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# SA baars BASS

Issue 290



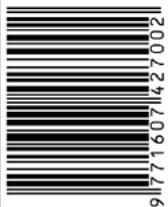
## Winter Bassin'

## Drop-shot Fishing

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## The MAGIC Lure

The Power Of Soft Plastics | Bass Need To Feed | Essential Items When Bass Fishing | Drop-Shot Fishing | The Magic Lure  
Deep Diving Crankbaits In Winter | Encountering Stable Weather Conditions | Bottom Feeding Bass | Winter Bassin'  
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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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– Jay Röhm-Williams



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– Jay Röhm-Williams



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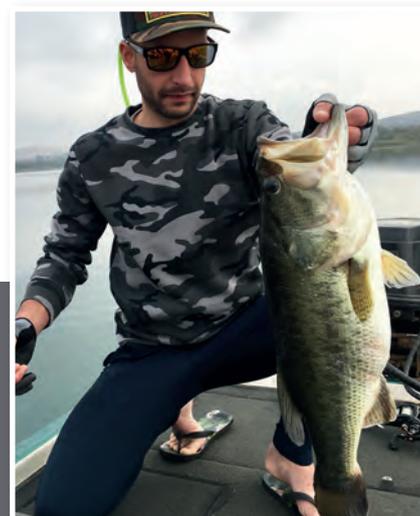
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“3.1kg, JP Fernandes, Nandoni Dam, LP”  
Image: Ryan Wigginton



# My Cast



As winter settles in and temperatures drop, many anglers pack away their gear, assuming the bite has gone cold. But not here at SA BASS, we know that winter offers its own unique rewards for those willing to adapt. In this issue, we bring you the knowledge, techniques, and inspiration to make the most of the chill.

We kick things off with “*The Power of Soft Plastics*”, a must-read for anyone looking to break the bass code when bites are few and far between. Cold fronts may shut down aggressive feeders, but with the right bait and a little patience, success is still very much on the cards.

Understanding bass behaviour is key this time of year. “*Bass Need to Feed*” explores how to adjust your strategy when the water cools, turning what can often be a frustrating season into a productive one. Similarly, “*Stable Weather Conditions*” examines how reading the skies can improve your hookup consistency, because when it comes to winter bass, timing is everything.

Whether you’re a newcomer or brushing up your kit, our “*Crash Course in Bass Fishing*” offers a concise guide to essential gear, while “*Bass Fishing 101: Deep Diving Crankbaits*” details one of the most effective winter tactics for reaching lethargic, deep-holding fish.

And speaking of effective techniques, we introduce “*Drop-Shot Fishing*”, a versatile presentation method that’s just as deadly in the shallows as it is in the depths. Combine that with “*Bottom Feeding Bass*” for a comprehensive guide to chasing fish that stay close to the lakebed.

Looking ahead, the “*Magic Lure*” returns, just in time for ICAST. Could this be the year a game-changing bait is unveiled? We’ll be watching.

In this issue, we’re also proud to present “*South Africa’s Top Competitive Bass Anglers*”, where we catch up with Pieter Khourie and delve into what drives our top-tier talent. And in “*Die Hedgesaal*”, we shine a spotlight on outdoor writer Larry Larsen, a name synonymous with excellence in angling literature.

For our Afrikaans-speaking readers, “*Die RRR uit die BRRRRR!*” brings a light-hearted yet informative look at why winter can be a prime time for bass fishing, if you can brave the cold.

Bundle up, grab your rod, and join us on the water this winter. The fish are still biting and we’re here to help you hook into them.

Enjoy your fishing, and may your lines sing with joy!  
Hannes Lindeque, *Publisher*

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# The power of Soft Plastics



Use tubes around contour breaks and rock piles



Soft plastics are the tough condition "go-to" baits

**SOFT PLASTICS ARE CONSIDERED TO BE THE MOST PRODUCTIVE SERIES OF BASS BAITS EVER DEVELOPED.**

In bass fishing education and experience can be more fun than training for any other sport. No one person has all the answers to the mysteries of bass fishing, which is what makes the sport so unique. To become a successful angler you must first become a consistent one or a very lucky one. However, it is not recommended relying too much on luck. Getting started in the right direction is vital to the beginner who wants to someday enter tournaments. The first step to learning is practice and a lot of hard work on and off the water, and you are on your way to becoming a better angler.

There is not a secret lure that performs in all conditions to catch fish in each circumstance. The right lure in the wrong place at the wrong time is not going to help much either. Anglers must learn to read the conditions, understand how weather, light and water temperature will affect the nature of the bass, and once all this is understood your well on your way to becoming a professional angler. There are no short cuts but there is one type

of bait that can help you break the bass code, especially in tough conditions and that is the broad category of soft plastic baits.

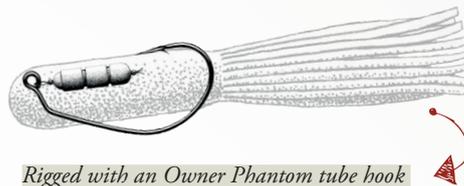
Those anglers that think they can succeed without the use of soft plastic baits are missing out on versatility and become disadvantaged in changing conditions. Soft plastics are considered to be the most productive series of bass baits ever developed. The variations of this category is endless as trailers, worms, bugs, creatures and soft plastic swim baits continue to be introduced almost daily by many companies who understand the various applications their products can be used with great success. For example, the power of a jig is undisputed among anglers, but most will credit a trailer to be the device that increases the catch ratio. The soft plastic trailer is what gives the presentation the image of a frog, a crawfish, or a bait fish that achieves a response from bass.

Soft plastic worms were probably the forerunners of the soft plastic revolution when introduced several decades ago.



The large tail displace a lot of water

Artificial baits were given a breath of life with the soft flexible action the pliable materials introduced. Although they are not known as search baits that are able to cover large areas of water like a spinnerbaits or crankbait, they are the “go-to” for many anglers - once the bite slows down and as a follow up bait when a top water strike is missed. When hard baits seem to lose their effectiveness it is time to throw a soft plastic.



Rigged with an Owner Phantom tube hook

lifelike enhancement to the Texas rigged worm, and it will get the bait down onto the cover and structure that the bass will be relating too.

Tubes are another example of the effectiveness of soft plastics. These baits received a lot of attention when they were introduced in the mid eighties, but they are still as effective today. With an EWG hook and a pegged bullet sinker the tube can easily penetrate the thickest cover where bass will be searching for food. Fished with a seven foot stiff heavy action rod, it can make the difference when punching with tubes. Anglers use heavy monofilament or braided line, depending on water clarity, to get the fish out of the cover. Smaller tubes are great when fished with a tube head jig inserted into the tube. This is not a weedless presentation, but when fished around contour breaks and rock piles it can be a very effective way to catch bass.

A big Texas rigged soft plastic paddle tail worm can at times out fish any other bait. In spring when bass are on beds or guarding fry, the large worms displace a lot of water while resembling a nemesis of a bedding bass, a small snake or eel that are known to feed on fry. The presentation of the big worm invokes a reaction strike from the bass. A Texas rigged worm is probably the most used bait by professional anglers; in fact it is so common it is often overlooked by less experienced anglers. An offset worm hook ranging from 2/0 to 4 or even 6/0, depending on the worm size, is the business end of the rig. The hook is threaded with the line through the nose into the body of the worm keeping the bait in a straight line to avoid line twist. The hook is impaled all the way through the centre of the worm and then out the other side, then with the tip of the hook back into the “skin” of the worm to achieve a virtually weedless presentation. A light slip sinker on the line ahead of the worm will add a

The popularity of soft plastics being used as fines baits has made a strong return of spinning reels back into bass fishing. Lighter line smaller baits have won many tournaments when bass were in a negative mood. Spinning equipment gives better control of lighter baits than bait casting equipment does like a puppeteer controls a marionette puppet. When fishing a drop-shot rig or a shake-head a lifelike presentation is vital on pressured lakes and during tough conditions to unlock the jaws of finicky

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bass. We have seen over the last ten years that spinning reels are more commonly used by professional anglers due to the versatility of soft plastic fines presentations. In the last ten years smaller baits have dominated tournaments on high pressured lakes and the smaller stick worms made their way into history. Texas rigged weightless and even wacky rigged; these neutrally buoyant worms took the industry by storm due to their effectiveness.

Fishing brush piles for instance requires a finesse presentation and these smaller salted worms are extremely effective when rigged weedless. Use a seven foot medium heavy action rod with twelve pound fluorocarbon line, which is heavier and will sink slowly with the bait. A lighter wire hook will add enough weight to get the stick worm into the brush without tangling. With this and other fines tactics keeping slack out of the line is important and this can be better controlled with a spinning outfit. Fluorocarbon line also has less stretch and allows the rod to do the work of the hook set.

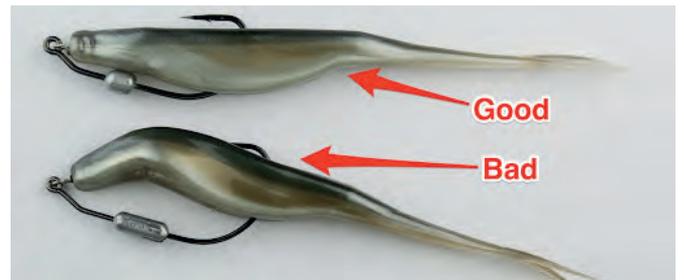
Deep water drop-shot with a soft plastic minnow is another effective soft plastic fines technique when the bass are deeper in response to light or changing conditions. Soft plastics closely resemble bait fish with the movement and water displacement on this tight line technique.

There are far too many variations of soft plastic baits and techniques used to present them to be included in one article. In fact, books could be written on each bait and the various techniques anglers use to successfully catch bass. These baits are versatile and effective when fished Texas rigged, drop-shot, shake-head, Carolina rigged or wacky

rigged all of which are part of a fully stocked tackle box. Soft plastics are the tough condition “go-to” baits for most professionals. They are worth the time to learn to master. They are a “feel” bait, and once you perfect the presentations and gain the experience to feel what the bait is doing you have become a better angler. 🐟



*Soft plastics are considered to be the most productive series of bass baits ever developed*



*Keep the bait in a straight line to avoid line twist*

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# Get in touch, Products that will blow your mind!



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Always take note of what cover is surrounding the shoreline or in the shallows

# BOTTOM FEEDING BASS

>> Jay Röhm-Williams

If you have ever had the privilege of swimming in a fresh water dam, lake or river when the water's clear and the visibilities great one will often notice so much more below than expected. It is truly a treasure filled landscape of underwater wonders resembling a forgotten world not often exposed to the ordinary man's eyes. To the freshwater quarry that we anglers hunt down religiously however, it is terrain that is more than familiar and the bass know every inch of it better than we ever could.

Ethan van Breda  
picking his way  
along the bottom  
through vegetation



Exploring and understanding the bottom of any venue while out on the water, doing what we love to do is a challenge normally on any given day. It's an underwater biome composed of so many structural and cover like factors that it becomes quite impossible to navigate, especially because we can't really see what's going on down there. Sure there are graphs and our sonar does its best to relay imagery back to us to analyse but let's face it we still have to use our imagination. We can see

humps, ledges, drop offs and hollows on screen though having a clear picture of what truly lies on top and around these structural images is tough. This means that when it comes to targeting bottom feeding bass we really have to picture how these fish are relating to the bottom in order to capitalise on catches.

## So what factors drive bass towards the bottom to feed in the first place?

### Water temperature

Well water temperature as we know is a huge considering factor to start with. Whenever the water temps begin to fluctuate bass will find that lower down in the water column at the bottom the temperature tends to be more stable.

### Weather conditions

Another thing we know is that weather conditions such as hot summer days will drive bass below out of the sun and down to where it is generally cooler or moderate.

### Comfort and safety

Comfort and safety are really two major factors that determine in which zones bass will move around in. The bottom feeding zone generally is safer and often more comfortable when conditions are unstable. Lower light penetration also makes them feel less threatened and exposed to both predators and prey which they're hunting.

