

Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association



March 2009

Next meeting: March 5th
Time: 7:00 p.m.
Speaker: Robbie Loper from Mid Bay Marine "Preseason Preventative Maintenance."
Quick Hits: Bill Midgette
Mini-seminar: Pete Burns
Next tournament: March 14th, American Legion Post 250

Club Officers for 2009

President:	Vince Hawkins	452-3899
Vice Pres:	Jimmy Quint	377-4879
Treasurer:	Chris Conken	209-2726
Secretary:	Vicki Foster	621-9113
Statistics:	Joe Sirmon	605-5811
Membership:	Mike Lee	665-4449
Weighmaster:	Pat Hughes	422-6992
Donations:	Alvin Bell	455-5739
Logo Items:	Justin Peacock	550-7532
Awards:	Bryan Hack	510-4196
Food:	Brenda Wilson	367-3499
Newsletter:	Jason Miller	490-3221
Webmaster:	Brandon Milam	680-1302
Advisor:	Mike Thompson	

President's Message

Tournament season is upon us and I for one can not wait! Please NOTE that the March tournament will be the 14th and NOT the 7th. Thanks again to Doug Smith and Mr. Charlie Dowdle for all they have done for this club. I was very excited to see such a large crowd at the first meeting and hope the trend continues. It was nice to meet some new members and I again encourage everyone to try get other men and women to join this great club. Hopefully we will have better weather this year to start our tournament season (last year's first 3 tournaments were brutal) and hope to see increased tournament participation from both children and adults. Remember to be courteous to your fellow anglers and enjoy your time on the water.

Newsletter Reminder:

This is the last newsletter you will be receiving by the U.S. Mail unless you check the box requesting the newsletter via mail on the Membership Application Form you fill out when you renew your membership. The monthly newsletter is available on the website at: www.acfafish.com via the newsletter link at the top of the page. You can also sign up to receive the monthly newsletter by e-mail from the same page.



800+ feet of potlicking-Club member Jim Foster doesn't let a "little" boat traffic deter him from having some fun with chunky Mobile River trout.

In this issue:

Page 2- March tournament, February meeting recap, 2009 Tournament Schedule, March mini-seminar

Page 3- ACFA in other tournaments, Outdoors news

Page 4- 2009 Bigfish Contest standings, Reminders

Page 5 -2009 Big Fish Contest Rules

Page 6- 2009 ACFA Tournament Rules

1st ACFA Tournament of 2009-March 14th

The ACFA tournament season is here! The first tournament is set for March 14th. The categories are: speckled trout, sheephead, white trout and ground mullet. The weigh-in will be at the usual location- American Legion Post 250, 10950 Dauphin Island Pkwy (Hwy. 193), just south of the Greer's Food Tiger and past the blinking yellow light, on the west side of the road. Your dues must be paid by the day of the tournament for your catch to be eligible. Tournament legal fishing times are 5 a.m. to 5 p.m, and fish must be caught in Alabama waters. Weigh-in is from 3 p.m. to 5 p.m. Weighmaster Pat Hughes will have the weigh station set up behind the Legion's building. ACFA members are asked to park their vehicles in the parking area to the side and rear of the building. Restrooms are available inside. Please support the Legion by purchasing your post-fishing refreshments from their bar. Remember that children of ACFA members under 16 are eligible to compete for Junior Division plaques, but please clearly identify to the weighmaster the ACFA member whom the junior "belongs to" when weighing in their fish. Even if you aren't lucky enough to catch that tournament winning whopper, be sure to come out to the weigh-in anyway to weigh any legal sized fish from one of the four categories for a participation point, enjoy the fish stories and camaraderie, and the great food from club "chef" Brenda Wilson. Brenda has settled on hamburger steaks for the main course for this tournament, but is still pondering sides. Whatever she decides, it will all be good.

