

# Alabama Coastal Fisherman's Association



Volume I, Issue 4 May 2008

**Next Meeting:** May 1, 2008 **Time:** 7:00 PM  
**Place:** American Legion Post 88  
 2663 Halls Mill Road  
**Main Presentation:** Robbie Loper on  
 "Getting your Outboard ready for the season."  
**Quick Hits:** Pat Sirmon

## Club Officers for 2008

President: Doug Smith 604-4758  
 Vice Pres: D.W. Garrettson 599-8701  
 Treasurer: Chris Conken 209-2726  
 Secretary: Angie Howle 479-2911  
 Statistics: Vince Hawkins 452-3899  
 Membership: Mike Lee 665-4445  
 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: Brandon Milam 680-1302  
 Advisor: Mike Thompson

## Speckled Trout Challenge!

The 'BoMB' drops on May 3 (see story on page 2)

### April 5, 2008 'Spring Breakout' Tournament Recap:

Again last month the weather refused to cooperate with our anglers, but again ACFA members challenged the fish and the elements of a record deluge in the Mobile area to have another successful tournament. Anglers tried their luck from the Mobile River south to the Gulf beaches of Dauphin Island in a variety of conditions and spots with different tactics and differing results. But as is now our tradition, the club members were rewarded with a cookout (grilled hamburgers and all the fixins) at the weigh-in. Thanks to our 'guest cooks' **Brenda and Steve Wilson** and their cooking crew: **Scott Godwin, Mike Lee** and other helpers! The burgers and baked beans were GREAT! Many of the members who did not fish came to the weigh-in just to eat and socialize. THAT's a sign of a good club community. "Oops" on the USCG Auxiliary not being there. We have traditionally done that at the April weigh-in, but I found out at the meeting (from VP **D.W. Garrettson**) it will be done in June this year. Sorry folks... Anyway, the fishing was S-L-O-W as you would expect with a nearly stationary storm front and NEAP tides. The bite on the Mobile River picked up a bit and some nice trout were caught later after the weather began to improve there. It did not rain at Dauphin Island until after 8am, and then it lasted only about an hour. Not much happened early, but after the rain I managed to catch 7 'decent' trout wade fishing with live shrimp near **Blake Michaleski** and **Pat Hughes** using artificials.

ACFA President **Doug Smith** enjoys a celebratory cigar after the results of the 2007 Speckled Trout Challenge had been totaled. He'd like to have another again this year!

### April Tournament Results

#### Speckled Trout

1st - Rick Yeend - 4.30  
 2nd - Jim Foster - 4.15  
 3rd - David Thornton - 4.00

#### Flounder

1st - Mike Herring - 3.15  
 2nd - Jarrod Yeend (N) - 2.20\*  
 3rd - Chris Conken - 2.20

#### Sheepshead

1st - Dane Tomberlin - 7.30  
 2nd - Henry Nall - 5.25  
 3rd - Dave Growden (N) - 5.00

#### Ground Mullet

1st - Dave Growden (N) - .85  
 2nd - Steve O'Dell - .70  
 3rd - Austin Lee (J) - .35

\*\* First to weigh in (N) New Member (J) Junior Angler (L) Lady Angler

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Our next tournament is: **The Speckled Trout Challenge: May 3rd, 2008**

aka **Battle Of Mobile Bay** (or **BoMB**) originated some years ago when Mike Thompson, founder of the then 'upstart' ACFA fishing club challenged the established Saltwater Sportsmen's Association (SSA) to a speckled trout tournament.

After six years of friendly competition (and usually ACFA victories) the SSA 'opted out' of the competition in 2004.

At that time the newly formed Weeks Bay Fishing Club (WBFC) challenged the ACFA to continue the series. The ACFA has prevailed the first four years and retained the trophy which rotates to the winning club for each year. But the WBFC is a determined group of fine fishermen who would like nothing better than to upset our plans of an unprecedented 5th victory and avenge 2005s 'sweep' of all 10 places by the ACFA. Last year the WBFC had 2 fish in the top 10, so they are gaining on us!

For the benefit of those members who may not be familiar with this tournament, the format is as follows: Speckled trout ONLY, caught during the competition hours (**5am to 5 pm Saturday May 3rd**) by currently paid members, or qualified family members (spouse or children under age 16) of the competing clubs may be entered.