When bass position themselves off the bottom they generally like to maintain a fair distance from the ground floor. It might only be a half a metre or less and if there's aquatic vegetation growing off the bottom then they will raise themselves just above that. Keeping this in mind then when targeting the bottom sections of venues we must take note of what cover we can see underwater in the shallows. This will relate to helping us better understand what might be lying further out the deeper we go.

There isn't always going to be aquatic vegetation around for example the bottom might be void and empty like a flat, gravel bed. When there are different varieties or just one predominant species of vegetation lying below though we consider how high above the bottom are those plants growing. We want to keep our lures in sight of the fish moving above the plant line and fished in a horizontal pattern to achieve the best result so don't be fooled by this secondary layer and fish below it. In taller growing vegetation like floating grasses, lily stalk forests and reed beds the bass will swim more readily through these types of plants with ease. Then once more sink back down to maintain that original depth from the bottom when it opens up again. This type of thinking is vital to retain when targeting bottom feeding bass in order to allow our baits and lures to stay in the strike zone for longer.

Normally in these scenarios when the bass are relating to the bottom we want to be presenting our lures horizontally. This means anything from swim jigs, swim baits, hard jerk baits and rigged soft plastics are going to be our number one, go to, tactical choices here. The idea is to keep those baits moving within the line of sight of the bass feeding along the bottom to provoke a response. Bottom feeding bass will readily engage in a chase after a bottom moving bait but in general the bite will be less aggressive overall. Speed, movements and retrieval techniques are areas of bassing that will need to be given more focus when attacking

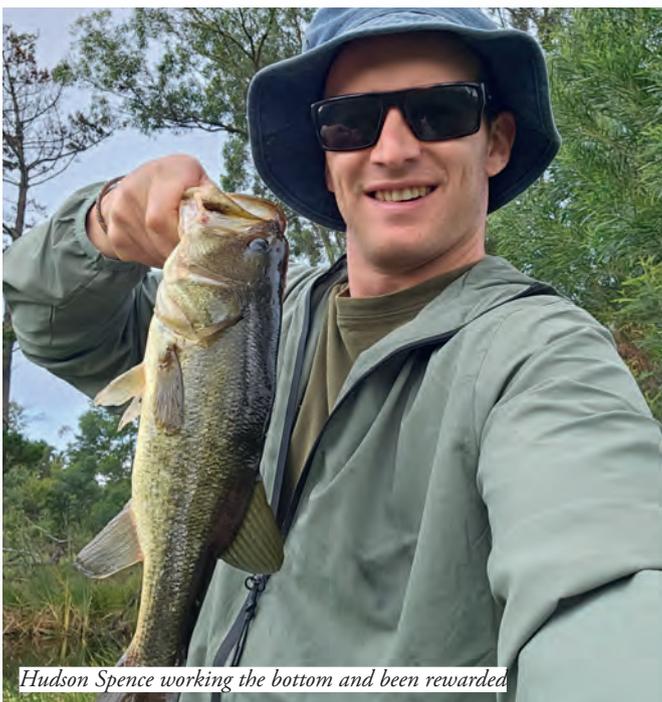


*Tackling deeper waters off the bottom is tricky- Brad van Vuuren*

the bottom so ensure you have the right lure for the terrain you're tackling. Remember as well that structure is what counts the most and cover second when targeting bottom feeding bass because the fish will position themselves off preferable structural areas before anything else.

Having to figure out ones approach when hunting down bass feeding off the bottom can be very hard going indeed. Shallow to medium depth waters seem easier to pick fish off from with a higher level of aggression showed but when the fish slide deeper down we have to know how to follow them. As the season change of autumn gets under full swing this April let us take note to where bass will be preferring to spend their days and lets meet them head on with confidence.

*Rods out and safe fishing everyone! 🐟*



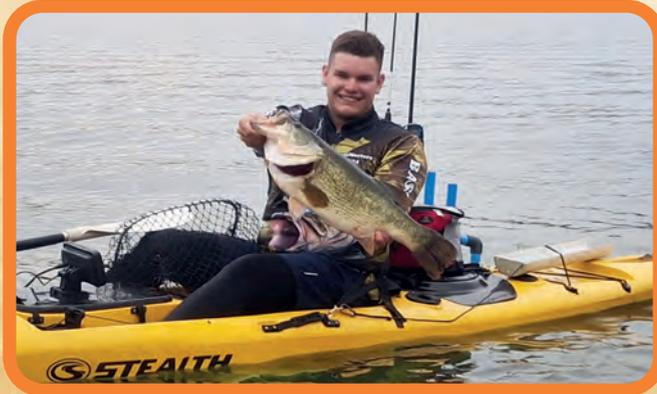
*Hudson Spence working the bottom and been rewarded*



*The author taking stock of his own notes*

# READERS GO BASSING

To feature in "Readers go Bassing" send your story and pictures to [editor@sabass.com](mailto:editor@sabass.com)  
All photos published in "Readers-go-Bassing" are for the exclusive use of SA BASS Magazine. Any photos previously published by other magazines will not be considered.



## THE BIG BITE

Since 2022, I have been studying different types of topwater lures. Over time and with experience, I discovered that I get a consistent big bass bite when fishing a speed worm or a Z-Man Turbo Fatty as a topwater lure over grass patches and structure. Over the past three years, I've won several club competitions using these topwater techniques. As a result, the Turbo Fatty has become my confidence lure in grass-covered areas.

On March 1, 2025, at Witbank Dam, I participated in my club's social competition. The day started off tough. We launched our kayaks from Riverbank Lodge, and I made my way to the gorge area, where I began fishing with a white spinnerbait and a Rapala DT6 in the "Penguin" colour. As I worked through the gorge, I started to notice a pattern with the crankbait. Once I reached the main dam, I saw scattered grass patches between the jetties in front of the houses on the left-hand side.

The moment of a lifetime

I picked up my trusted Z-Man Turbo Fatty, rigged on a Mustad 5/0 hook, and started working the grass patches and structures. As I approached a shallow spot (about 2.3 meters deep), right next to a boat dock, I cast my lure

tight against the structure. I reeled it back about seven meters when I suddenly saw a massive mouth open and heard that unmistakable "thump" sound.

That's when it happened. My line started swimming off, and as I set the hook, it felt like I had hit a brick wall. Within seconds, she surfaced and jumped - I freaked out on my small yellow kayak! The fight was intense as she dragged me into the grass three times. Eventually, she surfaced again, giving my friend the perfect opportunity to net this beast of a bass.

We measured and weighed her: a new club record and a personal best - 64cm and 4.81kg! After snapping a few photos, I carefully released her, taking a moment to admire her strength before she kicked away, ready for another lucky angler to catch one day.

Gear Used

- Reel: Shimano SLX 150 XG
- Line: 15lb braid with an 18lb mono leader
- Rod: Shimano 6'10" Medium-Heavy, Extra-Fast
- Lure: Junebug Z-Man Turbo FattyZ

That was the day I achieved one of my lifelong goals - catching a double-digit bass (10.582 lbs) - and won our club's social competition - **Jaco Fourie**



## BIG BASS

I caught this beautiful fish two weekends ago. It weighed 2.7kg and was safely released after a long, hard fight to live for another day. A black & blue chatterbait did the job... as always - **Brandon Muller**



## BIGGEST BASS

This past weekend, we competed in the Inter-Provincial artlure competition at Rhenosterkop Dam. My wife and I entered as a team and decided to target barbel first thing in the morning.

Upon arriving at our usual barbel spot, there was no sign of them. However, I noticed a lot of bass blowing up on

river sardines near the submerged trees. I quickly swapped over to my bass setup and tied on a chatterbait. On my third cast alongside the trees, I hooked into a beautiful bass on a chilly autumn morning. She weighed in at 3.46kg.

Shortly after, my wife landed her own bass following the same pattern in the same area. This fish earned me the title of Biggest Bass of the Day – *Francois Joubert*



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# South Africa's

# TOP

# Competitive Bass Anglers

## /// Pieter Khourie (1977)

Bass fishing in South Africa has grown into a fiercely competitive sport, with top anglers constantly pushing the limits of skill, strategy, and innovation.



**I**n this exclusive series, we sit down with some of the country's best competitive bass anglers to gain insight into their journeys, techniques, and what it takes to succeed at the highest level.

From tournament-winning strategies to personal stories, gear preferences, and industry insights, these interviews provide a rare glimpse into the minds of the anglers who dominate South Africa's bass fishing scene. Whether you're an aspiring tournament angler, a weekend warrior, or simply a fan of the sport, this series will bring you closer to the action and the people who live for it.

### BACKGROUND & PERSONAL JOURNEY

#### 1. At what age did you start bass fishing?

10 years of age.

#### 2. What is your occupation?

I'm a farmer.

#### 3. How did you get started in bass fishing?

I bought a *SA Bass magazine* many years ago, and it inspired me to start fishing.

#### 4. Who or what inspired you to become a competitive angler?

I've fished two Cast-for-Cash tournaments, but it all really started with my son's participation in Junior Nationals.

#### 5. What was the turning point when you realized you could actually compete in tournaments?

Fishing a Cast-for-Cash tournament years ago and doing well against some of the top anglers showed me I could hold my own.

#### 6. Can you share a memorable moment from your early fishing days?

Fishing a Cast-for-Cash tournament on Hartbeespoort Dam with my son when he was only eight. We ended up third in a field of 90 boats!

### COMPETITIVE FISHING & STRATEGY

#### 7. How do you prepare for a big tournament?

I put in a lot of practice - nothing beats time on the water. I

rely on historical data, plan according to the season, choose the right lures, and make sure all my tackle is sorted. Fresh line is a must - there's no room for mistakes.

#### 8. What's your go-to strategy when facing unfamiliar waters?

Cover as much water as possible to locate fish-holding areas.

#### 9. Do you have a favourite lure or technique that consistently produces results?

My favourite lure is a Junior Fluke, and my go-to technique is punching.

#### 10. What's the biggest challenge in competitive bass fishing?

Keeping your mind strong.

#### 11. How do you handle pressure and competition on the water?

I handle pressure much better these days. I've learned that I can fish areas that others have worked all day and still catch fish. Confidence comes with experience.

### TOURNAMENTS & ACHIEVEMENTS

#### 12. How many years have you been competing in the SA BASS Cast-for-Cash bass angling tournament trial?

About twenty years now.

#### 13. What has been your most memorable tournament win or experience?

Winning my first slot at the 2019 FLW RSA Championship on Witbank Dam to represent FLW South Africa on Lake Cumberland, USA.



Pieter and his son, Joe

**14. What's the toughest competition you've ever faced?**

Fishing tournaments in the USA.

**15. Have you ever had a major setback in a tournament? How did you overcome it?**

At Rust de Winter Dam, we had a motor breakdown and spent a lot of time fixing it. All our key spots were taken, so we had to find new ones. We still ended up winning and weighed the biggest fish of the day. It came down to staying calm and mentally focused.

**16. What's your proudest accomplishment in your fishing career?**

Seeing my son earn his Protea Colours in bass fishing, and achieving five MLF finals myself. I've also won five slots to the USA. Over five years, my partner and I have won four Team of the Year awards.

**GEAR & TECHNOLOGY**

**17. What's your must-have piece of fishing gear?**

My fish finder.

**18. How important is technology (electronics, GPS, sonar) in today's bass fishing?**

It's become almost essential to compete without the latest technology. But keep in mind -technology means nothing without experience and time on the water.

**19. Do you have any sponsorships? How do they influence your fishing career?**

Yes, Blue Water Gear (BWG), Six Sense, and ALX Rods. They constantly introduce new lures, which helps me stay ahead of the game and catch bigger, better fish.

**INDUSTRY & ADVICE**

**20. What's one thing about competitive bass fishing that most people don't realize?**

It's not just about luck. It takes a lot of hard work and practice.



On the weigh-in stage at Guntersville, USA with Mark McWhorter

**21. What advice would you give to someone considering competitive fishing?**

Spend as much time as possible on the water to learn. Stay calm and mentally strong. Also, be prepared: it's an expensive sport.

