

ACFA



- Club Officers and Chairmen for 2004
 Pres. Bruce Howle Sr. 479-2911
 VP David Hare 343-5875
 Treas. Tom Duncan 626-0219
 Sec'y. Angie Howle 479-2911
 Stats. Jennifer Mitternight 634-9716
 Membership Bekki Ludlam 649-8757
 Weighmaster Pat Hughes 443-6686
 Donations Charlie Dowdle 661-7770
 Club Logo Items Bud Barr 602-1982
 Awards Bill Midgette 473-4768
 Advisor Mike Thompson

April 2004 Newsletter

The third meeting of the 2004 club year will be on Thursday Apr.. 1st at 7pm at the American Legion Post 88, 2663 Halls Mill Road. Tall stories of your fishing exploits will definitely be accepted on that date and we promise not to cross-examine the fool telling them.

Our main speaker for the evening will be Dr. Bob Shipp, Chairman of the Department of Marine Sciences at the University of South Alabama; Alabama Deep Sea Fishing Rodeo head judge; columnist for a prominent salt-water sporting magazine; and author of "Guide To Fishes Of The Gulf Of Mexico" (probably the most definitive work on gulf fish, their habits, their haunts, and their identification). Dr. Bob will direct his talk to us on the fish stocks in Mobile Bay with (we hope) special emphasis on our Mobile Bay Grand Slam of Speckled Trout, Flounder, and Redfish. Dr. Bob has graciously agreed to bring a limited number of his "Guide To Fishes Of The Gulf" books for sale to those of you who may not have a copy yet. This would be an excellent opportunity to avail yourself of this wonderful identification and informational work.

Our second speaker of Thurs., will be Mr. Allan Stabler of the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary. Allan will briefly update the membership on those safety items which we should have onboard our fishing boats. He will also have a helpful leaflet for each boat owner that should be of great assistance when readying your rig for our voluntary vessel safety check which will be held during our April tournament weigh-in. (More info in this newsletter.)

In addition, Boater's World will have a display (and sale) during our meeting which will consist of new and/or desirable 2004 boating items which should be of interest to all.

Presidents Message

I want to thank everyone who participated in Saturday's tournament. The turn out was awesome. I cooked around 100 hot dogs and they were all gone before 5pm. So the April tournament is only a week away and we are going to have hot dogs again, this time I will cook alot more. What's better than to have a good day fishing and then come by the weigh-in and have a full stomach when your leave.

Well on the fishing front the Speckled Trout and Sheepshead seem to be in full swing. The trout are taking top water, mirrolures, and live shrimp under popping corks on the Shoals and Portersville Bay. The Sheepshead seem to be biting anything that is thrown to them, all the rigs on the south side of Dauphin Island have plenty of fish on them, a Carolina rig and peeled shrimp seem to work well. More info at the meeting.

See you at the meeting,
Bruce Sr.

March Tournament Results

An absolutely beautiful day for fishing seemed to overshadow the neap tides that occurred and a large contingent of "coasties" turned out for our 2004 kick-off "members only" tourney. Weighmaster Pat Hughes was kept busy for the majority of the two hour weigh-in by a club record of 42 members entering fish caught from the new Battles Wharf Reef, Dog River, the Canal, the Shoals, all around D.I., and rigs in the gulf. And even if you weren't a top-three winner about 65 fisherpersons and family members seemed to thoroughly enjoy the hot dogs and trimmings graciously donated to ACFA by the manager of the Food World on D.I.P. Thanks again Food World!!

The leaderboard-----Final

<u>Speckled Trout</u>		<u>White Trout</u>	
1. Jeff Vadakin	5.75lb *	1. John Fassbender	.70lb
2. Bill Patterson	5.60lb **	2. -----	
3. Kyle Mitternight	5.60 lb	3. -----	

Sheepshead

1. Doug Smith	12,80lb***	Club Record
2. Brittney Howle	10.80lb	
3. Belinda Smith	10.05lb	

Ground Mullet

1. Doug Smith	.85lb
2. Frank Dunlevy	.80lb
3. Tommy Pond	.80lb****

* New Member; First Tournament.

