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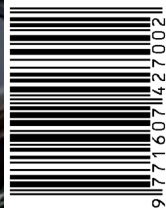
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Die Nuutste Gier In Baarshengel | Maak Die Maan Regtig 'n Verskil? | The New Bass Dad | Rekordbaars Vir Almal?
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Every article in this magazine has one purpose – to help you understand bass better, think more clearly on the water, and ultimately catch more and bigger bass.



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Our readers keep every issue for reference.



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SA BASS Magazine:	is published monthly (12 issues per annum) by BB Publications (Pty) Ltd (2023/818376/07)
Office Hours:	Our office hours are Monday to Friday, 08:15 to 16:15
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About SA BASS magazine:

SA BASS, which is editorially and financially independent, is a monthly magazine catering exclusively for the bass angling community in Southern Africa. SA BASS is distributed country-wide to outlets, not only in South Africa, but also in Namibia, Swaziland and Botswana.

SA BASS is designed as a specialist bass fishing publication and has catered for a well-defined niche market since April 2001. It enjoys the support and endorsement of non-government organisations, but is not affiliated in any way to these bodies or to any other publishing, environmental or political interest group.

Our mission is to promote bass angling as a socially acceptable and popular outdoor recreational activity, and in addition, to encourage acceptable angling ethics. As such, SA BASS provides pertinent information on a wide range of subjects. These include providing a platform for informed debate on issues affecting the sport of bass angling, providing information on bass angling strategies and techniques, bass angling waters and opportunities, and also creating awareness of new products.

Within this editorial mix, due consideration is given to developing the sport among all the country's people (including the youth), and to the practical conservation of the country's natural resources.

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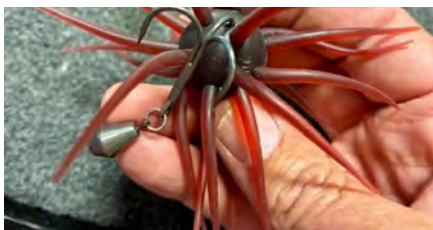
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ON THE COVER

“Maurice Kemp, Rhenosterkop Dam, MP”
Image: Maurice Kemp



My Cast

“ Every time I sit down to put an issue of SA BASS together, I’m reminded that becoming a better angler has very little to do with buying more tackle. It’s about learning to make better decisions. The anglers who consistently catch more and bigger bass aren’t necessarily the ones with the most expensive equipment - they’re the ones who understand what’s happening beneath the surface and know how to respond.

That’s exactly what this issue is about.

Take flipping, for example. Many anglers see it as a slow, methodical technique, but the best practitioners know it’s anything but. Precision, efficiency and confidence allow them to place a lure into water that most anglers simply can’t reach. In our feature article, *How to Flip Like a Pro*, we explore why this highly specialised technique continues to produce quality bass when other methods fall short.

Winter also has a habit of making anglers second-guess themselves. As the water cools and bites become less frequent, it’s tempting to scale everything down and simply hope for the best. Yet, as you’ll discover in *Finding Where the Bass Have Gone*, this season often presents one of the best opportunities to target truly big fish - provided you know where to look and how to approach them. And if rising water has added another layer of complexity, *Winter Flooding* explains how patience, planning and sound decision-making can still turn difficult conditions into productive days on the water.

Not every story in this issue is about catching bass. Some are about protecting the future of the sport we love. Our report on Albert Falls Dam raises serious concerns about the health of one of South Africa’s most iconic bass fisheries and why its future should matter to every angler.

Elsewhere, our Afrikaans readers can enjoy fascinating insights into the growing popularity of sea urchin-style lures, explore whether the moon really influences bass behaviour as much as many believe, and revisit the remarkable legacy

of Mickey Bruce in this month’s *Heldesaal*. We also ask an important question: who should be eligible to register an official South African bass record?

Finally, *The New Bass Dad* reminds us that while fishing may be one of life’s greatest passions, family has a way of reshaping our priorities, and often for the better.

Wherever you find yourself fishing this season, I hope these pages give you more than information. I hope they give you fresh ways of thinking. Because catching more bass rarely begins with the next lure you buy.

It begins with the decisions you make.

May your lines sing with joy!

Hannes Lindeque, *Publisher*

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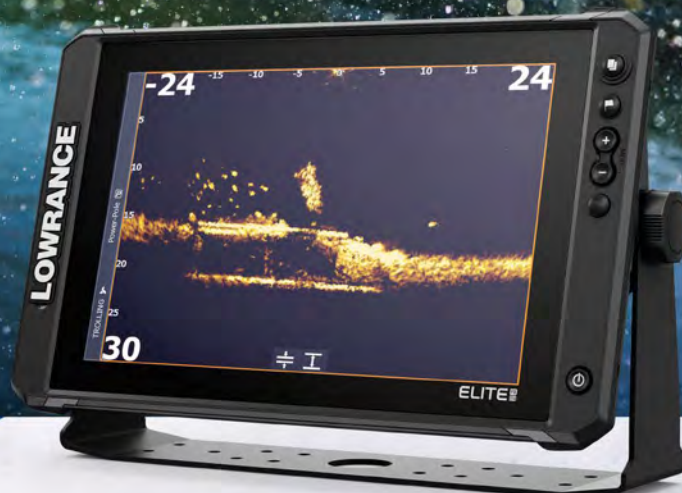
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HOW TO...

FLIP LIKE A PRO - PART 1/2

Mastering one of bass fishing's most effective casting techniques

There are certain moments in fishing that quietly change the way you see the sport forever.

Mine happened years ago while fishing a small impoundment lined with flooded willow trees. It was one of those still mornings when every sound seemed amplified. I'd spent the better part of an hour casting spinnerbaits and crankbaits along the outside edges of the trees, convinced that somewhere beneath those branches a decent bass was waiting.

The problem was, every cast landed where everyone else's cast had landed.

Then another angler idled into the same bay. He didn't make a single long cast. Instead, he eased his boat within a rod's length of the timber, lowered the trolling motor, and began dropping a compact jig into tiny openings between the branches. There was no dramatic casting motion. The lure simply swung forward, entered the water with barely a ripple, and disappeared into places I couldn't reach.

Within minutes he landed a solid fish... then another.

Then one that dwarfed everything I had seen that morning.

I remember thinking that he wasn't fishing different water. He was fishing different opportunities.

That was my introduction to flipping.

Until that day I thought of bass fishing as covering water. Flipping taught me that sometimes success comes from slowing down enough to fish water everyone else overlooks.

A revolution hidden in plain sight

Like many innovations in bass fishing, flipping was born not in a laboratory or a tackle factory, but out of necessity. In the early 1970s, California anglers fishing dense tule reeds, flooded bushes and thick shoreline vegetation realised conventional casting simply couldn't place a lure where the biggest bass lived. One angler, Dee Thomas, refined the technique into something remarkably effective. By quietly swinging a lure into heavy cover while keeping constant contact with it, he transformed competitive bass fishing.

Tournament anglers soon realised that flipping wasn't merely another way to present a lure; it was an entirely different philosophy. Instead of searching for active fish



Flip the lure into places many anglers cannot reach

in open water, they went directly to the places where bass felt safest.

The technique spread quickly because it consistently caught quality fish.

Decades later, that lesson remains just as relevant on local waters as it does on the famous reservoirs of the United States.

Why big bass love heavy cover

One of the biggest misconceptions in bass fishing is that cover simply provides shade.

Shade certainly plays a role, particularly during the warmer months, but cover offers something far more valuable: security.

Large bass survive because they've learned to minimise risk while maximising opportunity. A flooded tree, a reed line, a pontoon, or a thick mat of aquatic vegetation provides an ambush point, protection from predators, relief from bright sunlight, and often a steady supply of food - all within a space no larger than a dining room table.

To us, heavy cover looks untidy.

To a bass, it is prime real estate.

That simple shift in perspective changes everything.

Instead of asking, "Where should I cast?" accomplished anglers ask, "Where would a bass feel safest?"

That question naturally leads them into the heart of the cover rather than around its edges.

Learning to see like a professional

Watch experienced flipping anglers for long enough and you'll notice something interesting.

They rarely fish every piece of cover.

Instead, they quietly evaluate it.

A laydown isn't simply a fallen tree. They look for the darkest junction where the trunk meets the root ball. A dock isn't just a platform. They're searching for the corner that receives the least light, the deepest water, or the post offering the best ambush point.

Their first cast is rarely random.

It's usually aimed at the single highest-percentage target within the structure.

That's because experienced anglers understand something many recreational anglers overlook: every presentation changes the environment.

A lure splashing repeatedly into the same piece of cover, a fish thrashing on the surface, or a boat bumping into a dock all create disturbance. Bass notice those changes.

Professionals therefore treat every presentation as though it might be the only opportunity they'll get.

Quiet boats catch more fish

Long before you begin flipping, you've already started fishing.



Boat positioning is one of the least appreciated skills in bass fishing.

Notice how accomplished anglers approach cover. They seldom rush in with the trolling motor on high. Instead, they slow down well before reaching their target. The boat glides into position, often using momentum rather than constant thrust, before the first flip is ever made.

Why? Because bass don't only react to the lure. They react to vibration, pressure waves and repeated disturbances travelling through the water.

Good boat control protects every presentation that follows.

On many dams, where the water is often clear and the fish experience regular angling pressure, that quiet approach can make the difference between a productive morning and one filled with unanswered casts.

Finding your rhythm

Perhaps the greatest misconception about flipping is that it's slow. In reality, accomplished anglers develop an extraordinary rhythm.

- Flip.
- Watch the line.
- Lift.
- Swing, and
- Repeat.

Every movement has purpose. Nothing is hurried, yet nothing is wasted.

That rhythm allows them to present a lure to dozens of precise targets in a matter of minutes without sacrificing accuracy or stealth. More importantly, it keeps them mentally engaged. They're constantly evaluating the next target, the next angle, the next likely holding position.

Eventually the mechanics become automatic, allowing

their minds to focus entirely on reading the water.

That's the real beauty of flipping.

It begins as a casting technique but gradually becomes a way of thinking.

The one thing

Heavy cover isn't difficult water to fish; it's simply water that demands precision. The anglers who consistently catch the biggest bass aren't making more casts than everyone else. They're making better decisions about where each presentation belongs.

Think like a pro

Before your next flip, ask yourself:

- Which part of this cover gives a bass the greatest sense of security?
- If I only had one presentation here, where would I place it?
- Is my boat close enough for precision, yet far enough away to remain unnoticed?

Take it to the water

On your next outing, choose one stretch of heavy cover and deliberately slow down. Instead of fishing every branch or reed, identify the single highest-percentage target within each piece of cover before making your first presentation. By the end of the session, you'll discover that selecting better targets is often more important than making more flips.

In part 2 we answer the question every angler eventually asks: How do I become genuinely good at it?

RgB - Show off your best catch! Send us your bass fishing photos together with a short write up, and you could be featured in our **SA BASS Readers-go-Bassing** section! Email your pictures to editor@sabass.com and share your story with fellow anglers! 🐟



Large bass survive because they've learned to minimise risk

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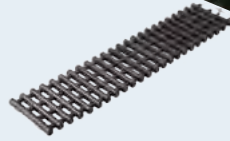
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Winter is the time to target big fish


FINDING WHERE THE BASS HAVE GONE

MANY ANGLERS I KNOW STRUGGLE TO ACHIEVE RESULTS DURING WINTER AND THEY ALL HAVE ONE THING IN COMMON: THEY TEND TO BE ONE DIMENSIONAL IN THEIR APPROACH AND RELY HEAVILY ON THE MARGINS (SHORELINE) TO GET SOME FISH IN THE BOAT.

This is all good and well if the fish are shallow, but the reality of the matter is that they aren't at this time of year. Relying on shoreline cover at this stage of the season would not be recommended unless there is sufficient depth. With the margins not producing, many anglers battle to adjust. Instead of leaving their comfort zone, and finding where the fish have gone, they prefer to make lure adjustments which serves no purpose if you can't locate fish. Offering the convenient excuse that the fish just weren't biting today isn't good enough. I've fished enough tournaments to know that someone

always catches them, regardless of how tough you think the fishing is. I would rather confess to not having found fish on the day, than say that they simply weren't biting.

How to find fish

With all that said, let's look at how to find fish in winter. Every impoundment is unique and has its own nuances so I'll keep to the basics. In early winter, fish will leave shallow water areas as soon as the water temperature becomes unfavourable. Shallow bays and flats tend to cool down quicker than the water around it so fish will leave these areas and retreat

>> *Divan Coetzee*

Key issues:

- Slow down your presentation
- Focus on:
 - deep water,
 - first break lines,
 - steep banks,
 - main lake points,
 - old river channel and
 - migrating routes.
- Use:
 - Any presentation that makes bottom contact,
 - big baits for big fish,
 - downscale to finesse baits to target quantity

to the first break they find: a drop off, river channel, even water grass. Grass retains heat quite well and is often a few degrees warmer than the surrounding water. Look for banks that have a 45 to 90 degree slope. Fish would rather move vertically through the water column to get shallow as opposed to horizontally, it saves vital energy. Fish will return to the shallows periodically to feed, but the majority of the time they will remain deep. The key here is to find a pathway, a route that links the bass with the feeding area. Bass relate to specific areas for a reason, find out what the drawing card is and exploit it. What I'm suggesting is: go to an area that you traditionally do well in, and just back off slightly into deeper water until you find the first break, the fish are likely to stack up in that area. If the slope is too gradual, and you have to cover a 100m just to gain 5ft in depth, the fish are likely to suspend. Avoid such banks and stick to the steeper stuff. Preferably main lake points and the old river channel. In particular where a channel swings close to a main lake point.