February meeting recap

It was standing room only for the first meeting of the year. Club members and guests enjoyed the valuable reel and rod maintenance information provided by club member Don Ludlam, and the Quick Hits presentation from the always entertaining David Hare. Club member, and CCA member Jonathon Law also explained the CCA's vehicle license tag campaign, which is intended to raise funds for saltwater conservation projects. Anyone interested in signing up for the tag can contact Jonathon, or visit CCA-Alabama's website at www.cca-alabama.org. Many members never even made it inside to pick up any of the useful information being shared due to the cook out being held by Brenda and her helpers in the Legion's BBQ gazebo. Thanks to all who contributed and helped with the food to kickoff the ACFA's 2009 season.

2009 Tournament Schedule

Mark your calendars! Below is the 2009 ACFA Tournament schedule.

March 14th "March Madness" Speckled Trout, White Trout, Sheepshead, Ground Mullet
April 4th "Spring Breakout" Speckled Trout, Flounder, Sheepshead, ground Mullet
May 9th "Speckled Trout Challenge" Speckled Trout (only)
June 6th "Summer Starter" Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, Ground Mullet, Spanish Mackerel
July 11th "Rodeo Warm-up" Speckled Trout (5/team), Redfish, Flounder, White Trout, Blackfish
Aug 8th "Mobile Bay Grand Slam" Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, White Trout, Blackfish
Sept 5th "End of Summer" Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, White Trout, Spanish Mackerel
Oct 3rd "Causeway Classic" Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, Sheepshead
Nov 7th "Mutt Burke Causeway Classic" Speckled Trout, Redfish, Flounder, White Trout

Please note that the July tournament has been moved from the ordinary first Saturday after the monthly meeting, to the following Saturday. For a number of reasons, including 4th of July ceremonies at the weigh-in site, family holiday obligations and local boat ramps being clogged that evening due to fireworks shows, the Board voted to delay the July tournament one week.

Dues reminder

If you haven't yet done so, please fill out the Membership Application (enclosed in your last newsletter, or available on the club website: http://www.acfafish.com/cms/ACFA_Membership_Form.pdf) and send it along with your check to: Mike Lee 4451 Nicholl Dr. Mobile Alabama 36619. You can also renew at the meeting, but we ask that you please mail in your dues and renewal form to make it easier on everyone at the meeting, and to allow plenty of room for new members to sign up. Dues must be paid prior to the March tournament in order to participate in the tournaments.

Mini-seminar –March 5, 6 p.m., prior to the main meeting

The mini-seminar series will return with the March meeting. For several years, our more expert club members have shared their valuable knowledge at informal question and answer sessions prior to the main meeting. The series has turned out to be very popular, and for good reason. We are extremely fortunate as a club because most of the local experts on all things related to inshore angling happen to be club members, so even the oldest salts can pick up a new tip or two at the mini-seminars. This month's mini seminar speaker will be Capt. Pete Burns. Pete has been plying the local waters since Noah kicked him off the ark, both as an avid fisherman, and as a bar pilot. During that time, he has made a few observations you will probably find helpful. If you have a topic you would like to hear about from one of our resident club experts at future mini-seminars, please let Patric Garmeson know. Talk to him at a meeting, or contact him at: 747-1554

Logo items

Justin Peacock, Logo Items Chairman, will be selling the usual assortment of ACFA shirts, hats, fish towels, etc. at every

meeting. This year the ACFA will also be offering ACFA beverage huggers.

Meeting Check-In

Those that attend and check in to at least 8 of our 10 regular club meetings will be eligible for our 2009 Grand Attendance Prize Package. Be sure to see Mike Lee 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.

Donations are needed

Donations are constantly needed for our monthly door prizes and for the 2009 Grand Attendance Prize Package. Please see Alvin Bell if you would like to contribute, or have any leads on possible donation sources.

New Member Sponsors

Remember to suggest ACFA to your fishing friends and acquaintances. Be sure to have any new members you get to sign up to put your name down as their sponsor in order to qualify you for the drawing to have your annual dues refunded. Any member that signs up at least one new member is eligible. 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 2009.

Please Support our Sponsors

Many local businesses graciously contribute to the club with donations, and in other ways. We ask that you show your appreciation by patronizing their businesses. ACFA sponsors include: Academy Sports + Outdoors, A-Team Fishing Adventures Canvas Products, Great Days Outdoors Magazine, L&S Bait Company/ MirrOlure, Mo Fishin Bait & Tackle, Saucy Q Bar B Q Southern Bama Bait & Tackle, and West Marine.

