

BASS TIMES



Horton headed to the **Classic**

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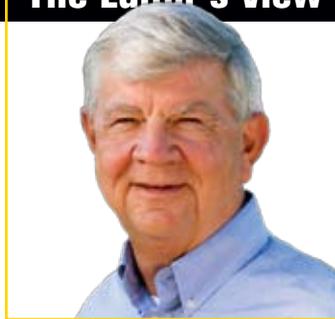


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The Editor's View



An app for that

While I still associate with a few dinosaurs – guys who carry flip phones – most of the people I've fished with lately have smartphones.

These wireless wonders, along with iPads and similar electronic tablets, have become indispensable aids to fishing, as you'll read about on page 14. Search for fishing applications on your phone and you'll come up with literally hundreds of free or cheap apps. Most are games, but some really do enhance your fishing.

Since most of the apps engineers don't fish outside the virtual world, they're missing some great opportunities for new applications that fishermen sorely need. I'm looking for a good designer (and a few investors) to build the following fishing apps:

TrueWeather

I have four weather apps on my phone. On a recent fishing adventure, three of the services predicted 20 to 30 mph winds out of the northeast. I trusted the fourth, which predicted 10 to 15. It was wrong, of course.

Everybody talks about the weather but nobody does anything about it. My TrueWeather app will guarantee that its predictions will come true. And for an extra \$24.95, the premium version will let you choose the weather conditions you like.

Fat Bass

A friend recently showed me an app called "Fat Face Booth." She snapped my portrait on her phone, then opened the app, which digitally added another 100 pounds to my image. It's similar to the technology that turned Tim Allen into the jolly old elf in the *Santa Clause* movies.

What's so difficult about using the same concept to turn your 4-pound bass into a Lunker Club candidate? You wouldn't even have to extend your arm toward the camera to enhance the fish. I already have a marketing campaign: "This app makes your bass look big." Clever, huh?

Waypoint Zapper

You're fishing an offshore honey hole, catching fish after fish, when another angler idles slowly by, working the "bent rod pattern." Then you hear the dreaded sound — beep . . . beep — as he inputs a waypoint. You instantly realize that you'll never have that hot spot to yourself.

If you had bought my app, you could press one button on your iPhone, and the hole poacher's GPS unit would be scrambled. The next weekend, when he tried to go back to your hole, he'd find the waypoint 40 yards up the bank on the other side of the lake. I'm working on a way to fog his memory so he couldn't even remember seeing you, but a few bugs remain to be worked out.

Trailer Backer

This is invaluable for everyone who fishes with a partner who can't back a trailer down the launch ramp. Turn on my app and affix your smartphone

to the rearview mirror. When your buddy puts the truck in reverse, a computerized voice begins issuing turn-by-turn commands that will guide him flawlessly down toward the water: "Slowly . . . a little left . . . no, the other left . . . more, more, MORE . . . stop . . . pull up and try again."

If your fishing partner is your spouse, this program will definitely improve your marriage.

Bass Caller

You'll have to buy an accessory for your phone to use this app. You plug a cable into the headphone outlet on your phone and lower a tiny speaker into the water. Turn it on, and it broadcasts the sound of shad schooling beneath your boat. It's like having a HydroWave in your pocket, but not as bulky. Guaranteed to help you win two consecutive Bassmaster Classics and four straight Toyota Tundra Bassmaster Angler-of-the-Year titles, just like Kevin VanDam.

Dave Precht



With the Fat Bass smartphone application, you can turn your next trophy bass into a world record.

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Cover photo by Adam Harbottle

Kevin Short grinds out a win

Grinding and winding earns Short a new nickname and a tournament title

BRANSON, Mo. — His triumph in a tough battle at the Bass Pro Shops Bassmaster Central Open season finale on Table Rock Lake has earned Kevin Short a new nickname.

The Elite Series pro recalls a prophetic conversation he had with fellow Elite angler Jeff Kriet when the two met on the water during practice and were discussing the difficult conditions they were encountering. Short said Kriet told him the slow bite was his “kind of deal” and if Short won the event he would be “Mr. Grind It.”

Grinding and winding is what Short did to catch a three-day total of 12 bass weighing 33 pounds, 8 ounces. He earned his fourth B.A.S.S. victory and the top prize of a Skeeter boat with a Yamaha outboard valued at \$45,000 along with \$9,000 in cash.

“I love the fall tournaments when it’s really tough because for some reason that’s when I really shine,” said Short.