The common trend during winter is to downscale on lure and line, this is sound advice but for me personally, this is the time to target big fish. The big females will start to gather in anticipation of the spawn, and big fish prefer big baits in my opinion. This doesn't mean that I wouldn't throw a drop-shot or shakey head, I do, but rather the magnum versions. If I wanted to target quantity instead of quality, then I would downscale to finesse type baits.

Bass typically relate to the bottom at this time of year, some fish do suspend offshore, but they are difficult to target effectively without top notch electronics. Basic sonar will do fine when looking for drop offs and ledges. Getting the bait down and keeping it there is vital. Any presentation that makes a sufficient amount of bottom contact will do – Carolina rigs, jigs, deep diving crank baits, drop-shot, shakey heads, flutter spoons, you name it. Slowing down your approach will benefit you greatly, it is winter after all and bass tend to be lethargic until the water reaches about 16°C.

Don't get disheartened if you initially don't achieve results, it took me about two seasons to fully understand fish movement according to seasonal stages, once you figure it out winter becomes a wonderland of opportunity. 🐟



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Winter Flooding

Testing limits of hard conditions



The dam wall overflowing

>> Jay Röhm-Williams*

After the recent, extreme, heavy down pours that were recorded across Southern Africa majority of our reservoirs, dams and lakes are passed over flowing. It was great news for most but unfortunate for many as livelihoods and enterprises were all sadly effected by the devastating cost of nature's raw power. Here in the Eastern Cape the extent of the floods that took place caused rivers to break their banks, the closure of roads and in some case loss of property, crops and livestock. All dams large, small, municipal or private were filled to maximum proportions so quickly that shock and awe don't come close to describing the magnitude of water that fell in such a short succession. As heart breaking as it was for many overall the rains were most welcomed and gratefully received. The long, stretched out drought was taking its toll on bodies of water everywhere and from a bass anglers point view I personally couldn't wait to get stuck into some full, high water bass fishing again.

The only setback now is winter was knocking on our door and no matter how hard you wish she wasn't here you can't keep that cold at bay. If you thought winter conditions were hard enough to catch bass in, things just became a lot

harder with the water rising full brim. At this stage during a weather and seasonal change up like winter flooding everything looks bassy. Water levels are up covering timber, grasses, bushes the works. Trees might have falling over and all those ditches, bays and gullies you could scan before are now submerged somewhere below. The water colour changes too becoming dirty and muddy with visibility down to almost zero. In all honesty though at first glance it still looks like bass paradise but in reality you just in for a very challenging session.

However it takes a lot more than just cold weather, high water and inaccessible, treacherous roads to discourage any die hard bass angler. If there's a chance to get out there and catch some bass then you know we going to risk it all for a chance at rod bending glory. But how do we approach this scenario and just what exactly does it take to catch winter bass in flooded water? Well it all bubbles down to understanding how these conditions effect bass firstly before we can draw our battle plans clearly so let's start there.

Water temperature

A notable factor above all else is recognising the water temperature. Its winter, the air is cooler especially the evenings and now there is a lot more water around. That water is going to be cold and it's going to take longer during the day to heat up before it cools off again. Early mornings that were before prime time are now going to have that bite window in most cases moved up a notch when the suns out for a bit longer. Early afternoon crossing over into late afternoon might hold more success before water temperatures start to decrease as night gathers in so timing here becomes key.

New flooded cover

Everything is going to appear to have bass hunkered up in and amongst all that new cover but don't be fooled. Bass have a habit of not pulling up into new flooded areas during winter because that's not part of their winter behavioural pattern. A few fish may explore a certain flooded section briefly but they tend to be far and few in between. Majority of the fish will stay off those shallow banks and stick the deep edges or ledges where the water temperatures are stable and the terrain familiar.

Where to fish

Well generally under these tough conditions an angler's best bet is stay clear off the shallow banks. Deeper water has been known to hold considerably more fish during these times so focusing a little offshore is advised. Primary and secondary ledges become areas to hone in on while



Everything is going to seem like prime real estate but do not be fooled

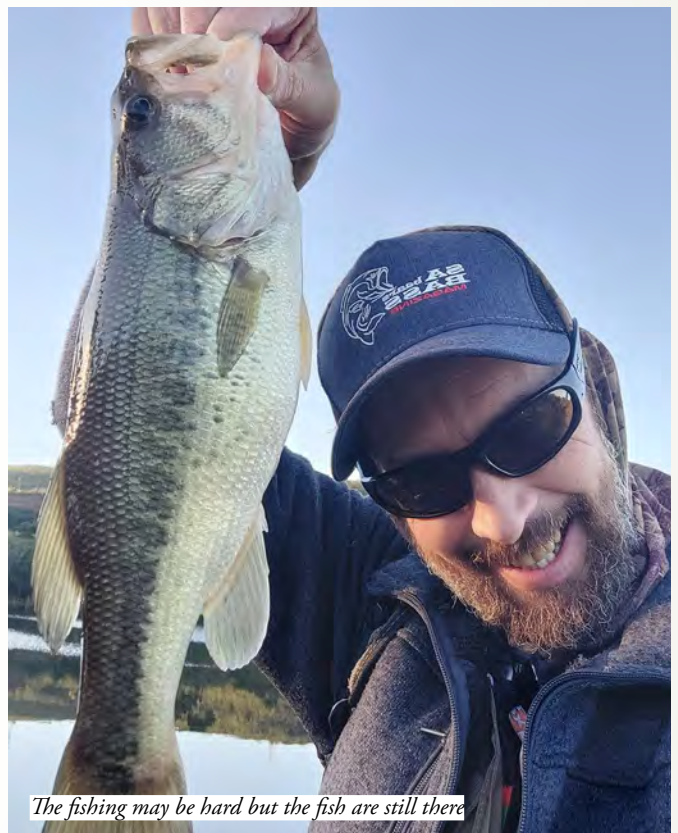


There is going to be a lot of new structure and cover to work so be prepared

concentrating on slow, deeper water presentations. Remember in some scenarios it will take a while for that water colour to settle again too so keep this in mind. Bluff walls and 45° slopes are also zones to target because here it takes less energy for fish to rise and fall back when feeding. Bass will also tend to school up together in particular patches so it's all about trying to locate a bite to find the rest. Above all the best advice is to try covering as much water as quickly as possible. It might not be manageable if you are fishing every likely area very slowly so choosing a bait that works for you is important. Bass are still feeding but it's about getting that reaction strike, gaining attention and lure placement. Sometimes it could be slow movements with the right fall rate and other times it could just be a vibrational attraction from a well-paced crank bait.



Shorelines breached and submerged

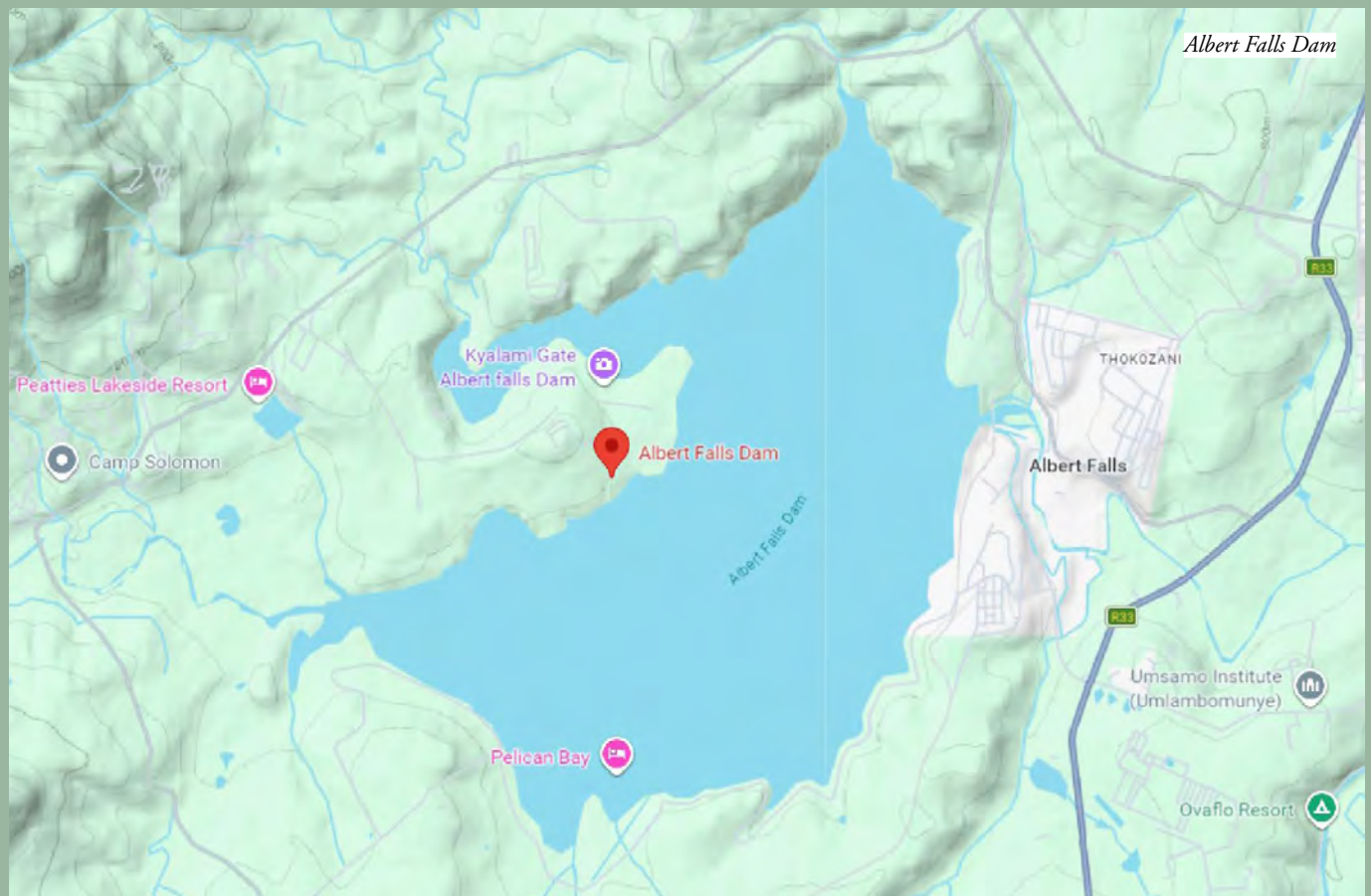


The fishing may be hard but the fish are still there

However you decide to approach high water venues in the cold clutches of winter remember that you will have to think clearly and carefully about how you fish. Bank accessibility might become limited so tread carefully if you only have the shore to work from. It is going to take patience; planning and a bit of know how to devise a practical, tactful approach towards catching some bass. These conditions are in my view one of the hardest conditions to fish especially if time is limited but persevere and you will be rewarded. Never give up, never surrender and always have one more cast!

Rods out and safe fishing everyone! 🐟

**Jay Röhm-Williams is a seasoned bass angler with a wealth of knowledge, and since 2018 he has been sharing his expertise with fellow bass enthusiasts, hoping they'll discover the same passion and enjoyment he finds in this unique sport.*



ALARM BELLS AT ALBERT FALLS

A WORLD-FAMOUS FISHERY IS DYING

>> Todd Clark

For decades, anglers from across the world have made the pilgrimage to Albert Falls Dam, tucked into the rolling hills of the KwaZulu-Natal Midlands. Regularly rated among the best largemouth bass fisheries on the planet, the dam has built an international reputation, drawing competitors to flagship events like the Albert Falls Bass Classic and pumping money into the guesthouses, tackle shops, boat operators and fishing guides of the uMshwathi area.

That reputation is now in freefall - and if you fish, guide, or run a business anywhere near this water, it affects you directly.

Over the past year, anglers arriving at Albert Falls have been met not with trophy bass, but with the unmistakable signs of a dying dam: fish washed up dead and dying along the shoreline, slimy ammonia-rich bubbles breaking the

surface, and water thickening with algae. The cause is no mystery to anyone who has spent time on the water - persistent sewage spills and nutrient pollution flowing down the uMngeni River system are pushing Albert Falls into a state of severe eutrophication.

