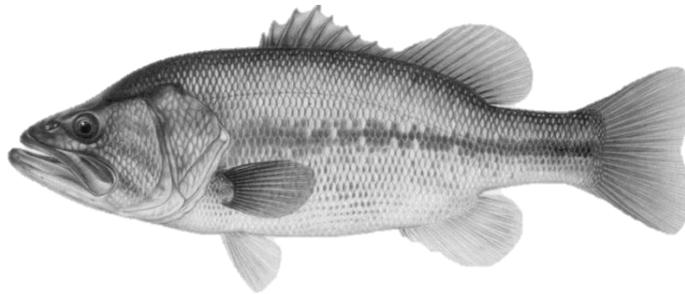


Georgia Bass Clubs

2016

Tournament Creel Report



Submitted By:

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Introduction

This is the 39th year Georgia bass club tournament creel data has been summarized in an annual report. During 2016, 55 bass clubs submitted results from 486 tournaments. As in 2015, clubs associated with Georgia Bass Chapter Federation and Georgia BASS Nation submitted tournament results to this effort.

Methods

Of the 486 bass tournaments reported, 326 were analyzed for this report. Seven clubs are in both organizations and their tournaments were only analyzed once. Tournaments that included fewer than five anglers and waterbodies with fewer than five tournaments were excluded from analysis. Creel reports from tournaments held outside of Georgia were also removed from the analysis. Georgia based clubs fished tournaments in Alabama, Florida, South Carolina, and Tennessee. All data from tournaments held in Alabama as well as on the border waterbodies was shared with the Alabama Department of Conservation. They issue an annual report (B.A.I.T) on black bass tournaments as well. Data from Tennessee waterbodies was also shared with Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency to be used in fishery management.

In total, tournaments from 14 bodies of water are analyzed in the following tables and figures. Waterbody abbreviations are as follows: Allatoona (**AL**), Bartlett's Ferry (**BF**), Blackshear (**BS**), Clarks Hill (**CH**), Hartwell (**HW**), Jackson (**JA**), Lanier (**LA**), Oconee (**OC**), R. B. Russell (**RU**), Savannah River (**SR**), Seminole (**SE**), Sinclair (**SI**), Walter F. George (**WG**), and West Point (**WP**).

Results

Anglers spent 37,863 hours of effort during the 326 tournaments analyzed in 2016 (Table 1). The weighed-in, tournament average catch rate was 0.291 bass/angler hour (or 2.33 bass in an 8-hour fishing day). This is up from 2015 (0.277 bass/angler hour), and is above the 10 average of 0.276 bass/angler hour.

Overall, the data shows a common story of being able to catch a lot of fish or being able to catch larger fish. Richard B. Russell and Allatoona illustrate this perfectly. These waterbodies produced the two highest catch rates (Figure 1), two lowest percentages of unsuccessful anglers (Figure 2) and two highest percentages of anglers weighing in 5 black bass (Figure 3). Additionally, these two waterbodies had the smallest average bass (Figure 4) and smallest average big bass (Figure 5).

The largest bass and heaviest tournament winning weights were found on Lake Seminole in 2016. Seminole had the second largest average bass (Figure 4), the heaviest average big bass (Figure 5) and the heaviest winning weight average (Figure 6). It was also the waterbody most likely to have a 5 pound bass weighed in (Figure 7).

Instead of reporting how many bass ≥ 5.0 lbs or larger were caught during each tournament in 2016, some clubs simply reported if a bass ≥ 5.0 lbs was caught. As a result, a new metric (Percentage Tournaments with a Bass ≥ 5.0 lbs) is in this report (Figure 7). While not illustrating how many hours are needed to catch a bass ≥ 5.0 lbs, this still provides an idea of how

common bass of this size are. This metric reinforces the pattern of large fish on Seminole and smaller fish on Russell and Allatoona.

A comparison of the waterbodies across all metrics shows there are some well-balanced tournament fisheries in Georgia (Table 2). While Clarks Hill, Hartwell, Bartletts Ferry and Sinclair don't produce particularly large fish or the most fish, they do provide quality tournament fisheries. Seminole still stands out in this ranking due to the large fish caught there.