Live and/or artificial baits are allowed, but all specks **MUST** be caught in a sporting manner on hook and line (NO net caught fish).

All contestants must launch and fish in Alabama waters ONLY.

Remember, you're on your honor! We are fishing for 'bragging rights' and of course plaques and tournament points.

**The weigh-in will be from 3 pm to 5pm (Sat May 3rd) under the old filling station canopy just west of the Public Launch Ramp on Chocalotta Bay** on the Highway 90/98 Causeway just west of the I-10 crossover.

In addition, this year the UCP (United Cerebral Palsy) will be having a tournament running concurrently with ours so

please remember to "park smart" to allow as many folks as possible access to the launches and tournament weigh-in areas.

Park off premises (IF possible) and be sure to secure your equipment from theft. As usual a fish fry will be provided by the ACFA.

Weigh masters representing both clubs (ACFA and WBFC) will be present with one digital scale to weigh the fish.

An official weight log will be kept with notations of the time, angler's name, weight of the fish and club affiliation.

By weighing in a speckled trout the angler is testifying that he/she caught it by legal, sporting means in Alabama waters during the tournament hours. Each angler is allowed to weigh in **ONLY** one speck (NO weight checks will be allowed on the official scales). Anglers **MUST** be in the weigh area, in line by 5pm or risk disqualification. It is their responsibility to be on time by closing time!

As soon as the scale officially closes after 5pm, the fish weights will be assessed and points awarded for the top 10 specks (10 points for 1st place, down to 1 point for 10th place). Example: the 4th heaviest is worth 7 points and the 8th heaviest 3 points. The 55 available points will be divided up according to the club affiliation of the anglers weighing in those 10 specks. The club with the most total points is declared the winner and will be awarded the Challenge Trophy at a future meeting (not to mention the 'bragging rights') for another year. Remember, we are just fishing for **ONE big trout**. Go get 'em!

So we need **ALL** our ACFA members to fish hard for that elusive big speck and maintain our domination in what has become a premier event in local speckled trout fishing. It's also a great opportunity to help a worthy cause with UCP (see page 3)

NOTE: to avoid any confusion as per what will constitute an ACFA 'participation point', Tournament Rule #16, posted on the ACFA website @ <http://acfafishing.com/ACFA2008TourneyRules.pdf> states "the Speckled Trout Challenge is NOT a regular club tournament." Thus, **only members weighing in a legal (at least 14" TL) speckled trout will receive a tournament participation point.**

The weigh master will accept (at his convenience) redbfish, and any of the other 6 fish species for weighing in the yearlong Big Fish Contest, but **ONLY speckled trout will get ACFA participation points for this tournament.**

ACFA members who weigh in a speck finishing in the Top 10 of the Speckled Trout Challenge will be awarded a plaque plus **TWO** additional points in the 2008 Tournament Standings (for a total of 3 points to members with a Top 10 speckled trout). Any questions can be addressed at the May meeting. The club needs **all** it's members to come out and fish this one!

**Also, there is a separate Junior Angler category for Speckled Trout in the Speckled Trout Challenge. Plaques will be awarded for 3 places to ACFA Junior Anglers who weigh in a speck. Get after em kids!**

**From our mission statement:**

" We promote friendship, sportsmanship, and conservation along coastal Alabama.

Our objectives are to provide a family oriented fishing club, where you can meet new friends while learning to become a more successful fisherman.."

This tournament and weigh in are great opportunities to have fellowship with members of another fishing club with which we share a similar dedication and passion. ACFA members are encouraged to participate in the competition and festivities in order to become better anglers and neighbors. Please proudly display your ACFA logo items (to help identify you with our club) and win or loose, let our motto of "promoting friendship and sportsmanship" prevail.

In the interest of fellowship (and a good time) the ACFA has provided a fish fry at no charge for **ALL** the contestants. I believe this tradition is planned for this year too, but you'll have to come to the meeting May 1st to get the full details. It'll be good!

