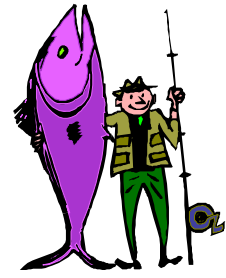




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The Home of the Big Fish!

USE OF SENKOS/PLASTICS AT KBR

Dear Members,

Over the last three years I have received various reports from fishermen who say that they have been catching bass that have big heads and bodies, but no weight to them. This big head and skinny body syndrome has been researched by one of our members, Carmin Rosato.

One of the prime suspects has been the use of large "plastic baits". General trauma from being caught, and broken leaders are also on the list of possibilities for this condition. The new plastic baits have the same problems associated with using live baits, the fish swallow them deep.

I have checked with other catch and release facilities, including out of state lakes that have a similar catch and release program as KBR. Their response is that they too have a certain number of fish which have this syndrome, and they felt that it was only partially due to ingestion of plastics, more than likely the hook and leader being broken off with the plastic bait as a major cause. Not throwing plastic baits back into the water when it is worn out was one of the cures.

In any case, KBR is modifying its' rules and recommendations for the members to help keep our fish healthy, and hopefully to put to bed the debate on the skinny fish-big head syndrome.

Please read Carmin's report on Page 2. KBR has officially adopted his recommendations into the rules of the ranch.

Thank you,

DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL

April 8th & 9th - Private booking
Lake Closed

April 11th & April 12th - Ventura Bass Club Two Day Outing
Lake Closed

April 13th Sacramento Fly Fishing Club, Lake Closed
April 26th Delta Club
Lake Closed

MAY

May 3rd KBR Team Tournament-Fish Sniffer
Lake Closed

May 10th Take-A- Special Kid Fishing
Lake Closed

May 17th 4 H Kids Fishing Derby
Lake Closed

JUNE

June 7th Calaveras Fly Fishing Club
Lake Closed

June 21st KBR Member's Clinic

OCTOBER

October 4th KBR Member's Tournament

Please check the web site for changes, updates and more information about lake events:

www.kelseybassranch.com

Monster Surfaces at KBR!!!

A 15 lb., 8 oz. Bass was taken from KBR on February 24th, 2003. The fish was not caught, it was found floating on its' side in the shoreline weeds, alive but unable to swim, by member Jeff Eddings. The fish appeared to be very healthy, no hook marks or abrasions and with no obvious reason for it not being able to swim. It was a large female, loaded with eggs. Her tail bore the marks of nest building. Water temperatures are approaching 60 degrees now and the fish are starting to spawn.

This is the lake record; the fish was photographed and weighed on a certified scale. Jeff is having the fish mounted and we will display the mount at the member's clinic this year. This may be the big fish we've heard about for years off the north tip of the park peninsula that's been teasing members that have glimpse this monster.



Inside this issue:

<i>Use of Plastics Report</i>	2
<i>KBR Membership Status</i>	2
<i>48-Hour Booking Rule</i>	3
<i>New Lake Rules</i>	3
<i>Aquatic Weeds a Bust</i>	4
<i>Team Tournament</i>	4
<i>Fire Up Pump</i>	4
<i>Members' Clinic</i>	4
<i>KBR Tournament Form</i>	5

Use of Plastics

(This report is based on information received on 11/25/02 from fish biologist at Berkley).

I spoke with the biologist responsible for testing the effects of Berkley Power baits on bass. I explained the contents of my letter to Yamamoto of 10/7/02. He was very knowledgeable in the subject, as he had tested the effects on both aquarium bass and pond bass. His experience is with power worms and he stated up front that they were softer than most other plastic worms.

In the case of a fish only ingesting the plastic worm he said the following (no hook or line involved):

A 12-inch aquarium bass will regurgitate about half the baits ingested. A four-inch worm will pass through anal orifice in 2-4 days. A seven-inch worm will pass through in approximately 7 days. A three-pound bass should have no problem passing a ten-inch worm in 4- 7 days.

The Berkley biologist was also familiar with senkos. He felt that with the high salt content, the plastic would soften as the

salt dissolves, since it leaves small voids as it dissolves. We discussed the reports of senkos being observed exiting the anal orifice. He was quite sure that plastic reaching that point would be expelled without causing a problem. That was a good sign that the digestive process was intact and working.

