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FISHING

## BASS Classic's weighing in with changes for '98

Look for major changes at the BASS Masters Classic in Greensboro next month. More than 100,000 people are expected to attend the outdoor exposition and weigh-ins Aug. 6-8.

For the first time in the 30 years of the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (BASS) some spectators at the final Classic weigh-in will have to pay to get in the Greensboro Coliseum. All weigh-ins shows have been free in the past.

Raycom Sports will film the Classic this year, while BASS did the work in the past.

There is a rumor this will be the last Classic for BASS founder Ray Scott.

Lets look at the changes one at a time.

■ Many BASS members drive several days to get to the Classic and get upset with the idea they may have to compete with every Tom, Dick and Harry for a seat at the Coliseum.

Reserved seats will be made available for lifetime BASS members for \$10 and can be purchased through BASS in advance.

Tickets costing \$15 are available to BASS members through Ticketmaster and non-BASS members will have to pay \$25 for reserved seating.

More than 9,500 seats out of the coliseum's 21,000 are for sale, with another 5,000 free seats, according to BASS publicity director Ann Lewis.

"There will be seats reserved for fishermen's wives, sponsors, volunteers and visiting dignitaries," she said. "Many of the lifetime members travel long distances to spend their vacation at the Classic and they don't want to be left out at the weigh-in."

"We spend about \$1 million on the Classic and have been giving it away free all these years," Lewis said. "There will not be a charge to see the Outdoor Show."

■ Raycom Sports will do the 1998 Classic film.

"It really isn't much of a change," Lewis said. "We have hired the cameramen and Bob Cobb has produced the film in the past."

BASS has won numerous awards for its laser-light productions and pre-weigh-in shows produced by staff members.

Peter Roth of Raycom is expected to produce the Classic television show with Mark Goss of Lake Wylie and Jason Quinn as production assistants.

Lewis said the television show is one of many projects Cobb handles for BASS. "We are expanding and have other projects in mind for Cobb," she said.

"In the past we hired cameramen from around the country, shot the film and then Cobb and the cameramen edited it before sending it to The Nashville Network," she said. "The only difference is we are hiring someone else to do it."

Lewis declined to elaborate on what Cobb may be doing in the future.

■ A wire service reported this week that this would be the last year Scott would emcee the Classic show.

Scott has continued to host the television show and serve as a spokesman for BASS since selling his interest in the company several years ago. He has an annual contract with BASS.

Scott denies the rumor and Lewis says reports are greatly exaggerated.

"These stories surface every year about the time we negotiate our contract with Scott," she said. "We don't want to lose him and hope we will be able to work out any differences we may have over the contract."



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*P r e s s   R e l e a s e*

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## **Raycom Sports To Produce This Week's BASS Masters Classic**

*World's Most Prestigious Fishing Championship Takes Place On North Carolina's High Rock Lake*

**Charlotte, N.C.** -- National sports marketing and television production company **Raycom Sports** has been hired by the **Bass Anglers Sportsman Society (B.A.S.S.)** to produce its world popular BASS Masters Classic fishing tournament, it was announced today.

The tournament—which begins tomorrow and runs through Saturday, Aug. 8—takes place on North Carolina's scenic High Rock Lake with surrounding events including the final weigh-in occurring in nearby Greensboro. For its announcing crew Raycom Sports has hired veteran ABC college basketball announcer Jimmy Dykes, an avid fisherman, as host and two-time BASS Masters Classic winner Hank Parker as analyst. Raycom Sports' one-hour production of the BASS Masters Classic will air on The Nashville Network, which reaches more than 60-million homes nationwide, September 26 and 27.

"I've been anxious to get Raycom Sports involved with a quality fishing program for the past six years and suddenly we are producing the Super Bowl of bass fishing," said Raycom Sports Executive Producer **Peter Rolfe**. "I'm extremely excited about this opportunity for our company."

Raycom Sports, a Charlotte, N.C.-based company founded in 1979, is an innovative leader in marketing, producing and distributing sports programming. Along with two weekly syndicated youth-oriented programs, "*More Than A Game*" and NASCAR-licensed "*Think Fast*," the company televises ACC Basketball and produces the complete package of college basketball games for ABC. In addition, Raycom is producing eight NFL preseason football games, two AVP Pro Beach Volleyball events and a BASS Masters fishing tournament. The company also owns and operates events around the country including three LPGA golf events, two college basketball tournaments and a college football bowl game.

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