

Alabama Bass Trail (ABT) puts forth reasons why it opposes slot on Alabama’s Coosa River Lakes

By Frank Sargeant, Editor Water Wire

Kay Donaldson, tournament director of the highly-successful Alabama Bass Trail (ABT), tells us the slot limit on the six Coosa River lakes proposed by Alabama DCNR won’t work for her constituents.

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“The catch-weigh-release format used by MLF in their finals works fine where you can have a TV cameraman and a marshal in every boat but it just won’t work at all for large tournaments with hundreds of anglers,” says Donaldson. “And anglers weighing their fish and sending in the pho-



Kay Donaldson, who developed the non-profit Alabama Bass Trail to increase tourism, now runs one of the most successful tournament organizations in the country. (Photo/Courtesy: ABT)

tos via smartphone is not only difficult for some of our older anglers, it also opens the window to various forms of cheating.” Donaldson also told TWW that having events where nearly all the fish will be under 14” long will put an end to large crowds at weigh-ins on the Coosa lakes and perhaps to some sponsorships.

“The Alabama Bass Trail is a non-profit organization, but it has been a huge financial benefit to the many businesses in the small communities on the Coosa Lakes over the last 10 years,”

Donaldson said. “And those communities have responded by building large boat ramps and tournament facilities to welcome large tournaments. If the tournaments lose participation, all the money those communities have put in facilities will have gone to waste.”

She also said that ABT has been a leader in care for bass at weigh-ins, investing over \$100,000 just in the 2024 season in improved fish handling equipment.

“We see very little mortality in most of our tournaments on most lakes,” Donaldson said. “We re-

alize there is probably more mortality in our summer events, but it’s also true that these anglers could be harvesting every bass they catch and be legal under Alabama’s 10 fish limit. So even if we lose some of those released fish, we’re still far better off with the catch-and-release ethic that tournament fishing has inspired.”

She also noted that not all the Coosa River lakes are showing a downturn in quality bass numbers.

“When our series started, anglers were winning with 14 to 15 pounds (with a five-fish bag) on

Lake Neely Henry, and now it takes 19 to win there. Lake Jordan was the best it has been in a long time this year—it took 20 pounds to win there. So, while some of the lakes are down, it’s not that way in all of them.”

However, she also notes that the widespread use of forward facing sonar, which began around 3 years ago, might be a factor in the increased weights—not that there are more big fish, but that anglers have gotten better at seeing and catching the big ones that are left. She said about 75 percent of the field in both the north and south circuits use FFS.

“We would like to see a compromise and do what’s best for the fishery,” Donaldson said. “The anglers want to fish the Coosa and we want them to. The stakeholders meeting needs to get a strong turn out and hopefully we can get a compromise that will work for all of us.”

ADCNR has predicted the slot limit would result in a 20% to 43% increase in largemouth bass over 20 inches and 43% to 71% increase in the populations of Alabama bass over 20-inches across all six fisheries over four to five years. More big fish would assuredly make everyone happy, but the ensuing slump in lakeside businesses and tournaments over the intervening years might be a big problem.

A stakeholders meeting is slated for January—check www.outdooralabama.com for the date.

You may contact Frank Sargeant at Frankmakol@gmail.com.

Hardaway announces Dante Harris as midseason transfer

MEMPHIS, Tenn. December 28, 2024 – The Memphis Tigers and head coach Penny Hardaway picked up a midseason acquisition Saturday morning, officially signing Virginia transfer Dante Harris.

Harris spent last season with the Cavaliers, but made the decision to enter the transfer portal early in the semester. He has practiced with the Tigers and is immediately eligible to play.

The 6-foot, 170-pound guard started his career at Georgetown where he spent two seasons, averaging 10.0 points, 3.5 rebounds, 3.6 assists and 1.3 steals in 55 career games (50 starts) for former Hoyas coach Patrick Ewing. He shot 36.5% from the field and 79.8% at the free throw line and scored in double figures 27 times over his career.

As a freshman in 2021, he earned the Dave Gavitt Trophy as the Most Outstanding Player of the Big East Tournament after averaging 11.8 points, 4.8 rebounds and 3.3 assists in four games. He led the team that season in assists (118), ranked second with 44 steals, and scored a career-high 23 points against Creighton on Feb. 14, 2022.

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The Washington, D.C. native posted 11.9 points, 3.6 rebounds, and 4.1 assists while starting all 29 games (32.2 mpg) in his sophomore campaign with the Hoyas, before entering the portal and joining Tony Bennett’s group in Charlottesville, Virginia.

After transferring to UVA in January 2023, he battled an ankle injury throughout the 2023-24 season that costed him 10 games. He finished the year averaging 2.5 points, 2.0 rebounds and 1.4 dimes in just 13.7 minutes per game over 24 contests.

