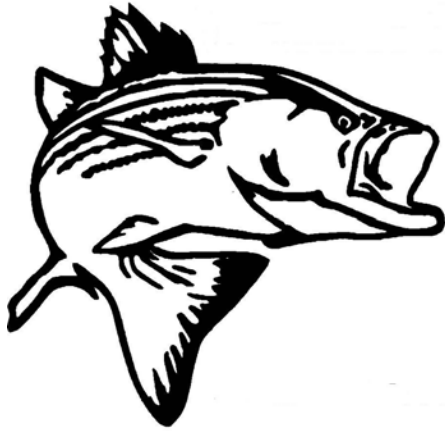


**Catch
the
Striper
Fever!**

T.S.B.A.



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

**May
2012**



*Jerry Skelly's
impressive
30-pound plus
catch is a great
example of the
large fish TSBA
members have
been landing this
past month. Be
sure to check out
the trophy shots
section to see the
results from the
recent club tour-
nament and other
individual trips
taken in April.*

Letter from the Prez

This month I would like to share some thoughts on striper fishing tournaments. In the first few events that I participated in years ago, such as the Hickory Star (Norris) winter event and the TSBA striper bowl, I recall emotions of excitement and intimidation. I felt that I had a chance to catch a winning fish, but did I know enough about the area to have a chance to find a decent catch? I didn't do so well in the first few tournaments. However, the more tournaments I entered, which enabled me to talk to the winners and placers, the more I learned. Over time I realized that you did not need to catch a winning fish to benefit from a tournament!

The early tournaments were all catch, keep and bring to weigh-in; almost all the larger fish from that fishery were harvested. In some cases the hard-core participants were motivated to catch, keep and cull the 2 largest for the weigh-in, resulting in some being over their creel limit. As the TSBA mindset of conserving our striper resource by releasing large fish sunk into my heart, the typical tournaments began to bother my conscience and I quit participating. I was actually relieved when the bigger striper tournaments on Norris and Cherokee were discontinued years ago.

Nowadays, with the use of digital cameras/phones, recording fish lengths by photograph - and then releasing the fish - has become a very effective method for documenting entries for tournaments. Fisherman can catch multiple fish and enter their longest catch. Loss of weight from hauling iced fish in the fish box is eliminated. This method allows fishing in areas such as Watts Bar where striper's have an advisory against consumption. The last several TSBA tournaments have been determined by less than an inch for a 2-fish total length, with no large fish harvested.

Our TSBA events are mostly about meeting and getting to know members better. They also give you an opportunity to gain knowledge about different fisheries that you may not be familiar with. With our **Catch, Picture, Release** method, few large fish are harmed.

The only way to catch a fish is to GO FISHING!

— Doug Steffe



Participants of the April 29, 2012, spring tournament on Watts Bar. Don't let their tough guy appearance fool you: these guys are ready to share their expertise with you. TSBA has several tournaments planned throughout the year and we are hoping more members will come and join in on the excitement of the friendly competition.

June Expectations

Expect to find the thermocline starting to develop and get deeper in the stratified calm waters with 80 + degrees on the surface. Striped bass are temperate bass, so seek out the deeper, cooler temperatures. The gizzard and threadfin shad will seek out the warmest water they can find and the stripers will follow them to feed and then return to their thermal refuge quickly. The alewife will complete spawning early this month so night time bites will still be good on the reservoirs. The gulls, cormorants and herons can be a great help in locating the baitfish even if they are not feeding. The striper and bait-eating birds will be where the bait is most abundant. Artificial baits can be very productive this time of year. You may want to try JIGGING, CASTING, OR TROLLING. Umbrella rigs have become a favorite method the last several years. Be aware of the new floating debris on the lake; this will be a concern until the wind pushes it into the coves. Large live bait is working well again and normally easy to catch this time of year.

— **Ezell Cox**

Minutes of the April meeting

TSBA's monthly meeting was held at the Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge on April 16, 2012. Approximately 35 members attended the meeting. President Doug Steffe opened the meeting by introducing new members as well as the first guest speaker for the night, Bill Carson.

Bill Carson, Marketing Product Manager for Humminbird, gave a presentation on Humminbird's new products. As he described a new sonar technology which scans a full 360 degrees around the boat, members were seen counting the money in their wallets and checking the balance of their bank accounts. Bill also emphasized the importance of how proper transducer mounting is required for optimal high speed performance. For more details of Humminbird's products, visit their website.

After Bill's presentation, Doug introduced Bart Carter, TWRA's Region IV Fisheries Manager. Bart said a potential state record, a 29 pound striped fish recently caught on Boone Reservoir, will be subjected to genetic tests to confirm whether it is a stocked 50/50 striped/white bass hybrid or a naturally occurring back-cross between a hybrid and a striped bass. Only 50/50 hybrid striped bass are eligible for the record books.



Attendees of the April Meeting were treated to a surprise special guest speaker: Bart Carter of TWRA (pictured left). Bart had this to say after watching Bill Carson's presentation: "looks like we are going to have to stock more fish!"

After a brief break Doug introduced a new sponsor, A+ Construction, owned by TSBA member David Powell.

Allen Franklin announced TSBA's first tournament of the year will be held on April 29 on Watts Bar reservoir. The tournament blast off and weigh-in will be held at the boat launch downstream of Melton Hill Dam and will run from 6 a.m. to 11 a.m.

— **Keith Shannon, Secretary**



Ezell Cox submitted this photo of friend Bob Leveck with a 30-pounder.

May Meeting

Please join us on May 21, 2012 for the TSBA monthly meeting. Our guest speaker will be Mike Smith of Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery. You never know who else may show up as a surprise special guest speaker, so be sure to attend next month's meeting!

