

Tennessee Striped Bass Association

Get Hooked !



October 2017



Monthly Meeting First Monday at Puleo's Grill,

110 Cedar Lane off Merchants Rd. at I - 75

TSBA web site <http://tnstripedbass.com/> for the latest news.

Down Rod Fishing for Striped Bass

The down rod is one of the most effective and consistent methods of catching freshwater stripers, day & day out, throughout the year, it is hard to beat a down rod. A down rod is basically a Carolina rig with a heavy weight and relatively long leader. A standard down rod (if there was such a thing) consists of a line counter reel, a fairly limber 6 to 9ft rod, the main line, an egg sinker placed on the main line, a swivel, a 4 to 8 ft leader, the hook and most importantly a fresh frisky live bait!

Let's cover each component of the rig in more detail. Your decision of what rod & reel combination to use is primary based on the size of striper that you are targeting. All reels should have a good drag and a line counter, so that you can get your baits to the strike zone as quickly as possible. For "average" size fish between 5 and 20lbs, a "normal" sized striper line counter reel, spooled with 15lb mono and a 7ft light/medium action rod. You want a softer tip to allow the smaller baits that are used to target this class of fish to have some freedom of movement. Some entry level equipment would be the Daiwa Accudepth Plus 27LC or Okuma Convector CV-20D reels mounted on rods such as the Shakespeare UGLY Stick Striper rod model # USCA 70 or an Okuma Classic Pro GLT Striper Live Bait rod model # CST-LB-701ML. Again, this is entry level equipment, as you progress in your angling skills, you might want to upgrade the quality of your gear. If you're targeting larger stripers between 15 and 30lbs, you would want to upsize your tackle accordingly, using an Accudepth Plus 47LC spooled with 25 or 30lb test line mounted on a 7ft medium heavy rod. Monster stripers of 25 to 50lbs should be targeted with a large reel such as an Accudepth Plus 57LC spooled with 50lb test on 7ft heavy action rod. The very large baits used when targeting monster stripers also require moving to a larger egg sinker – between 3 and 5oz – to keep the bait as straight down as possible. A longer rod such as 8 or 9 ft is sometime used to cover more water – the additional 2ft spread on each side of the boat sometimes makes the difference in getting bit or not.

Another important part of the down rod equation is your rod holders. You need a quality rod holder that is very strong, holds the rod firmly and allows for easy removal of the rod under the heavy pressure that stripers generate. My favorite rod holders are made by DriftMaster. I prefer the heavy duty "Pro" series. Since you are fishing straight down, the reel does NOT need to be "locked" into the holder, simply having the rod in the holder is enough. If your reel is "locked" into the holder, there is a very good chance you will NOT be able to remove it once a fish is on.

The terminal tackle used for down rods varies just a bit, again based on the size of the fish you're targeting and the depth you're fishing. As far as the swivels go, a simple barrel swivel, matched to the line class you are using is sufficient. If you're targeting monster stripers, you should move to crane swivels as they are slightly stronger than barrel swivels. The weight used can run from 1/2oz to 6oz. If you're fishing with dissimilar size weights, the heaviest weights should always go in the front of the boat and the lightest weight in back. This way, as you move around on the trolling motor, the lines will not tangle as much. If your lighter weight rigs are in the front they will kick back into the more vertical heavier rigs in the back. Using the light weights in the back allows you to cover a wider variety of depths. As you speed up and slow down on the trolling motor, they will rise and fall vertically in the water column. My standard down rod weight is 2oz egg sinker. If you're fishing very large baits in fast current or trolling at a higher speed, you want to increase the weight of your sinker to keep the bait down in your target zone. There are some variations available in the weights you use. Some examples of these variations are egg sinkers with swivels at both ends, long slender pencil weights with swivels on both ends, egg sinkers that are painted red or black (to reduce their visibility) or "invisible" egg sinkers made of glass. I personally like a normal egg sinker, that has been "aged" in the boat for while. Having the sinkers banging and rolling around in your tackle container will get the shine off of them. I don't like a brand new shiny sinker.

