

# Tennessee Striped Bass Association

Get Hooked !

November 2015



Monthly Meeting Third TUESDAY at  
Puleo's Grill, 110 Cedar Lane off Merchants Rd. at I - 75

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

## TSBA PRESIDENT'S LETTER

This year really has passed quickly and this is the last newsletter of 2015! It seems like the big deal about year 2000 was only a couple of years ago. I hope that all of our members have had time to frequently get out on the water and enjoy the great opportunities we have for striper fishing in east TN throughout the year. We'd be hard-pressed to find a better place to live and enjoy our sport.

Fuzzy Lambert will speak at our November 17 meeting. Not only is Fuzzy a member of TSBA, but also the region's representative for Minn Kota products. He will tell us about the newest technologies available to help us out on the water.

The last tournament of the year will be held on Norris on November 21<sup>st</sup>. Details will be posted on our web site and discussed at the November meeting. We used to have this tourney in December but the November timing should be better for weather. Even if you haven't been to other tourneys this year come out and join the fun.

As I noted in last month's letter, our Board of Directors will meet in December to elect officers and plan the schedule for next year. Please let one of our officers know it you'd like to be a Board member or officer, or if you're willing to help with other duties that make the club successful. Also, if you have ideas for our meetings, please share them with us.

Our last regular meeting of the year will be at Puleo's Grill (110 Cedar Ln, just east of the I-75/Merchants Rd. exit) on November 17, with dinner at 6 pm and the meeting at 7 pm. If you've enjoyed this venue, please let the Board of Directors know.



# T.S.B.A. Fishing Tournaments 2015

Coordinators: Eddie Dills 865 296 3743

Larry Nowell 865 898 9273

April 25	Hickory Star, on Norris Lake
May 23	Grainger County Park, Cherokee Lake
July 25	Watts Bar, Below Melton Hill Dam
Sept. 19	Cherokee Lake
Nov. 21	Norris Lake

Like it or not 2015 is almost over. **Happy Holidays** everyone!  
If you are traveling stay safe.

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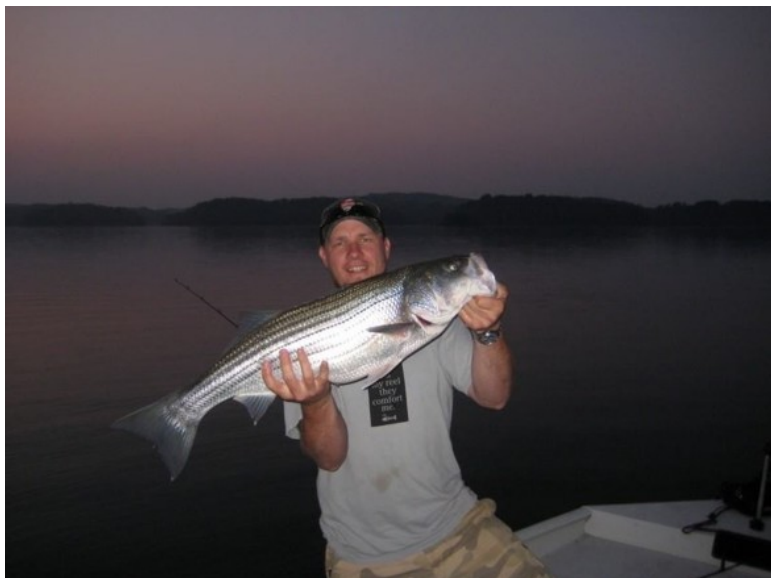
## Members Photos



Getting ready for the fish fry. 2015



## Justin and Steve at Cherokee



# 2015 Meeting links

January Ezell Cox and Mel Cook    Topic; Bait Tanks

<http://youtu.be/HG9x7CWEQ-Y>

March Jay Girardot & Doug Steffe    Topic; Umbrella Rigs

<http://youtu.be/hJpt-ZCNBNY>

April Keith Shannon    Topic; Keeping bait alive/ bait tanks

<http://youtu.be/l-gjExqDQQE>

May Allen Franklin    Topic; Catching bait / Cast net throwing

<https://youtu.be/m6EJrzE9nqM>    (outdoor) <https://youtu.be/BP72nx6jDSU>

June NA.

July Jim Negus    Topic; Lake temperatures and dissolved Oxygen,  
Zebra Mussels    <https://youtu.be/L-AqzDop8VQ>

August Mike Smith    Topic; TWRA Stocking program on area lakes

<http://youtu.be/FFMp299Y9g0> .