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. The buffet dinner will start at 6:00 p.m., with the meeting to follow at 7:00 p.m. The cost is \$15, which includes a drink and gratuity. (Note that payment is cash or check only).

Trophy shots



Gary Reinitz and member Bill Clapsaddle (pictured above) had a great day out on Norris Lake where they happily landed this striper.

The old saying about a "day late....." seems to apply to the photo below, submitted by Bill Ballou. Bill caught the fish pictured below the morning after the tournament on one of his hand carved wood plugs. He said the fish looked like it weighted at least 25 pounds, but he did not actually weigh it in an effort to get the fish back in the water quickly.





Bud White submitted this collection of photos from his work as a guide with Mike Allen. Pictured above is evidence of their handiwork on the Watts Bar pre-spawn stripers. Below, member Larry Mullins and family out on Cherokee Lake. Pictured at the bottom is a lady who is quite happy with not only the fish Bud found for her, but also the coat he loaned her!



Watts Bar Spring Tournament



TSBA sponsored its first tournament of the year on April 29, 2012. Twenty-four anglers in nine boats fished from 6 a.m. until 11 a.m. This tournament was a CPR tournament, where fish were Caught, Pictured and then Released. The group had a fun Morning on the Bar despite the slow water flow from the dam. This situation challenged the group but several different tactics were used to produce fish by the following winners.

1st JR Matheson, Bobby Hall, Barron Kelly 75"

2nd Bud White, Steve Nichol, Ben Clift 68"

3rd Chet Moore, Dick Boles 65"

Big Fish Keith Shannon 40.5 "
with Cody Daniels and Brandon Davis

A message from the TSBA Supply Guy

Hello Striper Club!

Steve here, your TSBA Supply Guy, with your first ever supply report. Bob Leech, our previous Supply Guy, is an extremely hard act to follow as he was very good at getting us deals on supplies; please bare with me and we'll get-r-done somehow. With all your help we will bring this supply thing together eventually. Any input and/or suggestions would be greatly appreciated.

We are currently lacking in the door prize type items, and other such things to give away at club functions. It has been very difficult for me to acquire these items. Perhaps some of you may have contacts in places that could help with this. As time goes on, maybe we can acquire more supplies for the club functions.

The internet seems to be the shopping place of choice, and I do have a list of reputable internet companies that are trustworthy for online shopping. It is a wonderful outlet for larger type items that the club cannot purchase. However if anyone needs help with internet items of their choice, I will be happy to help find and/or research items you may wish to purchase. I have pointed a few people to internet sites already with good results.

With all that said I will say bye from the "Supply Guy." Hope to see you all at the club meetings!

— **Steve Nichols, TSBA Supply Guy**

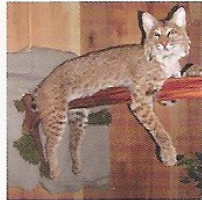


The supply closet is currently stocked with hooks, 1.5 and 2-ounce sinkers, u-rig arms, bait tank pumps and a pair of Bud White planner boards. Memphis brand nets in 7 ft., 5/8 inch mesh are arriving this month.



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Outlook for current fishing spots

Cherokee Lake

The spawn is over for the striped bass and alewife, so they will be seeking the cooler waters as the shallow water warms into the high 80's. This will cause them to move downstream from the headwaters and out of the warmer shallow coves. Looking for the large concentrations of baitfish and bait-eating birds, as well as looking for breaking fish on the surface, is a good way to find stripers / hybrids. The gulls, cormorants, and herons will continue to show where the best bait locations are located, even if they are not actively feeding. Top water breaks are still common this time of year so go prepared to cast into them. Large schools can often be found on the fish finders. Jigging also works well on the main channel points and humps. The premium locations are normally downstream of the German Creek area all the way to the dam. Nighttime top-water bite will still be very effective most of June.

Norris Lake

Find large schools of baitfish or look for surface feeding fish in the early hours of daylight can still be effective. The largest concentrations of stripers will be mid-lake and even the upper half of the reservoir in some of the major deep coves near deep water main channel humps. The bait-eating birds are scarce on Norris to help find the bait but the bait and striped bass will be much easier to locate on the fish finder as they move away from the banks and out of the coves.

Watts Bar and Melton Hill

The striped bass bite in the tail race and downstream river will develop this month and only get better into the early summer. The release schedule plays a major role in the quality of fishing below the dams and it seems to be much better with flow. Top water bites can happen all summer in the tailrace and downstream. Release schedules can be looked up on the TVA web site to improve your catch rate. The baitfish have started to show up in the shallow, sun-warmed flats and coves; the herons will help you find the feeding stripers throughout most of the summer.

FISHING REGULATIONS

It is your responsibility to know the rules and stay legal. Changes are normal in the management of our fisheries each year, and those changes also go into effect on the first of March. Go online to Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency at www.tnwildlife.org or pick up a 2012 Fishing Regulations book at sporting stores or TWRA offices.

—— **Ezell Cox**

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2012 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 21 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
Speaker: Mike Smith, Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery
- Jun 18 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Jul 16 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Aug 20 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Sep 17 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Oct 6 Annual fish fry - No monthly meeting
- Nov 19 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Dec There is no monthly meeting in December



Brad Lenderman

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TSBA 2012 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: Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc

P.O. Box 163

Sharps Chapel, TN. 37866

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 monthly 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.



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 21, 2012: Monthly Meeting
Flatwater Grill
100 Melton Lake Drive, Oak Ridge
Dinner at 6:00 p.m.; meeting at 7:00 p.m.**