Analyzing tournament fishing on a month by month basis, there are some expected trends (Table 3). Tournaments with the best fishing typically happened in March and April. This matches up with the spawn and fish are usually most aggressive that time of year. These two months also saw the most tournaments held as clubs looked to capitalize on the good fishing. That being said, effort is pretty well spread out over the year as clubs need to fish 10-12 tournaments each year. December shows lots of fish being caught, but not particularly big fish. Which could be a sign of fish try to feed heavily before winter arrives. February also stood out because large fish are caught more often than normal. This could be related to females preparing for the upcoming spawning season.

Overall, 2016 appeared to be fairly good year for bass fishing in Georgia. Annual averages were very comparable with the results from 2013-2015 (Table 4). There was a slight decrease in general angler success, but the bass that were weighed in were slightly larger than in the past 3 years.

Table 1. Georgia bass clubs tournament results for Georgia waterbodies in 2016.

Waterbody	Number of Tournaments Analyzed	Number of Angler Hours	Bass Weighed-in/Angler Hour	Lbs. Weighed-in/Angler Hour	Percent Anglers with Five or More Bass	Percent Anglers with Zero Bass	Average Largest Bass (lbs.)	Average Bass Weight (lbs.)	Average Winning Weight (lbs.)	Percent Bass as Largemouth Bass	Angler Hours Per \geq 5 lb Bass
<i>Allatoona</i>	7	832	0.363	0.535	42.4	12.6	3.48	1.45	9.02	0.10	0.00
<i>Bartlett's Ferry^b</i>	6	783.5	0.323	0.523	27.3	17.7	5.35	1.61	10.46	0.44	50.00
<i>Blackshear</i>	9	877.4	0.224	0.390	8.2	25.8	4.11	1.81	11.20	0.93	22.00
<i>Clarks Hill</i>	62	7138	0.292	0.578	31.3	21.9	4.79	1.97	13.56	0.90	41.94
<i>Hartwell</i>	16	2174.5	0.317	0.516	21.2	20.3	4.13	1.66	12.77	0.40	7.69
<i>Jackson</i>	13	1153.5	0.283	0.407	20.1	16.5	3.96	1.52	7.91	0.35	16.33
<i>Lanier^a</i>	49	6389.5	0.284	0.592	15.0	26.2	4.58	2.09	12.62	0.13	24.14
<i>Oconee^b</i>	29	2581.5	0.223	0.489	33.9	9.3	4.31	2.24	10.80	0.99	10.00
<i>R. B. Russell</i>	10	1263	0.433	0.561	32.8	17.9	3.15	1.27	11.01	0.15	44.44
<i>Savannah River</i>	18	2017	0.351	0.484	19.0	19.0	4.65	1.47	9.98	1.00	61.90
<i>Seminole</i>	21	2298	0.269	0.591	28.5	13.4	5.46	2.15	13.82	1.00	26.83
<i>Sinclair</i>	41	4643.5	0.308	0.558	18.7	26.6	4.31	1.83	11.84	0.98	54.17
<i>Walter F. George^b</i>	24	3114.5	0.239	0.497	32.5	17.5	5.04	2.05	13.77	0.89	31.25
<i>West Point^b</i>	21	2597.5	0.310	0.489	29.6	17.8	4.10	1.57	10.34	0.35	23.81
Total ^c	326	37863.4	0.291	0.536	25.3	19.2	4.51	1.88	12.02	0.68	31.59

^a 14-inch size limit on all black bass

^b 14-inch size limit on largemouth bass and 12-inch size limit on other black bass

^c Values calculated from raw creel report data, not the values in table

Table 2. Rankings of waterbodies based on 2016 Bass Tournament data.

Waterbody	Number of Tournaments Analyzed	Bass Weighed-in/Angler Hour	Percent Anglers with Zero Bass	Percent Anglers with Five or More Bass	Average Bass Weight (lbs.)	Average Winning Weight (lbs.)	Average Largest Bass (lbs.)	Percent Tournaments with a Bass ≥ 5 lb	Average Rank	Rank
<i>Seminole</i>	21	11	9	11	2	1	1	1	5.14	1
<i>Clarks Hill</i>	62	8	11	5	5	3	4	5	5.86	2
<i>Hartwell</i>	16	5	5	4	8	4	9	6	5.86	2
<i>Bartletts Ferry</i>	6	4	6	8	9	10	2	3	6.00	4
<i>Sinclair</i>	41	7	3	7	6	6	8	7	6.29	5
<i>Savannah River</i>	18	3	8	3	12	12	5	4	6.71	6
<i>Lanier</i>	49	9	4	10	3	5	6	11	6.86	7
<i>Walter F. George</i>	24	12	14	12	4	2	3	2	7.00	8
<i>Russell</i>	10	1	1	2	14	8	14	12	7.43	9
<i>Allatoona</i>	7	2	2	1	13	13	13	13	8.14	10
<i>West Point</i>	21	6	7	6	10	11	11	9	8.57	11
<i>Oconee</i>	29	14	13	13	1	9	7	8	9.29	12
<i>Blackshear</i>	9	13	12	14	7	7	10	10	10.43	13
<i>Jackson</i>	13	10	10	9	11	14	12	14	11.43	14