October Ezell Cox    Topic; Tips on locating fish / seasonal migration patterns.    <https://youtu.be/LB2o7ieDI-8>

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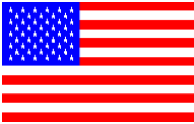
# Tournament Standings 2015

#	Name	April. 25	May. 23	July. 25	Sept. 19	Nov. 21	Totals
1	Eddie Dills	100 + 5	95+5	95+5	95+5		405
2	Larry Scott	95 + 5	100+5	90+5	95+5		400
3	Bob Biscay	100 + 5	90+5	85+5	100+5		395
4	Larry Nowell	0 + 5	100+5	95+5	100+5		315
5	Randy Jackson	100+5	85+5	85+5	5		290
6	John May	0 + 5	0	100+5	100+5		215
7	Ron Gabler	95 + 5	100+5	0	0		205
8	Eric Rauch	0 + 5	85+5	95+5	0		195
9	Steve Nichols	95 + 5	90+5	0	0		195
10	Chet Moore	0	0	100+5	0		105
11	Mike Johnson				100+5		105
12	Joe Asher	0	95+5	0	0		100
13	Hal Basdekis	0	0	90+5	0		95
14	Art Munchow	0	0	90+5	0		95
15	Les Bingaman				5		5



## Operations Specialist Master Chief Larry Nowell 1958- 1977

Many thanks to all of our  
veterans.



Served afloat aboard destroyer *Hamner*, guided missile destroyer *Mahan*, and guided missile cruiser *Chicago*. Gained early and extensive experience in the Navy's Tactical Data System (NTDS), qualifying as Air Intercept Controller (AIC) and Supervisor (AICS). Taught NTDS at Fleet Training Centers Dam Neck, VA and Point Loma, CA. While aboard *Chicago* 1970-74, participated in extensive air intercepts during the Vietnam War. Personally controlled over 100 live engagements for both Navy and Air Force fighter aircraft. Credited with assisting in 13 enemy MIG aircraft kills and with saving 4 friendly F-4 fighters, resulting in the first award of the Distinguished Service Medal in U.S. Navy history to an enlisted man for combat action. His knowledge, experience, and teaching ability caused him to attend the Navy Fighter Weapons Tactical School (TOPGUN) and to extensively rewrite the Navy's curricula for AIC, AICS, NTDS AIC, and NTDS AICS to incorporate aviation and surface techniques.



## **YOUR 2015 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF**

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Bill Ballou, Jim Blazier, Greg Dee, Eddie Dills, Ron Gabler (Board Chairman) Cory Malabey, Larry Nowell, David Powell,  
Eric Rauch

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Eddie Dills and Larry Nowell

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## Stripers by Shawn

What is one of the most argued topics when it comes to the striped bass? It's not which lure works best, not what state has the biggest striper, not braid vs. mono. Possibly the hottest topic when it comes to landlocked Southern striped bass is post release mortality. There have been studies, articles, discussions, experiments, trials and tribulations galore on the issue and still no answer has been reached. Or has it? The main issue with the catch and release of Southern striper is NOT an issue of survival. WHAT? Rather, it is an issue of ethics amongst anglers. The simple fact that somebody releases a fish has no bearing on the survival of said fish. The survival of the fish is imminently and profoundly affected by the methods used by the angler who caught it. There are several key components to a PROPER catch and release. If any one of these components are overlooked or miscarried, the survival rate of the released fish WILL be compromised. The vast majority of dead striper will sink. JUST BECAUSE THEY SWAM AWAY DOESN'T MEAN THEY WILL LIVE.

### WATER TEMPERATURE:

By FAR and AWAY the most critical component of PROPER catch and release is water temperature. Here in the south where summer water temperatures regularly climb to 90 degrees and our lakes stratify, the striper are at their geographical limits as far as latitude goes. Unfortunately, due to the physiological nature of these fish, striper in many southern impoundments are swimming a fine line between surviving until cooler temperatures prevail or death due to overheating/suffocation/starvation. Inducing ANY stress during this time of susceptibility will typically shift the balance to ultimately result in the death of the fish.

SOLUTION: When fishing for striper in water over 75 degrees, be very cautious with larger fish (10 lbs and up) since they are the most susceptible to the heat. Either limit yourself to killing only your creel limit, find cooler waters to fish such as a river or tailrace, fish for a species more tolerant of warm water release, or don't fish for striper if you think they may be dying after release. Listening to advice of experienced striper anglers and doing your own research on this topic will make you aware of your impact on the fishery.

