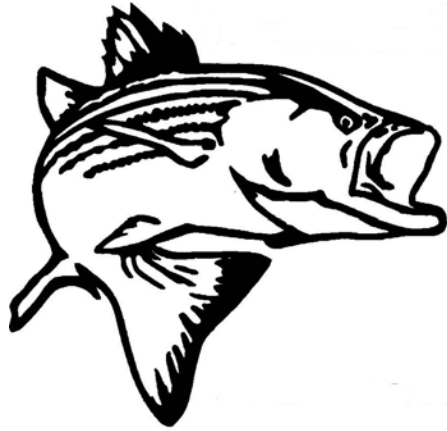


**Catch
the
Striper
Fever!**

T.S.B.A.



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

**May
2011**



Children everywhere spent Easter morning searching for prize eggs. Pat Kneiss was out searching for prize fish instead and landed this 34-pound beauty. What was in your Easter basket this year?

President's Letter

Hello everyone,

I hope you all have been able to get on the water and enjoy some of this great weather we have had lately. I only have a few points to discuss in this letter and look forward to seeing everyone at the next meeting.

Check the calendar for upcoming events. Next up is the Striper Bowl on Cherokee Lake. This tournament is a fund raiser to help support the kids fishing day. Following that is the kids day at Grainger County Park. We will enjoy some fishing, give out some prizes for the kids and eat well. I hope you can make it and enjoy the fellowship.

For those that were not at the last meeting, Doug Steffe had some great looking hats made for the club. If you are interested in purchasing one, come to the meeting or send me an e-mail and we will get one to you.

— *Erik Engebretsen*

June Expectations

Striper spawns are complete in Tennessee. As the water temperature approaches 80 degrees, these fish will begin to look for thermal refuge found in the cooler waters below the thermocline in the reservoirs. The fishing potential at the tailrace below the dams will develop and only get better through the spring and summer. Top water action can still happen, especially in the mornings.

The stripers will begin to congregate in schools, making the fish finder a great tool once again. The confluence of the major creeks and old river channel near mid-lake are good target areas. The large, shallow flats that transition quickly to deep water are also excellent places for stripers to hide. The stripers normally feed aggressively after the spawn is complete. Catch and release starts to become questionable in some places by the month's end, but is still a viable practice in the tailrace and rivers below dams where the water will be cooler with good dissolved oxygen.

— *Ezell Cox*

Minutes of the April 2011 meeting

Great food, good weather and knowledgeable guest speakers made for an excellent club meeting. We had two guest speakers for the April meeting. Captain Bill Carson spoke about graph reading. Captain Mack Farr gave a presentation on fishing with umbrella rigs.

Bill decided to keep his presentation short due to time constraints. With today's technology rapidly improving, our electronics become quickly outdated. If you have older electronics they can be hard to get repaired: outdated parts just don't exist. Today's electronics offer many functions and features and can be quite complicated to use. Bill was quite helpful to club members as he answered questions about their electronic devices.



There were over 50 members in attendance at the April meeting.

Bill, who is a field representative for Lowrance, discussed the newest products available from this company, including the HDS Systems with structure scan. Downscan will clearly identify objects and structures you may encounter. Sidescan can show structures as well as fish off to both sides of your boat. Fish can no longer hide in these areas without being seen. Many members brought their electronics to the meeting and Bill offered upgrades to their systems free of charge.

Our next guest speaker was Mack Farr, an expert striper fisherman who is well known for his custom made umbrella rigs and jigs. Mack spoke to the club about techniques used for fishing with umbrella rigs. Umbrella rigs are designed to imitate a school of bait fish. They are very effective at triggering a predatory reaction-type strike from stripers and producing a high percentage of hook-ups at any time of the year. Umbrella rigs can be a great search tool for finding and catching stripers. You can cover a lot of water quickly when pulling this type of rig, which in turn enables you to locate more fish. These rigs will keep you fishing in windy conditions. When pulling umbrella rigs, the desired speed is 2.5 to 3.0 mph. When pulling these rigs you will need a heavier action rod with a reel that can

hold a lot of line. Mack prefers to use 40 to 60-lb monofilament. Some anglers will use 80 to 120-lb braided fishing lines. You can pull these rigs with planer boards and even run at great depths with downriggers.

