

### **Trolling for bass has these primary advantages:**

- If you have some physical limitations that make it difficult to fish by casting, trolling is an easy and effective way to fish.
- It allows you to cover a lot of water in a short time and locate fish.
- It is effective for catching bass at depths where most people are uncomfortable with normal cast-and-retrieve methods
- It can provide very precise depth and speed control.
- The accuracy of lure presentation in relation to depth is maximized.

Trolling is usually done in the close proximity of deep water, over deep water or along a specific break-line or major structure feature. The best of these have always proven to be around drops and ledges associated with the submerged river and feeder creek channels. Long sloping points from the deep water, which terminate in a large flat or major cover area, are also good. Spotted bass will suspend over deep water and trolling is an effective method to catch these bass as long as your lure will get to the desired depth of the bass location. It may require adding weights (as much as 1 or 2 ounces) to your line to get the lure to the proper depth. You will need to experiment to get the right depth.

The type of reel is not extremely important but bait casting reels work well and one with a good drag system is desired. The type rod used in trolling would be 6' to 7' medium action. Almost all trolling anglers use monofilament line. Nearly all of these lines have a built-in stretch factor that helps stop the lure from ripping out of the bass's mouth. Make sure that your drag is set properly so that you don't lose your lure in case of a snag.

Trolling usually requires that you use a lipped diving crankbait. Although if trolling shallow water, a lipless crankbait like Red Eye Shad would be best. Depth is the most important lure selection criteria. If you don't get the lure down to the bass, they will not normally move up or down very far to capture it. Natural colors (i.e. shad) work well on Lake Keowee. The Fat Free Shad, Norman Little N or Rapala DT series are good choices for trolling. And, there are enough lure sizes (dive to different depths, i.e. 10', 15', 20' etc.) to cover all depth zones. The running depth will usually be found on the lure package. Thinner diameter line will make the lure run deeper as will fluorocarbon line.

The key to proper lure presentation is depth control. Remember that the depth must be in relation to the structure being fished. Boat control, therefore, must be used to keep the trailing lure properly positioned along the break-line, appropriate contour interval or in such a manner that the lure will climb over the point at the proper location. To be effective, trolling must be very precise. Remember that 90% of the lake water holds no fish so just dragging a lure is usually not productive, you must locate the bass.

Once bass are located by trolling, there are has two possible choices, depending on the depth at which the fish were found. You may elect to stop and work the area by casting, or you can decide to make additional trolling passes. Either way, you can help mark the area by tossing a marker buoy over the side when the first fish was hooked. Note that the marker is not placed exactly where the fish was caught, but rather should be positioned off to one side of the location. If it were dropped on the school, the falling weight might spook them. The marker is used strictly as a reference point.

Floating leaves, pine needles and twigs can present a problem. They can get caught on your line or lure and ruin its action. This is especially true in the fall. Check your line frequently if this condition exists.

Trolling is a highly effective bass locating and catching technique. Try it and have fun.