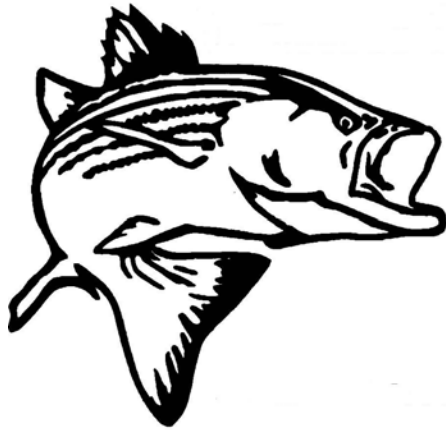


**Catch
the
Striper
Fever!**

T.S.B.A.



***Tennessee
Striped Bass
Association,
Inc.
Newsletter***

**March
2010**



Larry Mullins with a 52.3-pound fish caught on a recent trip to Chesapeake Bay. Great job, Larry!"

PRESIDENT'S LETTER

Hello, everyone,

I want to apologize for having to cancel the last meeting. I spoke with the directors and officers, and we felt with the forecast calling for snow and the distance several of us had to drive it that would be best to make the decision to be safe rather than risk anyone's safety. The only way of communication we had to cancel this was by word of mouth, and I understand a few people showed up at Shoney's not knowing the meeting was canceled. I apologize for this. We have added an announcement section on our web site where we will provide updates in the future to any TSBA events. As always, feel free to call my cell phone if you have any questions about events or fishing.

We will hold a Board of Directors meeting on March 10 to review some procedures we must follow as a club. We met with an attorney a few weeks back to have some questions answered and felt it would be a good idea to review our by laws and procedures. At this meeting we will also nail down specific dates and locations for some future events. Please check the announcements section on our web site after the meeting for these dates.

Jim Blazier posted a question on our web site that I would like to ask everyone. We have many talented fisherman in our club who are willing to share knowledge and write articles for the newsletter. My question is this: What topics would you like these articles to cover? If you have any ideas or thoughts, please share them with me, and we will get a how to article written about this.

A couple of miscellaneous items to bring up:

Don't forget to renew your fishing license; most of us have been cooped up in the house due to weather and haven't thought about this. They expired at the end of February.

Also, this is the time of year TVA starts raising the levels of our lakes, which results in floating debris that could harm your boat or, even worse, cause personal injury. Be careful and keep an eye out for floating logs, chairs, etc.

Lastly, I read a story recently about a guy who almost drowned while launching his boat. He was alone, and his rope came undone. As his boat started to float away, he jumped in the water to swim to it, but then realized he wasn't able to climb back in. The water was cold, he wasn't wearing a life jacket, and his boots and suit started to fill up with water. He started to lose control of his limbs. Finally, another boater appeared to help him to safety. Moral of the story: always think safety; your boat is not worth your life; and ALWAYS wear your life jacket.

Tight lines and see you on the water,

— Erik Engebretsen

Passing the Fever to the Next Generation



Above: Ten-year-old Markus Allen skipping school with the master Ezell Cox in the background. **Below:** 16-year-old Brad Allen showing off a 43-inch toothy critter from Melton Hill.



Setting Up Your Boat for Striper Fishing

I recently changed my boat and spent the too-cold-to-fish month of January rigging it. I enjoyed the process, which gave me a chance to use ideas learned from others. Setting up a striper boat depends on the layout and on the fisherman's preferred methods. My goal was to have an open boat clear of obstructions that would work on rivers and on our medium-sized lakes in East Tennessee. I mainly use live bait on free and weighted-down lines, as well as plainer boards. I also pull umbrella rigs when live bait is not working.

My boat is an aluminum 1870 Crestliner Backwater; 18' long with a 70" wide bottom and a 91" beam. The motor is a Mercury 90 EFI 4 stroke. I selected a center console layout a side console as a personal preference that I enjoyed on my previous boat. Fellow members Wally Edwards and Ezell Cox also have side-console versions of this boat. Starting at the front of the boat, the all-important trolling motor was mounted. I choose a Minn Kota V2 power drive with 70 lbs of thrust and 24 volts for a long day of use and the I-Pilot remote control.



