

More sports, law, and military news...

Kentucky Lake to host 2026 Bassmaster Junior and High School Championships—the Tackle Warehouse Junior and the Strike King High School Championship

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. January 22, 2026 — B.A.S.S. has announced that Kentucky Lake out of Paris, Tenn., will serve as the host site for two of its premier youth events in 2026: the Tackle Warehouse Bassmaster Junior Championship, July 24-25, and the Strike King Bassmaster High School Championship, July 30-Aug. 1.

The back-to-back national championships will bring the country’s top young anglers and their families to one of the most historic and productive fisheries in the sport. Stretching more than 180 miles along the Tennessee River and covering approximately 160,000 acres, Kentucky Lake is renowned for its diverse habitat, expansive grass flats, ledges and creek systems that consistently produce high-quality largemouth bass. Its size and variety make it an ideal venue for youth anglers to showcase a full range of skills, from shallow-water fishing to offshore techniques.

“Kentucky Lake has a long history of producing memorable Bassmaster events, and it’s an outstanding fishery for showcasing the talent and dedication of our Junior and High School anglers,” said Glenn Cale, B.A.S.S. Tournament Manager for College, High School and Junior Series. “Hosting these championships in Paris allows us to provide a first-class competitive experience while welcoming families and fans to a community that truly embraces youth fishing.”

Kentucky Lake has been a cornerstone of competitive bass fishing for decades, hosting nu-



Kentucky Lake will host the 2026 Tackle Warehouse Bassmaster Junior Championship July 24-25 followed by the Strike King Bassmaster High School Championship July 30-August 1. (Photo by Andy Crawford/B.A.S.S.)

merous Bassmaster events at multiple levels. Its reputation as a big-bass fishery, combined with reliable summertime patterns, offers young competitors a fair and challenging playing field. July conditions typically feature stable water levels and predictable bass behavior, allowing anglers to apply strategy, preparation and adaptability — key elements emphasized throughout B.A.S.S. youth programs.

Paris, Tenn., has become a familiar and welcoming destination for Bassmaster youth events, offering convenient access to Kentucky Lake, ample lodging and strong local support. The community’s commitment to outdoor recreation and youth sports makes it a natural partner for hosting national championships that draw participants from across the country. The Tackle Warehouse Bassmaster Junior Championship will

feature the nation’s top youth anglers competing in a two-day individual format as they pursue national titles and lifelong memories. Following the Junior Championship, the Strike King Bassmaster High School Championship will bring together elite high school teams for three days of competition, providing anglers the opportunity to compete on a national stage while earning recognition and scholarship opportunities.

Both championships will include daily weigh-ins, fan engagement opportunities and coverage celebrating the growth of youth fishing and the next generation of competitive anglers. Visit Bassmaster.com for more information on the Tackle Warehouse Bassmaster Junior Championship and the Strike King Bassmaster High School Championship. Henry County Tourism Authority is hosting these events.

No. 5 Memphis Rifle opens Spring with win over No. 19 North Georgia

MURRAY, Ky., January 23, 2026 - After nearly two months away from competition, the No. 5 Memphis rifle team returned to action in strong fashion, opening the spring semester with a 4715-4652 victory over No. 19 North Georgia at the Withrow Open on Friday, January 23.

The Tigers delivered a strong performance across both disciplines, earning a 2339-2292 win in smallbore before edging the Nighthawks 2376-2360 in air rifle to secure the overall victory. Gabriela Zych led the way, capturing individual honors with an aggregate score of 1186. She fired team bests in both smallbore (590) and air rifle (596).

“Today was a good day for us and I think a solid place for us to start our spring semester,” head coach Morgan Phillips said. “Gabriela was our standout performance today with great scores in both rifles, winning the match. Megan (Jaros) has also been working very hard in air rifle in particular and it was great to see her have such a great day today. We’re looking forward to getting some home matches next weekend and hope to build on what we did today.”

Emmet Bodrogi followed closely behind with an 1179 aggregate (585 smallbore, 594 air rifle), while three Tigers tied for third overall at 1173: Gabrielle Ayers (581, 592), Sophia Cruz (579, 594) and Megan Jaros (579, 594). Kenlee Ewton rounded out the top six with an 1172 aggregate (583, 589).

TIGER SCORECARD

1. Gabriela Zych: 590 smallbore | 596 air rifle | 1186 aggregate | 86 centers

2. Emmet Bodrogi: 585 smallbore | 594 air rifle | 1179 aggregate | 81 centers

T3. Gabrielle Ayers: 581 smallbore | 592 air rifle | 1173 aggregate | 68 centers

T3. Sophia Cruz: 579 smallbore | 594 air rifle | 1173 aggregate | 66 centers

T3. Megan Jaros: 579 smallbore | 594 air rifle | 1173 aggregate | 79 centers

6. Kenlee Ewton: 583 smallbore | 589 air rifle | 1172 aggregate | 75 centers.

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In partnership with NFHS, the NFL celebrates High School Officiating Crew of the Year.. from sports page 1

communities. We are indebted to this group of officials who have given their all to the game and are excited for those who will follow in their footsteps."