Your leader size should be the same size or larger than your main line. Some people recommend a lighter leader so that you lose less terminal tackle when you get your rig hung up in something. I would rather lose my terminal tackle than a good fish. Since the leader is so much shorter than the main line, it has much less stretch and therefore will break before your main line. Your leader can be mono or fluorocarbon. Fluorocarbon is only needed in very clear water. All my leaders are fluoro since I never know what conditions I will be fishing on for any given trip and the last thing I want to do is re-tie all my rigs on the water. Leader length is determined by two factors – the size of the bait and depth that you are fishing. You want shorter 5ft or so leaders on your

bigger baits. This is primarily to reduce tangling, as the bigger bait pretty much can swim wherever they want. Putting them on a short lease helps keep them from getting together. If you're fishing your down rods in shallow water – 12 to 25ft, a shorter 5ft leader helps keep the bait closer to your targeted depth and also helps prevent tangling of all size baits, since the “spread” vertically will be much smaller in shallower depths. This will be covered more in the tips section.

Hook size is determined solely on the size bait you are using. Match the hook to your bait and do NOT over power your bait with too large of a hook.

If you are a “set it and forget” type of angler, circle hooks are great as the fish will hook themselves when they take the bait and make their run. If you're more of a hands on angler who likes to hold the rod in your hands and set the hook, then I would recommend octopus hooks. As always, you want a sharp hook that is strong. Always remember to wet your knots when tightening them down. I personally like a palmor knot.

Obtaining and caring for live bait is a whole subject of its own. I am just going to say you need to have the LIVELIEST bait possible. Your bait is THE most important part of the puzzle when striper fishing; the better your bait, the better you will do. For smaller baits, check them fairly often as they will often get bit and killed or taken while you're not looking. Larger baits will be making the rod tip bounce so you should easily be able to tell if they're ok or not.

Here are some various down rod fishing tips. When fishing in deeper water with fish throughout the water column, stagger your baits to determine what depth the fish are most active. For example, on Lake Lanier in the summer time, the thermocline might be at 30ft and you're marking fish from 40 to 80. Place your rods at 40, 50, 60, & 70 feet. Having the large spread along with longer 8ft leaders allows you to cover as much water vertically as possible. The deeper you are fishing, the more you can tighten down your drag as you have plenty of stretch available in your main line. Tightening down your drag is especially helpful when fishing near timber - just remember to back it off a bit when the fish gets close to the boat. When fishing 12 to 25 ft below the boat you want a looser drag

as you don't have as much stretch available. Always place your baits above the fish you are marking. Stripers suspended in the water column look and feed up. If you're marking fish and you're not getting bit, drop down the bait 15/20ft below the fish and quickly reel your baits up though the fish. This will often trigger a bite. This technique is called power reeling. Sometimes banging on the bottom of the boat with a 2x4 or broom handle will "call" the fish to the boat. Stripers are curious by nature and will come to investigate. I prefer to play loud ROCK & ROLL to draw them in. Other variations on this technique are jumping in the water for a quick dip during the summer or leaving your outboard running. When fishing in shallower water, I keep the rod closest to me on the bottom, bouncing along, pulling it up quickly if I see a tree or other obstruction. Often only that bait that is right on the bottom is the one getting bit. If the fish are hitting softly, it helps to have everyone hold a rod and set the hook on them manually, rather than letting them set the hook themselves using the rod holder. Just hold on tightly in case a big fish makes a strong hit.

Capt. Mike Maddalena reprinted from 2013.

Join our Facebook group [TN Striped Bass Association](#)

The club is in need of a member to take over the position of **Newsletter Editor** starting January 2018. If interested please contact one of the board members.

Club Meeting: Speakers for 2017

February: James Everett and Michael Hick- TVA River Forecast Center

March: Jim Farmer- Cast Away Bait and Tackle

April: Keith Shannon, Alan Franklin and David Powell- discussion on finding, catching, and keeping live bait

May: Fuzzy Lambert- Humminbird/ Minn Kota Electronics and trolling motors

June: Captain Mack Farr

July: Captain Chadwick Ferrell- Fishing the boils and tailrace tips and tricks

August: TWRA Mike Smith- Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery discussion on striper stocking

September: Club Fish Fry (no regular club meeting) Fish Fry will be at Grainger County Park September 9th

October: Ken Cutsinger with TWRA- Water Safety, First Aid, and boating requirements

November: Open meeting- Year end review and recommendations for 2018

December: Board of Directors meeting (no regular club meeting)

The club is looking for a member in good standing to take over the position of : **Web Administrator:** Duties include: uploading new content, keeping the information on the website current and accurate by updating. If you are interested contact one of the board members.

