



ACFA

Club Officers and Chairpersons for 2007

President:	Doug Smith	604-4758
Vice Pres:	D.W. Garretson	599-8701
Treasurer:	Jep Hill	476-1796
Secretary:	Judy Smith	379-7195
Statistics:	Vince Hawkins	452-3899
Membership:	Erik Nelson	331-3804
Weighmaster:	Pat Hughes	422-6992
Donations:	Jimmy Quint	377-4879
Logo Items:	Alvin Bell	455-5739
Awards:	Bryan Hack	510-4196
Food:	Randy Wiscaver	662-3628
Newsletter:	David Thornton	458-2775
Webmaster:	Chris Massey	422-2518
Advisor:	Mike Thompson	

February 2007 Newsletter No. 1

Our first meeting for the 2007 season will be held on Thursday Feb 1st at 7pm at the American Legion Post 88, 2663 Halls Mill Road (the usual place). The hall is approximately ¼ mile north of McVay Drive next to Bolton's Branch.

President's Message

I hope everybody had a very Merry Christmas & hope your New Year is going well. But now its time to get ready for our first meeting of year!!!!!!!!!!!!!! Hope to see everybody there. Doug

Keep Your Newsletters on File

If you haven't already started, keeping these newsletters in a file will help answer most of your questions (and maybe answer someone else's too). Over the course of the year the details of all our club's activities will be published here, so STAY TUNED and STAY INFORMED! Like this important information below ...

2007 Meeting Schedule (all meetings start at 7pm)

February 1	April 5	July 5	October 4
March 1	May 3	August 2	November 1
	June 7	September 6	December 8

A GOOD Time Was Had ...

nearly 200 members and guests attended the 10th Annual Awards Banquet held Saturday evening December 2, 2006. 56 awards and trophies were given out and mass quantities of Saucy-Q Barbecue and sides were consumed (thanks to Alvin Bell for setting that up) along with numerous "scrumptious" desserts contributed by the attending members. Afterwards, LIVE musical entertainment was provided by the "Mystifiers"(thanks to David Hare and Don Ludlam for getting their instruments out of hoc ;-). Folks young and old enjoyed the music and the kids in attendance worked themselves into a "tumultuous uproar", dancing well into the night. It was another great ACFA party, and if you missed it, then you REALLY missed it! But the focus of the evening was the award presentations.

Our 2006 Big Fish Champions were:

Blackfish: John Fassbender 21.60#, 2nd & 4th Rick Toume, 3rd Kyle Mitternight, and 5th place Frank Mitternight
Sheepshead: Leslie Smith 11.75#, 2nd & 5th Kyle Mitternight, 3rd Bobby McElroy, and 4th place Matt Corley
Flounder: Gerald Markow 5.42#, 2nd Tommy Murray, 3rd John Fassbender, 4th George Koulianos, 5th Joe Sirmon
Spanish Mackerel: Bekki Ludlam 4.10#, 2nd David Thornton, 3rd Patric Garmeson, 4th Don Ludlam, 5th Gary Tingle
Ground Mullet: 1st & 3rd Brandon Parker 1.69#, 2nd & 5th Jim Glass, and 4th place David Hare
Speckled Trout: Trey Pitt 7.26#, 2nd Chris Conken, 3rd Phillip Guy, 4th Jim Glass, and 5th place Bruce Howell Jr
Redfish: Vickie Foster 7.00#, 2nd Henry Nall, 3rd Leslie Smith, 4th Belinda Smith, and 5th place Jason Miller
White Trout: 1st & 2nd Todd Golomb 3.15# *, 3rd Belinda Smith, 4th Hal Scheurich, and 5th Mike Thompson
 (* New Club Record)

All the overall winners in the yearlong Big Fish Contest are assigned points based on the number and place of fish they had in the final 2006 Big Fish Contest results. We refer to this as the Big Fish Championship. Based on these point totals 3rd place went to Jim Glass, 2nd place was a 4-way tie between John Fassbender, Kyle Mitternight, Brandon Parker and Leslie Smith. And **the 2006 Big Fish Championship was awarded to Todd Golomb.**

In addition we recognized the accomplishments of club members who consistently placed in our monthly tournaments by their standings in accumulated point totals at the end of the competition season.

