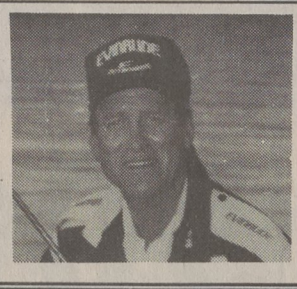


Angling Expertise

By
Guy Eaker



This time of the year lure selections for bass usually starts getting easier. When water temperatures begin getting colder, it's time to pitch a jig.

Crankbaits, spinnerbaits and topwater plugs will continue to take bass until the water temperature gets cold, but you might be surprised at how many fish you can catch now on a jig. I fish jigs year-round in professional tournaments. They can be extremely effective in spring and summer as well as in fall and winter.

The reason a jig is such an effective bass lure is because of where and how it can be presented and retrieved. With practice, you can put a jig into thick, heavy cover in places impossible to reach with a cast and you can put it there without making a ripple. You can leave it in the strike zone as long as you want and, because it is weedless, you can bring it out. You can't do that with many lures.

I don't think there is anything easy about fishing a jig. Jigs, like plastic worms, are free-falling lures that are most productive on or near the bottom. During that free-fall before it actually reaches the bottom is when you have the least control. Of course, that's exactly when a lot of bass decide to hit.

That's why concentration is so critical in jig fishing. You need to learn to be aware of what that lure feels like when it's falling and what it feels like when it stops falling. This comes with lots of practice and that is what makes Denny Brauer and Tommy Biffle so good. They know everything there is to know about how jigs feel in the water.

Most of the time you don't feel the bass hit your jig. I honestly believe I don't feel 50 percent of the hits I get. I still catch bass because my concentration is on watching my line.

All bass anglers have been told to "become a line watcher" when fishing jigs and worms, but not everyone truly understands why and how to do it.

In the majority of instances when a bass hits a jig your line will move slightly. It won't move much unless a bass hits and takes off with it, in which case you'll probably feel something too. Most of the time your line will twitch and that's it. If you miss the twitch, you'll miss the bass.

The best place to watch your line is right where it enters the water. The reason is because this is where the contrast between line color and water color is the strongest. That is also where line movement is most noticeable.

One of the most important questions you have to answer when fishing a jig is how fast the bass want the jig to fall. This may not sound that important but it's just like how fast a bass wants a spinnerbait retrieved or which retrieve pattern they want for a crankbait.

Always assume bass want a slow retrieve; the majority of the time they will. When the water is warm and the bass are more active, a faster fall may be what you want, but the bass will tell you. They'll hit as you're bringing the jig back up for another cast. This time of the year and throughout the coming winter months, bass will usually want the jig presented more and more slowly.

There are only three ways to control the rate of fall. The first and easiest is to choose a lighter jig. Believe it or not there's a lot of difference between a 1/2-ounce jig and a 1/4-ounce jig. The problem is that lighter jigs do not penetrate heavy cover very well and this time of year bass will generally be in some pretty thick stuff.

To get a jig through thick cover like vegetation or brush you need a heavier jig. I often use 3/4- and one ounce jigs. I also use heavy line, sometimes 30-pound test monofilament. This will slow the jig's fall. Some pros use 40-pound test mono.

The third way to slow the fall is by using a larger trailer, since both pork and plastic add buoyancy. This is one reason you hear about some of the pros using a jig with a huge pork frog in winter.

A big pork or plastic trailer also adds bulk, making a larger visual package. This is why jigs are such great big-bass lures. The adage about using big baits for big fish is true, smaller bass just won't hit a huge jig and pig.

Assuming your jig does not make it to the bottom without being hit, there are an infinite number of things to do with it down there. I like to hop it, but not too actively. With my rod tip, I move it only four or five inches at a time. After it settles back down, I hop it like that again. After three or four hops, I reel in for another pitch.

If you are fishing vertically, an effective retrieve may be one that hops the jig higher but not necessarily moves it very far from your target. Remember, bass hit jigs most often during the fall and this type of retrieve creates repeated falls.

A third presentation I have used and is often used by other pros is shaking the jig. Once it gets to the bottom, raise it a few inches and then shake your rod tip so the jig starts dancing and creating a commotion. Then lower the jig again. Depending on how the bass react, one of these retrieves may be the ticket to catching them.

Of course, the most important part of fishing a jig is having confidence in it. The only way you'll ever gain confidence is by using the lure. Learning isn't easy but once you do, I can guarantee the confidence will come quickly. The bass see to that.

(Guy Eaker and Steve Price have written a book called "Catching Bass Like a Pro." The book gives Guy's tips on how to locate and catch bass, select the right lures, and best techniques to use for the conditions. You also get an insider's view of life as a pro bass angler. The book is available for \$12 at the Eagle office, the Belmont Banner office, the Kings Mountain Herald office, or the Cleveland Times office. The book may also be ordered through the mail for \$14.95. If ordering by mail, send check or money order to Eaker Books, 1036 Country Club Drive, Cherryville, NC 28021.)

