

COLD WATER: 55 DEGREES AND BELOW

In Keowee most of the bass population will be on the main body of water, as opposed to tributary arms. They will be relating strongly to vertical fast sloping structure: rock bluffs, river channel drop off, 45-degree rock or earthen banks. These are all places where they make a major depth change by moving up or down: cold water, bass are lethargic, and won't swim long distances to change depths. In Keowee, bass often suspend in the water column rather than hold tight to cover.

Water clarity is a major determinant of bass depth in winter. In clear lakes like Keowee, bass can go extremely deep - 50 to 60 feet even 80' is not uncommon.

Since bass are sluggish, use a slow presentation. In any season, use search lures to find active bass. In winter prefer ones that draw strikes without moving fast. Suspending jerkbaits / crankbaits are good winter artificial search baits. The fact that you can fish these lures in the same place for long periods of time makes them effective on suspending bass. Leadhead jigs with worms and grubs also work well now; they probe vertical and fast sloping structure efficiently. The same goes for metal blade baits / soft plastic trailer and jigging spoons. Drop shot rigs are also very effective.

While searching out likely bass holding areas, fish parallel to the structure; this keeps the lure deeper in the water column longer. Knowing how to use and read your electronics is the key to successful "locating & catching" bass at this time of the year.

Presentation : think slow - slow - slow

Lure : think small - small - small