**22. How do you see the sport evolving in the next five to ten years?**

There's a lot of growth, especially with younger anglers entering the sport.

**23. What's your opinion on conservation and how anglers can help sustain fish populations?**

Cull smaller fish, handle the big ones with care, and make sure your live-well is properly maintained.

**FUN & PERSONAL TOUCH**

**24. What's your personal best bass? Where did you catch it?**

A 4.74kg bass at Roodekopjes Dam, North West.

**25. If you could fish with any angler, past or present, who would it be?**

Definitely my son, Joe. We have very similar but also slightly different techniques that complement each other well.

**26. What's one superstition or ritual you have before a tournament?**

Prayer.

**27. When you're not fishing, what do you enjoy doing?**

Fishing - more fishing! I also enjoy hunting and spending time outdoors.

**28. What's one funny or crazy thing that's happened to you while fishing?**

During a tournament, a (rather crazy) elderly lady claimed we were catching "her" fish in front of her house. She came out swinging a bucket and started throwing stones at us! We had to leave the area. Many anglers who've fished at Witbank Dam will know exactly who I'm talking about.

**29. Who is Pieter Khourie in one word? A perfectionist**

A perfectionist

*Stay tuned as we uncover the passion, dedication, and secrets behind South Africa's elite bass anglers. 🎣*

# FISHING 101

Deep diving crankbaits in winter - when and how to use them



The famous Norman DD22

Crankbaits can trigger reaction strikes

**W**inter bass fishing can be tough, but one proven tactic to locate and catch lethargic cold-water bass is using deep diving crankbaits. These hard baits can cover water efficiently, reach the depths where winter bass hold, and trigger reaction strikes even when fish aren't actively feeding.

Here's a breakdown of when and how to effectively use deep divers during the chilly months.

## WHEN to use deep diving crankbaits in winter

### 1. When bass are holding deep (12 to 20+ feet)

In winter, bass often suspend or hug the bottom in deeper water to conserve energy. Use deep divers to reach these depths and present a slow-moving target in their strike zone.

### 2. During stable weather windows

After a few days of stable, sunny weather, bass tend to become slightly more active, especially in the late morning to afternoon. That's the perfect time to crank those deeper ledges and drop-offs.

### 3. On rocky or hard-bottom areas

Cold-water bass relate closely to structure. Use square bill deep divers to grind along rocky points, channel swings, or deep humps where bass may be staging.

### 4. When you need to cover water

Crankbaits are search tools. If you're unsure where fish are holding, a

deep diver helps you scan large areas efficiently and find productive spots.

## HOW to use them effectively

### 1. Choose the right crankbait

Use a bait rated deeper than the water you're fishing. If you're in 15 feet, use a crankbait rated to dive 16 to 18 feet. This ensures bottom contact, which is key to triggering strikes.

*Top choices include:*

- Rapala DT-16
- Strike King 6XD or 10XD
- Norman DD22
- Megabass Deep-X series

### 2. Go slow and steady

Slow your retrieve. Winter bass don't want to chase. A slow, consistent retrieve helps keep the bait in the strike zone longer.

### 3. Use fluorocarbon line

Fluoro sinks and has low stretch, helping the bait reach depth quicker and maintain sensitivity. Use 10 to 12lb test to maximize depth and control.

### 4. Focus on deflections and contact

Let the bait bounce off rocks, stumps, or the bottom. These deflections mimic a wounded baitfish and often trigger reaction bites.

### 5. Use a cranking rod

A medium to medium-heavy rod with a moderate action gives you better casting distance and keeps treble hooks pinned without tearing them out.

## Pro Tip

Add a suspending feature or pause during the retrieve if your crankbait naturally floats. This pause-and-rise motion can imitate a dying baitfish and trigger bites from sluggish winter bass.

## Summary

Deep diving crankbaits are a key tool in your winter bass arsenal. By targeting deep structure with slow, steady retrieves, you can tempt even the most stubborn cold-water bass. *Focus on:*

- Stable weather periods,
- Rocky or hard-bottom structure,
- Keeping contact with bottom and structure,
- Master this technique, and winter bassing won't feel so cold after all.

**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](mailto:editor@sabass.com) and share your story with fellow anglers! 🎣



The key is to slow your retrieve

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# STABLE WEATHER CONDITIONS

## How bass behave under stabilized weather patterns

>> *Jay Röhm-Williams*

**I**t can be really frustrating for any bass angler when the weather conditions chop and change on a daily basis. Anything from an increase in wind speed to overcast skies can throw anglers off their game in a matter of just twenty four hours. You see bass like us won't necessarily react the same way as they did the day before if the weather changes much like you wouldn't walk around in shorts and slops if it was scorching hot yesterday and today it's cold and raining. Weather patterns will always have a direct impact on bass behaviour and by understanding these meteorological conditions better your consistency of hook ups will only increase.

However when it comes to discussing weather patterns the days we bass anglers really look forward to the most are the days where the weather has been consistent for few days consecutively. Stabilized weather conditions are ultimately our glory days on the water and having a greater understanding of how bass will generally be behaving is a capitalising advantage no bass angler would want to pass up.

First it's important to understand that days like these don't happen very often as the weather changes quite frequently. So when it does level out and you have a good couple days of similar conditions you know it's going to be great day out chasing down bucket mouths and here's why.

### Food and prey species have settled down

When the weather stabilizes on a body of water that means the animals and creatures residing there fall into a set daily, habitual pattern too. If it's the summer season and it's been hot for the last three days with no wind or cloud cover you can bet the shaded sided of any venue will have more prey activity on that side for longer because it's simply cooler for more hours of the day. If the wind has been pumping for a couple days in the same direction an angler can be ensured that baitfish and other prey species will be mostly blown up against the windward side of the shoreline or seeking shelter behind appropriate cover. The point is prey also fall into a pattern when the weather stabilizes and the bass will normally dial into their locations.

### Ideal locations become predictable

This brings us to predictable, ideal locations meaning that if we know how the prey are behaving we can figure out what kind of areas will have a better chance of holding more bass. So if it has been cold for three days straight we know those fish will be sitting off the edges and ledges where water temperatures will have been more consistent.



*Consecutive summer days create a pattern*



*When the weather stabilizes the fishing can be excellent*



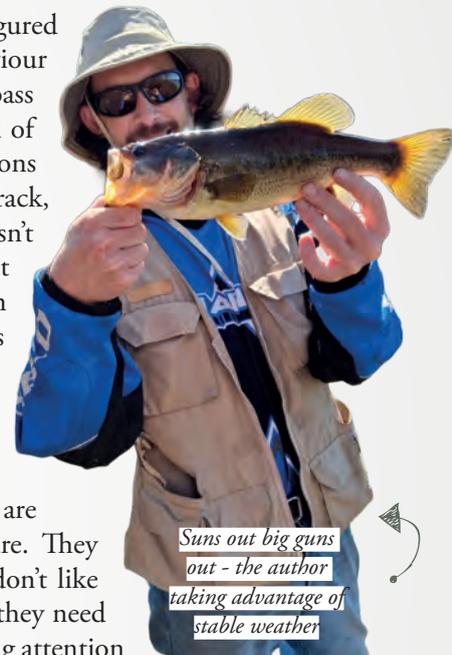
*Last of the summer fun before autumn*

On the other hand if it has been raining for over two days we can assume that the fish will be feeding near the shallows or close by runoff points where prey and food will be accumulating and the waters been well oxygenated.

### Bass positioning

When we know what the prey, weather and what areas the bass will be gathering in then the last bit of figuring out there positioning goes hand in hand with these factors. After a consecutive bout of stabilized weather bass anglers will have a pretty good idea of how bass will be positioning themselves in the water column and around cover or structure. They would have found a favourable water temperature from which they can either hunt or rest around and will position themselves accordingly. For example if the wind has been pumping in one direction without pause for days on end in the heat of summer bass will be seeking shade under some form of cover. They will also be generally facing into the direction from which the wind is blowing to capitalise on any food been driven towards them. If it is say autumn and it has been overcast weather the whole week we can expect under these low light conditions that bass will be patrolling the edges of drop off areas. They will be positioning themselves in the mid to shallow water sections where they can feed before filing back into deeper water as the day progresses.

Once an angler has figured out what kind of behaviour to expect from the bass themselves during a period of stabilized weather conditions it becomes very easy to track, find and catch them. It doesn't happen very often but when one notices a pattern forming over a few days it's best to cash in on the situation and get fishing immediately. Like most critters and animals bass much like humans as well are habitual creatures by nature. They know what they like and don't like as well as how to get what they need when they need it. By paying attention to consistent and stabilized weather patterns a bass angler can plan their fishing sessions to a better extent and set themselves up for success off the bat rather than having to struggle. Whether it's once off competitions, seasonal tournaments or just recreational bass angling you're involved if you can notice a solid weather pattern forming you will better prepared than the guys or girls who didn't pay attention.



*Suns out big guns out - the author taking advantage of stable weather*

*Rods out and safe fishing everyone! 🎣*



*When each day starts over like this who's complaining*



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# DIE RRR UIT DIE BRRRRR!



*Ruk-en-pluk kunsvissies is dodelik in die winter*

Die bibberkoue weer het opgedaag en ons betree die maande sonder die "RRR". Om baars te hengel is vir heelwat hengelaars taboe en die baarsstokke word weggepak in afwagting vir die lente om weer aan te breek. Vir die baarshengelaar met 'n passie net vir baarshengel kan dit frustrerend wees. Goeie nuus... baars byt nog steeds! Ons kyk so 'n bietjie na winterhengel.



*Die Ned-strop is 'n winterwenner met ligtegerei*

>> **Philip Kemp\***

**A**s jy dit hierdie winter enigsins langs die baarswaters wil waag omrede die visvanggogga jou so gebyt het en jy nie eers kan wag tot die "R" maande (lente, somer en herfs maande het 'n "R" in) weer op hande is nie, is die artikel net vir jou.

en geduld deeglik op die proef gestel word. Die meeste hengelaars sal egter vir jou sê dat dit nie lekker kan wees om in sulke koue weersomstandighede te hengel nie. Daar is egter verskeie faktore wat jy in ag moet neem voordat jy die "bibberweer-ding" wil doen.

Min hengelaars besef dat wintermaande ook 'n lekker tyd van die jaar kan wees om baars te vang. Dit is egter net die tyd van die jaar wat ons meer geduld aan die dag moet lê, en waar jou kennis

## Hengeltegnieke in die winter

Ons moet onthou dat baars koudbloedig is en dat hulle ook minder aktief is in die kouer wintermaande van die jaar omrede die water dan ook kouer word. Baars se metabolisme word stadiger en dit vat hulle dus veel langer om hulle kos te verteer. Omrede hulle metabolisme



*Voetbal Loodkoppe*

# Min hengelaars besef dat wintermaande ook 'n lekker tyd van die jaar kan wees om baars te vang.

stadiger is, is die baars ook geneig om nie te veel energie te vermors nie. Hulle sal dus ook traag wees om te vêr agter 'n prooi aan te swem, laat staan nog 'n vinnigbewegende een. Hengel dus so stadig as moontlik deur jou aas vir sekondes en selfs minute lank op die bodem te laat lê. Ek is veral lief om van die 11- tot 12-uur metode gebruik te maak om my aas in te katrol. Hou jou visstok in die 11-uur posisie en tel hom op tot in die 12-uur posisie, voordat jy die aas weer vir 'n geruime tyd laat stil lê (so lank as wat jy kan weerstaan). Hierdie metode het al groot sukses vir my opgelewer in die koue Vrystaat; in water wat grens aan 6°C tot 7°C. Soms wil jy egter nie jou aas van die bodem af oplig nie en is 'n lae stokposisie dan belangriker. Deur jou stok te lig, lig jy die aas dalk ook op van die bodem af, veral as jy van 'n boot af hengel in dieper water.