A dam that is suffocating

In plain terms: largemouth bass and the indigenous Natal yellowfish are picking up serious bacterial infections that kill them outright. Hardier species like carp and tilapia are now starting to go the same way, with dead fish a common sight along the water's edge. Winter makes things worse - not because cold water holds less oxygen (it actually holds more), but because reduced inflows and less flushing cut off the river's natural reoxygenation. At the same time, the algae that have been feeding on the nutrient overload die off in their billions: as their cells decompose, the microbial



The KZN yellowfish faces a specific and serious threat

process creates a biological oxygen demand (BOD) that strips dissolved oxygen from the water. Fish that can no longer survive in the resulting low-oxygen depths are forced to the surface, gasping for air. Albert Falls is a big dam, and some fish will survive. But landowners along its banks report that most of the population is being decimated - and on current trends, recovery could take a decade, if it happens at all, unless there is urgent action on nutrient management, wastewater treatment, and catchment rehabilitation.

An economic body blow

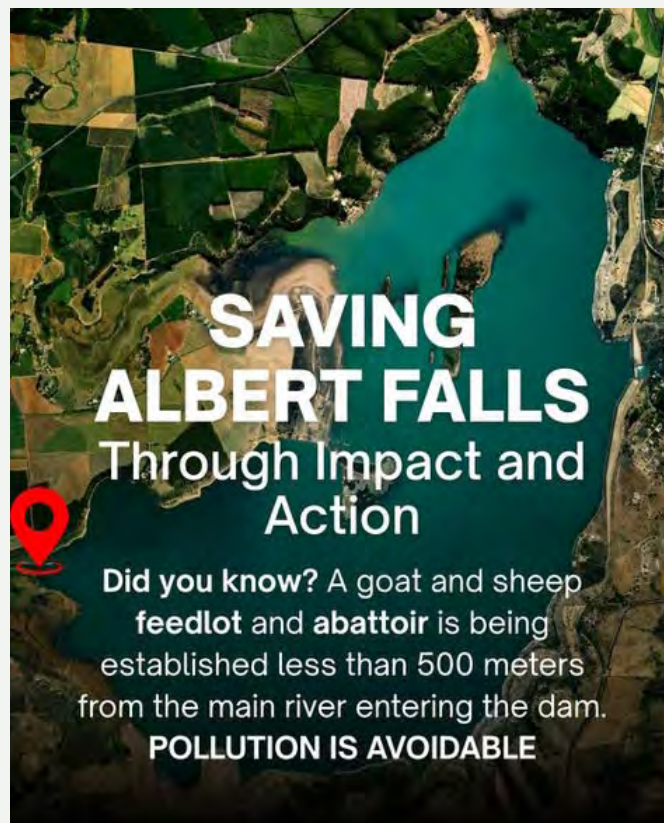
For a regional economy built in no small part on bass fishing tourism, the consequences are immediate and severe. Landowners around the dam's headwaters report a dramatic drop-off in bass boats and recreational craft. Anglers who do make the trip are increasingly going home empty-handed - and many are voting with their wallets, taking their tournaments, and their spending, to healthier dams elsewhere.

The scale of the fallout became impossible to ignore this year. Four major bass fishing leagues - the SABAA KZN Youth, the SABAA Opens, the KZN Team Tournament Trail and the Bass Warehouse Trail - together with the country's biggest bass event, the Albert Falls Bass Classic, have all cancelled their events at the dam. Organisers give the same reason every time: there simply aren't enough fish left to hold a competition. Several have indicated the cancellations are likely to extend into 2027.

Tournament records going back years tell the same story in hard numbers: catch counts down, catch weights down, across the board. This is no longer anecdotal - it is documented decline. Formally compiling and publishing these tournament records alongside monitoring data would provide powerful, court-ready evidence for the authorities, and the community is urged to do exactly that.

The numbers behind the decline

Monitoring data on annual nutrient loadings into Albert Falls and Nagle Dams, covering 2018 to June 2025, shows a clear and worsening trend: nutrient loads into both systems have risen sharply in 2025, a strong signal of accelerating eutrophication. The drivers are familiar - wastewater discharges, agricultural runoff, and reduced flushing through the system. Without intervention, the trajectory points toward more frequent and more severe algal blooms, and further deterioration in water quality.



Against this backdrop, scientists and conservationists have been calling for urgent, targeted nutrient management, improved wastewater treatment, and ongoing catchment rehabilitation. What nobody was expecting was a brand-new source of nutrient and pathogen pollution to be authorised right on the riverbank itself.

Into this crisis: a new abattoir and feedlot

The MEC for Economic Development, Tourism and Environmental Affairs in KwaZulu-Natal, Rev KM Zondi, has granted environmental authorisation for a new feedlot and abattoir roughly 500 metres upstream of where the uMngeni River flows into Albert Falls Dam - and just 350 metres from the river itself.

A coalition of local landowners and residents, working with an environmental attorney, has been fighting this authorisation. Their central complaint is that the public participation process required by law was, in practice, no process at all. Interested and affected parties were, by the community's account, effectively directed to a locked gate, with no meaningful access to the draft Basic Assessment Report they were legally entitled to review and comment on.

Having been denied a fair say through the official channels, the community turned to an independent expert for a professional opinion on the Final Basic Assessment Report (FBAR): Dr Mark Graham of GroundTruth Water, Wetlands and Environmental Engineering. Dr Graham is a registered Professional Natural Scientist, with more than 35 years' experience in water resources management, aquatic science, water quality management, catchment management, ecological monitoring, environmental

assessment and integrated water resource management. He has worked extensively across South Africa and the continent on water security and catchment issues.

“Not presently sufficient” - the expert verdict

After reviewing the FBAR and its supporting specialist studies, Dr Graham's conclusion was unambiguous:

“Having reviewed the BAR and associated specialist studies, I am of the opinion that the assessment is not presently sufficient to support an informed environmental authorisation decision from a strategic water resource protection perspective.”

He found that the report failed to adequately evaluate strategic water resource implications, cumulative nutrient loading impacts, eutrophication risks, groundwater contamination risks, downstream water treatment implications, public-interest considerations for a strategic drinking-water catchment, the complexity of feedlot and abattoir waste streams, and the adequacy of the proposed waste management and wastewater treatment systems.

Dr Graham was careful to stress that his concern is not with agricultural development as a principle. It is with what this specific development would add to a system already in crisis:

“The proposed development introduces an additional nutrient-generating activity and a complex waste stream into a catchment already experiencing severe eutrophication and algal bloom problems that are materially affecting one of KwaZulu-Natal's most important water supply systems.”

On the missing waste management assessment, he was equally direct: feedlot and abattoir operations generate nutrient-rich, pathogen-rich and difficult-to-treat waste streams, and “these waste streams represent one of the most likely pathways through which further degradation of local groundwater, wetlands, tributaries and ultimately the Albert Falls Dam catchment could occur.”

The FBAR, in his view, evaluates the development as an isolated, site-based activity - a lens the Albert Falls catchment can no longer be viewed through. The cumulative impacts of multiple nutrient sources are already manifesting as declining water quality, rising treatment costs, and reduced system resilience. The real question, he argues, is not whether this one development would cause eutrophication on its own, but whether any additional nutrient-loading risk should be authorised at all in a strategic water supply catchment already operating beyond its ecological limits. In his opinion, the FBAR does not provide sufficient scientific evidence to answer that question.

His professional conclusion leaves little room for ambiguity:

“Until a comprehensive nutrient loading assessment, detailed waste management and wastewater engineering assessment, cumulative impact assessment and strategic water security evaluation have been completed, there is insufficient evidence to conclude that the proposed

development is compatible with the long-term protection of the Albert Falls–Nagle–Durban Heights water supply system. ... Should authorisations have been given already (which I'm led to believe may be the case), these would need to be urgently reviewed!”

Why Albert Falls matters far beyond its banks

It is worth being clear about what is actually at stake. The uMngeni River system is the backbone of water security for much of KwaZulu-Natal, supplying potable water to the eThekweni metropolitan area and surrounding municipalities, while also underpinning agriculture, industry, ecology and biodiversity across the region. Midmar, Albert Falls, Nagle and Inanda dams form a chain of storage that millions of people depend on every day.

The whole system is managed through an integrated catchment framework, divided into resource units precisely because what happens upstream determines what flows downstream - in volume, in quality, and in the cost of treating it. Albert Falls sits at the heart of the Albert Falls–Nagle resource unit, which covers the uMngeni River from below Midmar Dam down to Nagle Dam, together with the Karkloof and iMpolweni Rivers and their tributaries.

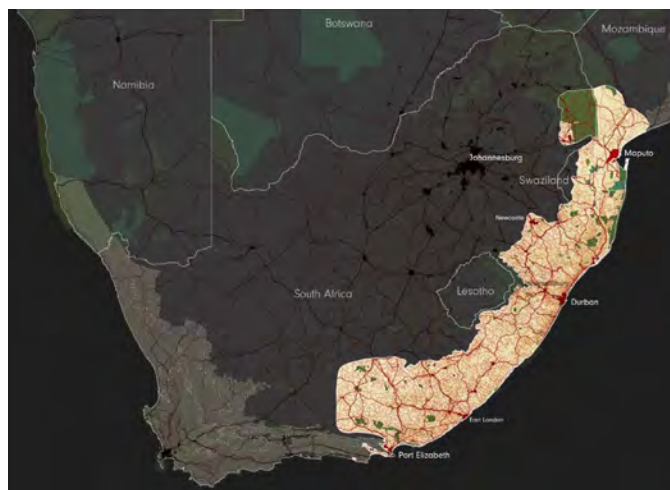
Adding a new abattoir and feedlot's worth of nutrient- and pathogen-rich waste into this resource unit - without the waste management and effluent treatment assessment that Dr Graham says is missing - means introducing fresh risk into, in his words, “a strategic water supply catchment that is already experiencing severe eutrophication, increasing treatment costs and declining ecological resilience.”

A river ecosystem already under siege

The visible fish kills and algal blooms are only part of the damage. A letter dated 17 June 2026 from Dr Matthew Burnett, Principal Scientist at the Institute of Natural Resources (INR) and a freshwater ecologist with over 15 years of specialist experience - whose PhD research focused specifically on the uMngeni River between Midmar and Albert Falls Dams - documents a deeper and more troubling story of what is already being lost beneath the surface.

The reach of the uMngeni flowing into Albert Falls Dam should support approximately 19 fish species. Of these, the IUCN lists two as Near Threatened (the KZN mountain catfish and longfin eel) and three as Vulnerable (Mozambique tilapia, chubbyhead barb, and red-tailed barb). The red-tailed barb has already been recorded as locally extinct in the uMsunduzi River around Pietermaritzburg, and there are no confirmed records of it on the uMngeni main stem upstream of Albert Falls in the past decade. The KZN mountain catfish has similarly disappeared from this reach. According to Dr Burnett, the reduction in fish species already indicates the river is in poor ecological condition - and any further negative inputs will push more sensitive species to the point of no return.

The KZN yellowfish (*Labeobabus natalensis*) - iconic to anglers and ecologists alike - faces a specific and serious threat. These fish migrate seasonally upstream from Albert Falls



The KZN yellowfish faces a specific and serious threat

Dam to breed in summer. Nutrient loading that promotes excessive aquatic plant growth smothers spawning sites and undermines recruitment success. The stakes extend beyond conservation: KZN yellowfish are a vital food source for fisherfolk along this stretch of river, many of whom depend on them entirely for their livelihoods. Further pollution of the Albert Falls population would directly threaten the food security and income of unemployed fisherfolk who have no other means of support.

Dr Burnett also puts his finger on a critical failure in how developments like the proposed abattoir tend to be assessed. Singular stressors, he notes, are difficult to evaluate meaningfully when water use decisions do not account for the entire aquatic system at catchment scale - "leading to poor assessment reports that don't adequately consider the compounding impact of multiple sources of pollution on the receiving aquatic environment." This is precisely the concern Dr Graham raised in his independent review of the Basic Assessment Report. Two expert opinions, from different disciplines, have now reached the same conclusion: this system cannot be assessed in isolation, and the cumulative toll of adding yet another pollution source to an already-stressed catchment has not been properly evaluated.

A landmark UNESCO designation in the crosshairs

The stakes extend further still. The uMngeni catchment - Albert Falls and Midmar Dams explicitly included - sits at the heart of the proposed Greater uMngeni Catchment Biosphere Reserve (GuCBR): a landmark initiative that would make this the first UNESCO-accredited Biosphere Reserve in KwaZulu-Natal.

Spanning approximately 291,426 hectares of KZN Midlands, the GuCBR falls within the Maputaland-Pondoland-Albany Biodiversity Hotspot - one of the world's globally significant biodiversity hotspots. It contains mistbelt grasslands, savanna, wetlands, and indigenous forests, many of which are classified as critical, endangered, or vulnerable. It provides habitat for a wide range of threatened and endemic species, including the

Karkloof Blue butterfly, oribi, cranes, Cape parrot, and the Hilton daisy. Albert Falls and Midmar Dams are identified in the GuCBR documentation as key water security assets within the reserve.

The proposal has attracted broad support from local municipalities, conservation organisations, educational institutions, private landowners, tourism bodies, and provincial conservation authorities. It aligns with the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework and the UN Sustainable Development Goals, and is positioned as a credible, internationally recognised model for integrating conservation with sustainable economic development - including the eco-tourism economy that the Albert Falls fishery helps anchor.