### DEPTH OF FISH:

Not the depth where you hooked the fish, but the depth the fish was prior to it reacting to your lure or bait. Bringing fish up to the surface from depths below about 30 feet will begin to result in a condition called barotrauma. This is due to the pressure difference at the surface vs. the depth from which the fish came. For every 32 feet of depth in water, the pressure increases one atmosphere. A fish balances itself by increasing or reducing the amount of gas in the swim bladder. As they go deeper, they must increase the amount to stay neutrally buoyant so they don't sink. When reeled up from the depths (in some extreme cases striper are being caught 90-100 feet deep, THAT'S 3 ATMOSPHERES PRESSURE), the swim bladder expands uncontrollably because it takes time for them to reabsorb the gas. This expansion rips and tears at the internal organs of the fish and often results in the stomach being expelled out of the fish's mouth. Unfortunately, barotrauma and summertime fishing go hand in hand.

**SOLUTION:** Keep your limit and STOP. Fish caught and released at this point will most likely die from injury. Forcing a fish downward into the water "torpedoing" is a less than desirable option. When torpedoing, allow the fish to only drop from a few inches above the water's surface. The idea is to start the fish's natural swimming motion so it has a chance to propel itself. Often the fish is thrown into the water head down with too much force causing the disoriented fish to pop back up to the surface. There are devices designed to lower the fish back to the depth it was caught which are supposed to let the fish revive at the temperature and pressure where it started. This is a better alternative to a surface release, but there are no studies to show it is effective. A technique called fizzing, or decompression, or gassing in which a needle is stuck through the side of the fish to allow some of the gas to be expelled is thought by some to be a successful alternative to just killing the bloated fish. The fact remains that the internals of the fish are damaged, it struggled on the line during the fight, was likely reeled through hot surface waters, and has now been overhandled by its would-be savior. This fish will at least die out of sight.

#### **OVERHANDLING:**

Third on the list of improper catch and release for good reason. Striper are majestic fish and enthusiastic anglers like to admire their catch. Unfortunately, they are unwittingly admiring their fish to death.

Have your scales and cameras ready for action PRIOR to landing the fish.

DO NOT allow the fish to touch anything that will disturb or remove its slime coat. We are all guilty of this, but minimizing the handling will result in better survival for the released fish. Nets are a big problem when it comes to this issue. The only net that is remotely release-friendly is a rubber or rubber coated net. Nets without coatings or with knotted mesh against the slime of a striper are like a cheese grater on YOUR skin. Disturbing the slime coat in any way will open a fish to many kinds of infections which could ultimately kill the fish.

**SOLUTION:** Use a smooth-tipped lip gripping device like a Boga Grip or plastic lip gripper to subdue and lift the fish. Support the belly of the fish. Snap a quick picture or two and get the fish back in the water. If you are alone, you cannot possibly accomplish this in a timely manner. Having a video camera already recording would be a great idea and you can capture still images of a quick pose from that.

#### **DEEP HOOKING:**

This issue is mainly from using bait. Sometimes a hungry striper will inhale the bait so quickly, you cannot possibly hook it in the lip. However, there are a couple of tricks you can employ to help prevent this. Circle hooks are designed to hook a fish in the lip. Offset circle hooks where the point is bent slightly outward will still deep hook a fish, but not nearly as often as a normal "J" hook, octopus or a khale style. If you must release a deep hooked fish, make a judgment as to whether or not the hook appears to be removable. Have your hook remover nearby. If it is too deeply embedded, cut the line as short as you can, usually at the lips, and release the fish quickly as usual. The hook will eventually rust away and as long as it's not in a compromising area, the fish should survive. Try shortening your leader on downlines. Keeping your bait closer to the weight will result in a quicker positive hookup and less swallowing of the bait. Don't allow striper to "run" with the bait. The old Roland Martin shiner fishing "Count to ten and then JACK HIS

JAW” doesn’t apply here. Striper don’t have suitcases or armpits to hold the bait in or under, it will be in their mouth so apply pressure immediately.

#### FIGHT TIME:

Keep fight time to a minimum. The longer fish struggle, the more tired they become. The more tired they become, the more lactic acid is released into their muscle tissue. Lactic acid in a striper is no joke. It makes them stiff, and after the fight, if they do not get swimming right away, they often die from a condition called LACTIC ACID ACIDOSIS. If you combine a long fight with high water temperatures and barotrauma, you’d better be getting that fish in, off, and down in a hurry! If the fish is over 10 pounds in the above scenario, it is more than likely a dead fish whether you put it on ice or not. SOLUTION: Use heavier rods, reels, line and tighter drag settings to bring fish in quickly. This is always a good idea, even in cooler weather and colder water.