Baars sal in die winter na dieper water beweeg omrede dieper water in die winter meer konstant sy temperatuur behou en nie soveel geaffekteer word deur wisselende weersomstandighede op die oppervlak van die water nie. Dit is ook belangrik om die weervoorspelling dop te hou en 'n paar sonnige warm dae kan die baars nader aan die vlakwater lok en ook nader aan die bodem wat dit vir die hengelaar makliker sal maak om hulle te vang.

'n Dam se waterkolom kan in drie lae verdeel word, naamlik die epilimnion, termoklien en hipolimnion.

Die epilimnion is die boonste laag water wat gedurende die somermaande verhit word. Dit is ook in die laag waar baars 70% van hul tyd in die somer spandeer. Gedurende die herfs en vroegwinter verkoel die boonste 2.5m water stelselmatig, word swaarder en sink. Intussen is die kouer, digter water reeds onder, maar wanneer die oppervlaktemperatuur dieselfde of kouer as die onderste lae raak, breek die lae af en die hele waterkolom meng – ook bekend as omdraai-water. Die opwelling van



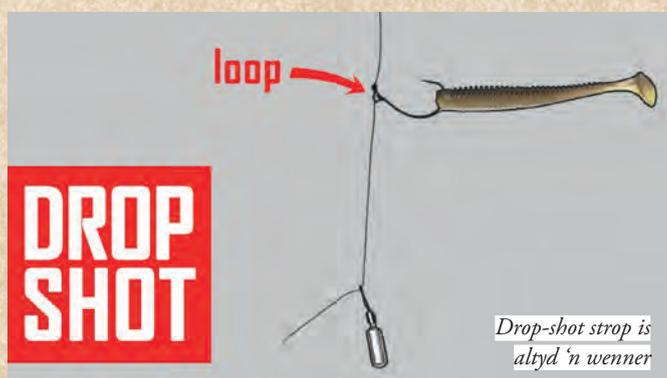
bodemateriaal maak water troebel en kan 'n reuk afgee.

Middelwinter verminder die suurstofvlakke in die dieper water en sal die baars die ideale ewewig soek tussen die epilimnion en meer suurstofryke water. Hierdie sal gewoonlik in ongeveer 2.5 tot 3.5m water gevind word. Baars is ook dan geneig om te skool en as die hengelaar die area kan vind waar hulle skool, en die korrekte ase gebruik, kan heelwat baars gevang word. Dit is nie ongewoon om vyf of meer baars uit dieselfde area te vang gedurende die winter nie. Baars kan ook gedurende die winter naby aan klipbanke wat veral bo die water uitsteek, gevind word. Hierdie klipbanke behou hul hitte langer en sal dus die water om die klipbanke verhit.

## Tipe aas en stroppe

Winterbaars vreet nie so gereeld nie en is ook nie geneig om agressief na kos te soek nie, daarom die sagte subtile eet van die aas. Omrede baars in die winter verkies om te suspendeer en nie op die bodem is nie, moet aas gebruik word wat die middelste waterkolom teiken. Ek vind dat loodkoppe en klets-ase goed werk met veral 'n wurm met 'n stertjie of 'n swemvissie as 'n treiler.

Swaaiemme wat baie stadig op die bodem gehengel word, werk goed, sowel as ruk-en pluk kunsvissies (jerkbaits) en drywende harde plastiek kunsvissies (crankbaits) wat jy lank in die middel van die waterkolom kan suspendeer. Deur die ruk-en-pluk kunsvissie (jerkbait) op die korrekte diepte net een of twee harde plukke te gee en dan te laat stil hang in die water, kan ook 'n wenner wees in koue toestande. Onthou egter dat koue water se digtheid hoër is en dat die kunsvissies soms nie wil



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SHOP 9, RIVERSIDE JUNCTION SHOPPING CENTRE, MADIBA DRIVE, MBOMBELA

# Een van my gunsteling tegnieke in koue omstandighede is gewis die “wacky rig”- gewigloos of met ‘n ligte gewiggie aan.

suspendeer nie en vinnig weer na bo dryf. Eksperimenteer met jou kunsvissies in ‘n swembad en kyk watter een werk die beste vir koue water. Dit help om ‘n swaarder sinkende lyn soos fluorocarbon te gebruik in kouer water. Die swaarder lyn sal verhoed dat jou kunsvissie vinnig na bo dryf. Ligte sinkers op die mojo-strop kan ook goed aangewend word om die aas stadiger deur die water te laat val. Ek vind ook dat gewiglose kunsas goed werk omrede hulle stadiger sak en dus langer in die trefzone van die baars vertoef.

Die wagwoord is egter om so stadig moontlik te hengel omrede die baars ook traag is om jou aas te gryp. Onthou dat baars nie soveel vreet gedurende die wintermaande nie en kleiner kunsas beter werk. Gedurende kouefronte wat inbeweeg, is loodkoppe met die regte kleur frokkie en ‘n krapagtige plastiek-aas baie suksesvol. Baars lê styf in die dekking en om die aas in die dekking in te gooi en net so nou en dan saggies op te lig en weer te laat sak, werk baie goed. Dit sal enige baars in die omgewing tot aksie laat oorgaan omrede die baars bloot uit reaksie sal reageer. Hou egter jou lyn fyn dop. Baars vat die aas baie saggies en sal soms nie net met dit wegswem nie. Indien jy enigsins iets ongewoon voel of sien moet jy onmiddellik vaskap.

Een van my gunsteling tegnieke in koue omstandighede is gewis die “wacky rig”- gewigloos of met ‘n ligte gewiggie aan. Die “drop-shot” tegniek kom ook in sulke situasies tot sy reg en bly een van my gunsteling tegnieke in die winter. Drywende plastiek-aas het die afgelope paar jaar ook sy verskyning gemaak en word met ‘n tegniek wat hulle die Ned-strop (Ned rig) noem, suksesvol gehengel. Die klein, drywende plastiek-aas word op ‘n spesiale loodkop, waarvan die kop plat is om sodoende regop op die bodem te staan, gehengel.

Warm waterskoene is ‘n moet op ‘n boot



Hengelaars moet ook onthou om so stadig as moontlik te hengel. As jy dink jy hengel stadig, hengel nog stadiger. In moeilike omstandighede sal ek selfs kleiner asies en dunner lyn begin gebruik op ‘n ligte stok met ‘n sagter aksie. Koffiemeulstokke (spin-stokke) gooi ‘n ligter aas heelwat verder en werk baie goed.

## Kleredrag

In die moderne

era is daar soveel ligter en dunner materiale wat hengelaars kan dra. Goretex, Thinsulate en ‘n menigte ander tipe hitteregulerings materiale kan vir winterhengel aangeskaf word. Besoek enige van jou buitelewe handelaars en jy behoort al die nodige winterhengeldrag in die hande te kry, van klapmusse, handskoene en ‘n menigte ander artikels. Indien jy in ‘n waterpak (wader) hengel, is dit belangrik om ‘n groter waterpak as jou normale skoengrote te kry, omrede jy lekker dik kouse en ‘n warm sweetpakkbroek of twee onder die waterpak wil aantrek. Wol is natuurlik ook ‘n materiaal wat nie vergeet moet word nie. Dit is egter belangrik om ‘n materiaal te dra wat nie net wind en koue bestand is nie, maar ook waterbestand. As jy in die Kaapse winters wil gaan hengel, gaan jy beslis op ‘n stadium natreën, daarom is waterdigte materiale baie belangrik. Gemaklike waterdigte waterstewels is ‘n moet. Vroeg-soggens kan dit snerpand koud op die oewer of op ‘n boot wees en sal plakkies beslis nie ‘n opsie wees nie.



## Ten slotte

Ek wil dus elkeen van ons lesers wat nog nie die “bibberweer- ding” probeer het nie aanraai om dit tog een of ander tyd die winter te gaan probeer. Jy gaan dalk nie die eerste keer so suksesvol wees nie, maar jy sal weldra leer en kort voor lank is jy ook ‘n ervare winterhengelaar. Gebruik dus hierdie winter om te eksperimenteer. Ek het gehoor van die hengelaars sê dat ‘n slegte dag langs die hengelwaters is nogsteeds beter as ‘n goeie dag op kantoor”. 🐟

*\*Philip Kemp is ‘n gesoute swartbaarhengelaar en assistent-redakteur van SA BASS.*



Dropshot strop is altyd n wenner in die winter

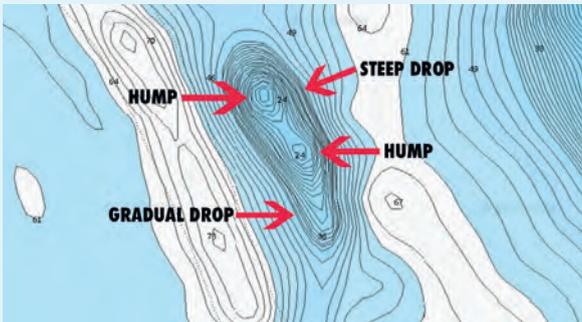
# BASICS FOR BEGINNERS

>> Hannes Lindeque



## Water Temperature

Rock and hard ground can affect surrounding water temperatures, offering bass a range of temperatures to choose from.



## Humps

Under water humps can be productive year-round with great success in any season.



## Winter

In winter, temperature matters less, but the element of surprise remains critical. Think of shaded areas like staging zones for predators: calm, hidden, and deadly at the right time of day.

## Adapt

- Bass are reactive predators; when the environment changes, they adapt quickly.



## Cover

No matter which way the wind blows, cover plays a major role in bass positioning.



## Signals

You may not feel the bite, but you'll see your line moving sideways or twitching unnaturally.



## Light

Light affects how your bait is perceived. High light can enhance colours, expose flaws, and/or make your lure more (or less) natural.



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# The Magic Lure



Super Fluke  
Watermelon Seed

With the annual ICAST show upon us, lure manufacturers from across the world will all have us believing that their latest creations are the “Magic Lure” we’ve been searching for. This is arguable.

Lure manufacturers understand that they’re not actually in the business of catching bass. Their business is catching fishermen! If you read the hype with regard to almost any new product, they’ll have you believing that “this is THE one!” Time and a truck load of money will bring you back to your senses, and you will view almost all new releases with the appropriate amount of scepticism required. Having said that, how could you possibly abstain from buying a crankbait that Kevin VanDam says “is the BOMB”?

Let me further illustrate how effective lure manufacturers are at catching anglers. If you take a look, you will see that the one of the oldest and most legendary surface lure is sold in about eight different colours. Trouble is, the underbelly - the part that the bass see, they are all white! The colours we see, are on top. So effectively you need to only buy one. (I’ve got four!)

At this time, let’s, just for a brief moment, entertain the possibility that such a “magic” lure exists. Before doing so, let me first apologise up front to those that do indeed believe in the “Father Christmas” lure. Now let’s look at it mathematically, and try to work out if, by process

you probably have about two hundred options, that is to say rattling, non-rattling, surface, very shallow runners, shallow runners, deep runners, very deep runners and you take these options and multiply them by the different sizes these come in, say four sizes,

and then multiply those options by the different colours, let’s say six different colours you get 33,600 different possibilities (and we haven’t even taken the different brands into consideration!)

Do the same with plastics, spinnerbaits, etc, and you will realize that the combinations are almost infinite. What I am trying to illustrate here, is that this notion of the magic lure is indeed a myth.

Easy now, don’t panic, there’s more! If you however take a different approach to this situation, you can



of elimination, we can narrow down the options.

Let’s start with crankbaits. I guess, if you look at all of them,



Is this the Magic Lure?

stack the odds in your favour in a much more favourable manner. How? Well, basics, basics, basics! We need to understand a few basic principles to help narrow down our lure choice. These principals are fairly straight forward, and the time of year will dictate where your lure choice should start. If you understand what the bass are doing, and when they are doing it, you can then focus on only two reasons why any bass will, hit, cuddle, molest or attack your lure. These two reasons are the feeding instinct, and the reaction bite.

The feeding bite can again be broken down into two basic categories. Slow bite and a fast bite. Whichever of these is happening will determine lure choice and speed of presentation.

The reaction bite is actually a “no brainer” in that it can usually be brought about on a spinnerbait, or a noisy crankbait... again with the speed of that presentation often being the deciding factor. The small difficulty that arises is the figuring out which of these modes the bass are in.