Creel and Size limits

CHEROKEE LAKE

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass: 2 per day in combination, 15 inch minimum length limit

NORRIS LAKE

Striped Bass

April 1–October 31: 2 per day, 15 inch minimum length limit

November 1–March 31: 1 per day, 36 inch minimum length limit

WATTS BAR

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass:

April 1–October 31: 2 per day in combination

November 1–March 31: 2 per day in combination, only one may be a striped bass.

Striped Bass:

April 1–October 31: 15 inch minimum length limit.

November 1–March 31: 36 inch minimum length limit

Hybrid Striped Bass: 15 inch minimum length limit

MELTON HILL

Striped Bass or Hybrid Striped Bass: 2 per day in combination, including Clinch River upstream to Highway 61 bridge in Clinton. 15 inch minimum length limit

Striped Bass: 32–42 inch PLR; only one fish may be over 42 inches

TSBA. Tournament Aug 12, 2017



Hal takes first place also big fish with a 32.5" and 31" fish

Art and Lloyd with two of the day's catch



Steve with Bob second place. Steve holding a 31" and 30.5" fish



Bob with a 31" fish





TSBA. Tournament Aug 12

Great lunch on the pontoon.
Thanks Art for bringing all
the fixings.

I wanted to take my boat and fish the tournament but with my limited knowledge of Cherokee it is always nice to have someone with you that knows the water. I asked Steve to ride along, he is a great guy to fish with and I knew he would keep me off the rocks. We agreed to meet at the dam launch ramp. Rain was in the forecast, I get there around 6 am. launch and secure the boat, just I as pulled the truck out Steve shows up. Soon after Art pulled up in the pontoon then Hal in his boat. We blast off at 6:30, I head over to three tree island - after finding a few fish we decide to put bait down. By 8 am. there are 5 or 6 boats nearby but not much catching going on, Art moves upstream to look for fish, a short time later we get the call he is in a group of boats, some fish being caught. I head that way till we spot a few boats, Art is off to one side Hal in the back. Sitting in 50' of water marking fish at 30' we quickly get lines out. The Shad are getting hit, within a few minutes, Steve hooks up with the first fish we land a nice 31" Striper. Hal was about 10 yards from us, I could see he had a fish it's on a run. All of a sudden 2 of our rods get pulled down Steve grabs one I get the other. Feeling like a fish on then I realize I have Steve he has me. Hal is now getting closer still with a fish on, it is all tangled up in 4 of our lines. I reel up the ones I can while Steve attacks the tangled mess at the back of the boat. Hal can do nothing but watch as Steve cuts loose our lines somehow pulling in a big Striper. The fish is in my boat so now it belongs to us right? That was fun we all had a good laugh.

BB

New Members List: Welcome to the club guys

Robert Metz - Harrison, Oh
Frank Zimmerman - Stow, Oh
James Rigney - LaFollette, Tn
Michael Carter - Knoxville, Tn
Michael High - Knoxville, Tn
Lawrence Douglass - Crossville, Tn
Joseph Campbell - Russell Springs, Ky
Jason (Chris) Stansberry - Seymour, Tn
Stuart Bilbrey - Jacksboro, Tn
Melvin Brook - Lily, Ky
Robert Fuller - Charleston, Wv
Tob Trenkamp - Hamilton, Oh
Jacob (Jake) Plasters - Gallipolis, Oh
Josh Treadway - Rockford Tn
Columbus Whaley - Sevierville, Tn
John Galliher - Norwood, NC

Clay Haselton, Kingsport, Tn
Jim Wallace, Knoxville, Tn
John Vincenzo, Knoxville, Tn
Tommy White, Sevierville, Tn
Sam Lanning, Rogersville, Tn
Jacob Lanning, Rogersville, Tn
David Maurer, Guilford IN
Gary Conley, Chapmanville WV
Tracy Templeton - Dandridge, Tn
Brian Oaks - Maynardville, Tn
Darrell Owen from Mooresburg, TN
Harvey Perricone from LaFollette, TN
Dan Hall from Loudon, TN
Larry Owens, Tazewell, Tn.
Richard Brogan, Loveland, Oh.
Kenny Witt, Maryville, Tn.
Jamey Loy, Knoxville, Tn.
Christopher Owens, Tablott, Tn.

