



The Newsletter of the ... **The Reel News**



Serving the Northeast Florida Fishing Community Since 1959

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The 2014 EL Cheapo is Here!



The 14th annual El Cheapo Sheephead Tournament and Fish Fry will be held on February 22nd.

For those of you who have never fished this tournament before, welcome to "The World's Largest Sheephead Tournament" and one of the largest tournaments in the US! For those of you who have fished it before, welcome back! --- and I'm sure you'll find the 14th edition of this tournament the best one yet! This year our Grand Prize winner will receive a **21 Foot Center Console Carolina Skiff with a 115 Hp Mercury 4 stroke motor on a Magic Tilt Trailer plus a Replica Taxidermy Mount of the winning fish! This is the 8th year that Mercury Marine has partnered with us and the 6th year for Carolina Skiff.** A great sponsor has stepped up again for 2nd place. I'd like to welcome back and thank Dell Marine for providing a brand new Carolina Skiff J-1650 with a 30 HP Mercury 4 Stroke on a Magic Tilt Trailer for this year's Tournament. **Check out Page 5 for the top Prizes, all for just catching one fish!**



PRESIDENTS CAST NET

Capt. Paul Gallup

Happy February all. In case you didn't know, we have the biggest event of the year coming up this month....The El Cheapo!! Things are well on their way for another great year. Please watch your e-mails for information regarding this first class tournament or better yet, come on out to the clubhouse and get the info first hand. We will be needing ALL of the help we can get.

Things are going to be a little different this year as compared to the past. One is that we had to raise the entry from \$60 to \$80 to help cover some of the additional costs involved, which are as follows: Our insurance has gone WAY up. Almost quadrupled. Something else we are doing is instead of renting all of the tents from MWR at the base and setting them up ourselves (along with 8000 lbs of concrete buckets) and taking them all down early Sunday is that we are going to have a company come in and do the set up and take down



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One thing that we've heard in the past is parking. Well I believe we have come up with a solution to that, the parking lot by Safe Harbor was made available to us for additional parking, and we will have a shuttle bus making trips back and forth in the afternoon. If I was a betting man, I think I would put my money on AJ. I'll tell you what, he's got a lucky horse shoe somewhere on his body. As of this letter, he has won the club raffle 4 times in a row. That's got to be some kind of record!!

On the fishing front, the Wahoo are showing up (when you can get out there), there have been several reports of nice catches of the ever endangered Red Snapper extremely close to shore as well as Seabass, B-liners and Triggers. Once again, when you can get out.

Inshore, there are good reports of a lot of Sheepshead being caught as well as Reds, Trout, a few Flounder and I personally know of 3 Snook that were caught in the Palm Valley area.

On a brighter side, our pals at the SAMFC seem to be loosening their grip on the closures, as of right now, Sea Bass are still open and I've talked to a few people that are involved and they think that they can see a smidgen of light at the end of the tunnel. Until next time, catch em up or at least get out and enjoy the water.

EL CHEAPO from Page 1

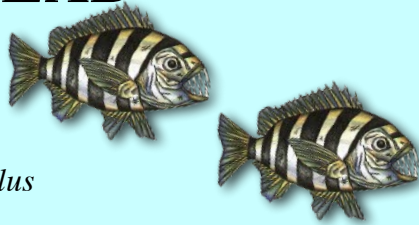
With *Atlantic Coast Marine*, *SweetWater Brewing* and *Donovan Heat* rounding out the top 5 places, we've got a combined value of over \$50,000.00 for just the top of the payout! When you add the Junior Angler, Platinum, Gold, and Silver level sponsor's contributions along with all the bonus prizes we've got, you end up with over \$100,000.00 worth of prizes being given away! This event truly has become one of the best family fishing tournaments in the entire country!