Table 3. Rankings of months based on 2016 Bass Tournament data.

Month	Number of Tournaments Analyzed	Bass Weighed-in/Angler Hour	Percent Anglers with Zero Bass	Percent Anglers with Five or More Bass	Average Bass Weight (lbs.)	Average Winning Weight (lbs.)	Average Largest Bass (lbs.)	Percent Tournaments with a Bass ≥ 5 lb	Average Rank	Rank
<i>March</i>	35	2	4	3	3	2	2	2	2.57	1
<i>April</i>	32	4	1	1	7	3	5	4	3.57	2
<i>May</i>	23	5	8	4	5	1	3	3	4.14	3
<i>December</i>	24	1	2	2	8	7	7	9	5.14	4
<i>February</i>	29	12	9	11	1	4	1	1	5.57	5
<i>July</i>	28	8	11	7	4	8	4	5	6.71	6
<i>November</i>	22	3	3	6	12	6	10	8	6.86	7
<i>June</i>	29	9	7	8	6	5	9	11	7.86	8
<i>September</i>	27	7	5	9	10	11	11	7	8.57	9
<i>October</i>	26	6	6	5	11	9	12	12	8.71	10
<i>January</i>	24	11	10	12	2	10	8	10	9.00	11
<i>August</i>	27	10	12	10	9	12	6	6	9.29	12

Table 4. Comparing state-wide 2016 Bass Tournament data to the 2013-2015 average.

Metric	2013-2015 Average	2016 Results	Change
Tournaments	313.3	326	4.0%
Angler Hours	39315.3	37863	-3.7%
Bass Weighed in Per Hour	0.299	0.291	-2.7%
Pounds Weighed in Per Hour	0.550	0.536	-2.5%
Percent Angler with Five Bass	26.9	25.3	-5.8%
Percent Angler with Zero Bass	19.3	19.2	-0.3%
Biggest Bass Weight	4.33	4.51	4.1%
Average Bass Weight	1.85	1.88	1.4%
Tournament Winning Weight	11.75	12.02	2.3%
Percentage Largemouth Bass	67.3	68	1.0%

Figure 1. Bass Weighed-in Per Angler Hour in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