Todd Golomb was 5th place, Donnie Fassbender 4th place, Kyle Mitternacht 3rd place, Henry Nall was 2nd place and **our 2006 Tournament co-Champions were Bryan Hack and Leslie Smith.**

An overall champion is chosen by a complex mathematical equation in which we compare each individual's rank in the Big Fish Contest and Tournament point totals.

By virtue of that, our coveted **2006 Master Angler Trophy was awarded to Leslie Smith.**

We use the same formula to select the overall lady and junior anglers too. The **2006 ACFA Lady Angler Trophy went to Belinda Smith** and the **2006 Junior Angler Trophy was awarded to Matt Corley.**

The "Founder's Award" is another coveted trophy. Each year it is presented by Mike Thompson to the individual who is considered to have advanced the club by giving time and effort beyond expectations or job description. **Randy Wiscaver (to a standing ovation) received the 2006 Founder's Award** for his unselfish work to provide great food at every tournament weigh in 2006. And he has agreed to continue for 2007! Wooo Hooo, THANKS BIGUN!

A very important part of the success of the ACFA is the support of individuals, businesses and organizations who help make it all possible. At the end of each year the club tries to reward the most deserving of them (in a small way) for their contributions with a plaque of recognition. In 2006, the ACFA recognized **Post 250, The American Legion** (tournament weigh in site), **Scott's Landing** (Causeway Classic weigh in site), **Grady Marine** (financial support throughout the year), **Charlie Crawford and Souther-N-Bama Bait & Tackle** (Big Fish Contest plaques and monthly door prizes). Thanks again Charlie!

The last award of the evening was the **Grand Attendance Prize** drawing (an ice chest filled with lures and other 'goodies' worth in excess of \$200). About 20 members qualified for the drawing (by attending at least 8 of the 10 regular monthly club meetings). When (Membership Chairman) **Erik Nelson's** name was drawn everyone thought he was playing a joke. But it was legit! You just never know what will happen next...

Congratulations to all our 2006 winners and good luck in 2007 (you're gonna need it :-)

ACFA Rule of 200!

Now in our 11th year, the ACFA membership has swelled to over twice the size it was just a few years ago! In order to try and keep pace with the club's phenomenal growth, and to offer more back to the members, the 2007 officers voted unanimously to add an additional species to the April, June & July Tournaments. In April we will (again this year) offer plaques (but NO points) for 1st thru 3rd in Pompano. In June we will add Spanish Mackerel to the tournament list and award plaques & points. And in July we will add Blackfish to the tournament list and award plaques and points.

So this year Speckled Trout will again be featured as a designated Tournament Species in all 8 tournaments.

Flounder is featured 6 times, Redfish 5 times, White Trout 4 times, Ground Mullet 3 times, and Blackfish and Spanish Mackerel will now be featured two times each.

Also we will add an additional plaque to reward the angler in the August "Grand Slam" Tournament weighing in the heaviest "Grand Slam" (combined weight of that angler's Speckled Trout, Redfish, and Flounder) whether or not any or all of their "Grand Slam" fish place in the top 5 of those species.

Note: ANY angler placing in the top 5 of all 3 of the designated "Grand Slam" species for this tournament will still receive a bonus 5 Tournament Points. That's only been done 3 times in 10 years!

Additionally, a semi-anonymous benefactor has made cash contributions to the club requesting those funds be used for the junior anglers.

Last year we experimented with the idea of adding a separate Junior Angler species in several tournaments. Well this year we will offer the Junior Anglers plaques for 1st thru 3rd place in a designated species for EVERY tournament!

To avoid any confusion with the regular tournament point totals, NO points will be given for the designated Junior Angler species (except for one Tournament "Participation Point") unless that species is one of the regular tournament species and the Junior Angler's fish is in the top 3 entries overall.

Example:

For the March Tournament the designated fish species are Speckled Trout, White Trout, Sheepshead and Ground Mullet.

And the March Junior Angler species is also Sheepshead.

Let's say the heaviest Sheepshead caught by a Junior Angler is also the 2nd heaviest overall.

That (Junior) Angler "passes" on the 1st place Junior Angler plaque (and NO points) for the 'more prestigious' 2nd place overall plaque (with the accompanying 2nd place points).

Then the Junior Anglers who landed the next 3 biggest sheepshead will all move up in order and get plaques. So in this case 4 Junior Anglers would receive plaques instead of just 3.