Authorising a nutrient- and pathogen-generating abattoir and feedlot 500 metres upstream of Albert Falls Dam, without adequate environmental assessment, does not sit easily alongside a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve nomination. It sends precisely the wrong signal at precisely the wrong moment - and risks undermining years of conservation work and a landmark international designation before it has even been secured.

What's next

The community has not given up. Despite presenting clear evidence of a flawed process and a scientifically unsupported decision, the MEC dismissed the appeal on a procedural technicality - without engaging with any of the substantive concerns raised by Dr Graham or the affected landowners. The legal team is now pursuing further avenues to have the authorisation properly scrutinised by the relevant authorities, while preserving the right to take the matter to the High Court if necessary.

This fight is far from over - but it does come at a cost. Specialist reports, legal advice and the administrative and court processes ahead all require funding that a community group simply does not have sitting in the bank.

How you can help

This is bigger than one dam, or one development - and it is bigger than one community. Every angler who has ever booked a guide, entered a tournament, or simply launched a boat at Albert Falls has a stake in this. It is about the future of the uMngeni River system, the water security of millions of people, and the survival of a fishery and an economy that has taken generations to build.

If you feel willing and able to contribute towards the next phase of legal costs, any amount will be sincerely appreciated. This is a collective effort to protect our valley and our broader community - its water sources, ecosystems, flora and fauna, our homes, our livelihoods, and the future opportunities that depend on the integrity of this special environment. And if you can't contribute financially, sharing this story and putting pressure on the relevant authorities helps just as much.

For details on how to contribute, or to get involved, please contact the author at toddkimclark@iafrica.com 🐦

BASICS FOR BEGINNERS

>> Hannes Lindeque



Secret

Instead of simply casting at a shoreline, identify specific target areas.



Winter

Slow down your approach because bass tend to be lethargic until the water reaches about 16°C again.



Laydowns

A laydown is a fallen tree that creates predominantly horizontal cover.



Crankbaits

The buoyancy of a crankbait is what determines if a bait sinks or floats.

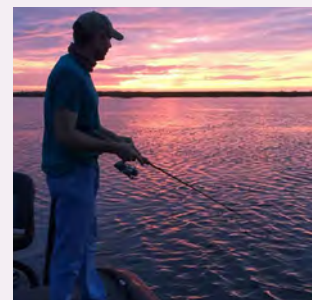


Depth

Between 8 to 16 feet deep water are often rich hunting grounds for bass and their prey.

Rod position

- Keep your rod tip pointed down toward the water, close to the surface. This position allows for a quicker response and better leverage when setting the hook.



Mistake

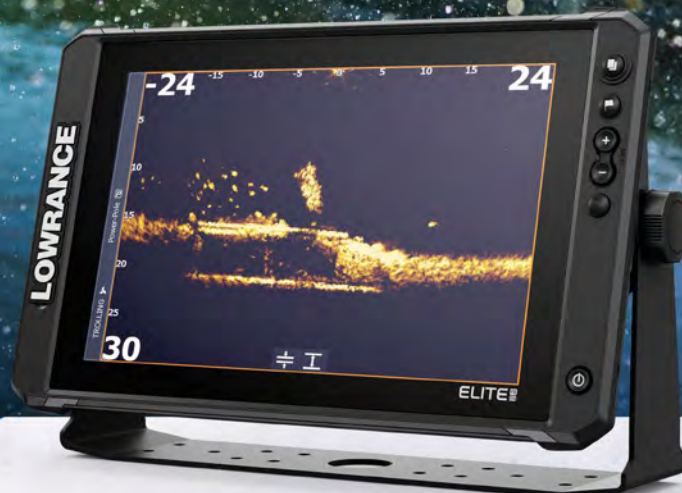
- One of the most common mistakes is fishing memories instead of conditions.



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Hierdie aas dwing die vis om nuuskierig te raak

See-Egels

Die nuutste gier in baarshengel

Deel 1/3

>> Philip Kemp*

Wanneer iets heeltemal anders die verskil tussen 'n stil dag en jou beste baars ooit kan wees

Daar is min dinge wat so vinnig versprei soos 'n nuwe hengeltegniek wat groot vis oplewer. Een oomblik is dit net 'n paar professionele toernooihengelaars wat iets ongewoon aan hulle lyn vasmaak; die volgende oomblik is sosiale media vol foto's van vyf- en sespond-baarse wat almal op dieselfde vreemde kunsas gevang is. So begin die storie van die sogenaamde See-Egel, of soos die Amerikaners dit noem, die Urchin Bait.

Toe ek die eerste keer een in my hand hou, was my reaksie eerlikwaar: "Wie op aarde gaan dink 'n baars wil dít eet?"

Dit lyk nie soos 'n wurm nie. Dit lyk nie soos 'n kreef, paddatjie of aasvis nie. Selfs 'n spinnerbait maak meer sin

as jy dit langs 'n See-Egel neersit. Dis bloot 'n sagte bolletjie met honderde fyn silikoon-tentakels wat in alle rigtings uitsteek. As jy dit droog op jou werkbank sit, lyk dit amper soos iets wat uit 'n wetenskapfiksiefiek gekom het.

Maar toe gebeur iets interessant.

Die eerste video's begin verskyn van hengelaars wat hierdie vreemde aas gebruik om groot, slim baars te vang op damme waar die vis al letterlik alles gesien het. Daarna volg die Amerikaanse toernooie, waar bekende name soos Hideup se Coike, Yamamoto se Uni en ander soortgelyke "spiny ball"-ontwerpe skielik oral op dekke van bassbote begin verskyn.

Wanneer professionele hengelaars, wat miljoene rande se pryse nastreef, hul vertroue in 'n nuwe kunsas plaas, begin die res van die hengelwêreld natuurlik aandag gee.

En toe gebeur presies dieselfde in Suid-Afrika.

Aanvanklik was daar baie skeptisisme. Op WhatsApp-groepe en Facebook-bladsye het mense gewonder of dit bloot nóg 'n duur modegier is wat oor 'n paar maande gaan verdwyn. Ander het gelag en gesê dit lyk soos 'n stoflap of 'n haarbal. Maar soos meer plaaslike hengelaars dit begin probeer het, het die stories begin inkom. Nie een of twee toevallige vangste nie, maar konsekwente resultate op damme waar die gewone Texas-rig, swemaas en finesse-wurms skielik minder doeltreffend begin raak het.

Dis juis hier waar die See-Egel sy grootste krag wys.

Waarom byt 'n baars iets wat soos niks anders lyk nie?

Dis waarskynlik die vraag wat elke hengelaar eerste vra, en die eenvoudige antwoord is dat niemand regtig weet nie.

Ons hou daarvan om alles in hengel te probeer verklaar. Ons wil weet of die kunsas 'n kreef voorstel, 'n aasvis naboots of miskien 'n paddavis imiteer. Met baie kunsas kan mens so 'n verduideliking gee, maar die See-Egel pas nie maklik in enige bekende kategorie nie.

Sommige meen die bewegende tentakels lyk soos 'n klein groepie aasvisse wat styf teen mekaar swem. Ander glo dit boots waterinsekte of klein ongewerweldes organismes na wat stadig deur die water beweeg. Daar is selfs hengelaars wat dink dit herinner aan jong krappe of varswatergarnale.

Die waarheid is waarskynlik baie eenvoudiger... die aas lyk bloot anders. En "anders" is dikwels presies wat 'n groot baars se aandag trek.

Dink vir 'n oomblik aan 'n dam wat elke naweek deur tientalle bote bevis word. Elke dag sien daardie vis honderde plastiekwurms, chatterbaits, swem-aas, jerkbait en jigkoppe verbykom. Groot baars word oud juis omdat hulle leer om versigtig te wees. Hulle reageer nie meer impulsief op elke kunsas wat verby swem nie.

Maar skielik sak iets stadig deur die water wat hy nog nooit gesien het nie.

Geen aggressiewe aksie nie.



Jy kan jou eie See-Egels maak. Gebruik 'n drie-angelhoek soos hier aangetoon



Die See-Egels kan ook op 'n loodkoppie geryg word



Geen harde vibrasie nie.
 Geen wilde flits van 'n spinnerlem nie.
 Net 'n sagte bolletjie waarvan elke tentakel onafhanklik beweeg soos dit stadig afwaarts dryf.
 Vir 'n nuuskierige roofvis is dit soms genoeg.
 Een van die interessantste dinge wat moderne "live sonar"-tegnologie vir ons gewys het, is hoe baars op hierdie aas reageer. Op die skerm sien mens dikwels hoe 'n vis van etlike meters af stadig nader beweeg, die aas volg en dit lank bekyk voordat hy uiteindelik sy bek oopmaak. Dis amper asof die See-Egel die vis se nuuskierigheid prikkel voordat sy jaginstink oorneem.

En juis daarom werk dit dikwels wanneer alles anders ophou werk.

Wanneer finesse werklik finesse beteken

Baie hengelaars maak die fout om te dink finesse-hengel beteken bloot ligter toerusting. Dis nie heeltemal waar nie.

Finesse gaan eintlik daaroor om die vis 'n rede te gee om self die besluit te neem. Jy forseer nie 'n reaksie met spoed of lawaai nie; jy laat die aas só natuurlik voorkom dat die baars homself oortuig om te byt.

Dis presies waar die See-Egel uitblink.

Wanneer die aas deur die water sak, beweeg daar nie net een stert soos op 'n tradisionele wurm nie. Honderde fyn tentakels reageer op die kleinste beweging van die water. Selfs wanneer die aas doodstil hang, bly daardie sagte "steekhaartjies" lewe kry deur die geringste stroompie, wind of beweging van jou lyn.

Die gevolg is dat die kunsas nooit regtig dood lyk nie.

En dis iets wat 'n groot, ervare baars moeilik kan ignoreer.

Ironies genoeg is een van die grootste foute wat beginners maak wanneer hulle hierdie kunsas probeer, dat hulle té veel daarmee wil doen. Hulle wikkel die stok se punt, sleep die aas vinnig of probeer dit soos 'n gewone wurm werk. Daarmee vernietig hulle juis die natuurlike aksie wat die See-Egel so besonders maak.

Hier geld 'n ou hengelwaarheid meer as ooit: *Hoe*

minder jy dink jy doen, hoe meer laat jy die kunsas vir jou werk.

Daardie gedagte klink eenvoudig, maar dit verg dissipline. Veral wanneer die byt stadig is, wil mens iets verander. Jy begin vinniger werk, groter rukke gee of die aas elke paar sekondes verskuif. Tog is dit dikwels die hengelaar wat geduldig wag, die aas laat hang en vertrou op die subtiële beweging van die tentakels, wat uiteindelik die hengelstok sien krom trek.

En dalk is dit juis die grootste les wat die See-Egel ons leer: soms is die mees ongewone kunsas nie suksesvol omdat dit iets perfek naboots nie, maar omdat dit die vis dwing om nuuskierig te raak.

Daardie nuuskierigheid is dikwels al wat nodig is om 'n groot baars se besluit te verander van "ek kyk net" na "ek byt."

Volgende maand in Deel 2: Ons kyk na die situasies waar die See-Egel werklik sy staal wys - van kristalhelder water en swaar hengeldruk tot die broeiseisoen, suspenderde baars en die stroppe wat hierdie kunsas so ongelooflik veelsydig maak. 🐟

**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaarshengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*

DIE GROOT DEBAT IN BAARSHENGEL:



MAAK DIE MAAN REGTIG 'N VERSKIL?

DAAR IS MIN
ONDERWERPE IN
DIE WÊRELD VAN
BAARSHENGEL
WAT SOVEEL DEBAT
ONTLOK SOOS
TEGNOLOGIE EN DIE
MAANFASE

Noem net “Forward-Facing Sonar” of begin praat oor die invloed van die maan op visvang, en skielik het elke hengelaar 'n sterk mening.

Maar die vraag bly staan: Maak die maan werklik 'n verskil wanneer dit kom by die vang van baars, of is dit bloot nog 'n hengelstorie wat oor die jare groter geword het?

Die gelowiges

Vir baie hengelaars is die maan veel meer as net 'n lig in die naghemel. Hulle glo die maanfase speel 'n belangrike rol in die gedrag van visse, veral groot baars.

Hierdie groep hengelaars beplan hul uitstappies maande vooruit. Hulle bestudeer maankalenders, gebruik toepassings wat sogenaamde “major”

en “minor feeding periods” aandui en probeer hul visvangsessies rondom volmaan- of nuwemaanperiodes skeduleer. Die redenasie klink logies. Die maan beheer immers die getye van die oseane. Dit beïnvloed talle natuurlike prosesse op aarde en baie dierspesies toon gedragsveranderinge volgens maansiklusse. Waarom sou visse dan anders wees?

Verskeie bioloë glo inderdaad dat maanfases 'n invloed kan hê op die broeiseisoen van swartbaars, veral gedurende die lente. In warmer streke beweeg grootbekbaars dikwels vlakker water toe rondom die volmaan om te paar. Hierdie verskynsel is al in talle studies waargeneem.

Selfs in Suid-Afrika rapporteer hengelaars gereeld dat hulle gedurende sekere volmaanperiodes meer neste sien of groter visse in vlak water teëkom.