Learning how to use and control these rigs can be quite challenging and even expensive. Mack shared these helpful tips: Eliminate hang ups by watching your sonar and GPS at all times; know where your rig is in the water column; by throttling up your rigs will run more shallow; when turning rigs may drop so throttle up as needed while turning. If you do hang up a rig, retrievers are available and do work. A quiet boat motor will not scare fish, even pulling rigs at short distances behind you. Most anglers are pulling their rigs 50 to 60 feet behind the boat achieving depths 15 to 20 feet. Your rigs will run at different depths depending on many different things, including factors such as the size and weight of your umbrella rig, the arm, weight of baits, type of baits, number of baits, line size, line type, and trolling speed.

Umbrella rigs can be set up thousands of ways. The most common setups are buck tails with trailers; swim bait setups are popular as well. Mack custom makes his rigs and offered them to members at the meeting. Mack recommended two on-line sources for our tackle needs: Stripertackle.net and Fishingfarmacy.com. He also offers oxygen systems from Keep Alive Bait Systems.

Erik continued the meeting with the 50/50 drawing, giving away \$62. Our club is looking for volunteers to help with the Big Brothers and Big Sisters program. This is a good way to help local children in need. Ezell Cox is currently involved with this program and would like to see more club members participate.

Doug Steffe offered early registrations for the TSBA sponsored Watts Bar Tournament along with a box full of TSBA hats. Forest green and tan were the agreed colors for 2011.

Alan Franklin reminded everyone that the Striper Bowl will be on May 7. This is the TSBA fund raiser for the kid's day event. This is a good reason to participate. Attendance will greatly be appreciated. Alan continues to do a great job coordinating these events.

— **Bud White, Secretary**



April's guest speaker Bill Carson arrived early from Atlanta to enjoy some great Tennessee striper fishing. He fished with some friends and then joined Ezell Cox for several hours on the Clinch River for a good time—stripers were hitting very good that morning and Bill landed one that was nearly 40 pounds.



Bill blogged on his website (nothinbutfish.com) about his fishing trip and had this to say:

"I went to Knoxville to do a Lowrance seminar for the TSBA and managed to get on the "pond" for some string stretching. Boy did we have a time! The boat I was on had the HDS unit on it and when we found fish it was wide open. I caught this big girl on a down rod in 23' of water for those who think the boat scares fish. My hat is off to Erik, Ezell, Doug and all the members of TSBA. These guys are all about conservation and the numbers and consistent size of the fish is a testament to their efforts."

To buy or rebuild: that is the question

TSBA member Chet Moore has been fishing out of his 1997 21-foot Pro Master center-console fiberglass boat for the past six years. This past fall, Chet considered selling his boat, but in the end decided to tackle rebuilding it to create a vessel well suited for the pursuit of stripers.



Before and after shots of Chet's work to fiberglass and gel coat the deck of his boat.

One of the major problems with his boat was in the back deck area, which had fold-down seats. Chet described this space as nearly unusable, having "a couple of worthless seats, very little storage and leaking like a sieve when it rained." The deck and sides of the boat were covered in carpet, hiding some soft spots created by rotting plywood.



Chet striped away all the carpet covering the interior of his boat, pulled out the entire rear section of the boat and removed the deck as well.

He then installed and applied fiberglass to a new deck. "The material used for the floor was some one-inch thick space-age

material that will never rot, so I am told," said Chet.

The second step was to improve upon that formerly unusable area in the rear section of the boat. To solve this problem, Chet completely removed the rear deck and replaced it with a storage compartment accessed by two hinged doors. He now has ample waterproof storage that is easily accessed. After installing the new storage compartments, the entire boat was then gel coated.



The last addition was the purchase and installation of a Yamaha 150 four-stroke motor. Chet says “this thing is incredible: I wish I had gotten one years ago. You can't hear the thing run, so you have to look at the tac. It also burns a fraction of the gas the old Johnson 150 two-stroke engine did. It is just an incredible piece of machinery.”





Chet is very pleased with how his project turned out, describing it as “the most functional striper boat I have ever been on”.

The icing on the cake for this project was the installation of the latest electronics available: a Lowrance HDS 7 with insight mapping and an EZ marine anchoring system, which he considers to be a necessity when anchoring in strong current.

— *Sherry Wehner, editor*

The TSBA web site has been rebuilt by Keith Shannon. Access it at www.TNStripedBass.com, logging in with your real name to register and your own unique password.