Now back to the “magic lure”. Let’s stop using this word “magic” and start saying “favourite” - different story. For me, I without question, do have a favourite “go-to lure”. I have had the good fortune to have caught four bass of 5kg plus on this lure in the past, so understandably, I really like it...



It is your standard soft plastic Zoom Super Fluke. In my opinion the single most influential lure used in South Africa for the last twenty years, and in my opinion, probably the closest thing you will get to a magic lure.

Lastly you can take heart in the fact that the lure that you caught your last limit on will probably your current magic lure.

**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](mailto:editor@sabass.com) and share your story with fellow anglers! 🎣



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# BASS NEED TO FEED

Fishing for bass during the late autumn and winter months can be challenging, especially compared to the more predictable patterns of summer.



*The colder the water, the longer the pause*

**I**n warmer seasons, bass relate to obvious structure, lush vegetation, shaded cover, and clear ambush zones that make fish location relatively easy. But winter removes these visual clues, leaving many anglers scratching their heads.

So how do you find and catch bass when everything seems lifeless? It all starts with understanding how bass behave in cold water.

## The lean months

Winter brings a slowdown in the food chain. Extremely cold temperatures can kill off smaller baitfish and aquatic life, significantly reducing available forage. This forces bass to conserve energy, often resulting in periods of low activity. That's why many anglers talk about the "big feed" just before winter, when bass bulk up in preparation for the long, lean months ahead.

## The right bait for the job

In frigid water, bass are not willing to chase fast-moving or small lures. They simply won't burn more energy than the meal is worth. This makes bait selection critical. While finesse techniques and small lures can still catch fish, don't overlook the power of big baits for big bass. South African anglers, like many around the world, often default to three- or four-inch lures in winter, hoping for just one bite. But a better approach might be upsizing to a five- to eight-inch bait.

Think of it this way: Why would a bass expend energy chasing multiple small meals when a single substantial one can meet its needs?



*Maverick 90  
Suspeding jerkbait*

## Slow down. Then slow down more.

The most important adjustment in winter fishing is slowing down - dramatically. There are times when the best action you can take is no action at all. Let your bait sit motionless on the bottom for long periods, seconds, even minutes. This style of fishing demands patience, mental toughness, and an unwavering focus.

## Jerkbaits: The winter MVP

One of my go-to lures in winter is the jerkbait. Many anglers fall into the habit of the basic "cast, retrieve, repeat" routine, but that's rarely effective in cold conditions. My personal rule is simple: The colder the water, the longer the pause. Slow retrieves with extended pauses between jerks can be absolutely deadly when bass are sluggish.

## Where do bass go in winter?

The answer: not far, but deeper.

If you're fishing a small, shallow body of water with minimal structure or a flat, muddy bottom, focus on the deepest spot available. This could be the middle of a cove or the deepest section of a channel. In large, public reservoirs or lakes, this sanctuary might be far offshore, in open water. Don't be afraid to fish what looks like "the middle of nowhere." In winter, depth and food availability are more important to bass than cover or structure.

## Rocks: A cold-water magnet

If the dam or lake you're fishing has rocky areas, pay close attention. Rocks absorb and retain heat, creating a slightly warmer micro-environment. They also offer shelter for baitfish, drawing bass in. On sunny days, bass may even move into shallow rocky areas to warm up. Deep rocks, on the other hand, often hold bass tight to the bottom edge, where the temperature is more stable.

## Final thoughts

Bass still need to eat in winter, no matter how cold the water gets. By understanding their behaviour, adjusting your bait selection, and slowing down your presentation, you can turn winter fishing from frustrating to fruitful.

Yes, it's tough. But with discipline and patience, winter bass fishing can reward you with some of the biggest and most satisfying catches of the year. 🐟



*One of my go-to lures in winter is the jerkbait*

# Op my houtbordjie

## LYNREKKIE

&gt;&gt; Philip Kemp\*

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

Stuur gerus jou fotos en storie vir ons na [philip@sabass.com](mailto:philip@sabass.com) indien jy sukses met hierdie truuk gehad het.

Dit is gewoonlik vir meeste hengelaars 'n frustrasie as hulle lyn spoel en die oorblywende lyn spring van die spoel af nadat die lyn gespoel is. Gewoonlik moet die lyn ook weer met 'n rekkie omgebind word, of met 'n plakkertjie geplak word om die oorblywende lyn op die spoel te hou.

Hier is 'n baie eenvoudige manier om dit vir die hengelaar makliker te maak.



Gebruik sommer 'n ou gebruikte rubberstopperhouertjie, 'n stukkie broekrek, 'n boor, 'n 5mm boorpunt, skêr en 'n draadtangetjie.



Gebruik die tangetjie om die draadjies van die plastiese skyfie af te knip.



Daar is reeds een gaatjie in die plastiese skyfie. Boor met die 5mm boortjie nog 'n gaatjie in die ronde skyfie regoor die een in die skyfie.



Sny 20cm van die broekrek af. Bind die een punt deur die een gaatjie en die ander punt deur die ander gaatjie.

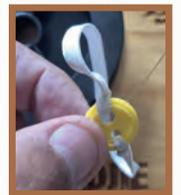


Knip die oortollige stukkie rek op die knoop af.

Die ander punt van die rek word deur die ander gaatjie geryg, geknoop en ook afgeknip. Die lynhourtjie is nou gereed om op die spoel geplaas te word.



Voor die rek oor die spoel getrek word moet die punt van die lyn eers deur een van die gaatjies geryg word.



Die rek word nou oor die spoel geplaas met die punt van die lyn wat by een van die gaatjies uitsteek. Om nou lyn te spoel van die spoelletjie af, is nou nie meer 'n kopseer nie. Dit is belangrik om te onthou dat die rek nie te styf oor die spoelletjie moet pas nie. 🐟

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

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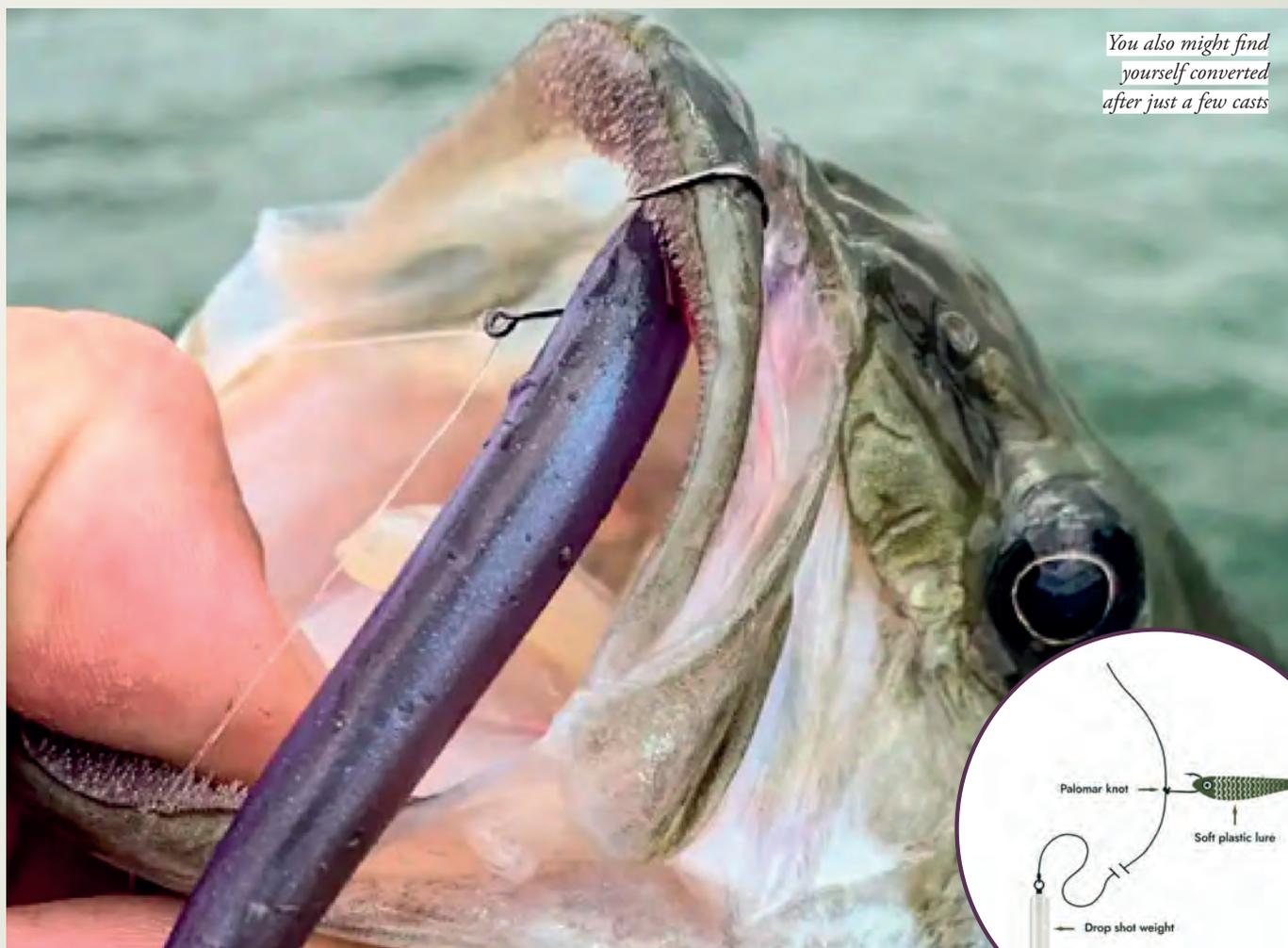


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You also might find yourself converted after just a few casts



## DROP-SHOT FISHING - A PERSONAL JOURNEY TO A PROVEN TECHNIQUE

The first time I used a drop-shot rig was back in 2012, fishing with a friend who was preparing for a tournament. When he saw the rig, he laughed and said, “Why are you using a carp rig to catch bass?” His doubt didn’t last long - after I landed 14 bass in just 17 casts off a hump, he quickly became a believer.

What I love most about the drop-shot rig is its versatility. There is no single “right” or “wrong” way to fish it. Over the years, I’ve experimented with countless techniques and presentations, many of which I can’t even remember. But one thing is certain, this rig has saved me from blanking on tough days and has even put me in the money in more than a few tournaments.

I use a spinning outfit and there’s always a drop-shot rod on my boat. It might not always be on the deck, but it’s ready in the rod locker. I don’t fish it all day, but it’s my go-to when the bite gets tough. That said, I believe it’s important

not to get tunnel vision. Relying on only one technique can limit your potential, no matter how effective it is.

One of the most common mistakes I see from anglers is fishing the drop-shot too fast. Yes, if bass are active and aggressive, they’ll bite just about anything that moves nearby. But, the true strength of the drop-shot shines when fish are neutral or inactive. Rushing the presentation on those days leads to disappointment and a loss of confidence in the rig. The key is patience.

### The traditional vertical presentation

The drop-shot is traditionally used with a vertical presentation in deeper water, ranging from 3 to 30 meters. But I soon discovered that it’s just as effective as a horizontal search tool in shallow water, helping me locate structure and suspended fish.

Why choose a drop-shot over other techniques? The main advantage is bait control. Once you’ve located fish-



*You can use various baits on the drop-shot rig*

holding structure, the drop-shot allows you to keep your bait in the strike zone longer than most other presentations. With many other techniques, the bait falls to the bottom and stays there, but bass aren't always hugging the bottom. They often suspend over structure, and that's where this rig truly excels.

Because of its nature, the drop-shot rig can keep your bait suspended just above or near structure. You can let it sit on the bottom or wiggle it in place to grab attention. This subtle, natural movement appeals to lethargic or pressured fish. With a bit of skill and the right use of electronics, you can present the bait right in the bass's face, and like a fly buzzing around your head, it becomes irresistible over time.

