

COURTESY OF CLEMSON BASS FISHING TEAM

The Clemson Bass Fishing Team competes in a number of national tournament trails and even offers local open events so that anyone can fish with the Tigers.

Bass fishing with the Tigers

BY PHILLIP GENTRY
FOR THE JOURNAL

Collegiate bass fishing is one of the fastest growing and most competitive sports in the nation. The sport is comprised of dedicated, hardworking, individualistic full-time students who all share one common interest — an undying passion for bass fishing and the great outdoors.

These students have chosen frigid mornings spent speeding across the calm waters of their favorite fisheries over the late night party scene and the security of a part-time college job.

The sport's explosion is made evident by the monumental number of competing schools at various collegiate trails throughout the country.

Four years ago, there were a modest 50 competitive universities, and now there are now roughly 300 universities competing, and that number is steadily growing with each year.

The Clemson Bass Fishing Team was created nearly four years ago and has proceeded to grow by leaps and bounds both in size and in national recognition. Last spring, Clemson sent its first-ever two-man team to the prestigious FLW College National Championship, where the Tigers jumped into the spotlight of professional bass fishing by leading all other teams on the first day of competition.

The Clemson Bass Fishing Team exists as a club sport and is open only to enrolled full-time students at the university. Unlike many teams, Clemson accepts any interested students and does not hold tryout fishing tournaments to join the team.

Currently, the team boasts 46 active members who are governed by a board of eight elected officers.

Seth Mycko, a senior member and officer of the team, said that while the team fishes in several trails and invitational tournaments that are only open to collegiate teams, there are also opportunities for the general public to fish with the Clemson Bass Fishing Team.

"One of our goals is to try to get more involved with the community and get the community more involved with our team," he said. "One of the ways we can accomplish that is by holding open bass fishing tournaments.

"It lets anyone who likes to bass fish, from high school students to senior adults, participate in one of our tournaments."

The team is holding an open tournament today on Lake Hartwell. While this short notice won't allow anglers to fish the tournament, interested parties can come out to the weigh-in, which will be held at 3 p.m. at Broyle's Landing off of Highway 24 near Townville.

Mycko said one of the best ways for supporters to stay in touch with the team is through its website, www.clemsonfishing.com.

He also added that open tournaments are not only exciting, but also play a vital role in fundraising for the team.

"We do have one wrapped boat that belongs to the team, but for the most part each angler team has to provide their own boat and pay their own entry fees for the tournaments," Mycko said. "We use a club point system based on participation to see which team uses the wrapped boat for a given event."

The Clemson Bass Fishing Team can also be found on Facebook at www.facebook.com/clemsonbassfishingteam.

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