Vir die gelowiges is die bewys eenvoudig: Sommige van die grootste visse van hul lewe is tydens 'n volmaan of nuwemaan gevang.

Die skeptici

Aan die ander kant van die debat staan die skeptici. Volgens hulle kry die maan heeltemal te veel krediet vir iets wat eintlik deur talle ander faktore bepaal word.



Verskeie faktore beïnvloed vis se gedrag



Met sonstrale wat van regs na links skyn is dit hoe die maanfases lyk

Hierdie hengelaars sal vinnig daarop wys dat watertemperatuur, suurstofvlakke, weerstelsels, voedselbeskikbaarheid, hengeldruk en seisoenale patrone baie groter invloed op baarsgedrag het as die maan. Hulle argument is ook moeilik om te weerlê.

'n Baars wat in 'n modderige dam of rivier leef waar sigbaarheid swak is, reageer waarskynlik baie sterker op temperatuurveranderinge of voedselbewegings as op die fase van die maan. Wanneer 'n kouefront deurbeweeg, kan die byt binne ure dramaties verander. Dieselfde geld vir skielike veranderinge in watervlakke, sterk wind of swaar reën. Vir die skeptici is die idee dat 'n baars sy voedingspatroon volgens 'n maankalender beplan eenvoudig onrealisties. Soos een hengelaar grappenderwys gesê het: "Die baars het nie my loodkop geignoreer omdat daar 'n sekelmaan was nie. Ek het hom net nie reg aangebied nie."

Wat sê die wetenskap?

Die waarheid lê waarskynlik êrens tussen die twee uiterstes. Wetenskaplike navorsing oor die invloed van maanfases op varswater roofvisse het gemengde resultate opgelewer. Sommige studies toon 'n geringe verband tussen vangste en spesifieke maanfases, terwyl ander geen beduidende korrelasie kon bewys nie.

Wat wel duidelik is, is dat die maan een van baie faktore is wat moontlik visgedrag beïnvloed.

Tydens die broeiseisoen kan die maan 'n groter rol speel. Gedurende ander tye van die jaar word die invloed dikwels oorskadu deur weerpatrone, watertemperatuur en voedselbeskikbaarheid. Die meeste visbioloë stem saam dat geen enkele faktor ooit in isolasie beoordeel kan word nie. 'n Hengelaar wat slegs op die maan fokus en ander veranderlikes ignoreer, gaan waarskynlik teleurgesteld wees.

Die Suid-Afrikaanse perspektief

In Suid-Afrika hoor 'n mens dikwels uiteenlopende stories. Sommige hengelaars sweer dat groot visse gedurende

die volmaan meer aktief is, veral in die lente en vroeë somer wanneer die broeiseisoen begin.

Ander wys weer daarop dat hulle hul persoonlike rekords op heeltemal gewone dae gevang het sonder enige spesiale maantoestande. Kyk 'n mens na kompetisie-uitslae oor die afgelope jare, is dit moeilik om 'n duidelike patroon te identifiseer. Groot sakke vis word tydens volmane gevang, maar net so dikwels tydens kwartmane of afnemende mane. Dit dui daarop dat die maan alleen nie sukses waarborg nie.

Die psigologie van hengelaars

Daar is egter nog 'n interessante aspek wat dikwels oor die hoof gesien word.

Mense is van nature geneig om patrone te soek. Wanneer 'n hengelaar sy grootste vis ooit gedurende 'n volmaan vang, onthou hy daardie detail. As hy egter tien keer tydens 'n volmaan gaan visvang sonder sukses, word daardie uitstappies maklik vergeet. Hierdie verskynsel staan bekend as bevestigingsvooroordeel. Ons onthou die gebeurtenisse wat ons bestaande oortuigings ondersteun en ignoreer dikwels die wat dit weerspreek. Dit beteken nie die maan het geen invloed nie. Dit beteken bloot dat ons versigtig moet wees om nie elke sukses of mislukking uitsluitlik aan die maan toe te skryf nie.

My mening

Persoonlik glo ek die maan speel wel 'n rol, maar waarskynlik nie so groot soos baie hengelaars dink nie. Ek sien dit eerder as 'n klein stukkie van 'n baie groot legkaart.

As die watertemperatuur reg is, dit die regte seisoen is, die weer stabiel is en die visse aktief eet, kan 'n gunstige maanperiode dalk daardie ekstra voordeel bied. Maar geen maanfase gaan 'n swak aanbieding, verkeerde aas of gebrek aan kennis regmaak nie. Die beste hengelaars in die wêreld fokus eerstens op die faktore wat hulle kan beheer: hul toerusting, tegniek, kennis van die water en vermoë om baars te vind. As die maan hulle 'n bietjie ekstra selfvertroue gee, des te beter.

Die finale uitspraak

Maak die maanfase saak? Ja, waarskynlik tot 'n mate.

Is dit die belangrikste faktor in baarshengel? Beslis nie.

Die maan kan moontlik die tydsberekening van voeding of broei beïnvloed, maar dit vervang nie goeie hengelvernuif nie.

Aan die einde van die dag bly een feit onveranderd: Die suksesvolste hengelaars is gewoonlik diegene wat gereeld op die water is, die omstandighede verstaan en bereid is om voortdurend aan te pas.

En êrens daar buite, ongeag wat die maankalender sê, eet 'n groot baars waarskynlik op hierdie oomblik 'n bloukurper omdat dit eenvoudig is wat baars doen.

Miskien is dit die enigste waarheid waaroor beide kante van die debat kan saamstem. 🐟

**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaarshengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*

THE NEW BASS DAD

A dedication to all the new bass dads



The first walk down to the dam

>> Jay Röhm-Williams*

Bass fishing changed my life personally for the better and I thank my lucky stars I had a dad who took the time to share his passion for the sport with me. There was no telling if I would even enjoy bass fishing but that was never the goal in the first place. I always remember fondly the countless trips all over in search of new bassing waters but never realised the extent of what it cost to make those adventures happen. I'm not just talking about financial output of course but more of things money just can't buy like patience, support, time, endurance and more patience again. Fast forward life as it continues and now I recently found myself coming full circle when I too became a new father, changing my life for the better once more. This is truly when if I thought I knew what sacrifices were all about before, I had another thing coming for sure.

Besides monumental daily changes to one's life prior, as a dedicated bass angler I perceived my active engagement within the bass sporting arena to carry on like business as usual. Boy was I delusional and in for a rude awakening which now looking back was always going to be obvious but points to me for optimism I guess. I soon came to full terms with what it meant to enter the incredible world of parenthood with whom so many bass angling dads had

joined before me. It was plain as day I was never going to stop bass fishing but my whole outlook towards how I now went about continuing my passion needed readjusting. I wish I knew in advance a couple of things regarding this matter to say the least but no one within my bassing crew had the experience. That been said if you too are in a similar boat or soon to be, I only offer the following personal opinions and advice freely to be taken as pleased. Nothing can prepare you for fatherhood and no matter what you read, watch or listen to each person's experience is and always will be unique. An inkling of hindsight into my upbringing had now begun to creep in slowly. It allowed me to begin edging towards what I suspect is a long road to which eventually I will understand the magnitude of the gift of bassing my old man passed onwards.



The sun rises on the next generation

The question remains though how do I continue from here pursuing what I love? Well it definitely is and won't be as easy perhaps for some new bassing dads but fortunately your journey doesn't end here. Your free time will definitely be more occupied for the next first year or so but it's really a small price to pay. The fishing sessions might become slightly less and the time spent on the water halved though overall we still get to be out there. Planning your sessions now might evolve around things like nap times and sleep windows but you get used to it. For myself it became about picking the right fishing conditions more carefully and ensuring priorities were seen to efficiently. Plus that extra back massage helped rack up the brownie points I'm sure. Putting half joking jests asides though even when we feel the need to go fish and reset alone, secretly you wishing your little one to grow up faster so she (or he) can join you. In the beginning stages after maybe not been on the water for a while something clicks where you realise just how much more each session starts to mean. Some new bassing dads might have it easier than others and that's okay too because like I said my experience will never be the same as yours.

Sessions become more precious and the thoughts of what shared father fishing milestones might still be yet to come is something to look forward to. At the end of each session going home gets easier than before because hey who doesn't want to see their little ones face again. Time really does fly by too and before you know it they actually will be joining you out on the water. I personally look forward to that and even if they don't take to the sport I wouldn't be discouraged or feel crest fallen.

Above all else I think the most important point of all of this is the fact that parenthood does change all aspects



of life forever, including bass fishing. For bass angling new dads out there maybe you can relate and to the new bassing dads yet to be I say don't worry. To the bassing dads before us perhaps you remember a journey once similar to these sentiments shared and your chuckle would not be offensive. This is something for everyone around the entire world who shares the common love for catching bass and knows what it's like to be a dad. So do not fear your bass sessions will get longer again and keep gently spreading the passion to that next generation. Hats off to all the bassing dads out there both young and old, we are grateful and I salute you. Rods out and safe fishing everyone! 🎣

**Jay Röhm-Williams is a seasoned bass angler with a wealth of knowledge, and since 2018 he has been sharing his expertise with fellow bass enthusiasts, hoping they'll discover the same passion and enjoyment he finds in this unique sport.*



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Op my houtbordjie

BUZZBAIT LEMME

>> *Philip Kemp**

In hierdie reeks deel ons graag 'n paar truuks, of beter bekend as "hacks", met ons lesers

Een van die eenvoudigste maniere om jou buzzbait se klank en waterverplasing te verander, is om een of twee gaatjies in die swailem te boor.

Deur ekstra gate in die lemme te boor, skep 'n harder gorrelgeluid en 'n duidelike spoor van borrels in die water. Hierdie verandering boots beseerde aasvisse na en help om die aas vir visse weg te steek. Dit veroorsaak dat visse die aas aggressiewer aanval. Die aas word dan meer effektief in veral troebel water, of tydens lae lig toestande. Hier is hoe ek dit doen:



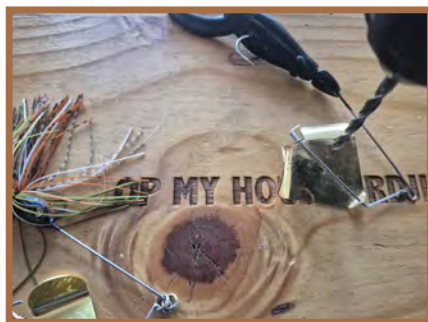
Stap 1: Verwyder die lem

Dit is egter nie nodig nie (soos op die foto waargeneem kan word), alhoewel dit die werk baie makliker maak en voorkom dat die draadraam buig wanneer jy boor.



Stap 2 - Kies die regte boorpunt

Gebruik 'n klein metaalboorpunt van ongeveer 4 tot 5mm. Die gaatjie moet groot genoeg wees om water deur te laat, maar nie te groot dat dit die lem verswak nie.



Stap 3: Merk die posisie (Opsioneel)

Merk die plek waar jy die gaatjie wil boor (soos op die foto). Twee gaatjies is voldoende; een naby die middel van die lem en 'n tweede effens laer, met genoeg spasie tussen hulle.

(Let wel: Moet nie te naby aan die kante boor nie, aangesien dit die lem kan vervorm.)



Stap 4: Boor stadig

Plaas die lem op 'n plankie en boor teen 'n lae spoed.

Wenk: Laat die boorpunt die werk doen - moenie te hard druk nie. Dit gee 'n netjiese, ronde gaatjie sonder om die dun metaal te buig.

Stap 5: Verwyder skerp rante

Gebruik fyn skuurpapier of 'n klein vyl om enige skerp brame rondom die gaatjies te verwyder. Die lem lyk net beter afgewerk.

Stap 5 - Monteer die lem

Sit die lem terug op die buzzbait (indien die lem verwyder is), en maak seker dit draai glad sonder enige weerstand. 🌀

Stuur gerus jou fotos en storie vir ons na philip@sabass.com indien jy sukses met hierdie truuk gehad het.

**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaars-hengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*

Wenk:

Ek verkies om twee gaatjies te boor. Dit gee die buzzbait 'n voller, growwer klank en laat die water borreltjies maak. Op dae wanneer die baars aggressief jag of wanneer die water effens gekleur is, kan hierdie klein verandering die verskil maak tussen 'n stil dag en 'n hengeldag om te onthou.

Soos met alle aanpassings aan kunsas, eksperimenteer gerus. Party dae verkies die vis 'n stiller buzzbait, terwyl hulle op ander dae die ekstra geraas eenvoudig nie kan weerstaan nie. Soms is 'n klein gaatjie al wat nodig is om jou volgende groot baars te oorreed om toe te slaan.

SA BASS EXISTS FOR ONE REASON: TO HELP YOU BECOME THE BEST BASS ANGLER YOU CAN BE



Great anglers aren't defined by the boats they own or the tackle they buy. They're defined by the decisions they make before every cast.



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Rekordbaars vir Almal?

Die debat oor Suid-Afrika se baarsrekords

>> Die onlangse artikel deur die bekende buitlugjoernalis George Robey het weer die kollig geplaas op 'n onderwerp wat al jare lank onder Suid-Afrikaanse baarshengelaars bespreek word: Wie behoort geregtig te wees om 'n amptelike Suid-Afrikaanse baarsrekord te registreer?