It was mounted off center and on the left side for front trailer access when launching and for a clear bait net throw/retrieve, as I am right handed. The off center motor pull is no problem for the I-Pilot which keeps the boat going straight.

The motor was wired straight to the batteries with no plug connection for a clean deck and reliability. A top accessible battery switch is used for disconnect when charging.

In a compartment below the front deck, three deep cycle batteries were mounted, two for the trolling motor and one for the bait tank and filler hose pumps. A three-bank charger in this compartment has an AC plug access on the top front panel. The bait tank is in the center of the boat for balanced weight and quick access from all locations. The console was kept simple with a tachometer and hour meter gages. The fish finder was mounted with an adjustable RAM arm for viewing by



(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4)

passengers and from the front deck when looking for bait. A VHF radio, used for finding fish through friends, was located below the console for weather protection. The antenna was placed in a central location allowing for a clear perimeter for chasing tricky fighting fish around the boat. Vertical rod holders were mounted on the console grab rail and sides, and comfortable seats were installed side by side behind the helm. The two outer seats are capable of being mounted on front and back deck pedestals. The driver's seat mounting allows side to side movement and also tilts/unhooks for live well access.



Six side rod holder mounts were made from 4" aluminum Ls, were bolted to the boat's slotted gunnels, and are adjustable from front to back. Drift Master rod holders were bolted to the brackets. The model used has 30- and 0-degree rod positions. Two or more vertical holders will be mounted on the center back deck in the near future.

On the transom, inexpensive reflectors were added for trailering safety at night, especially viewable if the trailer lights blow a bulb. (This is a good tip learned when following a fellow member early one dark morning.) Extra vinyl letters came with the pack for my TWRA boat numbers, so "TSBA" and a boat name were applied.



I am sure there are many ways to set up a Striper boat, but by learning what works for you and your boat, setting it up yourself can be very rewarding. I believe our hobby is not just about fishing on the lake but also involves modifying and maintaining our boats. I hope to see you on the lakes.

— Doug Steffe

FEBRUARY 2010 QUESTION OF THE MONTH:

WHAT BRAND OF TROLLING MOTOR BATTERY DO YOU CURRENTLY USE IN YOUR BOAT?

WHAT TYPE DO YOU PLAN TO BUY NEXT?

I'm tired of snow, ice, and wet weather. But I am glad our club has an active website that enables our members to post information that may be useful to other members. The responses to this months question is a good example of that type of information.

A lot of our members responded that they now use AGM batteries or that their next batteries would be AGM. I haven't made the switch to this type of battery due to cost. So I did some searching on the Internet for reasons to help me justify buying a battery that would cost at least twice as much as the standard lead/acid battery that I am currently using.

What is an AGM battery? It is a newer type of sealed battery that uses absorbed glass mats (AGM) between the plates. The glass mat is made of a very fine fiber made of boron-silicate. AGM batteries have all the advantages of gelled types but can take much more abuse. These batteries are also called "starved electrolyte", because the mat is about 95% saturated rather than fully soaked with acid.

Advantages of AGM batteries:

#1: Since the mat is not fully soaked, the acid will not leak even if the case is broken.

#2: Since there is no liquid to freeze and expand, they are practically immune from freezing damage. This is important for boats stored outdoors.

#3: Nearly all AGM batteries are recombinant, which means that the oxygen and hydrogen recombine *inside* the battery. These use gas phase transfer of oxygen to the negative plates to recombine them back into water while charging and prevent the loss of water through electrolysis. The recombining is typically 99+% efficient, so almost no water is lost. Therefore they are maintenance free and can be mounted in your boat in remote locations since they do not require fluid checks and refilling.

