



# Daily Journal

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## Bassmaster Classic still on Hartwell

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SENECA - The 2008 Bassmaster Classic coming to the Upstate next month •is still a go for Lake Hartwell, ending speculation that receding water level would force a change of venue.



"We're still planning to have the Bassmaster Classic at Hartwell," said Doug Grassian, a spokesman for Celebration, Fla.-based BASS, which stages a series of bass fishing tournaments that culminates each season with the premier Classic event.

"We're always monitoring lake levels, but at this time we don't see any changes being made," Grassian added.

The Bassmaster Classic's field of 50 anglers will compete for \$1.2 million, including a \$500,000 top prize. Anglers will launch from Portman Marina in Anderson, and the weigh-in will take place at the BI-LO Arena in Greenville, which has been tapped as the host city of the event. Tournament fishing takes place Feb. 22-24.

Also, ESPN Outdoors will stage Bassmaster Classic Expo at the Carolina First Center, less than three miles from the weigh-in site. The Expo and weigh-in are free to the public.

Grassian said Lake Hartwell is off limits to anglers participating in the tournament until Feb. 14. He said at that time, they would be allowed to test the waters for three days.

One final practice day is scheduled for Feb. 20, before the tournament starts.

ESPN, which owns BASS, will offer more than 11 hours of television coverage. More than 100 ESPN and BASS crews and staff workers, and an additional array of volunteers will descend on the Upstate on Feb. 15 to begin preparations for the big event.

More than 50,000 people attended the 2007 Bassmaster Classic held at Lay Lake in Birmingham, Ala.

Birmingham officials estimated that the tournament brought an economic impact to the city and surrounding area of more than \$19 million.