### Mastering the vertical technique

Vertical drop-shotting paired with sonar can be incredibly effective. Once you've marked structure and fish, position your boat over the target and adjust your tag-end weight based on the fish's depth. Drop the rig straight down beside the trolling motor, allowing the line to free spool until the weight touches bottom. Close the bail, lift the rod gently to feel for weight resistance, then drop the rod tip slightly to introduce slack, confirming the weight is still on the bottom.

Now, softly shake the rod tip with a semi-slack line; you don't need aggressive movements. These subtle shakes mimic an easy meal, tempting even inactive fish. Shake for 5 seconds, pause for another 5, and repeat. Some anglers even prefer to dead-stick the bait for extended periods, letting natural water movement animate the lure.

Another effective variation involves lifting the bait just off the bottom, without lifting the sinker. The goal is to

keep the rig anchored in the strike zone, gently shaking the bait above it, before letting it settle again. This process can be repeated slowly while subtly moving the bait toward the boat.

### Horizontal presentation techniques

A horizontal presentation starts with a long cast past your target area. Drag the drop-shot rig slowly along the bottom, stopping occasionally to work the bait in place with gentle shakes. After pausing, drag the bait slightly closer, then repeat.

Another effective method is to shake the bait on slack line after moving it forward. Let it sit undisturbed for a few seconds, then slowly tighten the line to feel for a bite. If you detect resistance, set the hook. If not, move the rig a bit closer and try again.

These slow, patient techniques make the drop-shot rig a perfect finesse option, especially in pressured waters or during seasonal lulls.

### Final thoughts

The drop-shot rig has been a game-changer for me. It's saved many fishing trips and helped me adapt to a variety of conditions. While it's not the flashiest or fastest technique, it consistently catches fish, especially when nothing else works.

If you haven't yet embraced the drop-shot, give it a try. Learn it, trust it, and keep it ready for those tough days. Like my sceptical friend, you might find yourself converted after just a few casts.

*In the next issue we will discuss rods, reels, hook set, and heavy duty drop-shotting and drop-shotting in grass.* 🐟

## CRASH COURSE IN BASS FISHING

# ESSENTIAL ITEMS WHEN BASS FISHING

Whether you're brand new to bass fishing or looking to sharpen your skills, this series of articles is designed to give you a solid foundation in the essentials.

>> *Hannes Lindeque*

**W**e cover everything you need to know to get started and improve your success on the water. Grab your rod, spool up your reel, and let's dive into the exciting world of bass fishing!

When bass fishing, it's essential to wear clothing that not only provides comfort but also offers protection and functionality for your fishing adventure. Here's a list of essential items for bass fishing:

### Fishing hat

A wide-brimmed hat helps protect your face, neck, and eyes from the sun. Look for hats with built-in UV protection and breathable materials.

### Sunglasses

Polarized sunglasses help reduce glare on the water, enabling you to see better and protect your eyes from harmful UV rays.

### Fishing shirt

Opt for lightweight, moisture-wicking, and quick-drying shirts to keep you cool and comfortable throughout the day. Long-sleeved shirts provide added protection from the sun and potential brush or insects.

### Fishing pants

Choose pants or shorts made from durable, quick-drying materials that offer flexibility and protection. Consider pants with zip-off legs for versatility.

### Fishing shoes

Quality fishing shoes or boots with good traction are essential for navigating slippery surfaces, rocks, and potentially muddy or wet terrain. Look for non-slip soles and water-resistant materials.

### Socks

Wear moisture-wicking socks to keep your feet dry and comfortable, especially if your shoes get wet.



### Rain gear

Always carry waterproof or water-resistant jackets and pants to stay dry during unexpected rain showers or splashes.

### Sun protection

Don't forget sunscreen for exposed skin and lip balm with SPF protection.

### Gloves

Fishing gloves provide grip and protection against abrasions, cuts, and exposure to the elements. Look for fingerless gloves for better dexterity.

### Layering

Dress in layers to adjust to changing weather conditions throughout the day. A moisture-wicking base layer, insulating mid-layer, and waterproof outer layer offer versatility and comfort.

### Insect repellent

Depending on the location and time of year, insect repellent can be crucial to ward off mosquitoes, flies, and other bothersome insects.

### Personal Floatation Device (PFD)

Safety should always be a priority when fishing, especially if you're on a boat or kayak. Wear a properly fitting PFD at all times when on the water.

### First Aid kit

Carry a compact first aid kit with essential supplies for treating minor injuries, ailments, nausea, diarrhea, or headaches.

### Dehydration

Avoid relying only on energy drinks, coffee, or sodas; they can actually dehydrate you more. Keep a water bottle close and take small sips regularly, even if you don't feel thirsty.

By wearing appropriate clothing for bass fishing, you can enhance your comfort, safety, and enjoyment on the water while pursuing your favourite catch. 🎣

# Zenni Optical becomes Official Eyewear Sponsor

# ZENNI EYEWEAR



**B**enton, KY – Major League Fishing (MLF), the world’s largest tournament-fishing organization, announced a new partnership with Zenni Optical, the world’s leading online eyewear retailer. As part of the partnership, Zenni now becomes the Official Eyewear of Major League Fishing and title partner of Bass Pro Tour Zenni Stage 6 at the Potomac River, held June 26-29 in Marbury, Maryland.

This strategic partnership unites two innovative brands, combining Zenni’s industry leadership in accessible, high-quality eyewear with MLF’s passionate and growing audience of anglers and outdoor enthusiasts. Together, MLF and Zenni are committed to providing affordable, stylish eyewear for anglers across the globe, while promoting the importance of eye health and protection on and off the water.

In a first-of-its-kind collaboration for MLF, Zenni and the league will curate a custom line of eyewear specifically designed for anglers and fans, featuring frames that will be customizable for both prescription and non-prescription lenses, offering innovative technologies including Blokz® blue light-blocking lenses, EyeQLenz™ light-adaptive lenses and polarized sunglasses – an essential tool for serious fishing. MLF fans will also enjoy a special offer for 10% off all purchases using the promo code: MLF.

“Zenni Optical is a proven leader in innovative and affordable eyewear, and we’re thrilled to welcome them to the MLF family,” said Jake Wittkop, MLF Vice President and Managing Director of Sponsorship and Business Development. “Whether you’re in need of polarized, prescription lenses for finding bass on beds or blue-light blocking lenses for streaming MLF at home, Zenni offers eyewear for every need. This partnership will not only elevate the visibility of the Zenni brand but also enhance the experience for anglers and fans alike.”

Zenni is no stranger to elite partnerships across the sports and entertainment landscape. In addition to MLF, Zenni is the Official Eyewear of Monster Jam, Major League Pickleball, the San Francisco 49ers and the reigning NBA Champion Boston Celtics – further solidifying its place at the intersection of performance, lifestyle and fan engagement.

“We are proud to partner with Major League Fishing, an organization that shares our passion for performance, precision and innovation,” said Robb Chiarini, Head of Partnerships, Licensing, & Events at Zenni Optical. “We’re excited to collaborate with MLF and introduce a line of eyewear and accessories built to meet the unique demands of the fishing lifestyle while providing enthusiasts and fans premium, but affordable, corrective and preventative options.”

Zenni will receive integrated branding across MLF’s expansive media platforms, including television and live-stream broadcasts, on-site event signage, an activation presence and features on MLF’s digital and social media platforms. As the title sponsor of Bass Pro Tour Stage 6, Zenni will be featured prominently throughout the event, with exclusive coverage on MLFNOW! and in upcoming television broadcasts on Discovery Channel, Outdoor Channel and MyOutdoorTV (MOTV).

For more information about MLF, visit [www.mlfSouthAfrica.com](http://www.mlfSouthAfrica.com)

## About Zenni Optical

Zenni pioneered the online eyewear industry in 2003 with a mission to make eyewear affordable and accessible to everyone. Based in the San Francisco Bay Area, Zenni offers adults and children the freedom to express their personality through a large collection of high-quality prescription, non-prescription and protective glasses and sunglasses curated with a sense of fashion and dynamic style. With over 51 million frames sold worldwide, Zenni is proud to be the Official Eyewear of the San Francisco 49ers, Boston Celtics, Monster Jam, Major League Pickleball, Ghost Gaming and more. Zenni has worked with designers and tastemakers on curations and collections, including Chase Stokes, Jrue Holiday, Sam Cassell and George and Claire Kittle. 🐟

## About Major League Fishing (MLF)

Major League Fishing (MLF) is the leading global tournament fishing organization, hosting over 250 events each year at some of the world’s most renowned fisheries. Featuring an elite lineup of professional bass anglers and more than 30,000 competitors across all 50 U.S. states and 20 countries; MLF delivers unmatched fishing resources and entertainment to its members, anglers, sponsors, fans, and host communities. Through its wide range of platforms, including tournaments, expos, international media, and innovative marketing, MLF is committed to **provide a lifestyle experience**, both on and off the water.



# Die Heldesaal

## LARRY LARSEN (1945)

Larry Larsen is in Amerika alreeds vir baie jare 'n huishoudelike naam onder buitelig- en hengel entoesiaste. Die befaamde skrywer is in 1945 in Wichita, Kansas gebore.

>> *Philip Kemp\**

Larry Larsen se liefde vir die natuur en skryf het reeds op skool begin waar hy joernalistiek as vak op hoërskool geneem het. Hier word hy ook die redakteur van die skool se koerant. Natuurlik was sy eerste artikel wat hy geskryf het se onderwerp... dalk het jy reg geraai... Hengel! Later ontvang hy 'n Baccalaureusgraad en ook 'n Meestersgraad in Ingenieurswese aan die Universiteit van Colorado.

Larry Larsen het reeds op driejarige ouderdom sy eerste vis gevang en later as agtjarige op baars- en forelhengel begin konsentreer. In 1968 vang hy sy eerste tienpond baars en in 1993 vang hy 'n allemintige twintigpond Peacockbaars. Selfs in soutwaterhengel het hy onder andere groot marlyne, os-oogtarpons en beenvis gevang.

Larry Larsen se eerste artikel verskyn in 1972 en daarna verskyn



Larry as jongman in 1973

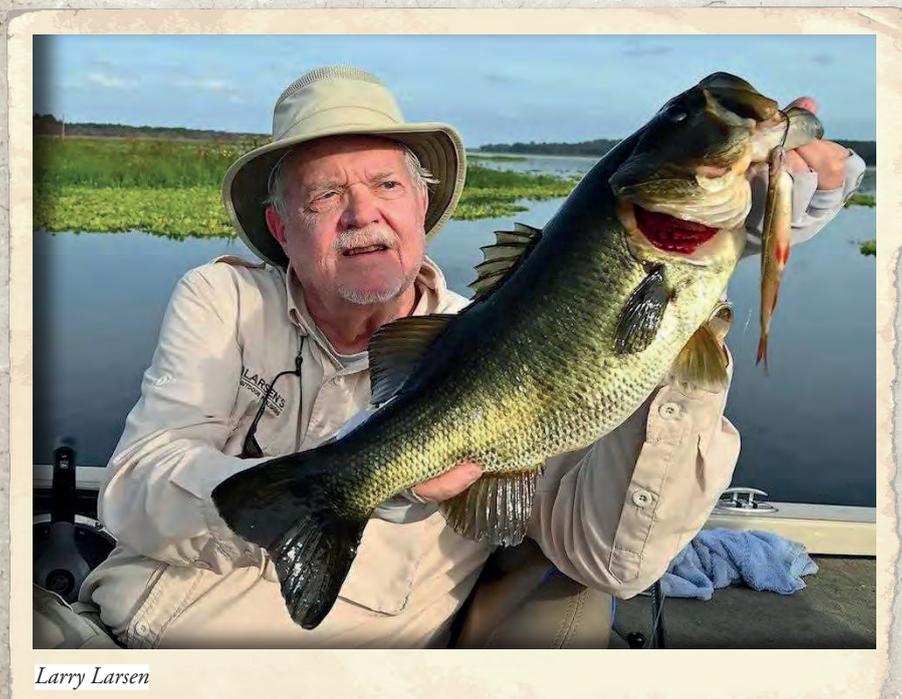
sy artikels in verskeie buitelewe en hengeltjydskrifte. In 1983 bring Larry Larsen sy eie uitgewersmaatskappy op die been met die bekendstelling van sy eerste boek. Sedertdien het hy 21

boeke oor hengel en reis geskryf, en 41 boekpublikasies wat onder die vaandel van Larsen's Outdoor Publishing aan die publiek bekend gestel is. Hy verkoop die publikasiemaatskappy in 2009 aan National Book Network. Gedurende die tyd tree Larry ook gereeld op as 'n gas vir televisie- en radioprogramme, hy bied seminare aan, vervaardig dokumentêre videos en raak betrokke by navorsing op damme en mere in die Florida omgewing.

