

BASS names America's Top Ten Bass Lakes

By Frank Sargeant, Editor
Water World Wire

The St. Lawrence River where it exits Lake Ontario is top spot in the nation this year, producing incredible catches of lunker smallmouth bass throughout the warmer months. (B.A.S.S.)

America's top bass lakes for the most part are lakes most of us can never fish—they are the little private ponds that dot farmlands

America's top bass lakes for the most part are lakes most of us can never fish—they are the little private ponds that dot farmlands everywhere across the country, where the only fishing pressure is a few occasional casts from the owner and his family—those bass get big, dumb and easy to catch.

everywhere across the country, where the only fishing pressure is a few occasional casts from the owner and his family—those bass get big, dumb and easy to catch. But we can't fish them.

The public lakes where we can fish are usually more challenging. But at the right time, some public waters can equal or exceed the no-pressure private waters.

The St. Lawrence River in summer is one of those places, and it was named top bass spot in the nation this year by B.A.S.S., which does an annual poll of anglers and state fisheries biologists. The St. Lawrence where it meets Lake Ontario is stiff with big smallmouths, with loads of 5 pound fish, and they are usually eager to eat. The island-dotted river and the surrounding country are beautiful, as well, making it a great fishing vacation destination. It's often



The St. Lawrence River where it exits Lake Ontario is top spot in the nation this year, producing incredible catches of lunker smallmouth bass throughout the warmer months. (Photo/Courtesy: B.A.S.S.)

rocky and shallow and you have to be very careful where you run, but the fishing is worth it, for sure. (It's a great getaway from the extreme heat of the south in summer, too—the fishing is good into September.)

For anglers who lust after really big largemouths, on the other hand, Texas' O.H. Ivie is just crazy. The lake produced at least 12 bass over 13 pounds in the first three months of this year, per the Bassmaster report. And it also turned out another 17 fish over 10 pounds in that same period. (That's the time to go, obviously, if you want the best shot at a beast.) Most anglers don't bother to report fish of less than 8 pounds here—it's just a great 20,000-acre fishery at its peak right now. Texas in July, however, is not a real attractive place to visit.

Third on the Bassmaster hit

For anglers who lust after really big largemouths, on the other hand, Texas' O.H. Ivie is just crazy. The lake produced at least 12 bass over 13 pounds in the first three months of this year, per the Bassmaster report. And it also turned out another 17 fish over 10 pounds in that same period. (That's the time to go, obviously, if you want the best shot at a beast.)

parade was Orange Lake, near Gainesville in Florida. This lake is an odd one because it occasionally up and disappears down a sink hole—and that's what makes fishing so good. When it goes nearly dry, the bottom solidifies, new emergent vegetation

sprouts when the rains fill it back up and they have an incredible bass spawn. Right now, the lake is at one of its peak periods—it's been full long enough for several huge year classes of bass to grow into the 8-10 pound class. Top lunker time is usually February and March when the fish are spawning, top bait a 10" long wild shiner—but plenty are also caught on big black plastic worms and other lures.

Lake St. Claire near Detroit was ranked fourth—it's a hot smallmouth fishery with a lot of 4 pound fish, per BASS. The lake is sort of a wide spot between the St. Claire and the Detroit Rivers, which connect Lake Huron and Lake Erie.

The nice thing about this area is you can catch smallies for sport and walleyes for eating—there's

no better tasting freshwater fish. And Lake Fork in south Texas was ranked number five, boosted by many, many double-digit largemouths. Texas has a long-term lunker spawning operation and they have been stocking offspring of these giants in lakes around the state for decades. Where the habitat is right, the genes kick in and they grow a lot of huge fish. Again, prime time is February/March.

You can see the full top ten at Bassmaster here: <https://www.bassmaster.com/best-bass-lakes/slideshow/top-10-best-bass-lakes-of-2024/1222543>.

You may email Frank Sargeant at Frankmako1@gmail.com

MUW golfers named to Academic All-District Team

from sports page 1

School. He is a four-year member of the Owls' program. He played in six of the team's events in 2023-24, with back-to-back fifth-place finishes at the Alabama Invasion and Music City Shootout tournaments. He also had a top-20 finish at the Freed-Hardeman Invitational, where he was 15th. For his career, Pannell was voted the USCAA Student-Athlete of the Year in 2022-23 and also a three-time USCAA All-Academic selection (2020-23).

Flowers, a biology major, graduated from Meridian High School before attending The W. She competed in all seven of the Owls' events in 2023-24 with four top-20 finishes, including a sixth place at the Lyon College Scots Invitational. Flowers also twice was invited to represent MUW at the PGA WORKS Collegiate Championships. Like Pannell, Flowers was the USCAA Student-Athlete of the Year in 2022-23 and a two-time USCAA All-Academic Team honoree (2021-23).

Gray, a kinesiology major, prepped at Oak Mountain High School and attended Snead State Community College for two years before coming to Columbus. A two-year team member, in 2023-24 Gray had two top-20 finishes (at the Lyon College Scots Invitational and the LeTourneau Tempest Intercollegiate).

All three players were also members of the St. Louis Intercollegiate Athletic Conference's (SLIAC) All-Academic Team, as well.

For more information about CSC Academic All-District® and Academic All-America® Teams program, visit AcademicAllAmerica.com.

8.31 vs

\$49 4 TICKETS + PARKING PASS*

**Price increases on 7/1 and 8/1 while supplies last*

MEMPHIS FOOTBALL

Email sports news and photos to MSTsports@prodigy.net

MEMPHIS POLICE DEPARTMENT

Drunk driving affects more than just YOU.
Don't drink & drive.

Emergencies: 9-1-1
Non-Emergencies: 901-545-2766

Matching Donors

**YOU DON'T HAVE TO DONATE A KIDNEY TO SAVE A LIFE
DONATE YOUR CAR, BOAT, REAL ESTATE, OR PLANE!**

We take donations in any condition, with fast, free pickup.

Every donation is tax deductible.

100% of the proceeds help save the lives of people needing organ transplants on MatchingDonors.com, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Call us at 781-821-2204
or donate online at MatchingDonorsDonations.com