How to Contribute to the Newsletter:

Please send in any pictures or news that you think would interest club members – we are always glad to hear from you. You can e-mail photos and reports to: bcbusy@att.net We usually put the newsletter together around the end of the month, but send your information any time and we will work it in.

Hot Spots

CHEROKEE LAKE

The seasonal migration away from the thermal trap that the larger fish have been surviving in during the late summer months has begun as the lake turnover & mixing is underway. The water quality remained good enough this summer for great survival of the larger stripers. Good dissolved oxygen & temperatures can be found anywhere so the striper / hybrid will head for the most abundant bait. Catch and Release will also be optional. Top water activity can be noticed on the calm mornings. The largest concentration of bait happens in the upper end of the reservoir and the back of major coves & creeks. The gulls will start to arrive by the end of October & other bait-eating birds will help find the game fish until then.

NORRIS LAKE

Water quality remained great all summer, so survival was excellent. Lake turnover & mixing is well underway, so migration of the stripers from deep water around the lower portion (dam end) of the lake has begun. Bait can be seen on the surface along with breaking game fish feeding in it. Stripers can be found around the most abundant bait in the headwaters of major creeks, coves, and rivers. The low water and flow has allowed the stripers to remain scattered much farther upstream than normal this summer. Good Catch and Release practice now becomes optional. The gulls are expected back to help find the fish at the same time the size and creel limits change on November 1.

WATTS BAR & MELTON HILL

Look for the stripers in front of the major coves or where you find the most bait fish and bait-eating birds. Catch and Release works good in the cool water months. The fish in Watts Bar & lower Clinch Watts Bar have contamination warnings so should not be harvested.

— *Ezell Cox*

YOUR 2017 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF

President: David Powell

Vice President: Cory Malabey

Treasurer: Art Muchow

Secretary: Keith Shannon

Board Chairman: Eric Rauch

TSBA DIRECTORS

Bill Ballou, Jim Blazier, Steve Nichols, Cory Malabey, David Powell, Eric Rauch, Allan Franklin, Bob Biscay, Hal Basdekis

TSBA STAFF

Newsletter Printing: Jim Blazier, Larry Nowell & Bill Ballou

Distribution: Jim's email jblazier@comcast.net

Newsletter Editor: Bob Biscay bcbusy@att.net

Membership: Art Muchow arthurmuchow@yahoo.com

Web Administrator: Terry Reinitz tennstripedbass@gmail.com

Forum: David Powell david@a-plusconstruction.net

Sponsor Coordinator: Justin Rose

Advisors: Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

Allan Franklin 865-805-3120

TSBA Sponsors

TSBA. Appreciates all the support we get from our sponsors. If you would like to see your business listed in our newsletter please consider renewing for 2017. TSBA can provide newsletters for our sponsors to distribute. Thanks!



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TSBA 2017 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

As a member:

- *You'll receive a monthly newsletter.
- * You'll help support Striped Bass Fisheries & Wildlife Agencies.
- * You'll be informed of new regulations & information that affect striper fishing.
- * You'll develop a network of "striper friends."
- * You'll learn new methods to improve your striped bass fishing effectiveness.
- * You'll be able to call officers for fishing reports.
- * You'll be able to attend monthly meetings with informative programs.
- * You'll have access to all areas of the TSBA web page.

Your Name _____

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(_____) _____ # of minor children in family _____

Referred By: _____

Please provide an e-mail address to receive the monthly newsletter:

E-Mail address _____

I have read and agree to abide by and be bound by the Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc. (TSBA) Bylaws. A copy of the Bylaws can be found on the TSBA website at www.tnstripedbass.com or at the offices of the corporation.

(Signature)

(Date)

Enclose a check for \$20.00

Mail to: TSBA

2954 Lake Forest Circle

Talbott, TN. 37877

Simplified Renewal Note: Returning members with no changes to their contact information are not required to fill out the application. Just send a \$20 check to the address above. Be sure to include the member's name on the check. When you send in your check, please provide TSBA with an email address where we can send your club newsletter. Yearly dues are due in January each year. New members that sign up in Oct., Nov., or Dec. will get credit for the remainder of that year and the following year.

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