

Equipment Setup for Fall & Winter Spoon Fishing on Keowee

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With some cooler weather finally arriving, outstanding deep water fishing on Lake Keowee will soon be underway. As bait migrates into creek channels and long coves, using a jigging spoon is an excellent way to target schools of fish. On a successful day, an angler can boat numerous fish and some excellent quality bass as well.

Here are some recommendations specific to equipment to make your jigging spoon technique more successful:

1. Use a bait cast reel. Using a bait caster allows you to "feel" many more bites. It is also very easy to use in this manner without having to worry about "birds-nests" in the reel since you are simply dropping the spoon vertically. Choose a good quality bait cast reel, preferably with a relatively high gear ratio, (6.6 to 1 or higher) that allows you to rapidly pick up any slack in the line. As you drop the spoon down, keep your thumb on the spool very lightly to detect any bite as the spoon falls. You will often feel a "tick" on the line when the bass hits the lure on the way down. Set the hook when you feel this! This is one big advantage over using a spinning reel – the bait caster allows you to detect many more bites as you control the fall of the spoon. Set your drag to allow the fish to pull line off without breaking in. In deep water, these fish basically have nowhere to go to break you off, so set your drag a bit on the soft side. Just keep a tight line on the fish while bringing it to the boat. You also want the spoon to fall freely, so set the reel up so the spoon falls quickly with just your thumb on the spool.

2. A good quality casting rod in a medium heavy weight is well suited to the spoon bite. Since you are often using 3/4 or 1 oz. baits, a rod with some strength and backbone is desirable. Also, you are often catching fish in deep water and pulling them in vertically. A medium heavy rod allows you to fight the fish appropriately.

3. Line. I prefer to use flourocarbon line for jigging spoons. There are different schools of thought on this, but I have found flourocarbon to be the best solution for my style of fishing. Choose a line in either 15 or 17 lb strength. You are putting a lot of stress on the line fighting these fish in deep water and you can be confident of the fish not breaking off using a higher rated line. The stronger line also allows you to often retrieve your spoon if it hangs up on something on the bottom. A good hard pull on the line will often break the spoon loose or straighten out a hook and allow you to salvage the lure.

If you have been using a setup different than above, give this a try and see if it doesn't improve your catch rate on the spoon. Good luck with your Fall fishing!