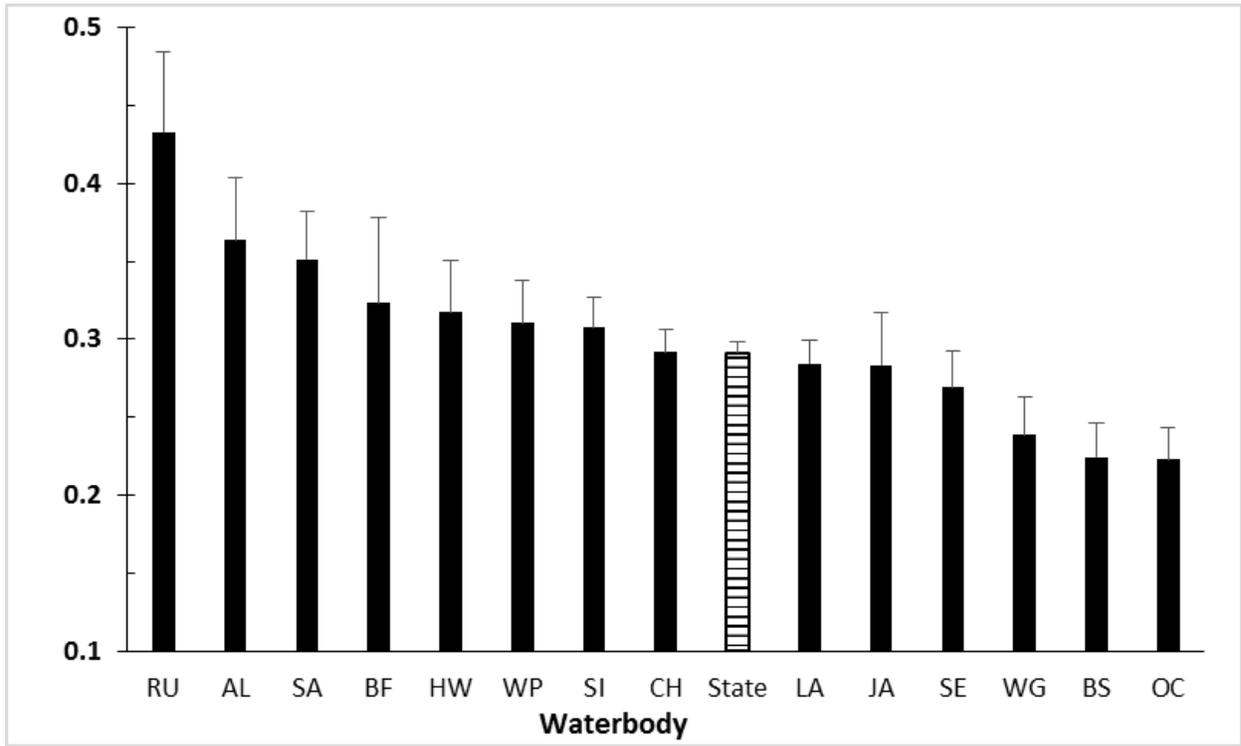


Figure 2. Percentage of Anglers with Zero Bass in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

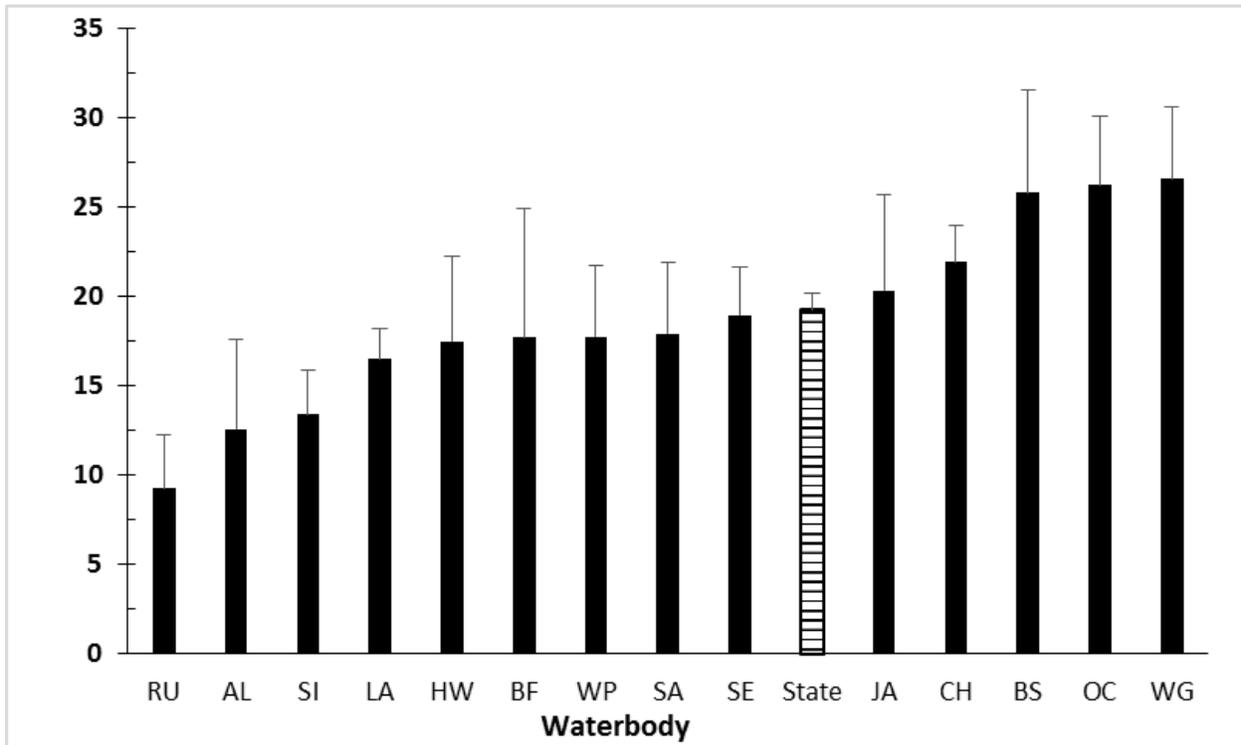


Figure 3. Percentage of Anglers with Five Bass in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