\*\*\*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.\*\*\*

### United Cerebral Palsy is proud to announce it's **UCP 1st Annual Inshore Fishing Tournament**

Fishing will start at 5:00 a.m. Saturday May 3, and weigh-in will run from 1:00 p.m. through 6:00 p.m. unless otherwise noted. The tournament headquarters and weigh-in station will be the Chocalotta Bay Landing (which is a public launch) located on the causeway. Tickets are \$25 per person, and all persons in the boat must have a ticket. Pier fishermen are welcome to participate. Categories for the competition include Speckled Trout, White Trout, and Flounder. Prizes will be given in each of the three categories from first through third place and winning entries will be based on size of fish.

Tournament tickets are available at United Cerebral Palsy of Mobile, Southern Bama, Quints, and Tackle This. For more information, email [events@ucpmobile.org](mailto:events@ucpmobile.org) or call (251) 479-4900. Or see **Chris Conken** at the May ACFA meeting.

A copy of the Rules and Instructions are available at the ticket outlets or online @ <http://www.ucp.org/uploads/fishingrules.pdf> This is for a VERY worthy cause and (for only a \$25 donation and a chance at some great prizes) your ACFA club officers want to encourage members to participate. Also the Board of Directors voted (unanimously) to donate \$500 to UCP from the club.

### **Ye OLDE News:**

Special thanks to the Marine Resources officer who spoke at the April meeting. He informed us that money from the recent license and fee increases will pay for two new enforcement officers for this area. Also they will getting some new (badly needed) equipment thanks to available matching federal money. So at least our money is being put to good use.

He wanted to warn (and remind) fishing boaters that the violation they see most often is having redfish in Federal waters. Keep that in mind IF you venture out past the Sand Island Lighthouse. He also wanted to remind and encourage fishermen to participate in the "Coast Watch Program" which trains interested public citizens in fishing regulations and reporting violations. The numbers for 24-Hour Contact to the Marine Resources are (251) 476-1256 (Mobile County) and (251) 968-7576 (Baldwin Co.).

Recently while fishing, two of our members reported an unattended gill net in the waters near Bayou La Batre. Though no arrests have been made (as yet) the net was removed and confiscated by the Marine Resources before it could kill any more than the 50-75 fish (including 6 speckled trout and 1 redfish) it held. That's our members and license fees in action folks!

Speaking of the last meeting, **Blake Michaleski** (aka Gumbo) did a great job filling in the whole mini seminar when our second speaker had to bow out. Wade fishing as an aspect of our sport that can really get you in touch with the fish on their level.

And **Vince Hawkins** (aka Hawk) did a fine job with the Quick Hits segment. We are fortunate to have a LOT of good fisher folks in the club who are more than willing to share their knowledge and experience and enthusiasm for the sport.

We've also got some good cooks who like to share with their fishing friends. Kudos to **Brenda and Steve Wilson** who put on an impromptu grilling clinic in the parking lot at the April meeting. They worked for some time planning to do that "Just to give something back to the club with so many new friends." as Brenda put it. All I can add is: IF you missed it, YOU MISSED IT!

Also, we had our membership related drawings. **Bob Matthews** and **Rick Tourne** were drawn from the list of members who mailed in their dues. In the Membership Sponsor drawing **Alvin Bell** and **David Thornton** (me?) were drawn. That was fun!

### **ACFA Members in Other Tournaments...**

Congratulations to all our members who compete in other venues. Please notify me with the results of your efforts so we can share the news.

In the March Weeks Bay Fishing Club Tournament our members made quite an impression dominating in speckled trout. **Kyle Mitternacht** and **Rick Tourne** won 1st place in Speck creel and Kyle had the lunker speck @ 3.2#. **Paul Smith** and his partner (just barely getting in time) were 2nd in the Speck creel and 1st in Redfish and had the lunker redfish @ 4.4#. **Patric Garmeson** and **Jim Foster** were 3rd in the Speck creel and 2nd in the Sheepshead creel. A GREAT showing guys. Well done!

And give a hearty 'well done' to members **Bobby Abruscato**, **Donald Garrettson** and **Barnie White** who competed (as amateurs) in the FLW Pro-Am Sportsmans in Louisiana. It was a grueling four day elimination competition that brought some of the biggest names on the professional redfish tours together. In the end, Barnie White finished 2nd in the co-angler division while partnered with the Pro Division winner Chad Dufrene. In fact Chad posted a stellar report of the tournament crediting Barnie and Donald (his 3rd day co-angler) as being the biggest contributors to his winning the tournament. What a fine testament to two fine fellows and deserving anglers who are a great asset and reflection on our club. Hip-Hip...!