The Mayflower, Ark., pro found a lot to love about this event since a prolonged Indian summer kept bass in a holding pattern for weeks at Table Rock, and the first major cold front of autumn hit the week of the tournament which put the fish into a fall funk. He intended to fish deep during the tournament because offshore patterns traditionally offer the most consistent action at Table Rock in the fall.

“I fished shallow a little bit in practice and actually caught a couple of 2 1/2- to 3-pound fish up in Long Creek,” said Short, who thought the shallow pattern would be his backup in case the deep tactics failed.

“I wasn’t catching a lot of fish out deep, but I was seeing them on the graph. I was dropping a spoon or drop shot to them,

So the next morning Short fished deep for a couple of hours but caught only one smallmouth on a 7/16-ounce Jewel Pro Spider Jig (peanut butter smoke) and Zoom Baby Brush Hog (watermelon candy). A slick water surface prompted Short to make a run for Long Creek to crank the shallows with his E1.

“I got dialed in on what those largemouth were holding on, and that was the game changer right there,” said Short.

He found the largemouth holding on scattered laydowns on the flat side of the creek from 18 inches to 2 feet deep. The shallow fish took a while to turn on, but Short finally caught a keeper around 2:30 p.m. that confirmed his strategy.

“I knew that wasn’t going to be the only fish up there. I really

only had an hour to fish and was fortunate enough to catch two more, and one was a little over 4 pounds. When I caught that 4-pounder, that told me not only that there were more keeper fish up shallow but there were big ones up there too.” The late flurry helped Short finish the day with 10-7 and moved him into fifth place.

Knowing that he needed about 14 to 15 pounds to win the event, Short decided to spend all of the last day in the back of Long Creek. Bluebird skies and slick water on the final day made it ideal for his cranking pattern because the conditions made the fish hold tighter to cover.

Short ran his crankbait at high speed with a 7-4 medium

St. Croix Mojo Bass glass rod (MBGC74MM) and a Lew’s 6.4:1 Tournament Pro reel filled with 14-pound Vicious Pro Elite Fluorocarbon. The key to his retrieve was deflecting the square-bill crankbait off the wood.

“There were very few fish I caught that I didn’t actually have to bang the crankbait around on the wood,” he said.

Because baitfish were everywhere in the creek, Short also relied on a HydroWave sound device to coax some bass into hitting his crankbait.

“I really feel the HydroWave unit helped me,” he said. “Playing with the volume on it probably helped me get a couple more bites because I had to compete with tons of shad there.”

Whenever he found a laydown with vertical limbs too thick for his crankbait to enter, Short would take a few fish from the cover by pitching the Pro Spider Jig on 12-pound Vicious Pro Elite Fluorocarbon with a 7-1 medium-heavy St. Croix Legend Tournament Bass rod (TBC71MHXF) and Lew’s Tournament Pro reel.

In the first half hour of the last day, Short caught two keepers, but then he lost a good fish later in the morning that he thought hurt his chances. Fortunately for him, the better fish started biting in the afternoon.

“I knew when I caught my fourth fish that I had about 11 pounds, and I knew then everybody else had better be catching them,” he recalled. “I felt if I got one more bite I was going to be tough to beat, and then I caught that last 4 1/2-pounder.”

Catching the only limit among the 12 finalists, Short weighed in a 15-7 bag to win the event by more than 7 pounds.

“This win sets me up as the guy to beat when the going is tough,” Short said. “Most of the ones I won previously have been brutally tough tournaments. They were just grind-it-out events.”

Chalk up another one for Mr. Grind It. **BT**



Kevin Short's mastery of a crankbait and determination were keys to his win.

Photo by James Overstreet

and I could catch them.”

Running to Long Creek the first morning, Short threw a W.E.C. E1 crankbait in a classic hue (brown/green/chartreuse) to the shallows and caught one keeper. But the action was too slow for his liking, so he moved on to his deep pattern. “For some reason, on the first day (the deep bite) just vaporized,” Short said. “I don’t know what happened to it or where the fish went.”

A drop shot rig with a Zoom Meatead worm and a Big Strike Jigging Spoon produced three keepers for Short, who finished the day in 22nd place with 7 pounds, 10 ounces.

“I knew at the end of the day that I screwed up. I should have gone deep early and shallow late.”

Notes & Quotes

► MARTIN IS SECOND BEST

Tommy Martin of Hemphill, Texas, knew that if he caught a limit each day he would finish high in the standings. The 19-time Bassmaster Classic qualifier nearly made it 20 Classic trips as he was



Tommy Martin barely missed qualifying for his 20th Classic.