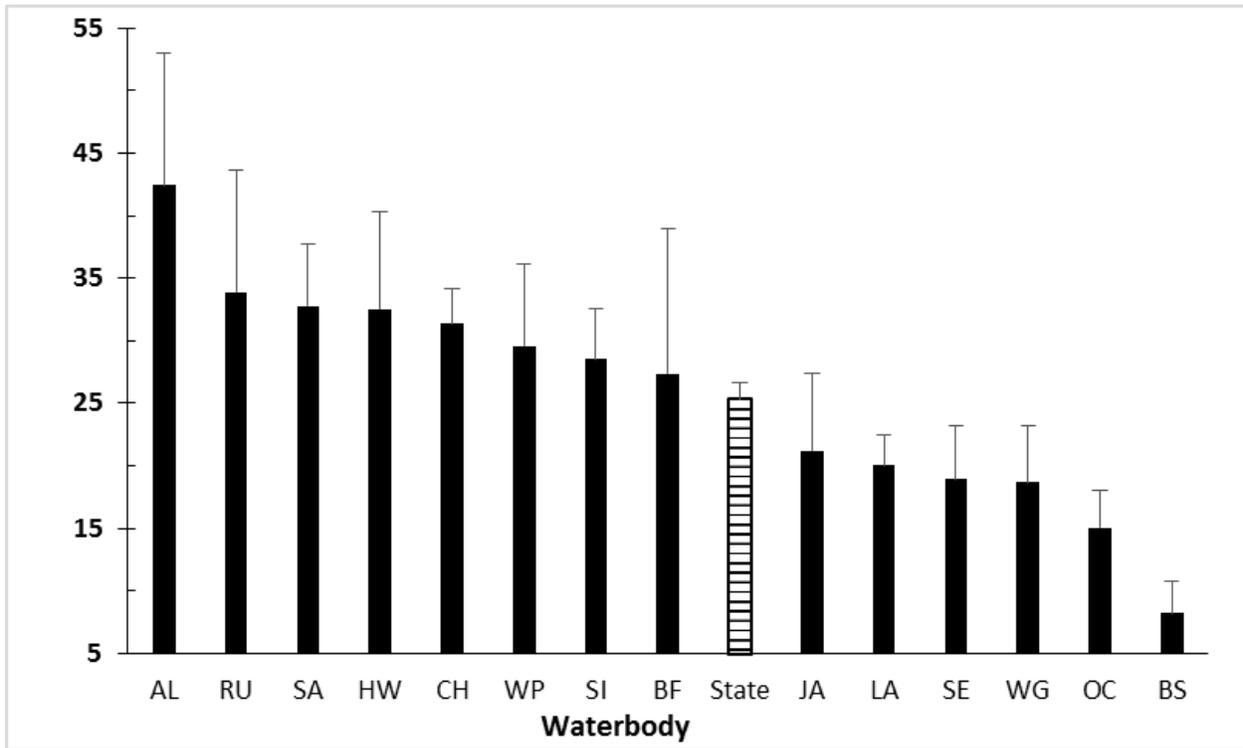


Figure 4. Average Bass Weight in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