#### METHOD OF FISHING:

To a lesser degree, the way you fish for the striper will have some effect on the releasability factor. Trolling umbrella rigs, leadcore, or even spoons, spinners and plugs typically results in a lip hook, and a more releasable fish. Using small bait will usually result in catching smaller, more releasable fish. Fish smartly and you can reduce your “death footprint” on the striper population.

#### ETHICS:

This is the most difficult component of catch and release. Many anglers, and unfortunately the ones who pose the greatest impact on the fisheries, will CHOOSE to turn a blind eye to all of the studies, experiments, advice, and pressure from other anglers regarding poor release tactics. One such angler’s death footprint on any given striper population can be 10-50x greater than a typical weekend angler. For example, some fishing guides choose to ignore their own conscience and bad practice of releasing striper to swim off and die. This is usually done with clientele aboard their vessel who unwittingly participate in the slaughter themselves under the false veil that the fish they are releasing might actually survive to be caught again.

#### CREEL LIMITS:

Sometimes at the root of the issue are outdated regulations and laws regarding the number of fish which can legally be taken on a per state basis. For example, in Georgia, there is a 15 fish (under 22 inch) limit on any combination of striper and hybrid striped bass per person. Only 2 may be over 22 inches. This regulation promotes a high kill number, especially on boats with a few people on board. Fortunately there is a 50 fish limit per boat. This is still a lot of dead fish. In Tennessee, this same regulation is 2 fish per person with a minimum length of 15 inches. Some special regulations apply to a few other lakes in the state, but this seems to preserve fish numbers much better than Georgia’s high limit. If there was a 7-8 fish compromise, it would secure a greater holdover population of fish from year to year. This would give more anglers a chance to catch not only more, but larger fish each year.

## LAKE SIZE AND STOCKING NUMBERS:

To a far lesser degree, the number of fish added to a lake each year needs to be considered. Striper are stocked fish in nearly every landlocked impoundment with a few exceptions

like Santee Cooper in South Carolina, Lake Weiss in Alabama and Texoma in Texas. Minimal natural reproduction occurs in other lakes, but usually not enough to generate viable catchable populations. Larger lakes like Hartwell and Clarks Hill on the Savannah River system receive several hundred thousand to a million striper fingerlings each year. Smaller lakes like Allatoona and Sinclair may receive less than a hundred thousand in some years. Yet the fishing pressure remains just as high on the smaller lakes. In fact, Allatoona is one of the most visited lakes that is controlled by the Army Corp of Engineers. That is out of 694 lakes!

**SOLUTION:** Conserve the striped bass population by using proper release techniques and keep only what you plan on eating.

In summary, if you make the choice to release a striped bass with the intent for it to survive to continue growing, you must follow the proper guidelines. If you are releasing fish solely to make you or your clients feel better about catching and killing so many fish out of deep OR near 90 degree water, please think twice about what you're actually taking away from everybody else. Your living may depend on catching those fish, but then again, your living depends on catching those fish! Keeping some striper to eat is recommended, but needless slaughter is severely frowned upon. Alternative species like catfish or bass make for good fun and good eating while not doing damage to a stressed out striper population. So, if it's hot, or the fish are deep, or if you mishandle, or deep hook, or even worse: you just don't care, then the chances of a striper living post release will go down. ENJOY the resource, be an ethical angler, reduce your death footprint and practice PROPER catch and release.

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## Shawn McNew, Owner, Striper Soup Bait & Tackle

Shawn holds a BS degree in wildlife fisheries science from the University of Tennessee.

He has been dedicated to catching and releasing striped bass for 20 years. His guide service, Seein Stripes, operated in East Tennessee and practiced catch and release ONLY striper trips. Shawn promotes the use of circle hooks, no nets, and short fight times to allow for successful catch and release.

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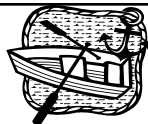


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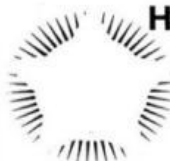
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- \*You'll receive a monthly newsletter.
- \* You'll help support Striped Bass Fisheries & Wildlife Agencies.
- \* You'll be informed of new regulations & information that affect striper fishing.
- \* You'll develop a network of "striper friends."
- \* 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.

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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](http://www.tnstripedbass.com) or at the offices of the corporation.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

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**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.



Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc  
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Sharps Chapel, TN. 37866

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