Photo by Adam Harbottle

the only competitor in the 130-angler field to catch a limit the first two days. “I’ve always enjoyed fishing this lake, and everything went well for me until the final day,” said Martin, who made an adjustment during Day 1 by switching from a spinnerbait to jigging spoons (chrome 7/8- and 1/2-ounce War Eagle models). “I had one really good spot that I caught eight keepers out of.” His honey hole was a creek channel drop filled with logs and brushpiles about 35 feet deep in a cove. The spot failed to yield a keeper the

last day, and Martin had to scramble to catch two fish on the spoon along points with timber. “The weather started warming up, and I think the fish were coming up off the bottom and chasing bait up by the surface,” said Martin, who finished with a total of 26-6. “Any time you don’t catch a limit, you open the door, and Mr. (Kevin) Short walked in.”

► FLEISCHMAN'S BIRTHDAY PARTY

Jacques Fleischmann of Lampe, Mo., celebrated his 68th birthday by winning the co-angler division and taking home a special gift of a Nitro/Mercury rig valued at \$35,000. “This is the second-best thing that has happened in my life,” said Fleischmann, who listed marrying his wife as the best moment. “I didn’t catch a lot of fish (five keepers in three days), but the ones I did catch were good ones.” Fleischmann had to rely on three lures to come up with a total of 11-7. The first day he caught a spotted bass dragging a tube jig along a gravel point, and on Day 2 he coaxed two largemouth into biting a watermelon 7/16-ounce Jewel Eakins Jig and watermelon red Zoom Critter Craw. On the final day, the retired business owner caught two smallmouth on the Eakins Jig and a Carolina rigged French fry.

► ELITE SERIES QUALIFIERS

Chris Zaldain, of San Jose, Calif., racked up 804 points during the three Central Open events to finish as the circuit’s top angler and qualify for the 2012 Bassmaster Elite Series. **James Niggemeyer** of Van, Texas, finished second in the point standings with 743 points, which double-qualified him for the Elites. The rest of the Elite qualifiers from the Central Opens are **Jared Miller** of Norman, Okla. (third with 742 points), **Tommy Martin** of Hemphill, Texas (fourth with 738) and **Kevin Ledoux** of Choctaw, Okla. (fifth with 734). Little Elm, Texas, angler **Janet Parker** had a rough tournament at Table Rock and fell out of contention in her bid to become the first woman to qualify for the Elite Series.

► SPECIAL SPECTATOR

A Bass Fishing Hall of Famer renowned for his skills with a Zara Spook was in the weigh-in audience the final two days at Table Rock. Five-time Classic qualifier **Charlie Campbell** took a couple of days off the water to watch the proceedings. “I’m just fishing every chance I get on rivers and Bull Shoals or Table Rock,” said the 78-year-old Campbell, who still fishes some tournaments close to home and practices for the events with his wife, Wanda. “My wife and I are just having a good time.”

Facts & Figures

2011 BASS PRO SHOPS BASSMASTER CENTRAL OPEN POINTS RESULTS

1. Chris Zaldain	(Points) 804
2. James Niggemeyer	743
3. Jared Miller	742
4. Tommy Martin	738
5. Kevin Ledoux	734

AVERAGE BASS WEIGHT ON TABLE ROCK LAKE

September 2006 visit
(total weight: 384-2)

2.16

2.16

October 2011 visit
(total weight: 908-0)

Bass Pro Shops Bassmaster Central Open

Oct. 20-22, 2011 – Table Rock Lake, Branson, MO

Place	Angler	Hometown	Bass	Weight	Winnings
1.	Kevin Short	Mayflower, AR	12	33-08	\$53,933
2.	Tommy Martin	Hemphill, TX	12	26-06	11,167
3.	Robbie Dodson Jr.	Harrison, AR	7	22-13	13,400
4.	James Niggemeyer	Van, TX	9	22-04	8,933
5.	Brian Snowden	Reeds Spring, MO	9	21-07	8,040
6.	Christopher Lee	Keithville, LA	8	20-13	7,147
7.	Casey Scanlon	Lenexa, KS	9	19-08	6,253
8.	Roland Martin	Naples, FL	10	18-09	5,360
9.	Jimmy Johnson	Ganado, TX	9	18-04	4,467
10.	Roger Hughes	Bartlesville, OK	8	18-03	4,020

Find complete results at www.bassmaster.com.



Illustration by Laurie Trisdale