Outlook for current fishing spots

CHEROKEE LAKE

Catch and release is still successful, as the striper/hybrid may still be feeding at the water surface in the mornings through most of June. Hybrids are more tolerant of the warm water conditions than the stripers. The bait-eating birds will indicate where the striper/hybrid are going to be at the buffet also to eat. The early spawning season is complete and the larger stripers have started their slow migration back downstream. Best locations to fish in past years have been from point 21 downstream to point 1.

NORRIS LAKE

Excellent fishing can be found in the Loyston/Lost Creek area around point 19 upstream to point 29 and also downstream of point 15 on the Powell River side. Choice locations in general will be on the inside bends of the river and in front of the major coves with creeks feeding into the river including places such as Cove Creek, Big Creek, Cedar Creek, Davis Creek, Mill Creek and Lost Creek.

WATTS BAR & MELTON HILL

Many of the stripers have moved upstream to the discharge at the dams. Put your sinker and hook close to the bottom with plans to lose a few for the most catches. Pulling side planer boards down the banks can also catch fish for miles downstream.

FISHING REGULATIONS

There are some seasonal striped bass CREEL AND SIZE limit changes that took place April 1, 2011. Go on line to Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at www.tnwildlife.org or pick up a 2011 Fishing Regulations book at sporting stores or TWRA offices.

It is the law, and a good one at that, which requires boaters to wear life preservers below the dams in the tailrace. Life preservers are required below the dams and are a good habit anytime on the water for personal safety

— *Ezell Cox*

Watts Bar Waters Tournament Results

The Watts Bar Waters Tournament was held on April 23, 2011. There were 14 boats with a grand total of 36 contestants entered in the competition. Kick-off and weigh-in was located at the Clinch river ramp at Melton Hill Dam.



Todd Asher is pictured above doing the math and verifying all the numbers. Doug Steffe and several others are watching to see where they stand in the rankings. (They might be double-checking his math?)

As this was strictly a catch-and-release tournament, all fish caught were returned to the water.



Considering the cool water conditions below Melton Hill Dam, most of these fish are expected to live to fight another day. Participants had a great time and appreciated the outstanding job Todd Asher did organizing this "no kill" tournament event for the club.

JR Matheson, left, receives his trophy and cash award for earning first place in the tournament. JR's winning fish totaled 71.5 inches in length.



The Mike Allen Crew was very successful in the tournament. Mike, pictured second from the left, won second place with a total fish length of 71. Mike Allen Sr., pictured far left, collected a trophy and a cash award for winning the big fish pot with an impressive 37-inch long striper.



Billy Davis, center, landed third place with a grand total of 61 inches in combined fish length. Pictured with Billy is fishing partner Cody Daniels.

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[vacant]

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2011 TSBA Calendar

Please join us at TSBA meetings and events. Monthly meetings are held at the Flatwater Grill at 100 Melton Lake Peninsula in Oak Ridge, Tennessee (<http://theflatwatergrill.com>).

- May 7 Tournament: Striper Bowl
Grainger Co. Park on Cherokee Lake
Fishing begins at 2 p.m., weigh-in at 8 p.m.
- May 16 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:30 p.m., meeting 7:15 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge.
Topic: TWRA Stocking
- May 21 Kid's Day: 2:00 - 8:00 p.m.,
Grainger County Park
- Jun 20 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:30 p.m., meeting 7:15 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge.
Topic: Artificial Baits and Fishing Tackle, speaker TBA
- Jul 9 Tournament: Details TBA
- Jul 18 Monthly Meeting; details TBA
- Aug 15 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:30 p.m., meeting 7:15 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge.
Topic: Artificial Baits and Fishing Tackle, speaker TBA
- Sep 24 Annual Fish Fry, Grainger County Park

Monthly Meeting Details


TSBA's monthly meeting will be held in a private room at the Flatwater Grill restaurant in Oak Ridge. This room is best entered through the side door near the railroad bridge. Dinner will start at 6:30 p.m., with the meeting to follow at 7:15 p.m. The dinner is a special buffet that owner Dean Russell is organizing for us. The cost is \$15, which includes a drink and gratuity. (Note that payment is cash or check only).

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T.S.B.A. 2011 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.

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

Simplified Renewal Note: Membership renewals with no address or info revisions may send **just a \$20 check** with member's name, to the address above. Filling out the application is not required. 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**



**May 16, 2011: Monthly Meeting
Flatwater Grill
100 Melton Lake Drive, Oak Ridge
Dinner at 6:30 p.m.; meeting at 7:15 p.m.**