>> *Philip Kemp**

Robey gebruik die voorbeeld van Leon Cronje se ongelooflike 7,3kg grootbekbaars wat in April 2015 by Albert Fallsdam gevang is. Volgens die artikel sou dié vis destyds die grootste grootbekbaars gewees het wat nog in Suid-Afrika gevang is, maar omdat Cronje nie op daardie stadium by 'n geaffilieerde SABAA-klub aangesluit was nie, kon die vangs nie as 'n amptelike Suid-Afrikaanse rekord erken word nie. Die volgende dag het Cronje wel by 'n klub aangesluit, maar teen daardie tyd was die vis reeds teruggesit. Dit laat 'n mens wonder: Is die huidige stelsel nog die beste manier om Suid-Afrika se hengelrekords te bestuur?

Waarom bestaan rekordstelsels?

Voordat ons die huidige stelsel kritiseer, moet ons eers verstaan waarom rekordboeke oorspronklik geskep is. Rekords dien verskeie belangrike doelwitte:

- Om buitengewone vangste te dokumenteer.
- Om geskiedkundige data te bewaar.
- Om hengelaars aan te moedig om die sport te beoefen.
- Om spesies en hul groeipotensiaal te monitor.
- Om die potensiaal van damme en watersisteme uit te lig.
- Om geloofwaardige statistieke vir navorsing te verskaf.

Wanneer iemand hoor van 'n 7kg-plus grootbekbaars

uit Albert Falls-, Loskop- of selfs Koppiesdam, inspireer dit ander hengelaars. Dit skep belangstelling in die sport en bevorder toerisme na daardie gebiede. In dié opsig het Robey beslis 'n geldige punt.

Waarom doen Suid-Afrika dit anders?

Robey vra verskeie belangrike vrae. Die grootste een is waarskynlik: "Waarom kan enige hengelbaar in Amerika, of onder International Game Fish Association (IGFA), 'n rekord registreer, maar nie in Suid-Afrika nie?"

Die antwoord lê gedeeltelik in die geskiedenis van georganiseerde sporthengel. In Suid-Afrika word nasionale rekords tradisioneel deur sporthengelliggame bestuur. Hierdie organisasies funksioneer binne die raamwerk van SASCOC en internasionale sportfederasies. Die rekordboeke was oorspronklik nie bedoel as algemene hengelrekords vir die publiek nie, maar eerder as rekords wat binne georganiseerde sporthengel behaal is. Met ander woorde: die rekordstelsel het ontwikkel as deel van 'n sportstruktuur en nie as 'n algemene nasionale rekordregister vir alle hengelaars nie. Dit verklaar waarom lidmaatskap vereis word.

Die stelsel is ontwerp om: rekords te verifieer, bedrog te voorkom, eenvormige prosedures te verseker, en 'n amptelike dissiplinêre proses te hê indien dispute ontstaan.



George Robey is in Suid-Afrika bekend as die invoerder van Venom Baits

Hoewel dit logies klink, is die vraag of die model nog by moderne hengel pas?

Die wêreld het verander

Toe baie van hierdie reëls dekades gelede geskryf is, was daar nie slimfone nie.

Vandag dra feitlik elke hengelaar 'n hoë-resolusie kamera in sy sak. Digitale skale kan foto's neem van gewigte. GPS-koördinate word outomaties aangeteken.

Video-opnames kan die hele vangs dokumenteer.

Daarom ontstaan die argument dat moderne tegnologie dit moontlik maak om rekordvangste geloofwaardig te verifieer sonder dat die hengelaar noodwendig vooraf by 'n klub geregistreer hoef te wees.

Amerika se staatsrekords werk dikwels op hierdie beginsel. Die fokus is op die geldigheid van die vangs, nie op die hengelaar se lidmaatskapstatus nie.

Die Leon Cronje-geval

Leon Cronje se vis bly een van die mees interessante "wat as?"-verhale in Suid-Afrikaanse baarshengel. Volgens die beskikbare inligting was die vis in uitstekende toestand en is dit onmiddellik teruggesit om die vis se welstand te beskerm.

Dit wys iets belangriks. Cronje was nie besig om roem te soek nie. Hy was besig om verantwoordelike vang-en-vrylaat-hengel toe te pas.

Vandag, in 'n era waar bewaring al belangriker word, is dit 'n aspek wat groot waardering verdien. Baie hengelaars glo steeds dat daardie vis 'n historiese vangs was wat erkenning verdien het.

Nog voorbeelde van nie-amptelike reuse

Interessant genoeg is Cronje nie die enigste voorbeeld nie. Oor die jare was daar verskeie berigte van reuse grootbekbaars uit damme soos Albert Falls, Inanda, Loskop en selfs private waters wat nooit amptelik geregistreer is nie. Sommige hengelaars het eenvoudig nie van die reëls geweet nie. Ander was nie klublede nie. Nog ander wou nie die moeite doen om deur die administratiewe proses te gaan nie. Hierdie vangste word dan deel van hengellegendes eerder as deel van die amptelike rekordgeskiedenis.

My mening

Ek verstaan beide kante van die argument. Aan die een kant is dit noodsaaklik dat rekords streng geverifieer word. Sonder vaste reëls kan rekordboeke vinnig hul geloofwaardigheid verloor. Aan die ander kant dink ek dit is tyd dat Suid-Afrika 'n meer inklusiewe benadering oorweeg. 'n Moontlike oplossing is om twee afsonderlike kategorieë te skep naamlik een vir sporthengelrekords en 'n ander een vir oop nasionale rekords waarby enige Suid-Afrikaanse burger kan aansoek doen. In albei gevalle moet streng vereistes gestel word wat die volgende insluit:

- 'n Gesertifiseerde skaal moet gebruik word om die gewig te bepaal,
- Getuies, foto's en video om vangs te verifieer,



Die skrywer en George Robey

- Lengte- en omtrekmetings van die betrokke vis, en
- Onafhanklike verifikasie van die vangs.

Só behou ons geloofwaardigheid, maar gee ook erkenning aan uitsonderlike vangste deur gewone hengelaars.

Wat sou die voordele wees?

'n Meer oop rekordstelsel kan meer mense by die sport betrek, jong hengelaars inspireer, meer data kan oor visgroeï versamel word, die profiel van Suid-Afrikaanse baarshengel kan verhoog, en die openbare beeld van georganiseerde hengel kan verbeter word.

Dit beteken nie dat klubhengel minder belangrik word nie. Inteendeel, dit kan selfs meer belangstelling in klubs skep.

Slotgedagtes

Alu-Boats, based in White River, Mpumalanga George Robey se artikel vra ongemaklike vrae, maar soms is dit juis sulke vrae wat vooruitgang bring. Hy is reg wanneer hy sê dat groot rekordvisse almal inspireer. Die verhaal van Leon Cronje se 7,3kg Albert Falls-monster word vandag nog deur hengelaars vertel, meer as 'n dekade later.

Terselfdertyd moet ons erken dat die huidige stelsel nie sonder rede bestaan nie. Die reëls is geskep om die integriteit van rekordboeke te beskerm. Die uitdaging vir Suid-Afrikaanse hengeladministrateurs is om die balans te vind tussen geloofwaardigheid en toeganklikheid. Miskien is die vraag nie of die huidige stelsel verkeerd is nie. Miskien is die werklike vraag of dit nog volledig aangepas is vir die moderne era van vang-en-vrylaat, digitale tegnologie en 'n hengelgemeenskap wat veel groter is as net die geaffilieerde klubstrukture.

As Suid-Afrika daarin kan slaag om daardie balans te vind, sal die volgende "Leon Cronje" nie hoef te wonder of sy vis erken sal word nie. Die fokus sal wees waar dit hoort – op die buitengewone vis self en die storie daaragter. 🐟

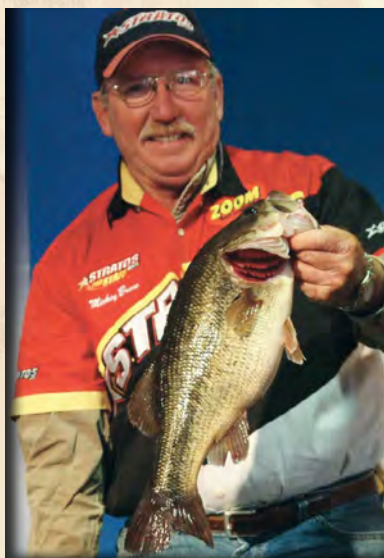
**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaar-hengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*



Die Heldesaal

MICKEY BRUCE (1951-2024)

Wanneer daar oor die grootste name in professionele baarshengel gepraat word, val die kollig gewoonlik op legendes soos Rick Clunn, Kevin VanDam en Roland Martin.



Mickey Bruce het ondanks al sy groot suksesse altyd verkies om op die agtergrond te bly



Mickey Bruce se FLW Tour vierde plek wen in 2005

Tog is daar een hengelaar wat oor dekades heen stilweg 'n ongelooflike nalatenskap opgebou het sonder om altyd die erkenning te kry wat hy verdien. Daardie man is Mickey Bruce. Baie omstrede is hy egter nooit in die Bass Fishing Hall of Fame opgeneem nie.

Graag wil ek eers die woorde van Jimmy Horton aanhaal:-

"When I was on the board of directors for the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame, I wanted to nominate Mickey Bruce and Ron Shuffield as nominees for the Hall. I was told they didn't have the credentials. I then listened as the board wanted to nominate people that I had never heard of."

The Bass Fishing Hall of Fame is strangely different from every other Hall of Fame in other sports as it is run

like a self serving country club instead of embracing those who were at the top of the sport.

The fact that Zell Rowland, Mickey Bruce, Alton Jones, Ron Shuffield, Jim Bitter, Joe Thomas, Fish Fishburne and others have not been nominated along with last years debacle of Edwin Evers not being a first ballot hall of famer tells us all we need to know.

It's time for new leadership and to get away from the good old boy club. It's a shame what has happened to the BFHOF."

Mickey Bruce is op 25 Julie 1951 gebore en het sy tuiste in Buford, Georgia, gemaak, 'n dorp wat wêreldwyd bekend is vir die uitstekende baarshengel op Lake Lanier. Dit is ook hier waar Bruce sy vaardighede ontwikkel het en uiteindelik een van

die mees gerespekteerde professionele hengelaars in Amerika geword het. Sy liefde vir die buitelewe het verder gestrek as visvang, met jag en golf wat ook groot passies was.

Bruce se loopbaan spreek van self. Hy het aan 'n verstommende 185 Bassmaster-toernooie deelgeneem en later ook 59 FLW Tour-toernooie gehengel. Gedurende sy loopbaan het hy meer as \$966,000 se prysgeld verdien, 'n merkwaardige prestasie in 'n era waar pryse heelwat kleiner was as vandag. Hy het drie oorwinnings op die Bassmaster-toer behaal en later ook 'n FLW Tour-oorwinning bygevoeg, wat sy status as een van die sport se mees konstante presteerders bevestig het.

Een van sy grootste oorwinnings was die gesogte Super BASS II-

>> Philip Kemp*



Mickey Bruce

toernooi op Lake Lanier in 1983, waar hy die eerste plek en \$100,000 gewen het – destyds een van die grootste uitbetalings in professionele hengel. Hy het later ook die Bassmaster Invitational op Lake Lanier gewen en in 1989 'n indrukwekkende oorwinning op die St. Lawrence-rivier in New York behaal. Sy FLW Tour-oorwinning in 1999 het gewys dat hy maklik tussen die twee grootste professionele toere kon aanpas.

Hoewel Bruce nooit daarin geslaag het om die Bassmaster Classic te wen nie, het hy hom elf keer vir dié wêreldkampioenskap gekwalifiseer, 'n prestasie wat slegs deur die beste hengelaars bereik word. Hy het twee keer derde geëindig, eers in 1989 op High Rock Lake en weer in 1990 op Lay Lake. Min hengelaars kan spog met soveel jare van mededingendheid teen die wêreld se beste.

Wat Bruce besonders gemaak het, was sy vermoë om konsekwent vis te vang ongeag die omstandighede. Hy was nie bekend vir dramatiese vertonings of groot uitsprake nie. Intendeel, hy het 'n rustige, nederige benadering gevolg en sy werk op die water laat praat. Mededingers het hom gerespekteer vir sy tegniese kennis, uitstekende bootbeheer en vermoë om selfs onder geweldige druk die regte besluite te neem.

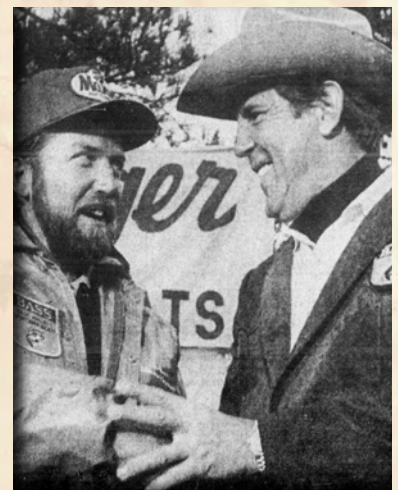
Baie jong professionele hengelaars

het Bruce as mentor beskou. Sy bereidwilligheid om kennis te deel en ander aan te moedig, het hom geliefd gemaak binne die Amerikaanse hengelgemeenskap. Hy het bewys dat ware sukses nie net aan trofee gemeet word nie, maar ook aan die invloed wat jy op ander mense het.

