Jason Ehrlich
Bass Specialist And Lure maker

Jason has been a Southeast Queensland freshwater fishing specialist for many years. A former bass guide and tournament fisherman, he’s written numerous magazine articles on Australian freshwater fishing and is currently the freshwater fishing field editor for Queensland Fishing Monthly magazine. His lure business “Hot Bite Fishing” produces a line of niche lures specifically for SEQ impoundment bass fishing.

Jason’s Top Bass Fishing Tips

- Somerset Dam holds plenty of quality fish, but its close proximity to Brisbane makes it one of SEQ’s busiest waterways and the bass are well educated as to the ways of anglers. You’ll need to know some tricks to tempt the resident bass population in this waterway.
- For reasons unknown, bass tend to congregate under a boat and can be concentrated by drifting or slowly motoring around places where fish are gathered. Depending on the conditions etc, Jason
uses this technique to draw fish into shallow water and entice them to feed, or draw them off the bottom into deeper water.

- It's important to realise that once under a boat bass will often not bite and that their habits can change their behaviour and move higher in the water, fooling many anglers who are then fishing at the wrong depth to inactive fish! Jason suggests noting the depth that the bass were holding when you first sounded them, then fishing at that depth, away from the boat where fish tend to be a little more active. Don't fall into the trap of fishing to inactive fish, move away at 1.5 km/hr and the fish will follow, often becoming more activated in the process.

- Low light periods fish best on Somerset, but the lake is gated so the windows of opportunity are limited. Try and be among the first few boats through the gate in the morning and the last to leave.

- Weather conditions are not critical, though a little wind and some cloud cover don't.

- Bass are harder to find and tempt during the late Autumn and early winter, but tend to aggregate more and feed harder in late winter and early spring. Jason suggests not being tempted by the large number of smaller fish that suspend deeper in the water column down near the main basin and instead focus on the old river bed and flats further up the lake where the fish are larger but less plentiful.

**Somerset Bass Fishing Tackle**

- You'll need a rod that can handle the weight or the relatively heavy lures. Jason was formerly a brand ambassador for Abu Garcia and still uses their Veritas rods in 7'2", 3-5kg. He prefers a 6-8lb braided line with a 14lb Berkley vanish leader.

**Somerset Bass Fishing Lures**

- Jason's own line of Hot Bite Gangbanger 20g G2 spoons are a great choice for late winter bassing in Somerset. These lures have plenty of action and can simply be slow rolled through the schools of bass, although Jason finds it more effective to fish the lure with plenty of pauses. Slow draw hops along the bottom, allowing the lure to flutter back on a semi-taut line works well when the fish are hugging bottom. Break this up with short bursts of winding. If the fish are higher in the water Jason will increase the duration and frequency independent tackle stores around SE Queensland.
of winding, flipping the bail and letting the lure flutter back down between bursts or winding. Watch for indications that the lure might be eaten on the drop.

- A 30g slow pitch jig can be fished vertically through a school of bass, but is also quite useful when cast. Jason finds that using a series of aggressive hops with lots of rod shakes, letting the lure sink back to bottom. Fish rarely take the lure during the hops, occasionally take them on the drop and most often take them when the hops are immediately followed by a slow wind.
- Jason's Hot Bite Spectre 5/8 oz Vibration Jig is a popular lure on Somerset Dam and was designed for the summer bite but also works very well in the winter months. These lures work best through the summer months, but are also great during the winter, especially on windy days. Jason likes to have the boat drifting or slowly motoring on the electric while working the lure in 3-4m bursts while allowing it to sink to bottom between bursts.