While we continually thank our sponsors for that big number, the reality is that without the J.O.S.F.C. membership, NONE of this would be possible. It's truly a spectacle to behold watching all the volunteers come together to transform our clubhouse and grounds of the Mayport Boat Ramp into a First Class tournament facility. To have such a large event take place at a such small venue in such a short amount of time is testament to how dedicated and focused our members and volunteers are.

I look forward to seeing all of you out there and making the 2014 El Cheapo the best one yet!

SHEEPSHEAD

Order: Perciformes
Family: Sparidae
Genus: *Archosargus*
Species: *probatocephalus*



Although it reaches a maximum size of about 29.5 inches (76 cm) and 22 pounds (9.6 kg), adult sheepshead are most commonly about 1-8 pounds (.5-3.6 kg) and 14-18 inches (35 cm). Maximum known lifespan of the sheepshead is at least 20 years with maturity typically reached at 2 years of age.

This fish is highly valued for human consumption due to its fine white flesh and mild flavor. However, its heavy scales and strong fin spines make it difficult to clean and fillet. It is marketed fresh and frozen and may be prepared by frying, broiling, microwaving, and baking.

Primarily occurring inshore around rock pilings, jetties, mangrove roots, and piers as well as in tidal creeks, the euryhaline sheepshead prefers brackish waters. It seeks out warmer spots near spring outlets and river discharges and sometimes enters freshwater during the winter months. This fish moves to offshore areas in later winter and early spring for spawning, which sometimes occurs over artificial reefs and navigation markers.

Sheepshead average about three pounds but can get over ten, and are terrific fighters who like to run anglers' lines around the pilings where they are most often caught. Their bite is very hard to detect and they are a difficult fish to hook if you don't know what you are doing.

Sheepshead are tied to hard structure such as bridges, jetties, docks, and piers. They use their sharp teeth to scrap barnacles from this structure and gobble up and break the shells of barnacles, mussels, and crabs. They do not travel in schools but orientate themselves around a food source and become very territorial, often staying in an area until the food supply is used up.

Catching sheepshead is not easy. They are not often caught incidentally by bottom fishermen but are hooked and fought by local anglers in many states who target them. A strong rod and heavier than usual line, around 20 lb test, is recommended as when hooked

sheepshead quickly try to run the line around those pilings. It is important to put strong pressure on the fish to bring them away from the hang-ups.

Sheepshead are caught on unusual saltwater baits and rarely take usual ones such as cut shrimp, squid or cut fish. Instead they hit fiddler crabs, pieces of larger crabs such as cut blue crab, sand fleas (also called mole crabs) or even barnacles scrapped from a piling and held together by their own sticky mesh or rubber bands.

- Despite their brute strength Sheepshead have a bite that it is so soft it is often impossible to detect. ***The old saying among sheepshead fishermen is that you must set the hook just before a sheepshead bites!*** It's not that difficult, but almost. One trick is to watch the rod tip, which will have a slight dip from the weight of your sinker. When a sheepshead bite the dip will disappear as the tip rises. Even if you feel nothing, set the hook.

Sheepshead anglers don't stay in one place but move from piling to piling. Sometimes they can be seen in clear water rising up and slowly working on the barnacles and mussels of the pilings.

Sheepshead have protruding lips that give the fish its name. They also have a white body and big, black bold stripes. They are sometimes confused with black drum, another inshore structure fish that covers the same areas but is easier to catch.

Sheepshead are a hearty, tasty fish that yield delicious white meat fillets which fit into many seafood recipes. Sheepshead fillets are also very good simply breaded and fried.



This is your target for the month of February, the Sheepshead, 7 Striped Jetty Snapper, or as I like to call them DINNER!



Top's Tips Safety First

Top Ingram
Safety Officer



Wear your Life Jacket

Early on the morning of Saturday, December 7, 2013, 2 fishermen, in a 19 foot fishing boat, were proceeding from the Trout River into the Saint Johns River when their boat struck a buoy at the junction of the two rivers and ejected both men into the water. Neither man was wearing a life jacket when they entered the water. One man was rescued and taken to UF Health Hospital in serious condition.