In 2007 Junior Anglers will be offered plaques for 3 places for a different species in EVERY tournament throughout the year for a total of 24.

In fact the **ACFA will offer an unprecedented total of 149 plaques during the 2007 Tournament season!**

You say toe-may-toe...

The ACFA uses the colloquial (local) names for most of its 8 designated target species. In the case of Ground Mullet, the name is often used for any of 3 separate (yet similar looking) species here in coastal Alabama. Southern Kingfish or Kingcroaker (*Menticirrhus americanus*) are most commonly known as ground mullet, Gulf Kingfish or Kingcroaker (*Menticirrhus littoralis*) are most commonly known as whiting, and the less numerous Northern Kingfish or Kingcroaker (*Menticirrhus saxatilis*) are called both whiting and ground mullet. To avoid confusion for the members in telling these apart, and to clarify this issue, the 2007 Club Officers voted to include all 3 species as eligible in the Ground Mullet category of tournaments and in the Big Fish Contest.

The state of Alabama doesn't differentiate between these species in record keeping, so why should we?

By the way, there are actually TWO separate but similar looking species of fish commonly called white trout, and two major species of flounder in our area... but NEVERMIND that!

YOUR Newsletter...

You are receiving this newsletter compliments of the ACFA, THE premier inshore fishing club of coastal Alabama. Membership dues (\$45) are now due for 2007 and MUST be paid in full for you and your family members to compete in club tournaments. After the April mailing, non-renewing member's names will be purged from the mailing list. Mailing this newsletter represents one of the most expensive line items in the ACFA yearly budget. IF you would like to save the club some money (about \$5 per member per year) you can request to have your name removed from the mailing list at any time by phoning any Club Officer or signing a paper that will be passed around at the meetings. **NOTE:** There will be NO mass email postings of the newsletter. We will try to have all newsletters available on our website during the week they are mailed out. In addition a limited number of printed newsletters will be available at meetings and we'll try to maintain an archive of newsletters on the website for general use and referral @ <http://acfafishing.com/news.htm> We welcome any comments or suggestions (but no threats please ;-)

Speaking of the website...

It was brought to the attention of the club officers present at the recent Board of Directors meeting of the integral part the ACFA website has played in the growth of the club's membership and its important role in extending the reach of the ACFA beyond our local area through this 21st Century media. It was decided (unanimously) to add the title of Webmaster to the Board of Directors as a reflection of the website's importance to the continued growth of the club and ask Chris Massey to continue to serve the club in that capacity, and he has agreed.

The Mini-Seminars Will return

The huge popularity and success of the Mini-Seminar Series last year has assured it has a place in the planning for this year. In fact Joe Sirmon said he would like to see it resume for the March meeting with "Fishing the Net", a theme of internet resources for fishermen. We plan to provide discussion and internet links on the local aspects of weather and water data and forecasts, tackle and boating links, fishing discussion forums (similar to our own), fishing articles and a veritable cornucopia of resources available on the world wide web that can make YOU a better informed, better prepared and better overall fisherman!

In addition Joe said he would like to hear from you about what other topics you would like to see discussed along the lines of "questions we'd like to hear answered, but were afraid to ask." Suggested topics already include "Spring Fishing Techniques" and "Live and Artificial Bait Presentations". You can pass your ideas on to Joe at the meetings or email him at joesirmon@bellsouth.net or phone him at 605-5811. See you there!

2007 Memberships are Due and ...

Wouldn't you like to avoid the crush at the Treasurer's Table at your first meeting? You can mail in your \$45 membership fee along with your name, address and telephone number to **Jep Hill 61 Williams Court Mobile, AL 36606**.

This will go a long way to alleviate the crowding and confusion and leave more room for NEW members to sign up.

As added incentive the ACFA will draw **TWO** names of members who renew by mail and refund their \$45 membership fee!

And remember, those who already have fish entered in the 2007 Big Fish Contest **MUST** have renewed their membership by the end of February, or their Big Fish Contest entry will be removed.

Congratulations!

We've been trying to keep up with our ACFA members as they place in the various local public tournaments, but for fear of leaving a deserving individual out we must defer to a general "well done" for all of you winners. You make us all very proud and bring only good publicity to our club. Way to go! Feel free to contact the newsletter editor for inclusion in our next issue.