Prior to college, as a junior at Lakeway Christian Academy, Harris averaged 30.6 points and 9.0 assists as a junior.

Harris was recognized as a Tennessee Secondary School Athletic Association (TSSAA) Mr. Basketball finalist (Division II-A) and was selected to the 2019-20 Tennessee Sports Writers Association All-State Team in 2019-20.

Memphis (9-3) gears up for a big game Saturday at home against No. 16 Ole Miss in a 1 p.m. ‘White Out’ on ESPN2.

For complete information on Memphis Tiger Men’s Basketball, visit www.GoTigersGo.com and follow the team’s social media channels on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

NSSF to host 2nd Annual State Attorneys General Forum at SHOT Show 2025 to discuss legal landscape and lawfare

From The Tackle Wire

NSSF, The Firearm Industry Trade Association, will host several state leading law enforcement officers for the 2nd Annual state Attorneys General Forum at SHOT Show® 2025 to discuss the legal landscape. This forum

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will be a moderated discussion surrounding courtroom developments to protect Second Amendment rights and the firearm industry from antigun “lawfare” attacks and the Biden-Harris administration. The forum will focus on ongoing legal battles, legal questions and the amicus briefs these attorneys general submitted to the courts opposing threats to the Second Amendment and the industry as well as challenging many of the



Shown here are experts featured on popular SHOT Show from last year’s event. (Photo/Courtesy: NSSF)

proposed and final rules by the Biden-Harris administration.

Confirmed for 2nd Annual Attorneys General Forum are (in alphabetical order of states):

- Georgia – Attorney General Chris Carr
- Kansas – Attorney General Kris Kobach

- Missouri – Attorney General Andrew Bailey
- Montana – Attorney General Austin Knudsen
- Ohio – Attorney General Dave Yost
- West Virginia – Attorney General (elect) J.B. McCuskey

“The firearm industry and gun

owners have true courtroom champions in these attorneys general. They are the vanguard to standing up the past four years of attacks by the Biden-Harris administration against our industry and our Second Amendment rights,” said Lawrence G. Keane, NSSF Senior Vice President & General Counsel. “They are the crucial voices in the courts to demonstrate how gun control ‘lawfare’ is abusing rights that belong to the people. NSSF is

proud to bring this opportunity to SHOT Show for attendees to hear directly from those defending our freedoms in the courts.”

The 2nd Annual Attorneys General Forum, moderated by NSSF’s Lawrence G. Keane, will be a laid back and interactive discussion with state attorneys general fighting the legal battle initiated and still ongoing by the Biden-Harris administration and other politically-driven attacks against the firearm and ammunition industry and Second Amendment rights.

These attorneys general are the leading law enforcement officials in their states and fight back against the wave of “lawfare” brought by special-interest gun control groups that weaponize courts against American civil liberties. The Attorneys General Forum will be held Wednesday, Jan. 22, from 4-5 p.m. at the Venetian Expo, Lido Room 3101A.

More attorneys general may be added to the forum as schedules permit. The 2nd Annual Attorneys Forum is open to all SHOT Show attendees and media. The forum is open to all, but space is limited. Register today!

For more information, visit www.nssf.org.

Memphis Athletics scores with highest record of GPA in department’s history

MEMPHIS, Tenn. – The University of Memphis athletic department recorded the highest departmental GPA ever during the fall 2024 semester, recording a 3.404 grade point average with 16 teams coming in at a 3.0 or higher for the term.

“I’m proud of the continued academic focus and efforts of our student-athletes in achieving these accomplishment” Associate Athletic Director, Academic Services Fernandez West said. “A special thanks to our CAAS staff and coaches for creating and maintaining such a high standard of academic excellence.”

Along with breaking the department record, Memphis recorded its 23rd consecutive term with a 3.0 GPA or higher, its sixth straight semester of a 3.2 GPA or

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higher, 58 Tiger student-athletes with a 4.0 and had 28 fall graduates, 15 of which graduated with honors.

“Congratulations to the students-athletes for their outstanding academic accomplishment and establishing another record-

high GPA for the department,” Senior Vice President and Director of Athletics Ed Scott, Ph.D. said. “As a department, we consistently strive to set the benchmark as high as possible and our student-athletes’ commitment to excellence in the classroom has allowed for another record-setting semester. We truly appreciate the hard work and dedication the Center for Athletic Academic Services, the support staffs and coaches have provided our student-athletes in their pursuit of academic achievement.”

Highest Female Team GPA: Women’s Soccer, 3.830

Highest Male Team GPA: Men’s Tennis, 3.658

For complete information on Memphis Tigers Athletics, visit www.gotigersgo.com.

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