ACFA'ers in other tournaments

On February 7, the second installment of this winter's "Battle of the Grubs" series was held. Congrats go to: 1st Place-Budd Barr and Jimbo Miller 21.15lbs, 2nd Place- Al Mead and Bruce Howle, Jr 17.05lbs, and 3rd place -Donald Wayne Garrettson and Rick Tourne 15.75 lbs.

Rick and Donald Wayne had so much fun, they have organized a third installment of the "BOG" to be held on Saturday, March 7th. Registration is at the Hwy 90 Waffle House near I-65 from 5 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. \$25 entry fee per person, up to two man teams, and \$10 per person for the optional redfish pot. Weigh-in is at the Chacalachee boat ramp on the causeway from 4:00-4:30 p.m. All artificial lures only, 5 trout creel per team. The redfish pot goes to the heaviest slot red.

The Gulf Coast Anglers Association had its second redfish tournament of 2009 on February 21 at Hopedale, LA. Many club members made it over to compete, with the usual suspects putting in a strong showing. Congrats to Bobby Aburscato and Scott Ritter for their first place finish with a two fish bag of 15.84 lbs. Paul Smith, fishing solo, managed a 5th place finish with 13.9 lbs.

Please help your newsletter editor keep up with and recognize all the club members who place in local tournaments throughout the year by e-mailing him at: jasonmiller1974@yahoo.com.

Outdoor News

McCoy Outdoors has announced a series of saltwater seminars to be held at their store on Springhill Avenue near I-65. The schedule is as follows:

March 12th-Capt. Bobby Aburscato- Spring Tactics and Tackle for Speckled Trout.

March 26th-Capt. Scott Ritter-Spring Tactics and Tackle for Redfish

April 9th- Capt. Dan Kolenich-Fly Fishing Tactics and Tackle for Speckled Trout and Redfish

April 23rd -Capt. Joey Aburscato-Summer Tactics and Tackle for Speckled Trout

May 28th -Capt. Jimbo Meador-Kayak Fishing.

All seminars start at 4:45 pm.

This year's Boat Show is scheduled for Thursday, March 5th to Friday, March 8th at the Mobile Convention Center. Go pick out your next dream boat, or just do like most of us and drool on boats some other sucker is going to buy. Most years, you will run into about half the club there wandering around staring at fishing boats looking dazed and glassy eyed.

For those of you who like to fish vicariously through others when you can't go fishing yourself, local TV weatherman and outdoorsman Jason Smith is hosting a local outdoors show on Fox 10. I happened to catch an episode on Sunday, February 22 from 10 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. while enjoying a lovely case of the flu on the couch. (I assume this will be the show's regular air time.) On the particular episode I saw, Jason was sight fishing redfish in what looked to be the Bayou Heron/Bayou Cumbest, MS area. The show was entertaining and informative, and a nice change of pace from most of the not-so-helpful shows on elsewhere where you learn things like

how to catch the vicious Bloodsucking Bara Bara Kuckamunda Fish in the wild backwaters of Timbuktu. You can also catch some of his outdoor videos on FOX10's website: <http://www.fox10tv.com/subindex/outdoors>.

2009 Bigfish Standings

	Blackfish	Wt	Flounder	Wt	Ground Mullet	Wt	Redfish	Wt
1 st								
2 nd								
3 rd								
4 th								
5 th								
	Sheephead	Wt	Spanish Mackerel	Wt	White Trout	Wt	Speckled Trout	Wt
1 st					O.P. Harrison	2.29 lb		
2 nd								
3 rd								
4 th								
5 th								

CPR Speckled Trout: 1st -Jim Foster 28.25", 2nd -Patric Garmeson-25.5", 3rd -Jim Foster-24.25"

Reminders

2009 dues are due now, pay by mail to avoid crowds and qualify for prizes.

NO ACFA tournament in February.

2009 Big Fish Contest is now running until Nov 14, 2009. Our Statistician MUST receive cards within 30 days of catch.

Fill out and send Bigfish cards to: Joe Sirmon 3831 BEBEE POINT DRIVE THEODORE, AL 36582 (605-5811)

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://www.acfafish.com/>

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.

