of weight, if needed. Obviously you'd want to fish this outfit on ultra-light spinning tackle and 4-to-6 pound monofilament line.

Remember that a balanced rod and reel is important for casting these little baits the necessary distance with a minimum of effort, plus this also allows you to stay away from shore, so that you won't have to worry about spooking the fish.

The "Slider" is one bait that I'll fish into the shore, because this is where you'll pick up the size of fish the lure is designed to catch.

To fish the "Slider" correctly you'll want to cast perpendicularly, or at such an angle that the line can be kept under a tight line across a point or to a likely looking spot.

After you cast, engage your reel immediately with two or three fast cranks to straighten your line and start the lure to swimming (or "sliding") across the bottom. Then slow down to about one second, per turn of the reel handle, or just fast enough to keep the lure sliding along.

When you start getting taps, ignore them. Only set the hook when you feel a firm pull or when the fish swims off with your bait.

Hopefully, something I've said over the last few paragraphs will help you put more fish over the side of your boat the next time you go fishin' with a plastic worm. These methods have certainly helped me over the years!

I'm Sammy Lee and until next time, "Tight Lines®"!

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