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

#4: The charging voltages are the same as for any standard battery - no need for any special adjustments or problems with incompatible chargers or charge controls. And, since the internal resistance is extremely low, there is almost no heating of the battery even under heavy charge and discharge currents.

#5: AGM batteries have a very low self-discharge rate, with 1% to 3% per month being normal. This means that they can sit in storage for much longer periods without charging than standard batteries can.

#6: AGM batteries are tightly packed and rigidly mounted and will withstand shock and vibration better than any standard battery

Do you need to buy an AGM battery? Even with all the advantages listed above, there is still a place for the standard flooded deep cycle battery. AGMs will cost two to three times as much as flooded batteries of the same capacity. In installations in which batteries are set in an area where you don't have to worry about fumes or leakage, a standard or industrial deep cycle is a better economic choice. AGM batteries' main advantages are that they need no maintenance, can survive most freezes, and are completely sealed against leakage even if broken. Not everyone needs these features.

Jeff Jolly offered the following comments on the web site: What has made my love/hate relationship with batteries way better was discovering "sulphated" batteries! I purchased a Battery MINDER Plus about four years ago. It conditions "sulphated" batteries as well as automatically charging any type of 12-volt storage battery without ever over-charging. Dubbed the charger with a "brain," it is believed to be the first charger of its kind to reverse the primary cause of early battery failure known as "sulphation". "Sulphation" batteries once considered beyond recovery can now be brought back to long-term useful condition. I now have six of these and move them around to all my batteries, and, yes, I disconnect all my batteries from the onboard charger every other month and use the Battery MINDER Plus for a week. I have not replaced a battery since learning about "sulphation".

Check out <http://www.pacificbattery.com/batteryminder.html>

— **Jim Blazier**

Fishing Hot Spots



Cherokee Lake

The stripers often feed on the surface in April. The gulls will still indicate where to cast. Stripers are scattered all over the lake. John Sevier Steam Plant will attract many prespawn fish. Point 17 upstream to Point 21 always holds a lot of baitfish and stripers. Mossy Creek at Point 1 is always good with the alewife spawn. Night fishing with the alewife spawn in progress is at a premium.

Norris Lake

The Loyston/Lost Creek area at Point 19 and near Hickory Star Marina is excellent upstream to Point 28 at Straight Creek Marina. Pull the baitfish over the shallow humps and near the bank with your planer boards. The stripers will run into all of the major creeks including Cove Creek, Big Creek, and Cedar Creek - Davis and Sycamore also.

Watts Bar Lake/Melton Hill Lake

The best action will still be at the steam plants, but migration will continue upstream to the tailraces. Kingston Steam Plant is running. The only ramp that is closed is the one at the warm water discharge. There are barges and equipment in the discharge area, but you can fish there. You cannot go up the Emory River. There are plans to dredge the lower Emory very soon to where it confluences with the Clinch. There are lots of fish in the area, but like everywhere else the water temperature is too cold and has sick and dying shad that

APRIL EXPECTATIONS

Caution is needed more in the spring as the reservoirs and rivers are on the rise. That causes a lot of floating debris that can damage, injure, or worse. The new fishing license and regulations for 2010 are in effect. Top water action in shallow water can be wonderful. Water temperature will rise above 50 degrees F. and above 60 degrees F. in some of the shallow, sun-warmed coves.

The baitfish begin to spawn this month. The striper's movement and activity will be related to pre-spawn and warming water temperatures. Migration upstream to the rivers and major feeder creek currents will also keep the attention of the striper. The pre-spawn bellies will stay big through April in the natural rivers. As the 70 degree F. water temperature is reached, the spawn will take place, and the big stripers will slowly start back downstream. The tailrace below the dams will develop and only get better through the spring and summer.

Large live and artificial baits presented on top will create some very large explosions. Records and trophies are caught this month. On Norris, Watts Bar, and Boone, the creel and size limits change to two fish at 15 inches starting April 1.