2009 Year Long Big Fish Contest Rules

1. The ACFA recognizes eight categories in its Big Fish Contest that runs from 12:01 a.m. November 15th until 12:00 a.m. (midnight) the following November 14th. To avoid confusion using local names in our classifications "Ground Mullet" is considered to be any of the three species of kingfish: Southern (*menticirrhus americanus*), gulf kingfish (*M. littoralis*), or northern kingfish (*M. saxatilis*). And "White Trout" is considered to be either the Sand Seatrout (*Cynoscion arenarius*) or Silver Seatrout (*Cynoscion nothus*).

To encourage conservation of the resource each category has the following minimum weight requirements to qualify:

<u>Category</u>	<u>Minimum Weight</u>	<u>Category</u>	<u>Minimum Weight</u>
Blackfish	10 pounds	Speckled Trout	6 pounds
Flounder	3 pounds	White Trout	1 pound
Ground Mullet	1 pound	Spanish Mackerel	3 pounds
Sheepshead	7 pounds (changed in 2009)	Redfish *	5 pounds

* Redfish can ONLY be weighed in during tournaments (to assure slot limit compliance)

2. Each fish entered must be legally caught by hook & line or rod & reel in Alabama waters.

3. Each member is allowed a maximum of two (2) fish in each Big Fish category.

4. Points will be awarded for each of the top ten (10) places in each category, as follows:

PLACE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10th
POINTS	10	9	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1

5. Five (5) bonus points will be awarded to any member that breaks an AFCA club record.

6. The member with the highest overall number of Big Fish points will be declared the club's Big Fish Champion. Top five places for each of the eight categories will be recognized with a plaque at the December Awards Banquet.

7. Weight verifications in one of the following manners is acceptable:

- a. Weigh Master at club tournaments
- b. Tournament Official at other tournaments, in writing
- c. Business with calibrated scales, in writing, on a business receipt or ACFA Big Fish Card.
(Date, member's name, species, weight, location of business, and weigher's name)

8. All entries must be received by the ACFA Statistician within 30 days of the catch in order to be entered.

Mail entries to: **Joe Sirmon 3831 BEBEE POINT DRIVE THEODORE, AL 36582 (605-5811)**

*It is highly recommended you make a good photocopy of your Big Fish Contest submission before mailing it in.

9. Certain rules specified in the tournament rules apply to the Big Fish Contest.

10. In case of a tie the earliest dated business receipt or ACFA card will take precedence over the later entry.

** 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. **

SPECIAL Year Long CPR Contest Rules

1. In an effort to promote good conservation practices and exercise proper catch and release tactics, the ACFA will run a year long Catch, Photograph, and Release (CPR) category for the longest speckled trout.

2. The contest duration is the same as the Big Fish Contest (November 15th until the following November 14th).

3. A member must submit a photograph or photographs (digital or print) to the Statistician that allows easy verification of the angler's catch and an accurate length of the LIVE speckled trout, just prior to release. Procuring a quality image of the fish that allows verification and good handling to ensure the survival of the fish is primarily the responsibility of the angler who is 'on his honor' to follow the spirit of a good release. Every 'reasonable' effort will be made to verify all entries. However, images of poor quality or exhibiting poor release techniques may be rejected at the discretion of the judge (i.e. Statistician) and his rulings will be final in this matter. Fish should be measured flat over the tape or rule.

4. The members with the ten (10) longest verified live release speckled trout will receive special plaques at the Awards Banquet in December. NOTE: Each member is allowed a maximum of two (2) fish in the top 10.

Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association Tournament Rules
REVISED: January 2009

1. ALL tournaments start at 5:00 a.m. and end at 5:00 p.m. except for the Causeway Classic, which starts at 6a.m.
2. Weigh-in is from 3:00 p.m. until 5:00 p.m. on the day of the tourney. You MUST be on the premises with your fish by 5pm
3. Each fish must be weighed in by the member or family member who caught it.
4. Fish that are not fresh or in good condition will be disqualified.
5. All decisions made by the Weigh master and/or his assistants are final (see Rule #17).
6. All fish MUST be caught during the tournament hours on hook and line in AL state waters.
7. To qualify for the monthly awards, all fish weighed in an ACFA tournament must be no less than a minimum of one pound with the exception of White Trout and Ground Mullet, which must weigh at least 8 ounces (0.5 pounds). To avoid confusion in using local names in our classifications "Ground Mullet" is considered to be any of the three species of kingfish: Southern Kingfish (*menticirrhus americanus*), Gulf (*M. littoralis*), or Northern Kingfish (*M. saxatilis*). And "White Trout" is considered to be either the Sand Seatrout (*Cynoscion arenarius*) or Silver Seatrout (*Cynoscion nothus*). There is no minimum weight for the Junior Angler category fish, but it must meet any minimum size limits specified by the AL MRD (see Rule # 11).
8. Only legal "slot" Redfish (16"-26" with pinched tail) will be weighed in the tournaments. No flounder less than 12 inches. No Speckled Trout under 14 inches. No Blackfish under 16inches. (see Rule #11)
9. Only one fish in each category per member can place. NOTE: a second category fish may be weighed in as a Big Fish Contest entry.
10. In case of a tie, the first fish weighed in wins.
11. All state and federal laws apply. (see Rule #8)
12. Tournaments will not be cancelled due to weather conditions (except when tropical storm or hurricane conditions are predicted or expected to be predicted by the NWS and/or NHC for the Tournament weekend). Members shall fish at their own risk and should use good judgment when and where to fish. The ACFA encourages safety, and assumes no responsibility for participating fishers or their equipment. It is not worth risking life and property to get a plaque!
13. Competition is open to all members in good standing (paid dues prior to tournament day) their spouses and children under 16 years of age on Feb 1 of that tournament year. PLEASE make a note to the Weighmasters of the member's name when their dependants (spouse or children) enter a fish.
14. For each tournament the top three places in each category will be receive a plaque at the next club meeting, except in the Speckled Trout Challenge and Grand Slam Tournaments (see 'Bonus Points' below). ALL Junior Anglers will receive plaques for their tournament category fish .
15. The Club's Tournament Point Champion will be recognized at the year-end Awards Banquet in December. The member (or members) with the highest number of tournament points after the season ends in November will be declared the victor.
16. Tournament points will be awarded as follows: **(NEW for 2009)**

PLACE	1	2	3	4	5
POINTS	5	4	3	2	1

Bonus Points:

 - * One "Participation Point" will be awarded to each member who weighs a fish at any tournament provided the fish is of a specified tournament category, even though that fish may not meet the minimum tournament weight.
 - * 4th and 5th place points (2 & 1 point) will be awarded for ALL regular club tournaments (excluding the Speckled Trout Challenge).
 - * Five additional Tournament Points will be awarded to any member that completes the slam in the Grand Slam Tournament (places in the top five in Speckled Trout, Redfish and Flounder for that tournament).
 - * Five additional Tournament Points will be awarded to any member that breaks a club record in a tournament.
 - * One "Participation Point" will be awarded to each ACFA member who weighs in a Speckled Trout during the Speckled Trout Challenge and two additional points will be awarded to any ACFA member that places in the top ten. (i.e. IF you make the top 10 you earn 3 points, if not you only earn 1 point) (NOTE: The Challenge is NOT a regular club tournament though entries will be accepted for the Big Fish Contest by the Weighmasters at their convenience).
17. The Weigh Master will decide any matters not covered by the rules (as per Rule #5).
18. Any angler over 16 years of age must have a valid fishing license and must be a paid member IF their 16th birthday is prior to Feb 1st of that year in order to participate in any tournament and the Speckled Trout Challenge. Junior Anglers must NOT have reached their 16th birthday by February 1st of this year.
19. All weigh-in locations will be announced in the newsletter and at the regular club meeting prior to the tournament. Our Weigh in site for most tournaments is the American Legion Post 200 on Dauphin Island Parkway Hwy 193 (near the Greer's Food Tiger store). The Speckled Trout Challenge (in May) and the Causeway Classic (in November) will likely have weigh ins on the Causeway (Scott's Landing).

** 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. **