Sisk to head vocational program

Sheila Sisk has been promoted to the position of Workforce Development Director in the Kings Mountain District Schools and will assume her new duties January 2.

Sisk was hired as the interim director of the vocational program Thursday night by the Kings Mountain Board of Education. She will succeed the retiring Betty R. Gamble.

Supt. Dr. Bob McRae said some reorganization is underway in the Central Office and Mrs. Sisk was offered a temporary contract through June 30.

Sisk said her responsibilities will be overseeing a staff of 20-plus vocational teachers in the system, continuing as VOCATS coordinator and as director of public relations.

"I am excited," said Sisk, 48, who came to Kings Mountain District Schools in the Business Department 26 years ago. She be-



SHEILA SISK

came head of that department at the retirement of Mrs. Grady Howard and three years ago

became Industry Education Coordinator. She is the liaison between students and industry and students and the military. She oversees the career development program, schedules financial aid workshops and directs registration at the high school.

A graduate of Shelby High School, she received her bachelor's degree in business education from Limestone College. In 1986 she earned her master's degree from Winthrop University.

She is married to Howard Sisk and they are parents of one daughter, Wendy Lemmons, who works at East School as family advocate for Community-in-Schools. They live in the Patterson Springs Community and are active in Lafayette Street United Methodist Church in Shelby. Mrs. Sisk is the

daughter of Mrs. Selma Parker of Shelby and the late Boyce Parker.

Sisk says she looks forward to her new job.

"There have been a lot of changes in vocational education and Betty Gamble's shoes will be hard to fill," she said.

Only the third vocational director in the KM system, Sisk said she worked with both former directors, including the late Myers Hambright and Mrs. Gamble.

"Betty Gamble is well known throughout the state for her efforts in vocational education and in Tech Prep," said Sisk. Gamble was among the first people to congratulate Sisk on her appointment.

Beth Eubanks will continue as secretary in the department which has offices in the administration building at Central School.

KM District Schools lunch menus

Kings Mountain District Schools lunch menus for January:

Jan. 3 - Pizza, garden salad, corn, choice of fruit, milk.

Jan. 4 - Chili beans, Picidally slaw, oven fries, fruit, crackers or corn bread, milk.

Jan. 5 - Hamburger or cheeseburger with lettuce/tomato, french fries, baked beans, cobbler or fruit, milk.

Jan. 8 - Peanut butter/jelly or toasted cheese sandwich, vegetable soup, crackers, fruit, milk.

Jan. 9 - Barbecue on bun, barbecue slaw, oven fries, choice of fruit, milk.

Jan. 10 - Spaghetti, mixed green salad, buttered corn, bread sticks, fruit, milk.

Jan. 11 - Turkey pie, steamed rice, green beans, choice of fruit, milk.

Jan. 12 - Hot dog with chili, oven fries, slaw, fruit of choice, milk.

Jan. 18 - Chicken nuggets with BBQ sauce, slaw, oven fries, fruit, milk.

Jan. 19 - hamburger or cheeseburger, lettuce/tomato, baked beans, fruit or cobbler, milk.

Jan. 22 - Pizza, french fries, corn, choice of fruit, milk.

KMMS Library open Thursday

Kings Mountain Middle School readers need over 55,000 points to reach a goal of 100,000 points by end of next school year and the Media Center will open Thursday, December 28, from 8 a.m.-12 noon to help students achieve the goal.

Librarian Holly Godfrey said that students are encouraged to return and check out library books that day and also to take the Accelerated Reader tests. Students who want to take the test must take their books with them.

Godfrey and Principal John Goforth will be on hand to assist students.

As of December 15, KMMS students had earned 44,767 reading points with the 8th grade Voyager team leading with 6,721 followed closely by the 7th grade Sea Creature team with 6,566 points.

Parents are encouraged to visit with their children Thursday and participate in the special reading project.

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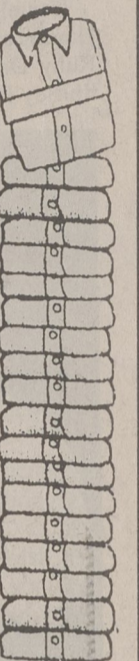
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<p>1994 CHEVROLET LUMINA EURO Auto, V6, Tilt, Cruise, Power Windows & Locks, Cassette Only \$11,488 or \$269 per month</p>	<p>1991 PLYMOUTH ACCLAIM V6, Auto, Air, Cassette, Tilt, Cruise Only \$5,988 or \$187 per month</p>
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<p>1994 MAZDA PRESTIGE Auto, Air, AM/FM Cassette, Only 15K miles Only \$10,988 or \$279 per</p>	<p>1989 PLYMOUTH VOYAGER Power Windows & Locks, Tilt, Cruise, AM/FM Cassette Only \$5488 or \$237 per month</p>
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