Fishing Regulations

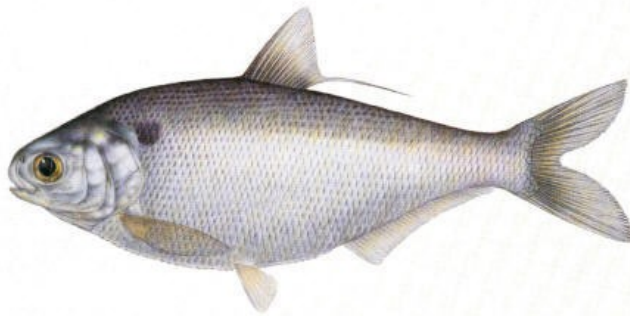
New fishing licenses are required to fish starting March 1. It is each fisherman's responsibility to know the rules and stay legal. Changes are normal in the management of our fishing each year, and those changes become effective on March 1. Each river or lake may have exceptions you need to be aware of before exposing yourself to a fine. Go on line to Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at www.tnwildlife.org or pick up a 2009 Fishing Regulations book at sporting stores or TWRA offices.

Gizzard Shad

By Bob Leach

The gizzard shad is unquestionably the most important bait fish for striper fishermen in East Tennessee. Almost always, a striper fisherman will have a gizzard shad hooked through its upper lip or will use some kind of artificial lure intended to mimic a shad. If you ask veteran striper angler Ezell Cox, he will quickly tell you that there are only two types of fish: Rockfish and baitfish. About 99% of the time, he will have lively gizzard shad in his bait tank. The reason for their importance is the fact that they are the preferred food of the striper. This has been well studied and documented. Therefore, I thought it would be interesting to research and document some of the more relevant facts concerning the gizzard shad.

The gizzard shad is native to East Tennessee. This species has evolved and adapted to some of our local waters extremely well. In fact, if they are left unchecked, they can become the dominant species in the lake and actually can become a problem due to their sheer numbers. One article I read indicated the following: "It is not uncommon for adult gizzard shad (8" and longer) to comprise 60-80% of the total fish in the lake." Obviously, this would be a disaster for all the species in the lake, including the shad itself. The reason is that the gizzard shad has adapted extremely well to high-fertility, slow-moving rivers and reservoirs. Basically, it is a better survivor than other species. After the shad spawn in the spring and summer, their food is microscopic animals called zooplankton and protozoa. They filter huge quantities of highly fertile water through their closely set gill rakers. They quickly supplement their diet with algae and insect larvae.



Gizzard Shad

In Remembrance

In remembering Dick Vornehm, our club Secretary who passed away in January, TSBA made a contribution to his church in his name. The following thank-you card was received from his wife.

Dear Fisherman,

Thank you so much for the gift to Beaver Ridge United Methodist Church in the memory of Dick. It was very kind of you to honor him in this way.

I am so grateful for the fun and good times that the Striped Bass club provided to Dick. He enjoyed getting to know every one of you and had some of his happiest days on the water and in the club meetings with you. You truly gave him lots of pleasure and good stories, and I will always treasure that.

Sincerely,

Marita Vornehm & family

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:

erik.engebretsen@chilis.com

We usually put the newsletter together around the end of the month, but send your information any time and we will work it in.



Larry Mullins with good friends catching great fish on a recent Chesapeake Bay trip. All fish (including the one on the cover) are from 28-52 pounds! Great job, Larry!



A History of Striped Bass Stocking In Cherokee Lake

By Bob Leach

Construction on Cherokee dam started in August 1940 and was completed in December 1941, which makes it one of the oldest TVA dams. The dam is 175' high and over 1-1/4 miles long. At full pool, it covers more than 30,000 acres and is 59 miles long with a total shoreline of 463 miles. The flood-stage elevation at summer pool is 1,073' above sea level, and the winter pool level is 1030' above sea level. The dam is located just off Highway 92, a few miles north of Jefferson City. The lake itself covers areas in Hawkins, Grainger, Hamblen and Jefferson counties and has a total watershed of 3,428 square miles.