### **And in the news...**

In a recent column in the Mobile Register, Jeff Dute mentioned member **Bill Midgette** had written him a note on "Reef Etiquette".

"Although sometimes overlooked, we believe that more folks ought to understand that when fishing in close proximity to others -- especially on our reefs -- there are certain things you as a sportsman should take into consideration," Midgette wrote.

If you had the chance to catch Bill's talk on this subject last year you know he has a lot of good observations of how-to (and how-not-to) approach a fishing spot, or another angler. Hopefully they are another ACFA member and they "give you the A".

In his April 20th article on rising fuel prices affecting boaters, **Mike Thompson** interviewed **Charlie Dowdle**. Charlie had some great insight into how he and partners **Joe Sirmon** and **Ocie Wade** have altered their fishing tactics to adjust to the higher costs.

Pl	Angler Name	Points
1	Donnie Howell	16
2	Jim Foster	12
3	Dave Growden (N)	11
4	Mike Herring	9
4	Rick Yeend	9
5	Bobby Abruscato	8
5	Dane Tomberlin	8
5	Trenton Pitt (J)	8
6	Henry Nall	7
6	Jarrold Yeend (N)	7
6	Steve O'Dell	7
7	Doug Smith	6
7	Jimbo Miller	6
7	Leslie Smith	6
8	Alvin Bell	5
8	John Fassbender	5
8	Mike Foster	5
9	Austin Lee (J)	4
9	Chris Conken	4
9	David Thornton	4
9	James Roushmi	4

## Statistics...

After two tournaments the point standings are as follows:

**The following members have 2 points:**

Adam Barker, Bill Midgette, Chris Massey, Patric Garmeson, Phillip Guy, Robert Brewer (N), Tommy Murray, Vince Hawkins

**The following members have 1 point:**

Bill Perry (N), Blake Michaleski, Brenda Wilson, Bryan Hack, Cameron Calhoun, Dewayne Overstreet, Donnie Fassbender, Frank Mitternight, Frank Parker, Gary Tingle, George Koulianos, Gerald Bolen, Howie Galloway (N), Jarred Kelly (N), Jerry Bolen (N), Justin Peacock (N), Kim Guy (L), Larry Watkins, Mike Lee, Mike McDonald, Mutt Burke, Pat Hughes, Richard Hoffman (N), Richard Schantz (N), Rick Tourne, Scott Godwin, Tim Pierce, Timmy Bradley (J), Vicki Foster (L)

(N) New Member (J) junior Angler (L) Lady Angler



Congratulations to Richard Suk, the first entry in our new 'CPR' category (**Catch, Photo, Release**) on 3-27-08. Richard's speck was 24 3/4 inches!!! The gauntlet is cast ACFA members. See IF you can catch, photo, and release a bigger speck than Richard's. Photos courtesy of his partner, Tom Duncan.



'CPR' Speckled Trout standings as of April 20, 2008: 1st Richard Suk 24 3/4", 2nd Jim Foster 23 1/4", 3rd Jason Miller 19 1/2"  
This is a fun contest that will hopefully help protect the resource we enjoy so much. Keep those pictures coming folks!

# The BIG Fish Contest

Current 18-Apr-08

	Blackfish	WT		Flounder	WT		Ground Mullet	WT		Redfish	WT
1			1	Mike Herring	3.15	1	Donnie Howell	1.10	1	Jason Miller	6.45
2			2			2			2	Donnie Howell	6.05
3			3			3			3	Patric Garmeson	5.95
4			4			4			4		
5			5			5			5		
	Sheepshead	WT		Spanish Mackerel	WT		Speckled Trout	WT		White Trout	WT
1	Theo Koulianos (J)	9.11	1	Bobby McElroy	3.34	1	Bill Patterson	6.80	1	Vicki Foster (L)	2.43
2			2			2	Chris Conken	6.31	2	Michael Foster	2.09
3			3			3	Bill Patterson	5.96	3	Theo Koulianos (J)	2.03
4			4			4	Pat Hughes	5.69	4		
5			5			5			5		