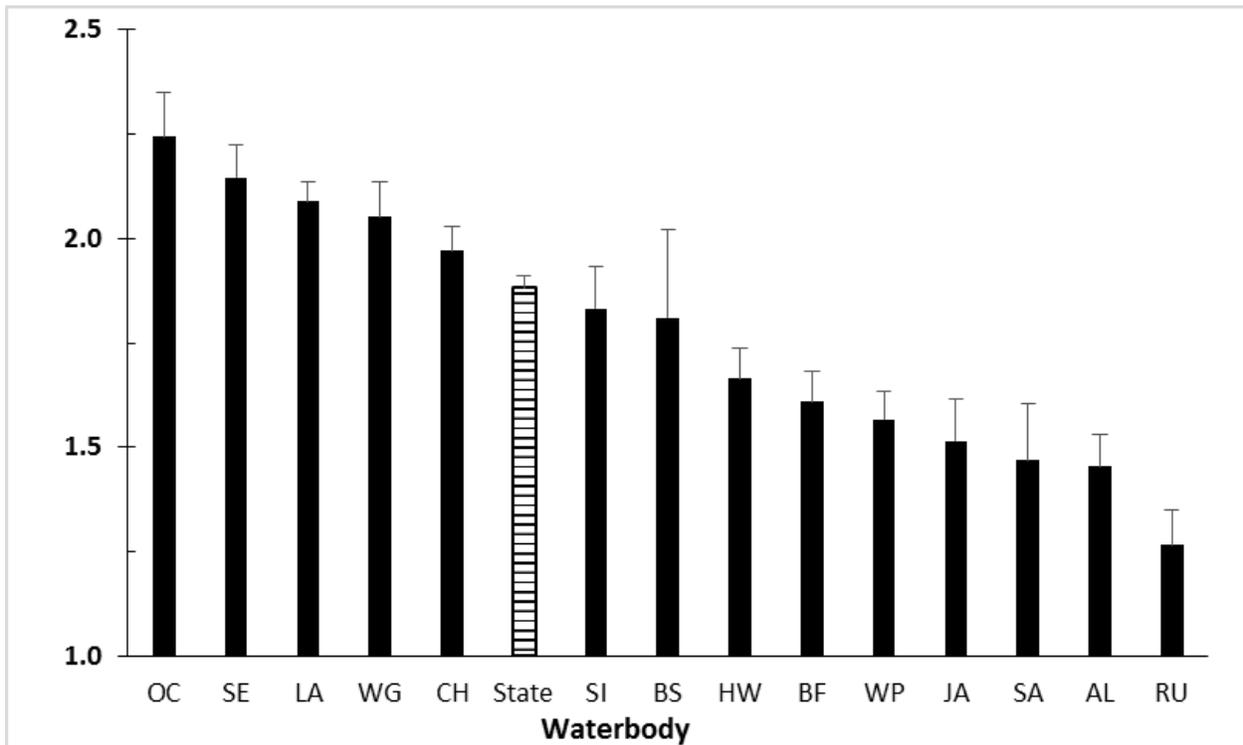


Figure 5. Average Big Bass Weight in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