Striped bass were first stocked in Cherokee in 1958 and Hybrid or Cherokee bass followed in the mid-1960s. Cherokee was the first lake where hybrids were stocked, which is why they are sometimes called Cherokee bass. The hybrid is a cross between a male white bass and a female striped bass. While it does not get nearly as large as a striper, its white bass genes make it much more tolerant to higher water temperatures and poor water quality. Also, the hybrid is considered by most fishermen as a stronger fighter than a striper on a pound-for-pound basis. In fact, some veteran anglers say that a five-pound hybrid will pull a five-pound smallmouth backward. I'm not sure about that, but they really are great game fish and a lot of fun to catch. The best way to distinguish a hybrid from a striper is the relative shape of the two species. The striper has a torpedo-like shape while the hybrid looks more like a football.

The TWRA's stocking plan for Cherokee Lake over the years has been to stock it fairly heavily with equal numbers of stripers and hybrids. However, they recently decided to skew this ratio much more heavily toward hybrids to reduce the heavy summertime striper die-offs on Cherokee. In fact, they wanted to eliminate stocking of stripers in Cherokee altogether, which was not well received by the TSBA. After a considerable amount of negotiating, they have agreed to continue stocking some stripers – at least for the next few years. Also, they have agreed to stock 150,000 hybrids annually in Cherokee, which is almost double their historic levels. This may make Cherokee a trophy hybrid lake, but only time will tell how the fishery will be affected and how well its anglers will receive these changes.



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jblazier@comcast.net

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Doug Steffe
865-278-2363, 865-335-3815

Secretary:

[Vacant]

Asst. Treasurer:

Allan Franklin
865-805-3120

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Kyle Rutherford, John Seiber, Keith Shannon

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Tournament Coordinator: Allan Franklin 865-694-8888

Fish Hatchery Meetings (Pizza):

Allan Franklin 865-694-8888

Door Prizes: Bob Leach 865-471-1365

Open Fishing Day Coordinators:

John Butler & Dwayne Clark
865-207-7627, 865-964-9295

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2010 TSBA Calendar

Please attend TSBA events and join us at the meetings.
Monthly meetings will be held at Shoney's Restaurant, 2405 Andersonville Highway. Get off I-75 at Exit 122 (Hwy. 61 - Clinton/Norris), head east. Shoney's is on the left.

March 15	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM Alan Franklin on Catching and Keeping Bait
April 19	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM Bill Carson from Lowrance
May	Monthly Meeting at the Lake [date to be announced] Demonstration: Planer boards, floats, down lines
June 19	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM Bob Leach of TSBA; Kim Gibson of TWRA
July 19	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM Mike Smith of TWRA on stocking striped bass
August 16	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM
September 20	Fish Fry Grainger Park [date to be determined]
October 18	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM
November 15	Monthly Meeting, Dinner 6 PM, Meeting 7 PM

The TSBA web site has been rebuilt by Keith Shannon. The link to access it is the same [**www.TNStripedBass.com**], but you will need to log in with your real name to register and input your own unique password.

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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.

Is this a renewal ____ or a New Membership ____

Your Name_____

Spouse's Name_____

Address_____

City_____ State _____ Zip _____

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

E-Mail address _____

Referred By: _____

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: Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc

P.O. Box 163

Sharps Chapel, TN. 37866

Note: All members must sign and submit this membership application with the 2010 dues. 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.



The TSBA is a non-profit corporation that supports TWRA & its Striped Bass & Cherokee Bass programs. We come together to provide a unified voice for the Striped Bass & the Cherokee Bass programs in the State of Tennessee. We educate the public & share our knowledge with fellow Striped Bass anglers.

**Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 163
Sharps Chapel, TN 37866**



**Make sure to send your dues for 2010
as soon as possible and check the calendar
for meeting dates in 2010.**