\* First to weigh in (N) New Member (J) Junior Angler (L) Lady Angler

Statistician Vince Hawkins wants to remind everyone to please be sure and make a photocopy of your Big Fish Card before entrusting it to the mail. Better safe than sorry! **Mail to: Vince Hawkins 112 Baratara Drive Chickasaw, AL 36611 (452-3899)**

## REMINDERS

- A raffle for a full day inshore redfish sight fishing charter trip for two anglers in LA marsh with Bruce Howle Sr (aka TOPDAWG).
- A raffle for a bass fishing trip on exclusive Steelwood Country Club Lake (near Stapleton, AL) see Patric Garmeson
- Junior Angler Division plaques: for 3 places in EVERY tournament
- ‘Special’ Tarpon C&R Tournament (Tarpoonapalooza) in August (with plaques)
- ‘Special’ Catch, Photograph and Release (CPR) Speckled Trout division (5 plaques)
- ‘Mini-Seminars’: to be given prior to most meetings on popular subjects (see Patric Garmeson about future topics)
- Streamlined sign-in and more seating at the meetings (additional chairs are available) PLEASE find a seat, or offer one.
- 2008 dues are due now, pay by mail to avoid crowds and qualify for drawings to held at the April meeting.
- Please remember, **NO SMOKING** in the meeting room. Thanks for helping to make a healthier family environment.
- **STATE LAW prohibits any outside alcohol at the meetings.** PLEASE support Post 88 and purchase your drinks from the bar.
- Parking is quite limited at Post 88. There would be additional spaces if vehicles parking behind the hall would back well into the grass to allow other vehicles to ‘double park’ in front of them. **Please park smart**, and come early!
- And **PLEASE** be respectful of our speakers (and the members who want to hear them) by refraining from any unnecessary talking or moving about during the presentations or during the mini seminar prior to the start of the meeting. Thank you!
- And we ask that you save your questions until the end of the talks unless prompted by the speaker.
- The ACFA 2008 Big Fish Contest is now running until Nov 14, 2008. Statistician **MUST** receive cards within 30 days of catch.



ALABAMA COASTAL FISHERMAN'S ASSOC. BIG FISH CONTEST ENTRY	
DATE	
MEMBER'S NAME	
FISH TYPE	
WEIGHT	lbs.      oz.
WEIGHED AT	
WEIGHED BY	

ALABAMA COASTAL FISHERMAN'S ASSOC. BIG FISH CONTEST ENTRY	
DATE	
MEMBER'S NAME	
FISH TYPE	
WEIGHT	lbs.      oz.
WEIGHED AT	
WEIGHED BY	

Signature of person weighing the fish

Signature of person weighing the fish

Fill out the above fields, print and have the person weighing the fish sign the form.

Fill out the above fields, print and have the person weighing the fish sign the form.

Then mail to:      Big Fish Contest  
C/O Vince Hawkins  
112 Barataria Drive  
Mobile, AL 36611

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112 Barataria Drive  
Mobile, AL 36611

## Changing of the guard...

We have recently upgraded the club's forum software and moved it to a new server, but the web address is still the same @ <http://www.acfafishing.com> A victim of our own success, we had simply outgrown the old service. The new server appears to be working out well according to **Brandon Milam** (aka saltcreep), who has taken over the administrative duties for the web site. **Chris Massey** (aka Blazer Bay) decided to take (early) leave as Webmaster, to be as he put it "An average fishing Joe." Several years ago Chris did it ALL for us by 'laying in the course' and establishing our club's own website. He even paid the upfront costs out of his own pocket just to get the forum started. Since then the out reach of the club has extended to even attract new members and friends throughout the region, the rest of the state and even several other states! And like many other aspects of our club's phenomenal growth and popularity we owe so much to so few who are willing to do so much of the work. Now Brandon has stepped up and assumed most of the responsibilities of keeping the website running smoothly (something he is well adept at doing). He told me improvements & added features should be along soon, that will be available for the paid club members who are also forum members.

He added, IF anyone has any suggestions on something they would like to see, email him [admin@acfafishing.com](mailto:admin@acfafishing.com)

And thanks to **Mike Lee** (aka membership mike) who has untangled the 'backlash' of members (most with alternative forum names) to assure our paid members will get the full benefit of belonging to the biggest and best inshore fishing related web community in our area. We'd love to see you there!