Sy persoonlike lewe was net so belangrik soos sy loopbaan. Bruce was vir 34 jaar getroud met sy vrou, Susie. Sy is ongelukkig 'n tydjie voor hom oorlede. Familie en vriende het hom beskryf as 'n lojale vriend, toegewyde familielid en iemand wat altyd tyd gemaak het vir ander. Sy waardes van nederigheid, eerlikheid en harde werk het hom oral vergesel.

In Oktober 2024 het die hengelwêreld afskeid geneem van Mickey Bruce toe hy op 73-jarige ouderdom oorlede is. Sy afsterwe het 'n groot leemte gelaat, met talle professionele hengelaars wat hulde gebring het aan 'n man wat soveel vir die sport beteken het. Alhoewel hy nooit die Bassmaster Classic gewen het nie, het hy iets dalk selfs belangriker bereik: die respek van sy eweknieë en 'n nalatenskap wat nog lank onthou sal word.

Vir Suid-Afrikaanse baarshengelaars is daar waardevolle lesse in Mickey Bruce se verhaal. Hy herinner ons daaraan dat volgehoue harde werk, deursettingsvermoë en nederigheid



Rickey Bruce word in 1983 deur Ray Scott geluk gewens na nog 'n groot oorwinning

uiteindelik groter is as roem. Sy loopbaan wys dat ware grootheid nie noodwendig gemeet word aan hoeveel titels jy wen nie, maar aan hoe lank jy op die hoogste vlak kan presteer en hoe jy ander langs die pad inspireer.

Mickey Bruce was dalk nie altyd die grootste naam op die voorblaaie nie, maar hy was sonder twyfel een van professionele baarshengel se grootste ambassadeurs. Sy nalatenskap leef voort in elke hengelaar wat glo dat karakter, toewyding en konsekwentheid die ware fondament van sukses is. 🐟

**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaars-hengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*

QUIZ

FIND

THE WORD

THERE ARE 16 DIFFERENT NAMES HIDDEN
IN THIS PUZZLE, SEE IF YOU CAN FIND AND
ENCIRCLE ALL OF THEM.

Cabbage
Clearwater
Crawworm
Diameter
Estimate
Float-tube
Golden-shiners
Inflatable
Lay-down
Lock
Natural
Pattern
Post-spawn
Ratio
Saddles
Size

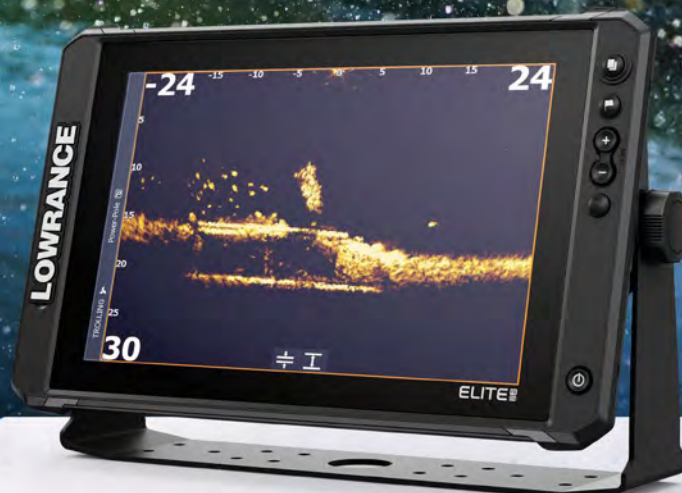
W	E	S	T	Y	U	N	O	P	Q	A	S	D	F	G	H
A	C	U	P	L	W	L	L	M	J	K	L	M	N	O	P
D	A	I	A	O	C	L	E	A	R	W	A	T	E	R	S
F	B	O	D	C	O	M	Q	R	O	P	Q	S	I	Z	E
B	B	Y	D	K	K	R	R	N	K	L	R	N	N	P	Q
S	A	D	D	L	E	S	P	Q	N	E	P	Q	F	S	T
L	G	I	G	G	L	I	N	O	N	M	N	O	L	Q	R
H	E	A	H	P	Q	J	S	I	P	C	E	T	A	B	M
T	A	M	J	X	O	I	H	K	L	J	R	A	T	I	O
Z	D	E	G	B	N	S	J	E	S	T	I	M	A	T	E
T	D	T	D	H	N	A	T	U	R	A	L	E	B	U	B
Z	F	E	Z	E	O	W	Q	S	O	P	Q	R	L	T	U
V	G	R	D	Z	K	O	M	B	P	A	T	T	E	R	N
W	F	L	O	A	T	T	U	B	E	A	P	C	E	T	U
O	O	Z	V	S	X	K	C	R	A	W	W	O	R	M	B
G	K	X	B	C	N	N	P	Q	N	O	P	N	R	S	T



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Die baars kon my goudkleurige Rat-L-Trap nie uitlos nie

WINTERBAARS OP DIE KROKODILRIVIER

Waar patrone elke dag verander

>> Philip Kemp*

Daar is min plekke wat dieselfde gevoel van avontuur bied as die Krokodilrivier gedurende die hartjie van die winter. Die rivier leef (selfs wanneer die baars traag is) en elke draai, stroomversnelling en stil poel hou die belofte van 'n onvergeetlike vis.

Toe my goeie hengelvriend, Janus Pretorius, my nooi vir 'n twee dae lange winter-uitstappie, was die vooruitsig eenvoudig te aanloklik om van die hand te wys. Janus het die vorige week besonder goed gevaar en het 'n paar uitstekende mooi visse op groot swimbaits gevang. Die plan was eenvoudig: die eerste dag sou ons bokant Roodekopjesdam hengel en die tweede dag sou ons Janus se netjiese aluminium boot by Boesmanland, onderkant die damwal, te water laat.

Soos dit dikwels met hengel gebeur, het die vis egter ander planne gehad.

Ons het eers omstreeks tienuur die eerste oggend op die water gekom. Die winterson het stadig begin warm word en die rivier was ongelooflik mooi. Oral was daar voëls, wild en die rustige atmosfeer waarvoor die Krokodilrivier bekend is. Die grootste verrassing van die dag was egter 'n reuse krokodil van ongeveer drie en 'n half meter lank wat rustig op die wal gelê en sonbaai het. Dit was 'n

indrukwekkende gesig en 'n mens besef gou dat jy net 'n besoeker in hierdie natuurparadys is.

Janus het natuurlik eerste die groot swimbaits uitgehaal waarmee hy die vorige week sukses behaal het. Hierdie keer wou die groot kunsas egter eenvoudig nie die groter visse oortuig nie. Gelukkig het Janus steeds 'n paar mooi baars op kleiner "crankbaits" gevang. Ek het besluit om plan te verander en na een van my grootste staatmakers oor te skakel... Damiki se Mr Jumbo Grub. Dit het nie lank geneem voordat die eerste baars die grub opgeraap het nie. Soms herinner so 'n dag jou weer daaraan dat eenvoud dikwels beter werk as die nuutste neigings.

Ek het daarna lank met verskillende "jerkbaits" geëksperimenteer, maar sonder enige sukses. Uiteindelik het ek my ou staatmaker uitgehaal; 'n goudkleurige, klanklose Rat-L-Trap. Hierdie kunsas het my al deur talle moeilike hengeldae gehelp. Wanneer baars onder hengel druk verkeer en die water effe-kleurig is, verkies hulle dikwels 'n stiller aanbieding sonder die harde geluide waaraan hulle gewoon geraak het. Weereens het hierdie ou gunsteling sy waarde bewys en kon ek laatmiddag my twee grootste baars land.

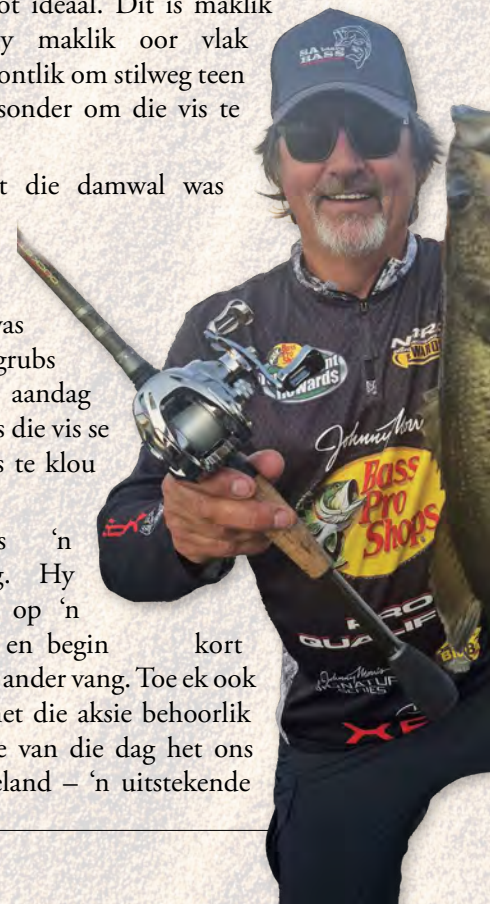
Teen die einde van die dag het ons bykans 30 baars geland – 'n uitstekende wintersessie en 'n bewys dat volharding uiteindelik beloon word.

Daardie aand het Janus en sy vrou, Leandi, my somer behoorlik bederf. Buiten die heerlike kuier was die unieke sushi van die lekkerste wat ek in 'n baie lang tyd geëet het. Sulke oomblikke maak 'n hengeluitstappie soveel meer as net die visvang self.

Die volgende oggend was ons vroeg by Boesmanland, waar ek en Janus sy Tal-Tec aluminium boot te water gelaat het. Wat 'n netjiese, praktiese boot! Vir rivierhengel is so 'n ligte aluminiumboot ideaal. Dit is maklik hanteerbaar, stabiel, gly maklik oor vlak gedeeltes en maak dit moontlik om stilweg teen die rivier op te beweeg sonder om die vis te versteur.

Die water onderkant die damwal was helder skoon – amper te helder. Aanvanklik wou niks werk wat die vorige dag suksesvol was nie. Groot "swimbaits", grubs en "crankbaits" het min aandag gekry. Weereens moes ons die vis se bui lees eerder as om vas te klou aan gister se sukses.

Toe maak Janus 'n eenvoudige verandering. Hy bind 'n gewone Senko op 'n Ned-rig loodkoppie vas en begin kort voor lank een baars ná die ander vang. Toe ek ook die patroon begin volg het die aksie behoorlik losgebars. Teen die einde van die dag het ons weer bykans 20 baars geland – 'n uitstekende





Senkos op 'n Ned-strop het die tweede dag baie goed gewerk

vangs vir 'n koue Julie-dag.

Een van die interessantste waarnemings was waar ons die meeste vis gevang het. Byna al die baars het in die sogenaamde “eddies” gelê.

'n “Eddie” is daardie rustige draaikolke langs sterk vloeiende water. Hierdie areas bied aan die vis 'n plek waar hulle min energie gebruik, maar steeds kos kan onderskep wat deur die stroom afgespoel word. Dit is 'n klassieke rivierpatroon wat hengelaars nooit moet miskyk nie.

Rivierhengel verskil op baie maniere van damhengel. Die stroom bepaal waar suurstof, kos en uiteindelik die baars voorkom. Klippe, omgevalle bome, grasbanke en stroombrekers word natuurlike versamelpunte waar roofvis wag vir 'n maklike maaltyd. Daarom is dit belangrik om nie net na die oewers te kyk nie, maar die water self te “lees”. Elke verandering in stroomspoed of waterkleur vertel 'n storie.

Hierdie uitstappie het weereens bewys dat suksesvolle winterhengel nie noodwendig afhang van die duurste of grootste kunsas nie. Die vermoë om aan te pas, patrone raak te sien en vertroue in eenvoudige aanbiedings te hê, bly een van die grootste sleutels tot sukses.

Twee dae, ongeveer vyftig baars, goeie geselskap, uitstekende kos, 'n indrukwekkende krokodil en 'n pragtige rivier – dit is presies waarom 'n mens keer op keer terugkeer na die Krokodilrivier. Soms is die mooiste herinneringe nie noodwendig die grootste vis nie, maar die mense saam met wie jy die water deel en die lesse wat die rivier jou elke keer weer leer. 🐟

**Philip Kemp is 'n gesoute swartbaarthengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*

Die skrywer met een van sy groter baars wat hy met 'n Rat-L-Trap gevang het



Janus het gou die patroon vir die tweede dag bepaal



Janus Pretorius met 'n gesonde vet baars



Ons Tal-Tec alluminium bootjie was ideaal op die rivier

DAIWA

Twenty years ago, the STEEZ® nameplate redefined the industry by establishing the global benchmark for high-performance tackle. These aren't luxury showpieces – they are purpose-built fishing machines engineered to amplify an angler's technical abilities and provide unwavering dependability under pressure. Today, DAIWA® honours that two-decade legacy of Japanese craftsmanship with the release of the STEEZ® SV LIGHT TW 100.