Sy liefde vir veral Peacockbaars noep hom om die Peacock Bass Association te stig vir hengelaars wat spesifiek die kragtige en besondere visse teiken. Baie van sy kennis het hy ook met organisasies soos, Outdoor Writers Association of America, Society of American Travel Writers, Southeastern Outdoor Press Association en Florida Outdoor Writers Association gedeel.

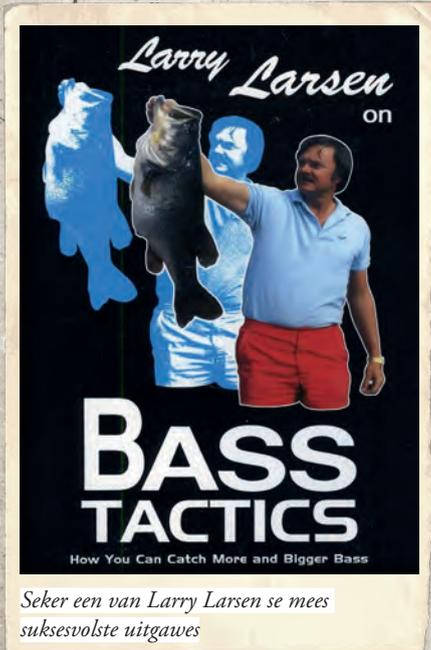
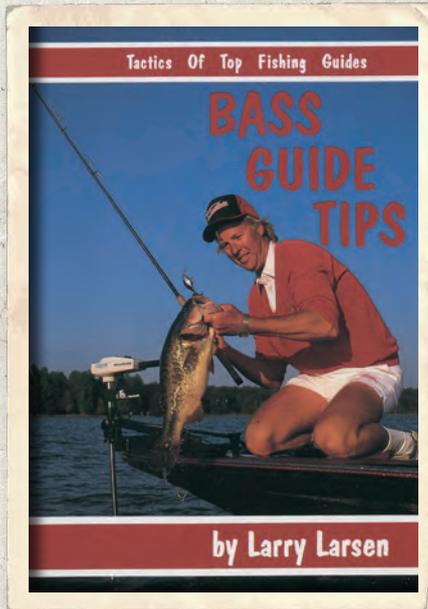
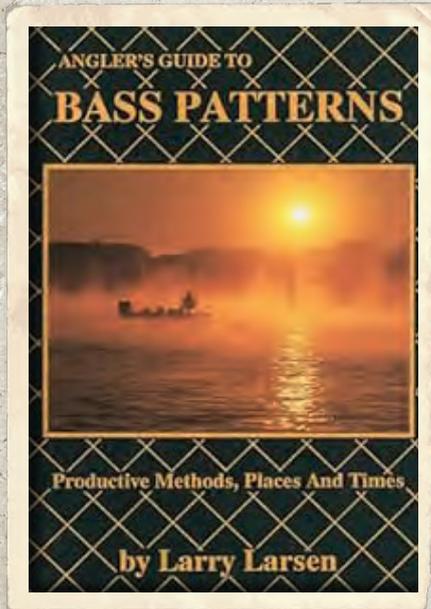
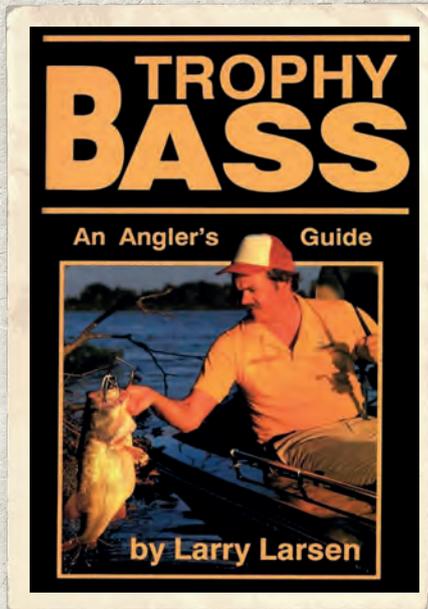
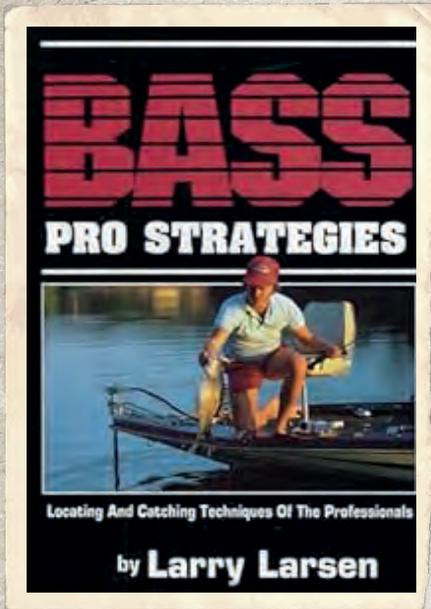
As een van die bekendste buitelewe skrywers, gee Larry leiding en hulp aan hengelaars oor hoe en waar om baars en ander spesies te vang. Larry Larsen was onder andere ook die redakteur van "Larsen's Adventure Travel Magazine" en ook "Florida Sportsman", "Fishing World", "North American Fisherman" en verskeie meer tydskrifte.

Seker een van die beste boeke oor baars, "Larsen on Bass Tactics" is beslis 'n moet in enige baarsengel entoesias se biblioteek. Sy betrokkenheid by die opstel van topografiese kaarte vir damme en mere was van groot hulp vir varswater hengel in Amerika. As gevolg van sy werk het Larry ook die geleentheid gehad om verskeie ander lande te sien en ook daar te gaan hengel. So het hy ook die geleentheid gehad om saam met verskeie hengelgerei vervaardigers nuwe kunsase te



Larry Larsen

Enkele van Larry se boeke oor swartbaarthengel



Larry het 'n groot voorliefde om Peacockbaars te vang

ontwerp. Die bestuur van hengelwaters lê hom ook baie na aan die hart en dit is vir Larry Larsen belangrik om die natuur en hengelwaters te beskerm vir ons nageslagte.

Larry Larsen is in 1999 in die Nasionale Varswater Helderlaer opgeneem uit erkenning vir sy bydrae as skrywer, fotograaf, seminare, video's, televisie en radio optredes. Saam met al sy prestasies is hy ook die wêreldrekordhouer vir die vang van verskeie spesies in verskillende lynklasse, spesifiek Peacockbaars.

Elke hengelaar behoort op een of ander stadium een van Larry Larsen se boeke te lees. In die nuwe moderne era van hengel, waar kennis op sosiale media gekry kan word, het soveel ouer boeke se inligting verlore geraak.

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

## Fishing & Golf

It's mid-July and a tackle manufacturer, an executive producer and a former Bassmaster Classic Champion, are careening across a central Florida fairway in a golf cart laden with fishing rods. Aiming for a pond on the far side of the next green, they're about to break the usual club rules.

With golf clubs stowed in cart bags, the group pulls up to the pond and spot a flurry of topwater activity near a patch of reeds. Then, the golfers take turns fishing for off-limits, lunker bass. In a state bursting with legends of 10lb golf course bass that go years between seeing a fishing lure, each cast is filled with tension.

But there's a catch: today's fishing is fully sanctioned by Kissimmee, Florida's Celebration Golf Course. For one day only, the rules of the golf course have been suspended.

The casts are being overseen by officials from the Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission. With each hookset, the officials take scores to be tallied up with birdies and pars at the end of the day.

"I think fishing and golf go hand-in-hand," says 2012 Bassmaster Classic Champion Chris Lane. "A lot of fishermen love golf." Each year, for the better part of two decades, Lane has made the journey to ICAST to work with tackle manufacturers, network with potential sponsors and see the latest and greatest in fishing tackle. Today, he's come to ICAST two days before show doors officially open to play in the show's Lunkers & Bunkers golf scramble. The event raises money for Keep America Fishing, the American Sportfishing Association's advocacy and outreach arm focused on clean water, abundant fisheries and conservation.

With more than 14,000 attendees representing 75 nations and hundreds of tackle manufacturers, ICAST is the best place on the planet to see the debut of brand-new fishing tackle and lifestyle products. But Lane believes events like the Lunkers & Bunkers golf scramble make the entire trip to ICAST about more than business – they also make a trip to ICAST about having fun. "We do come here to connect," he explains. "But we also come to ICAST to have fun. To be able to spend time outside of the show with your friends – and to do that for a great cause like Keep America Fishing – is just awesome."

Lunkers & Bunkers serves as the unofficial kick-off to ICAST week. It's a signal flare that festivities are underway. And it's joined by a host of other activities that extend far beyond the ICAST show floor. There's the ICAST Cup, a pro-am bass fishing tournament hosted by Major League Fishing at the renowned Lake Toho. There's ICAST On the Water Demo Day, where a small village of exhibitors line a demonstration pond outside of the Orange County Convention Centre. And throughout the week, there are dozens of dinners, parties and gatherings lining Orlando's glimmering International Drive, which sits just a few minutes from the Universal Studios theme park.

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For one week each summer, the sportfishing community takes over Orlando, a city that feels almost purpose-built to host the world of angling. While New York and Los Angeles perennially take the top spots as the most visited cities in the United States, Orlando is never far behind. It regularly ranks in the top five of most visited US cities, regularly hosting more than 75 million tourists each year. It's served by two international airports reaching more than 160 destinations. And last year, a new high speed rail service connecting Orlando to Miami extended that reach to a further 180 routes.

"One thing we have discovered in our outreach is that sometimes people don't realise how easy it is to get to ICAST," says ASA Vice President of Communications Mary Beth Long. "But thanks to its combination of theme parks and massive convention economy, It is truly a city designed to host visitors. Orlando is one of a handful of truly international cities in the United States."



# Japanese Osaka Show

The Japanese economy and a poor weather forecast may have put a dampener on the Osaka Fishing Show, but it still did not stop huge crowds attending one of the country's largest tackle events.

The impressive booths of domestic giants like Daiwa, Shimano and Gamakatsu were packed to the rafters with eager fishermen savouring the delights of the myriad of new products on display. In all, 42,054 visitors attended – down 9% from the 46,206 of the previous year – but you would not have noticed by the throng of anglers packing the aisles.

Yoshi Dohi, Director of Osaka Fishing Tackle Cooperative Association, told Angling International: “The poor weather and high admission ticket prices may have had an impact. In the Japanese market, prices of goods have risen sharply due to the weak yen, so people are being strict about consumption and are only purchasing products that they need.

“It is important for young people to enter the market and as an industry we continue to work to increase fishing resources, increase fishing spots and improve the environment.”

Visitor Rob Carter, owner of Angling International, said: “The crowds were crazy – especially around the impressive booths of Daiwa and Shimano. It was Daiwa as far as the eye could see in a hall that it dominated. Its booth was so big that it needed its own map. What a way to make a statement in your domestic market!”

Spotted among a show floor dominated by home brands was that of the most American of companies, AFTCO. Its classic apparel has been brought to Japan by partners Sunline and it was appearing at the show for the first time. “By my reckoning it was the only US brand with its own booth,” said Carter. “Sunline’s senior associate in the international sales team told me that Japanese consumers love US brands.

“It also proves once again that shows are ideal for breaking into new markets. There is no better way to grab attention and make the new connections you need to get started. If you are seeking a similar impact to AFTCO, but in Europe, drop me a line and let me put your brand in front of customers at Angling International LIVE.”