** Ties are broken by earliest weigh-in time.

*** The current Alabama State Record Sheepshead is 12lb 15oz. On our scales this fish went 12lb. 13oz.--only 2oz. off current record.

**** Tommy says blood lost from gaffing this fish probably cost him a sure second place finish.

Membership 2004

There always seems to be some good news and some bad news connected with any worthwhile endeavor. ACFA definitely follows that pattern. The good news is that we now have over 93 paid members for this club year. The bad news is that approx. one dozen of our old "tried-and-true" members, people we expected to continue their ACFA affiliation, are (sadly) not now in that number. Some of these folks were charter members of the club. If this is you, and you've just forgotten your dues we apologize and we'll be looking for you and your dues at Thursday's meeting.

And along that line our membership contest ends at the close of this April meeting. The club member responsible for the most new members in '04 will be announced at the May meeting and another member will win the membership drawing at the meeting. Seafood dinners-for-two will be awarded to both winners. You do not have to be present to win.

April ACFA Tournament

Our April tourney, "breakout", will be held on Sat. April 3rd. We will be fishing for Speckled Trout, Flounder, Sheepshead, and Ground Mullet. 12 awards will be given. Please remember: (1) You can launch and fish anywhere in Southern Alabama, (2) You don't have to fish with an ACFA member and you can fish alone, (3) You can use live or artificial bait (but no nets or dynamite), (4) Slot redfish can be entered for big fish awards on any tourney even when reds are not the designated tournament fish, (5) When fishing with anyone each angler should mark their own fish as only a fish caught by the member entering same can be entered for recognition (The Honor System!) and finally, (6) As long as your fish is a tournament fish and is legal it can be weighed in for a tournament participation point, even though it may not make our ACFA minimum tourney weight for awards consideration.

Weigh-in will be from 3pm to 5pm behind the American Legion Post 250 on D.I.P. (on west side of hiway next to Family Dollar) approx. one block south of Bayley's Restaurant and Greer's Food Tiger. Hot dogs, with all the trimmings, will again be served to all fishermen and their families.

Reminders

- R 1. Sign-in at the door to be eligible for the ACFA grand attendance prize which we award in Dec. This prize already contains more than \$75 worth of items for the winner, with more to be added all year.
- R 2. Please wear a name tag--we're trying to get to know you better.
- R 3. Revised 2004 fishing contest rules will again be available at the door. Pick up a sheet if you still haven't done so.
- R 4. Big fish cards are available also.
- R 5. All new members receive a complimentary set of ACFA decals when they join. Did you get yours?
- R 6. At every meeting we are aiming for a 7pm start and we're almost there. Be on time, get a seat, and get ready to enjoy. By the way, so far no meetings have gone past 9pm!
- 7. The big 3-day outside, boat show will be held in the Hank parking lot on Fri., Sat., & Sun.--April 2-4th.
- 8. ACFA 2004 dues (\$45) are payable now. If you don't expect to be able to make this meeting send a check (made out to ACFA) to: Tom Duncan, 37 Village Main, Spanish Fort, Al 36527. Note-if you're paying cash at the meeting please have the correct denomination bills.
- R 9. The brand new ACFA business cards were introduced and distributed to all members present at our last meeting. These cards should aid in explaining/selling our club to prospective members and we hope that every member has at least 2 of these in their wallet ready to give away. Make sure to get yours at the door on Thursday.
- 10. Bobby McElroy will handle our "quick hits" presentation for this April meeting.
- 11. Did you know that ACFA will spend \$1,135.00 in 2004 just to have a place to meet?
- 12. ACFA has four licensed fishing guides within our membership.
- 13. ACFA has two custom rod builders who are members.
- 14. ACFA has gained over 30 new members in 2004.
- 15. Thank You Smokers for limiting your smokes to outside our meeting room whenever you can. We all appreciate it!