“The STEEZ has never been about following trends; it's about setting the standard that the rest of the industry eventually tries to follow,” said DAIWA Field Marketing Manager, Chris Martin. “The SV LIGHT TW 100 is the highest expression of that 20-year journey. It is, quite simply, the best in its class, backed by the kind of mechanical precision you can only achieve through two decades of category leadership.”

About Daiwa Corporation

This isn't merely an evolution; it is the realization of DAIWA's ULTIMATE CASTING DESIGN – a series of the most advanced technological features to achieve the epitome of casting control, distance, and overall casting performance. By integrating the HYPERDRIVE DESIGN™ platform as well, DAIWA has created a high-resolution instrument where peak casting distance, amplified sensitivity, and lasting smoothness converge into a single, cohesive system.

The SV LIGHT TW 100 is built on a specialized magnesium foundation. By utilizing magnesium for the frame and side plate, DAIWA achieves a structural rigidity and weight reduction that even aluminium cannot match. This ultra-lightweight magnesium body does more than just reduce fatigue; it serves as a high-sensitivity conductor, transmitting the most subtle vibrations from the lure directly to the angler's hand.

Daiwa's first spinning reel rolled off the assembly line in 1955. Since then, the company has grown into one of the largest and most influential tackle companies in the world today. To handle sales and distribution in the United States, Daiwa Corporation first opened its doors on September 26, 1966, operating from a small facility in Culver City, California. Today, based in Foothill Ranch, California, Daiwa Corporation sells tackle throughout the United States, Canada, Central and South America. From the very beginning, Daiwa's emphasis has been upon innovation and quality. The result is a long list of product features, design and materials that have become standards for the fishing tackle industry. Daiwa's long-standing record of innovation has left a visible mark on the majority of tackle manufactured today and continues to advance the sport of fishing.

Trade Investigations

The Trump Administration announced dozens of investigations under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, citing unfair or discriminatory trade practices by U.S. trading partners.

New 301 Investigations

These investigations cover most major trading partners and address areas of concern such as industrial excess capacity and forced labour concerns. The new Section 301 investigations would cover more than 70 countries, including the industry's top trading partners.

U.S. Trade Ambassador Greer has indicated that the administration intends to conduct these investigations on an “accelerated timeframe” – which could result in new tariffs just as the Section 122 tariffs expire in July.

Below is a summary of the recently announced Section 301 investigations:

- **Investigation Relating to Structural Excess Capacity and Production in Manufacturing Sectors**

The investigations will determine whether those acts, policies, and practices are unreasonable or discriminatory and burden or restrict U.S. commerce.

Countries subject to investigation: China, the European Union, Singapore, Switzerland, Norway, Indonesia,

Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Korea, Vietnam, Taiwan, Bangladesh, Mexico, Japan, and India.

- **Investigation Relating to Failure to Take Action on Forced Labour**

The investigation will determine whether acts, policies, and practices of each of these economies related to the failure to impose and effectively enforce a ban on the importation of goods produced with forced labour are unreasonable or discriminatory and burden or restrict U.S. commerce.

60 countries are subject to investigation.

As a reminder, many of the Section 301 tariffs placed on imports from China beginning in 2018, including many marine products, remain in place and are likely to be expanded and increased.



Emil Wagner Secures EQ Victory At Lake Champlain

In record-setting fashion, Minn Kota and Humminbird pro Emil Wagner captured first place at the Bassmaster Elite Qualifier on Lake Champlain, September 18–20, totaling 15 bass for a three-day weight of 69 pounds, 2 ounces – the heaviest three-day winning total in B.A.S.S. history at Champlain. Wagner earned a \$58,049 prize and proudly raised the inaugural Bassmaster Elite Qualifier trophy on the Plattsburgh Boat Basin.

Already qualified for the 2026 Bassmaster Elite Series, Wagner came to Champlain with two goals: to fish for the win and to clock valuable time on one of his favourite bodies of water ahead of the 2026 Elite Series event at the same location. After a 20-plus hour drive from Georgia, he methodically worked the lake over three days. He started with a 22-2 limit on Day One, followed by a 23-9 limit on Day Two that put him into a narrow lead heading into Championship Saturday. That's when things got interesting, and Wagner had to fish his instincts and rely heavily on his equipment on the final day.

"I caught so many fish on the first two days, and coupled with the wind on the final day, the fish just vanished on me," he said. "The bait was gone and the bass had moved out. I knew I needed to make a move around noon, so I went to another area I had found in practice – luckily, I was able to fish it and the smallmouth were set up where I could catch them."

He sealed the win with a final day limit of 23-7, finishing just 13 ounces ahead of second place. The tournament allowed Wagner to further hone his strategy in the storied smallmouth bass fishery, but ultimately his success came down to flawless decision-making and leveraging his equipment.

"Coming into this event, I thought I could catch fish shallow in the Inland Sea, where these derbies usually go down," he said. "But with much of the field there, and the fish not how I wanted, I looked over the Humminbird LakeMaster map on the Humminbird APEX and headed to a less pressured portion of the lake, quickly finding productive water."

Wagner dialled in his plan, fishing a deepwater hole on the edges of a sandy flat, targeting fish either along the drop-off or suspended close-by over deeper water—key areas visible on his LakeMaster chip. Once in position, the Minn Kota Ultrex QUEST kept him on the spot despite heavy north winds.

"With LakeMaster, you can pick out spots before you even check anything with the boat," he said. "I swapped to the 52" shaft on the Ultrex QUEST before I came up; on the second day, I was taking waves over the bow constantly, and the motor kept me in place. I was able to cast to as many bass as I could see, and once hooked, I'd hit Spot-Lock and know I wasn't going anywhere. The precise foot-pedal movements let me find a smallmouth and cast right to it. It was a great week and Champlain is my favourite lake – I love catching smallmouth, and this is hands-down one of the best places."

"Emil is an outstanding ambassador for both Humminbird and Minn Kota," said Tim Price, Field Promotions Manager. "He's a very seasoned young angler, and we're proud of his hard work and focus throughout the season. His performance at Champlain is a perfect example of his commitment to the sport, and Emil truly represents the next generation of anglers."



GEAR UP

ICAST 2023 SPECIAL

The right lure can make all the difference when the bite is tough or the fish are fired up. In this edition of Gear Up, we take a look at eight of the newest bass fishing products making waves at ICAST this year.

Note: Many of these products will only be available in South Africa early 2027.



1. HEDDON SPIN'N IMAGE JR.

Heddon has revived one of its legendary bass lures with the all-new Spin'N Image Jr. This compact topwater bait combines a subtle walking action with a rotating tail blade that adds flash and vibration. It's an excellent choice when bass are feeding on smaller baitfish, especially during calm mornings and evenings. The downsized profile makes it deadly around docks, grass edges and shallow flats.

2. MEGABASS VISION 110+2 JR.

The famous Vision 110 family has a new member. The Vision 110+2 Jr. offers the same erratic darting action anglers love but in a smaller package that dives deeper. Designed for targeting pressured bass holding in deeper water, it excels with long pauses and sharp jerks, making it another premium jerkbait from Megabass.

3. BANDIT LURES BDT050 FINESSE CRANKBAIT

The BDT050 is purpose-built for the rapidly growing BFS (Bait Finesse System) market. At only 1.75 inches long, this tiny squarebill produces a tight wobble and excellent deflection around rock and timber. It's ideal for highly pressured fisheries where downsizing presentations often triggers extra bites.

4. BANDIT LURES BDT050D FINESSE DIVER

Joining the finesse lineup is the BDT050D, a deeper-diving version of the BDT050. It maintains the same compact profile while reaching fish holding below shallow cover. Its natural swimming action and precise tracking make it an excellent option for spinning or BFS tackle.

5. LEW'S ACCEL BAITCAST REEL

Lew's has introduced the Accel Baitcast Reel, offering premium casting performance at an affordable price. Featuring a lightweight frame, smooth retrieve and reliable braking system, the reel is designed for anglers wanting tournament-level performance without the premium price tag. Early reviews have been extremely positive.

6. LEW'S SPEED SPIN CRX

The new Speed Spin CRX spinning reel delivers silky smooth performance with a lightweight design and dependable drag system. Perfect for finesse presentations such as Ned rigs, shaky heads and drop-shotting, it offers impressive value for both weekend and tournament anglers.

7. SHIMANO CURADO 150 M

Shimano's new Curado 150 M builds on one of bass fishing's most respected reel platforms. Designed for increased versatility, it handles everything from lightweight finesse lures to heavier power-fishing techniques. Expect the smooth gearing, durability and casting performance that have made the Curado name famous.

8. G. LOOMIS IMX-PRO BFS ROD

G. Loomis has entered the BFS market with its first dedicated IMX-Pro BFS casting rod. Built for ultra-light presentations, it offers outstanding sensitivity and casting accuracy while maintaining the power needed to land quality bass. This rod is expected to become a favourite among finesse anglers.

30 STORES
9 PROVINCES



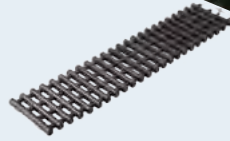
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South Africa

Dam Levels



Here is a list of the latest water levels of some of South Africa's biggest water reservoirs.

Eastern Cape	60.9%	↑↓
Beervlei Dam	0.0%	0.0%
Bridle Drift Dam	85.4%	-4.0%
Darlington Dam	48.4%	-26.8%
Impofu Dam	100.1%	-1.0%
Wriggleswade Dam	9.7%	-87.5%

Gauteng	100.3%	↑↓
Bronkhorstspuit	100.0%	-0.3%
Roodeplaat Dam	100.5%	-0.1%

Kwa-Zulu Natal	89.4%	↑↓
Albert Falls Dam	89.7%	-13.0%
Bivane Dam	99.6%	-0.5%
Goedertrouw Dam	93.8%	-2.8%
Inanda Dam	98.0%	-2.6%
Midmar Dam	90.0%	-4.1%
Ntshingwayo Dam	69.3%	-3.7%
Pongolapoort Dam	84.1%	-1.2%
Spioenkop Dam	90.7%	-7.4%
Spring Grove Dam	84.2%	-10.0%
Wagendrift Dam	93.4%	-6.1%
Woodstock Dam	95.2%	0.3%
Zaaihoek Dam	85.2%	-15.3%

Limpopo	88.9%	↑↓
Albasini Dam	94.9%	-3.3%
De Hoop Dam	100.1%	-0.4%
Ebenezer Dam	100.3%	-0.3%
Flag Boshielo / Arabie	101.5%	-0.7%
Doorndraai Dam	100.1%	0.2%
Mokolo Dam	100.7%	0.2%
Nandoni Dam	101.5%	-0.3%
Rust de Winter Dam	100.7%	-0.5%
Tzaneen Dam	0.0%	-0.5%

Mpumalanga	99.0%	↑↓
Da Gama Dam	100.3%	0.0%
Driekoppies Dam	100.2%	-0.4%
Grootdraai Dam	98.6%	-0.8%
Heyshope Dam	100.2%	-0.8%
Injaka Dam	100.1%	0.0%
Jericho Dam	92.1%	-4.2%
Kwena Dam	100.3%	-0.3%
Loskop Dam	100.3%	-0.6%
Middelburg Dam	96.1%	-2.4%
Morgenstond Dam	99.2%	-0.4%
Nooitgedacht Dam	98.5%	-1.8%
Rhenosterkop Dam	100.5%	0.0%
Vygeboom Dam	100.5%	0.2%
Witbank Dam	99.2%	-0.5%

North West	104.0%	↑↓
Boskop Dam	102.8%	0.0%
Buffelspoort Dam	100.5%	-0.3%
Hartebeespoort Dam	99.0%	-0.4%
Klerkskraal Dam	110.2%	-0.6%
Kosterrivier Dam	100.8%	1.0%
Molatedi Dam	109.4%	-0.4%
Roodekopjes Dam	105.0%	1.1%

O.F.S.	100.6%	↑↓
Allemanskraal Dam	99.2%	-1.6%
Bloemhof Dam	106.8%	0.8%
Gariep Dam	99.3%	-1.7%
Kalkfontein Dam	101.6%	-0.4%
Knellpoort Dam	100.0%	-0.2%
Koppies Dam	100.4%	-0.3%
Sterkfontein Dam	98.9%	-0.3%
Vaal Dam	101.9%	-2.8%
Vaalrivier Barrage	97.3%	3.6%
Vanderkloof Dam	100.2%	100.2%

Western Cape	74.1%	↑↓
Berg River Dam	89.0%	11.2%
Brandvlei Dam	61.2%	11.9%
Clanwilliam Dam	94.1%	6.5%
Kwaggaskloof Dam	59.6%	10.9%
Theewaterskloof Dam	78.6%	3.9%
Voëlsvlei Dam	62.1%	2.9%

Levels on: 8-Jul 16-Jun
Average: 91.9% 92.8%

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