# Recreational Fishing Boost

The recreational fishing tackle industry across Australia is set to benefit from more than AU\$18m of funding for the sport in one of the country's states.

The Minns Labor Government says the funding to New South Wales is part of its commitment to making recreational fishing more accessible to everyone and ensuring it continues to contribute to the local economies of the communities in the region.

The investment includes:

- \$5 million for recreational fishing enhancement and improving access;
- \$3 million for Fishcare Volunteers, schools education, fishing workshops and communication with recreational fishers;
- \$3 million for research and monitoring programmes;
- \$3 million for detecting and preventing illegal fishing and protecting fisheries resources;
- \$2 million to restore and improve fish habitat;
- \$2 million for a digital and over-the-counter licence payment system.

In 2023/24 more than 400,000 fishing licences were issued with revenue from these sales flowing into the Recreational Fishing Trusts and then back to fund programmes and



projects that support and grow recreational fishing activity and the environment for vibrant fish habitats.

Tara Moriarty, Minister for Agriculture and Region NSW, said: “Recreational fishing is fun for families and small local regional businesses and that is why the Minns Government is keen

to make good investments in programmes and infrastructure that will ensure this activity can be sustainably ongoing.

“As well as enhancing fishing, many of these programmes help drive economic growth in the regions through fishing tourism and business opportunities, while also providing significant ecological and productivity benefits. This year our world-leading fish stocking programme has seen over 5.3m freshwater and marine fish stocked in NSW waterways, providing a boost to fishing, conservation outcomes, employment and local economies

“Fishing enhancement programmes like the Offshore Artificial Reefs and fish attraction devices (FADs) deliver quality sport fishing opportunities and are a popular draw card for locals and tourists alike.

“To ensure that our fishing stocks and habitats are not depleted or over fished, we also invest in compliance and administering fishing rules so that a small number of bad actors are not ruining it for everyone else.”

# GEAR UP

THE LATEST FISHING ADDITIONS

The latest fishing additions on the market.



## 1. SPRO BRONZEYE FROG RODS

>> Something new from SPRO

Developed by professional angler Dean Rojas, the SPRO Bronzeye Rods are specifically designed for the SPRO frogs to give the best combination of comfort, action and power to give anglers the best rod for the technique.

## 2. NOMAD DESIGN THE DELTA MINNOW

>> Something new from Nomad Design

The groundbreaking patent pending Adjusta-Ball tungsten system, now available with Nomad Design live ops soft plastics.

This innovative system allows you to insert tungsten balls into chambers within the bait, giving you the ability to adjust the weight distribution for perfect balance and natural, horizontal sinking action. Unlike traditional soft plastics, this system ensures your bait sinks naturally, preventing it from tipping head-first. You can even fine-tune the sink rate by adding more tungsten balls, all without the need for heavy ball heads. The customizable weights also let you adjust the bait's action, offering you thousands of rigging options to suit any fishing style. Take your fishing to the next level with precision control over your bait's performance!

## 3. LEWS CUSTOM PRO GEN 3

>> New from Lews

The latest generation of Custom Pro now built with the first Lew's 30mm aluminium frame, the Lew's Custom Pro Gen 3 Casting Reel is packed with top-of-the-line technology to give anglers an edge on the water. Most notably, the new ParaMag ITB braking system is a fully magnetic inertia transfer braking system that reduces the risk of backlash without use of electronics, batteries, chips or brake shoes, providing full free spool feeling when reeling. Slick aesthetics paired with an ergonomic feel, the aluminium frame and C45 carbon side plates come-in at a feather light 5.6oz, allowing anglers to fish for hours on end.

Titanium coated dual stage line guide facilitates uninterrupted casting and premium eleven bearing system with double shielded stainless steel ball bearings generates buttery-smooth retrieves when covering water quickly. A speed dial line test indication tension knob allow you to make precise adjustment based on your technique and the speed keeper flip in/out bait keeper is an innovative addition for lure storage without inflicting performance. Fitted with an aluminium handle with contoured and comfortable pro power knobs for superior control, the Lew's Custom Pro Gen 3 casting reel offers a blend of quality and lightweight design that meets the requirements of tournament anglers.

## 4. BOOYAH FLASH POINT JERKBAIT

>> Available from Solly's Anglers Corner

The Flash Point features a slender minnow body with hard lines and a raised mid-section for a heavy return as it is working through the water column. It shows off with an extremely fast darting action and suspends on the pause, but the real key is obvious when you pick one up. The small custom blade affixed to the head of the lure provides a subtle flash for attracting strikes, but also enhances the return on live sonar. When our engineers came up with the idea it was as if a light bulb went off and we knew instantly after watching it underwater that big bass were going to fall prey. We are beyond pleased to introduce the Flash Point after many years of research and painstaking development, and we guarantee it to create more strikes and less retreats.

## 5. BAIT FUEL STICK

>> Something very special to look for at leading fishing tackle stores

The stick that helped Bassmaster Elite Pro, Justin Hamner, wins the 2024 Bassmaster Classic.

The BaitFuel X55 freshwater hardbait stick is an alternative to the BaitFuel gel fish attractant designed to stick to the side of any hard bait. The hardbait stick can be used on

6



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jerkbaits, spinnerbaits, glide baits, frogs, and crankbaits and even soft plastics.

The Hardbait Stick comes in a 0.5oz twist-up tube that allows for easy application and hundreds of uses in just one tube. BaitFuel is supercharged with F.A.S.T. (Fish Active Scent Technology®).

## 6. MUSTAD ARM LOCK SPINNERBAIT

>> Available at Solly's Anglers Corner

Designed with a one-of-a-kind enforced arm, the Arm Lock spinnerbait holds the hook strong and steady when the fight is on. Unlike other similar spinnerbaits, the arm ensures unmatched strength to preserve hook integrity by keeping the force on the hook at the optimal point. The hand-tied silicone skirt and high-quality brass spinner blades make this spinnerbait stand out in the water.

## 7. SPEARPOINT GP FINESSE HOOK

>> Available from Solly's Anglers Corner

Designed to be the ultimate performance hook, Spearpoint Performance Hooks GP Finesse Hooks are built with patent pending technologies that will improve hook setting performance and dramatically increase your fish landing ratios. Featuring innovative V-Grip technology, Spearpoint Performance Hooks GP Finesse Hooks force fish down

into the special "V" of the hook when an angler sets the hook, which locks the fish in place in such a way that they can't jump and shake the hook free. The sticky sharp piercing points also penetrate through bone and cartilage without rolling to ensure rock solid hook-sets and more fish in your live-well. Offered in a wide selection of sizes to fit the most popular baits on the market for easy rigging, the Spearpoint Performance Hooks GP Finesse Hooks will become the only hook you use for drop shots, wacky rigs, Neko rigs, and much more.

## 8. RAPALA CRUSHCITY THE KICKMEN

>> Available at leading fishing outlets

Rapala Crush City The Kickman, a game-changer in the realm of swimbaits. Designed to dominate the underwater world, this lure boasts a strong kicking paddle tail action that sends irresistible vibrations through the water, enticing even the most elusive of predators.

## 9. RAPALA PENCIL PXR87

>> Available at Solly's Anglers Corner

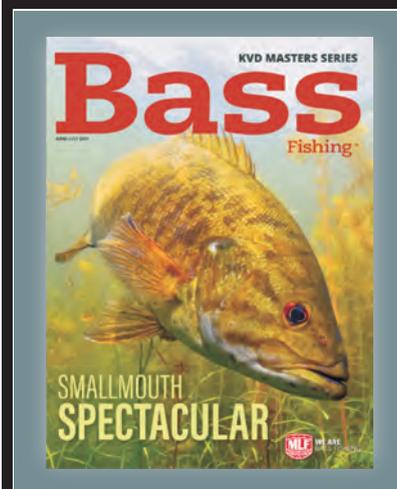
Precise design, extreme action! Inside the Precision Xtreme Pencil's durable and through-wired plastic body is an internal weight system that makes the lure one of the best-casting baits in its category.

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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 Province			↑↓
Beervlei Dam	0.0%	0.0%	
Bridle Drift Dam	103.6%	-3.4%	
Darlington Dam	48.2%	-0.5%	
Impofu Dam	52.9%	-0.6%	
Wriggleswade Dam	100.2%	-0.3%	

Gauteng			↑↓
Bronkhorstspuit	103.2%	-1.4%	
Roodeplaat Dam	100.5%	-0.1%	

Kwa-Zulu Natal			↑↓
Albert Falls Dam	100.6%	-0.4%	
Bivane Dam	101.5%	-1.1%	
Goedertrouw Dam	100.1%	-0.2%	
Inanda Dam	101.8%	-1.0%	
Midmar Dam	100.0%	-0.5%	
Ntshingwayo Dam	94.1%	0.3%	
Pongolapoort Dam	94.2%	1.1%	
Spioenkop Dam	100.2%	-0.2%	
Spring Grove Dam	100.5%	-0.5%	
Wagendrift Dam	100.6%	-0.8%	
Woodstock Dam	102.1%	-1.0%	
Zaaihoek Dam	102.1%	1.4%	

Limpopo			↑↓
Albasini Dam	99.7%	0.0%	
De Hoop Dam	100.5%	-0.5%	
Ebenezer Dam	100.3%	-0.1%	
Flag Boshielo / Arabie	103.6%	-3.6%	
Doordraai Dam	99.7%	-0.2%	
Mokolo Dam	39.2%	-2.2%	
Nandoni Dam	100.2%	-0.7%	
Rust de Winter Dam	101.4%	-0.9%	
Tzaneen Dam	54.0%	-8.3%	

Mpumalanga			↑↓
Da Gama Dam	100.3%	0.0%	
Driekoppies Dam	95.1%	0.1%	
Grootdraai Dam	102.1%	-0.8%	
Heyshope Dam	100.9%	-0.1%	
Injaka Dam	99.6%	0.2%	
Jericho Dam	102.1%	1.6%	
Kwena Dam	100.6%	-0.2%	
Loskop Dam	101.3%	-0.8%	
Middelburg Dam	101.3%	7.4%	
Morgenstond Dam	99.8%	0.0%	
Nooitgedacht Dam	100.6%	0.5%	
Rhenosterkop Dam	101.6%	-2.2%	
Vygeboom Dam	99.1%	-1.8%	
Witbank Dam	100.7%	0.6%	

North West			↑↓
Boskop Dam	103.2%	-1.4%	
Buffelspoort Dam	100.8%	-0.3%	
Hartebeespoort Dam	97.8%	0.2%	
Klerkskraal Dam	107.8%	7.1%	
Kosterrivier Dam	100.6%	-0.2%	
Molatedi Dam	109.2%	-0.8%	
Roodekopjes Dam	101.5%	6.5%	

O.F.S.			↑↓
Allemanskraal Dam	100.0%	-0.8%	
Bloemhof Dam	104.8%	-2.8%	
Gariep Dam	98.6%	-7.3%	
Kalkfontein Dam	103.1%	0.7%	
Knellpoort Dam	99.7%	-1.5%	
Koppies Dam	104.7%	-1.3%	
Sterkfontein Dam	100.1%	-0.1%	
Vaal Dam	108.1%	-2.3%	
Vaalrivier Barrage	108.1%	13.9%	
Vanderkloof Dam	100.0%	-6.9%	

Western Cape			↑↓
Berg River Dam	60.8%	0.8%	
Brandvlei Dam	42.3%	-1.1%	
Clanwilliam Dam	29.4%	0.9%	
Kwaggaskloof Dam	42.3%	-0.8%	
Theewaterskloof Dam	58.8%	-0.9%	
Voëlvllei Dam	57.7%	-0.9%	

Levels on: 20-May 6-May  
Average: 92.2% 92.6%



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and mad about FUN.

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- One day bass angling tournament;
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- Entry fee: R300/angler;
- Buddy tournament – fish with your friend, family member, or alone;
- Fishing is from small watercraft (less than 4.6m in length) - No outboards allowed;
- Limit is 3 fish per team;
- Big cash prizes + trophies to be won;
- Lucky draw prizes

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