In the case of a fish ingesting both the plastic worm or senko and the hook and leader his comments were:

We then discussed the situation involving power worms and senkos when they are ingested and the bait and hook passes into the esophagus and beyond. He had test results showing the effect of a small jig heads **without hooks** being ingested with power baits. In these cases it took an additional three weeks to pass through the fish. He felt to preserve our fishery, **barbless hooks** on all plastics are a must. As to "gut hooked " fish, he felt if you can see the hook, and use forceps through the gill plate, assuming the use of barbless hooks, that you can gently rotate the hook out and most fish will survive. Any tearing to the peritoneum wall and the fish is not likely

to survive. On fish where most of the hook is not visible, the best you can do is to cut the hook--the more removed the better--without undue stressing of the fish. The worst-case scenario is where the fish ingests the bait with hook, is gut hooked and the line is cut by the sharp jaw plates common on Florida strain largemouth. Here the fish has to deal with the plastic, and an imbedded hook as well as a possible injury .The bigger the hook, and the thicker the hook the more stress and time to pass or corrode away.

Big head, skinny body:

I brought up the reports of large headed fish with small bodies--"The head of a ten pounder but the body of a five pounder". He could not venture opinion as to cause. It could be a genetic problem, could be insufficient food or it could be due to internal injury. A fish biologist would have to examine the fish to determine the most likely cause.

Report Submitted by Carmin Rosato



KBR Membership Status

The KBR membership is full right now with new memberships being accepted when an old member drops out. I personally feel that by reducing the membership numbers the fishery will benefit from a reduction in fishing pressure.

This will be the last year we are offering corporate memberships. After this year we will be offering individual or family memberships only. Don't worry, if you have a corporate membership now, we will continue to honor them as long as the membership is renewed. The membership fee for a new corporate membership has been raised effective January 1, 2003 from \$1500 per year to \$1800 per year. All pre-2003 corporate memberships will be renewed at the same amount - \$1500 per year. Individual or family memberships fees will stay the same at \$900 per year.

Remember the 48-Hour Booking Rule

Spring fever is already striking. The urge to come on out no matter what is strong this time of year. Please remember to call the fishing line (209-563-1950) at least 48 hours in advance before you visit. This is especially helpful in the Spring. Last year the lake was full everyday for the months of March, April, and May. Scheduling in is the only way we are able to keep the number of boats on the lake at any one time to six. This helps to keep the lake a source of enjoyment for everyone.

One of the things that aggravated me at Sacramento Sportsmen show was the lone person (non member) that came up to the KBR booth and announced to his friends that he'd never come back to KBR because when he tried it out, there were more than six boats on the lake and he wasn't going to fish there again.

I remember the day he tried the lake, it was Good Friday two years ago. We had a booked full lake; then three members showed up out of the blue (they got sick of not catching fish at McClure or Don Pedro, so they popped in here); and a group that had won a fishing certificate just showed up, too, without scheduling in and they brought an extra boat. We had twelve boats on the lake.

So if you really want to come out the same day, call me at 209-563-6573 and talk to me. If you can't get a hold of me and you come out, be prepared to bank fish if there are six boats on the lake. Also be prepared to pull out of the water if a sixth scheduled boat shows. Remember calling 48 hours in advance guarantees you a spot.



New Rules for the Lake (see website for updated text)

KBR has developed the following rules now going into effect this year for the lake. These new rules are based on the idea that we all want to maintain the very best fishery at Kelsey Bass Ranch. The purpose of these requirements is to minimize the injuries and fatalities to fish that have ingested plastic baits.

1. All plastic baits must be fished with barbless hooks.
2. Use light wire worm hooks--avoid use of 2X, 4X and heavy duty hooks such as Gamakatsu G-Mag and Superline worm hooks and Owner Rigging hooks.
3. Plastics fished without weights require use of braided line or braided leader.
4. When using senkos, the maximum size is 5 inches. No 6 or 7-inch senkos allowed.
5. Anyone fishing plastics must have the following tools onboard to aid in releasing fish.
 - 5a. 8 inch locking forceps (equiv. To BPS item 15-446-504-00). B. 6 inch diagonal cutters capable of cutting worm hooks.
6. Any fish that is not lip hooked should be landed by net or by lifting from the water by grasping it's jaw to avoid further injury to deep hooked fish.