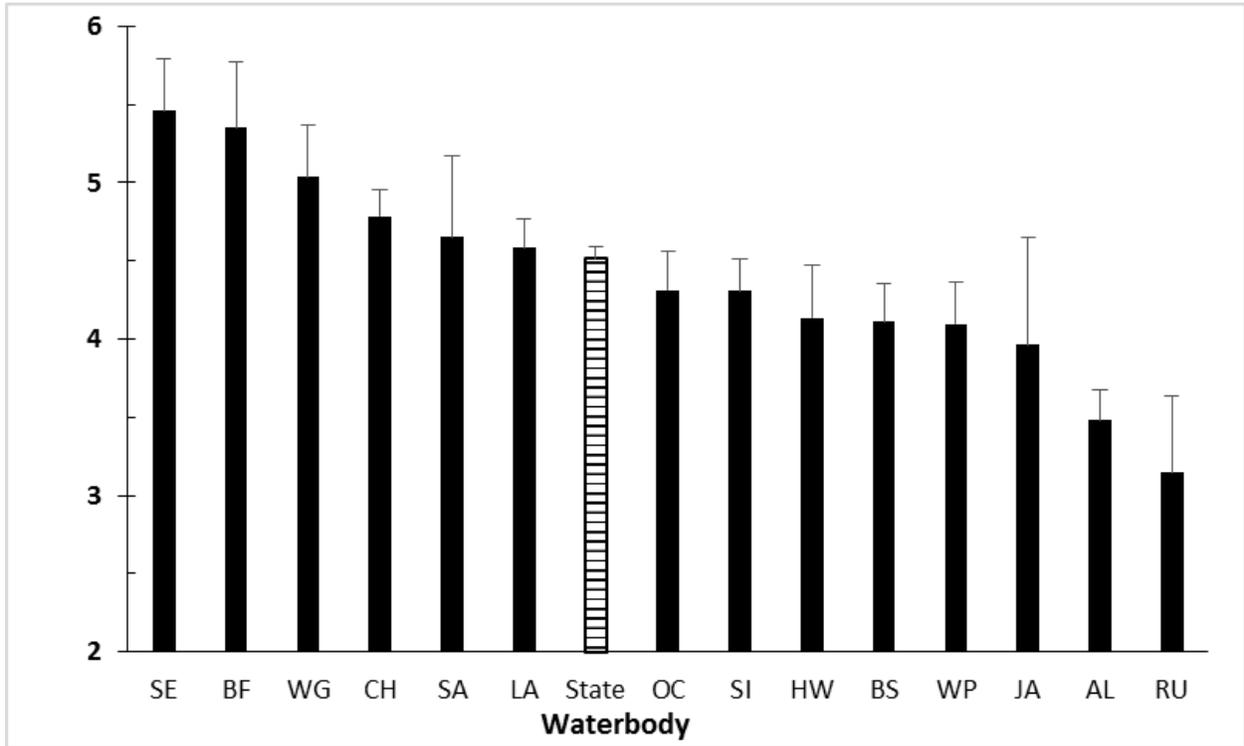


Figure 6. Average Winning Weight in Georgia Bass Club Tournaments in 2016.

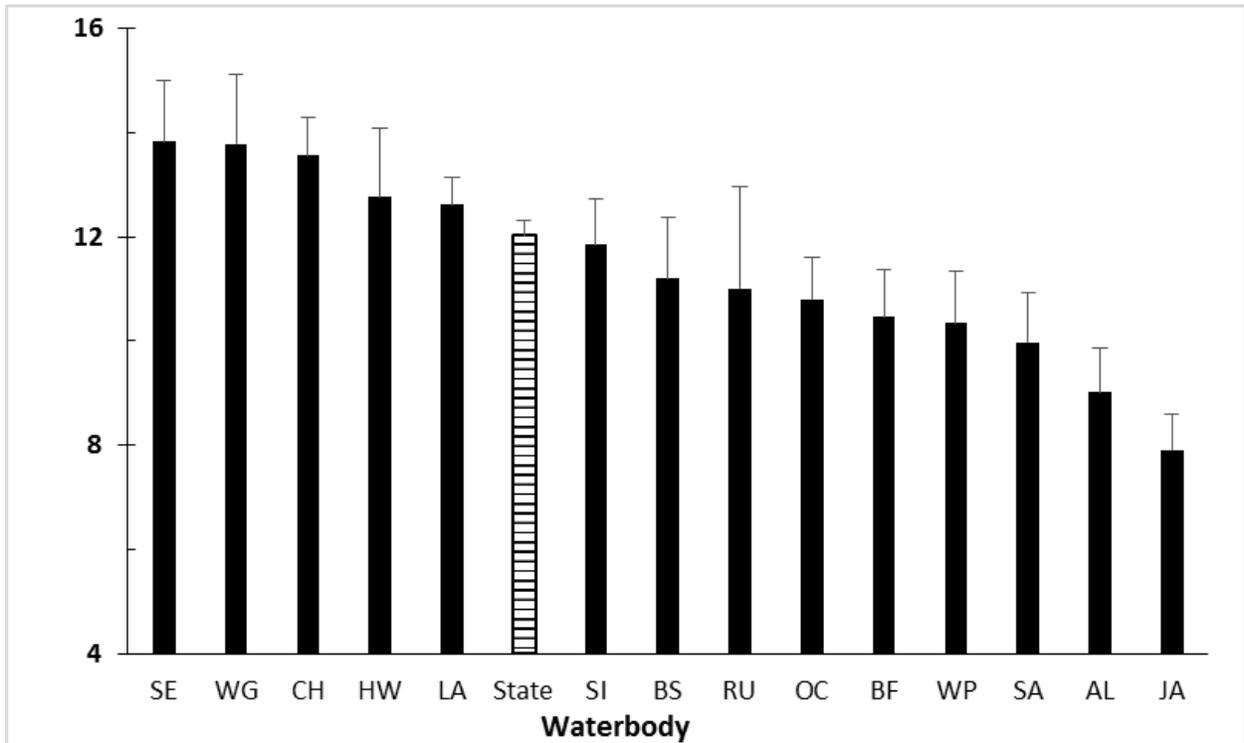


Figure 7. Percentage of Georgia Bass Club Tournaments with a bass ≥ 5.0 lbs. in 2016.