Voluntary Courtesy Boat Inspections

In the interest of boating safety ACFA has again arranged for (voluntary) boat inspections by the U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary during our weigh-in hours at the April Tournament (4/3). Allan Stabler will be at the meeting on Thurs. to explain the basic safety points and will have available a safety pamphlet that will inform you which items will be checked on our fishing rig by the auxiliary personnel who will be on site during our tourney weigh-in. Last year over a dozen rigs were offered for inspection and we hope to increase that number in 2004. You don't even have to fish in the tournament--just pull your rig down to the weigh-in site between 3 and 5pm on Sat. Apr. 3rd like several members did last year. This is a non-binding inspection with no

...ow-up nor any penalties. If your rig passes you will receive a safety sticker for display on your boat. The presence of an up-to-date U.S.C.G.A sticker will preclude a whole lot of hassle if you are subsequently checked on the water at a later date. Please try to participate! ACFA encourages safety on the water. And, did you know that with a passing certificate you can purchase any regular safety item at any participating marine store and receive a 10% discount on that purchase? Another win-win situation!

Is This Your Last ACFA Newsletter??

HOPE YOU ENJOYED READING THIS AS YOUR LAST ACFA NEWSLETTER

Unfortunately the answer is "yes" for those of you who haven't paid your 2004 dues by our printing deadline of April 26th. We've carried you for an extra month this year to give you time to rejoin but that lagniappe will now be terminated. We sincerely hope we won't have to omit your name from our mailing list and roster but with postage costs around \$500 per club year we can't waste our member's dues money. We hope that you will understand.

ACFA---We Catch Fish! Get The Net!

Dues

ACFA TOURNAMENT STANDINGS

2004 Tournament Standings

PLACE	MEMBER	POINTS
1	Doug Smith	15
2	Johnny Fassbender	8
2	Jeff Vadakin	8
3	Frank Dunlevy	6
3	Brittney Howle	6
3	Bill Patterson	6
4	Kyle Mitternacht	4
4	Tommy Pond	4
4	Belinda Smith	4
5	Bud Barr	1
5	Alvin Bell	1
5	Charlie Dowdle	1
5	Tom Duncan	1
5	Donnie Fassbender	1
5	Donald Garretson	1
5	Sonny Gause	1
5	Jim Glass	1
5	Mike Herring	1
5	Earl Hopper	1
5	Donnie Howell	1
5	Angie Howle	1
5	Bruce Howle, Sr.	1
5	Jackson Hughes	1
5	Joseph Hughes	1
5	Patrick Hughes	1
5	Billy Hurd	1
5	Jim Jernigan, Jr.	1
5	Marion Jernigan, Sr.	1
5	Barry Keith	1
5	Gerald Markow	1
5	John Markow	1
5	Bobby McElroy	1
5	Bill Midgette	1
5	Frank Mitternacht	1
5	Thomas Murray	1
5	Beverly Pierce	1
5	Butch Pierce	1
5	Michael Pierce	1
5	Darrell Raley	1
5	Rick Tourne	1
5	Ocie Wade	1

Big Fish Contest Standings 2004

3/22/2004

	Blackfish	WT	Flounder	WT	Ground Mullet	WT	Redfish	WT
1			Frank Mitternacht	4.50	Bruce Howle, Jr.	2.32	Kyle Mitternacht	5.75
2			Del Delchamps	4.34	Bruce Howle, Sr.	1.86	Bill Midgette	2.05
3					Bruce Howle, Sr.	1.60		
4					Bruce Howle, Jr.	1.58		
5								
	Sheepshead	WT	Speckled Trout	WT	Spanish Mackerel	WT	White Trout	WT
1	Doug Smith	12.80	Keith Vaughn	6.24			Bruce Howle, Sr.	1.86
2	Britney Howle	10.80	Jeff Vadakin	5.75				
3	Kyle Mitternacht	10.26	Bill Patterson	5.60				
4	Belinda Smith	10.05	Kyle Mitternacht	5.60				
5	Barry Keith	10.00	Michael Pierce	4.65				

Under no circumstances will the Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association (ACFA) be responsible for the welfare of any members, guests or equipment while attending meetings or engaging in ACFA tournaments or the challenge