

## **B.A.S.S. Nation Releases Full Four-Tournament Schedule For 2019**

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — B.A.S.S. officials announced Wednesday that the B.A.S.S. Nation, the popular grassroots organization with affiliated clubs in 47 states and 10 nations worldwide, will once again hold three regional events and a year-end championship in 2019.

The Nation will visit Alabama's Lake Guntersville for the Central Regional on April 17-19, California's Lake Shasta for the Western Regional on May 8-10 and Sebago Lake in Maine for the Eastern Regional on Sept. 11-13.

The season will then culminate with the B.A.S.S. Nation Championship, which will be held on South Carolina's Lake Hartwell at a date to be determined — most likely in October.

"We're excited to have a schedule that includes well-known bass-fishing havens like Lake Guntersville, Lake Shasta and Lake Hartwell," said B.A.S.S. Nation Director Jon Stewart. "Obviously, the tradition that B.A.S.S. has with those three lakes speaks for itself.

"But we're also really excited about holding a B.A.S.S. Nation Regional event at a great site like Sebago Lake. It's a place that we've visited for smaller divisional tournaments before, but a place that maybe a lot of people aren't as familiar with as some of the others."

The timing of the Guntersville event — right in heart of spring — should make for good weather and excellent fishing on a 69,000-acre Tennessee River fishery that is known for producing giant largemouth. The tournament will feature a field of 190 boats with 418 anglers, including alternates.

Guntersville has hosted 22 major B.A.S.S. tournaments, including the 1976 and 2014 Bassmaster Classics and Bassmaster Megabucks events in 1990 and 1992.

"All you have to say is 'Guntersville,' and bass fishermen perk up," Stewart said. "Bass anglers of all skill levels understand what an opportunity it is to fish a lake like Guntersville, especially during the spring."

The Lake Shasta tournament, which will be held in Redding, Calif., will have a field of 110 boats with 242 anglers — and history says it could be a spotted bass slugfest.

"When we were out there for the Nation Regional in 2017, anglers were saying you could pull up to any place you wanted to, throw any bait you wanted to throw and expect to catch fish," Stewart said. "We had some incredible fish weighed in, mostly big spots. We hit it just right — and hopefully we will again."

The final regional of the year, on Sebago Lake, will feature 180 boats with 396 anglers leaving from Point Sebago, Maine. The 30,000-acre fishery, which is the state's second-deepest lake at

316 feet, has excellent populations of largemouth and smallmouth bass as well as landlocked salmon and lake trout.

Unlike 2018, when the site of the Nation Championship was announced well after the regional lineup, Lake Hartwell has already been identified as the site of the 2019 year-end event. The 56,000-acre fishery on the Georgia/South Carolina border has hosted three Bassmaster Classics, including the 2018 event that drew a record total attendance of 143,323.

The event will be hosted by Visit Anderson.

“Our team at Anderson county could not be more excited about hosting the 2019 B.A.S.S. Nation Championship again at Green Pond Landing and Lake Hartwell,” said Neil Paul, executive director of Visit Anderson. “Our community enjoys a tremendous amount of success whenever we’re hosting the great folks at B.A.S.S. We owe a great deal of credit to B.A.S.S. for their part in helping to make Lake Hartwell a championship fishery and Green Pond Landing one of the top facilities in the nation.

“We look forward to welcoming the anglers, their families and the entire B.A.S.S. Nation in 2019.”

The Top 3 finishers from the 2019 Nation Championship will earn a spot in the 2020 Classic, and the overall Championship winner will receive an invitation to fish the 2020 Bassmaster Elite Series.

“When we refer to the B.A.S.S. Nation as a grassroots organization, we mean exactly that,” said B.A.S.S. CEO Bruce Akin. “It’s an organization that gives anglers from all walks of life an opportunity to fish at the highest level of professional bass fishing.

“That’s what makes it truly special — and that’s why it’s still growing after 50 years.”