As part of the ongoing partnership between the NFL and the NFHS to increase participation in, and recognition of, high school football officials, the NFL has identified three major areas of support, including recognition, mentorship, and campaign support. The participating clubs collaborated with surrounding NFHS member state high school associations to fulfill the initiative's mission.

"The NFHS is proud to honor the Crew of the Year from New York, representing the Giants," said Dr. Karissa Niehoff, NFHS CEO. "These officials selflessly serve the game of football in their

communities as interscholastic officials and are outstanding ambassadors of the game. They are excellent representatives of the state of New York, the NFHS, and the officiating family, and their service both on and off the field is worthy of this national honor. The NFHS is grateful for their work in education-based athletics, and we are proud of the example they set for the schools

and student-athletes they serve, as well as their officiating peers. We are excited to see the growth of the joint NFHS/NFL officiating initiative over the past three years and look forward to honoring more officials like this outstanding crew from New York in the future."

The following 18 NFL clubs participated in this initiative in 2025 with partnership from their state football associations:

- Atlanta Falcons
- Buffalo Bills
- Carolina Panthers
- Chicago Bears
- Cincinnati Bengals
- Cleveland Browns
- Green Bay Packers
- Houston Texans
- Indianapolis Colts
- Kansas City Chiefs
- Las Vegas Raiders
- Minnesota Vikings
- New Orleans Saints
- New York Giants
- New York Jets
- Pittsburgh Steelers
- Tampa Bay Buccaneers
- Washington Commanders

•Chicago Bears

•Cincinnati Bengals

•Cleveland Browns

•Green Bay Packers

•Houston Texans

•Indianapolis Colts

•Kansas City Chiefs

•Las Vegas Raiders

•Minnesota Vikings

•New Orleans Saints

•New York Giants

•New York Jets

•Pittsburgh Steelers

•Tampa Bay Buccaneers

•Washington Commanders

K9 holistic health is doggone delightful from sports-military page 2

gether during permanent changes of station, strengthening continuity and the human-K9 bond.

"When I to Italy, being able to bring my dog with me made a huge difference," said Army Spc. Matthew C. Skalisky, a patrol explosive detector dog handler assigned to the 525th MWD. "It helps us maintain that trust and teamwork that can't be replaced. The PAW program makes sure that bond doesn't get broken."

Each MWD now follows structured conditioning routines designed to build strength, endurance and agility while reducing the risk of injury. Specialized diets, recovery protocols and enrichment activities round out their regimen, ensuring each dog remains physically capable and mentally resilient.

According to Army Sgt. Maj. Viridiana Lavalle, Headquarters, Army Military Working Dog program manager, the initiative marks a major step forward in modern K9 care.

"Proactive and data-driven K9 care is essential for optimizing the performance and longevity of MWDs, directly impacting mission readiness and effectiveness," Lavalle said. "By leveraging advanced analytics to monitor

health metrics, exercise regimens and behavioral patterns, handlers can implement tailored care strategies that enhance the holistic health of MWDs."

This strategic approach not only improves the physical capabilities of these vital assets but also supports K9 mental resilience, ensuring they are fully prepared for the demands of their critical roles.

"Ultimately, investing in comprehensive K9 care through data-driven insights enhances operational effectiveness, contributing to mission success and the overall safety of military personnel," Lavalle added.

The holistic approach extends beyond the kennel. Handlers train alongside veterinary and behavioral specialists to better understand each dog's unique needs, improving communication and enhancing mission effectiveness.

"The bond between handler and dog is everything," May said. "When you have that trust, that connection, the dog performs with confidence. The H2F program helps us strengthen that bond through better training, stress management and recovery practices."

From explosive and narcotics

detection to patrol duties across Europe and Africa, the 525th's military working dogs play a vital role in safeguarding soldiers and installations. The K9H2F program ensures those capabilities remain sharp on every mission, in every environment.

"Investing in our dogs' health is investing in readiness," said Army Spc. Abigail M. Bentle, a patrol narcotics detector dog handler assigned to 525th MWD. "They're not just assets, they're teammates. When they're healthy, confident and capable, our entire formation is stronger."

Under the directive, the Army Provost Marshal General oversees program criteria and compliance, while the Surgeon General of the Army coordinates implementation guidance. Commanders are required to meet new kennel and enrichment standards within 90 days, and the policy will be incorporated into Army Regulation 190-12 within two years.

For the soldiers and K9s of the 525th MWD Detachment, holistic fitness isn't just a program; it's a commitment to excellence that keeps both handlers and their four-legged partners ready for any mission.

A ‘Tail’ of Service: Famous Military working dog Nick ‘Doggles’ retires from sports-military page 2

people take to him and fall in love with him," Peyton said.

"This dog's career is a direct reflection of the high standards and operational lethality we demand from every team in our unit," said Army Capt. Patricio Quezada, 2nd Military Police Detachment commander, as he reflected on Nick and Peyton's

time with the unit. "Their success was built on the relentless work of a dedicated handler who exercised patience and translated that into an unbreakable bond between dog and handler."

When adopting a military working dog after their service, handlers have priority. Nick will

spend the rest of his years with Peyton and his family.

"Knowing that Nick kept Justin safe for so long, knowing that he protects my husband, has given me a lot of comfort," Lauren Peyton said. "We are looking forward to giving him a comfortable life in retirement."

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