If any part of the hook is visible on deeply hooked fish, the barbless hook can usually be removed with the recommended forceps. Gently insert the forceps through the gill plate, clamp on the hook and gently rotate the hook out of the tissue involved. Do not pull to expose more hook--this will only add to the injury and stress. If all else fails cut off all visible hook with the diagonals. There have been many reports of sizable fish "breaking off" or "slicing off" monofilament lines when using senkos. The braided line/leader will prevent this slice off on fish that swallow the bait and allow for a safe hook removal and release as opposed to having gut hooked fish trying to survive an embedded hook and plastic bait.

Aquatic Weeds a Bust

Last season the much talked about aquatic weed problem never materialized, sure there were weeds but they just didn't get a hold on the lake. In fact the weeds grew to a point and then just seemed to wither away as the season progressed. The up shot of the aquatic weed growth is that it is good for the fish and fishery. Members I want you guys to come to the Member's clinic. Fishing the weeds is the prime topic there and everyone needs to know how they can be used to their advantage.

Time to Fire Up the Pump

One thing for sure as far as living in Central California, most years you're going to be disappointed in the rainfall. Of course a cattle ranch and farming rely on the rain. This year seems to be a major disappointment in the making. The lake has not risen significantly from the storminess we had in December, and the storms that are coming through now aren't hardly dropping a drop. So, when the water gets turned on in the MID Canal about March 14th, we are starting our main pump for the ranch with the intention of filling the lake sometime toward the end of April.

Team Tournament Scheduled

Mark your calendars for May 3rd for the KBR Team Tournament hosted by Fish Sniffer magazine. Last year's team tournament was a great success. Even though the tournament was designed to attract non-members into trying the ranch, almost half of the participants were members. And they won, too!

This year's tournament will start an hour early at 6:00 am. Attached is an entry form in case you guys are interested in showing your stuff (or download it off the website). Sheldon Bright of the Fish Sniffer, the host of the tournament, will be fishing along with everyone else.

There will be a KBR membership for two as first prize, as well as cash prizes for 2nd and 3rd place, and a Big Fish prize. The tournament will be conducted mega-buck style, 30 minutes a slot.

All KBR Members are invited to 'spectate,' too! Last year's top prize went to Donny Young and Michael Goodwin. And of course there is a barbeque for all. Call to RSVP if for 'spectating' so we have enough food for you.

Members' Clinic

If you want to be entertained and have a chance to learn by some of the region's best pros then you gotta come to the Member's Clinic, Saturday, June 21st. Words of Wisdom, fish stories, and hands on instruction is what this event is all about. The topic once again will be the challenges of fishing KBR - the aquatic weeds. And, of course, there will be a barbeque.



Please check the web site <http://www.kelseybassranch.com> regularly for updates on fishing reports, date changes, special events, and other important information regarding Kelsey Bass Ranch.

Keep Those Fish Stories and Photos Comin'!

Members—please continue to send all good fish and fisherman photos to us. Our web site is always hungry!

Email your digital photos to robynporter@sbcglobal.net or bigfish@kelseybassranch.com. Help us keep making Kelsey Bass Ranch one of the greatest catches on the 'net!

KELSEY BASS RANCH TEAM TOURNAMENT



Saturday May 3, 2003 at 6 AM
**SECOND ANNUAL
OPEN INVITATIONAL!**

Hosted
by
Sheldon
Bright



2003

Northern California's Greatest Trophy Bass Lake

15 Two Person Teams

\$200 Per Team

Top 3 Teams Receive Trophies

1 In 3 Payback (Based On Full Field)

OVER

\$4,000 IN CASH & PRIZES

WIN A \$1,500

Membership To Kelsey Bass Ranch

Entry Form

Boater Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number _____

Make, Model of Boat _____

Ins. Co. _____

Policy No. _____

Non Boater Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Phone Number _____

All participants in the tournament must have a working livewell system, and are required to read and sign the official rules the day of the tournament. Failure to do so results in automatic disqualifications. The first 15 teams to sign up will receive a welcoming packet in the mail, tournament rules, and directions to the lake.

**Make Checks or Money Orders Payable To
The Kelsey Bass Ranch, P.O. Box 324, Snelling, CA 95369**

FOR MORE INFORMATION



**KELSEY
BASS RANCH**



**CALL
(209)**

563-1950

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Mai l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 1
M a i l i n g A d d r e s s L i n e 2
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How bee-zar is this!?!? You've seen it on the website—it's no urban legend.