ACFA Logo items

Our Logo Item Chairman, Alvin Bell said he still has a supply of items to sell from last year, and will have more XXL and XXXL t-shirts printed soon along with some long sleeve T-shirts, shirts for the lady anglers and quite possibly a new ACFA banner t-shirt!

In addition we will try to offer the "ACFA Shirt Night" twice this year (IF there is enough interest).

The first run will likely be offered in April and the second in October. We need 10 commitments to see Alvin and say they would like to have the ACFA logo embroidered on their shirt (for the \$10 fee). The shirts would be collected (along with the money) at the April meeting and returned at the May meeting. This is a stylish addition to any fisherperson's wardrobe, so let him know you're interested.

Sign-In and WIN!

Those that attend and check in to at least 8 of our 10 regular club meetings (Feb-Nov) will be eligible for our 2007 Grand Attendance Prize Package (worth in excess of \$200 last year). Don't let "the BIG one get away" ;-)

So be sure to see Erik Nelson at the sign-in table and please wear a name tag. It's a great help to new members in associating names and faces and for all club members to get to know one another quicker.

Hasn't anyone been fishing this winter?

Statistician Vince Hawkins reports that NO 2007 Big Fish Contest entries have thus far been received. He wanted to remind everyone to please be sure and make a photocopy of your Big Fish Card before entrusting it to the mail service. Better safe than sorry! Mail to: Vince Hawkins 112 Baratara Drive Chickasaw, AL 36611 (452-3899)

Donations are Needed ...

For our monthly door prizes and for the 2007 Grand Attendance Prize Package. Please see, or call Jimmy Quint (377-4879) to donate or make arrangements.

New Member Sponsors

In our eleventh year, and dues remain at \$45 (unchanged since the birth of ACFA.) We're still the best fishing deal around! That price includes spouses and children (under the age of 16 on Feb 1) to fish in our tournaments and to attend all ACFA functions including meetings, cookouts, weigh-ins and banquets. And why not talk to your friends about joining the ACFA? Even if they don't fish much, the food benefits alone are less than a single family seafood dinner at a local restaurant. And be sure that any new members you get to sign up put your name down as their sponsor in order to qualify you for the drawing of a FREE Dinner for two at a local restaurant. And again the member who sponsors the most new memberships will automatically win a free dinner for two and receive the Membership Sponsor Award for 2007.

Also Coming in 2007

A raffle for a full day inshore redfish sight fishing charter trip for two anglers in LA marsh with Captain Paul "Moondoggie" Smith.
Junior Angler Division plaques: for 3 places EVERY tournament
'Special' Pompano Division: added to our April tournament (3 places)
'Mini-Seminars': to be given prior to the meetings on popular subjects
Streamlined sign-in and more seating at meetings
Up to 149 plaques to be awarded in our 2007 tournaments

All this (and more) brought to you by your 2007 Board of Directors. Please see any of them for comments and suggestions.

Reminders

2007 dues are due now, pay by mail to avoid crowds and qualify for prizes.
NO ACFA tournament in February, all 2007 club tournament dates will be announced in the March Newsletter.
Alvin Bell (455-5739) will be selling ACFA logo'd items at the March meeting
2007 Mobile Boat Show at the Mobile Convention Center March 8 - 11, 2007
2007 Big Fish Contest is now running until Nov 14, 2007. Our Statistician MUST receive cards within 30 days of catch.
Fill out and send cards to Vince Hawkins 112 Baratara Drive Chickasaw, AL 36611 (452-3899)
Dues MUST be paid by the end of February to retain a fish on the Big Fish Board.
Please remember, NO SMOKING in the meeting room. Thanks for helping to make a healthier family environment.
And PLEASE be respectful of our speakers (and members who want to hear them) by refraining from any unnecessary talking or moving about during the presentations. And we ask that you save your questions until the end of their talk.

Check Us Out Online @ <http://acfafishing.com/>

Our entire club related information is available on the internet through the above URL address in a very 'user friendly' format. And join us to get the latest fishing reports, outdoor news, gossip, hunting reports, recipes and just plain fun available on the 'web' on our premier message forums @ <http://acfafishing.com/phpBB/> that includes our exclusive "ACFA Members ONLY" forum where even the area's best kept fishing secrets are revealed by our resident panel of 'experts' ;-)

ACFA---We catch fish---Get the net!!!

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.