The second man, 67 years old, was found dead the following day. The cause of death was determined to be drowning. There is never a guarantee, but a life jacket can only save you if you have it on when you enter the water. Accidents happen so fast you do not have time to don a life jacket as the accident is taking place. You must be prepared in advance. Also, under low visibility, you should slow down, especially if you are in unfamiliar areas.

The above is a stark reminder to wear your life jacket when on the water. According to U.S. Coast Guard statistics, nearly 90% of all boaters who drown are not wearing life jackets. So, don't let your boat guests tell you they do not need one. At least, give them one and ask them to adjust it so it will fit properly in case of an emergency. A life jacket should fit snugly; it should not be loose enough to slide up over the wearer's mouth or ears. This is especially true for children. That means children should have child-sized jackets. Store your life jackets so they are easily accessible when not worn and those with missing or torn straps should be replaced.

With Club Tournaments following the "El Cheapo" on the tournament schedule, I think it is a very appropriate time to remind the Club membership of the fact that the successful fishing/boating trip is the one that begins and ends safely. One way to ensure a safe outing on the water is to wear your life jacket. Although not required by law, except for children 13 years of age and younger, boaters should wear a life jacket especially when the boat is underway. Historical data shows that many excellent swimmers have drowned when thrown from a moving boat without wearing a flotation device of some type. Recently we had a near tragic accident when a small boat, with 3 fishermen, capsized near the jetties. Since the fishermen were not wearing life jackets, only the quick action of some nearby fishermen prevented a tragedy.

As a practical matter, I know that many of you will not wear your life jacket. If the life jacket is not worn, however, it should be at least readily accessible and available

for immediate donning in an emergency such as a vessel sinking, fire, etc. One place it would be readily available is draped over the helm seat back. Please keep in mind that a life jacket will be of no help to you if you are thrown from the boat without the life jacket on. A life jacket should not be stowed in a closed or locked compartment, or have other gear stowed on top of it.

If your boat is 16 feet or longer, you must have a throwable flotation device in addition to wearable ones for each person on board the vessel. The throwable device must be immediately available near the helm and all persons on board should be informed of its position and use. All recreational boats must carry one type 1, 2, 3, or 5 flotation device for each person on board. Any boat 16 feet or over, except canoes and kayaks, must also carry one type 4 (throwable) device.

Most recreational boaters elect to carry the type 3 flotation device which is designed to keep the wearer vertical in the water and where quick rescue is probable. The type 2 flotation device, or near shore buoyant vest, is designed to turn a person to a vertical position in the water, but not as pronounced as the type 1.

The type 1 flotation device is designed to turn an unconscious person from face down to a vertical position and is used by boaters cruising waters where there is a probability of a delayed rescue. The type 5 flotation device, or flotation suit, provides not only flotation, but also protection from hypothermia and is intended for special use activities. No matter what type of lifejacket you carry on your vessel, it will only work when worn.

Make it a point to at least wear your life jacket when running from one spot to another. If you encounter a rogue wake or wave and are thrown from the boat your chances of survival are increased. Wear your life jacket and continue to enjoy safe boating throughout the year.

Top Ingram
Fish Tales



Life Jackets, Yeah, I know you don't wear one most of the time, but maybe you should consider wearing one at least while the boat is underway!

Or you could tie an ANCHOR to you to try to help keep you in the boat when it hits a wake, log or turtle you didn't see!



How about this for some GREAT prizes!

CAROLINA SKIFF
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Sea Skiff 21
By Carolina Skiff

First Place in the El Cheapo wins a Carolina Skiff Sea Skiff 21 Center Console with a 115 HP MERCURY 4 stroke, on a Magic Tilt Trailer.



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Second Place presented by **Dell Marine**, a Carolina Skiff J-1650 Tiller with a 30 HP Mercury 4 stroke on a Magic Tilt Trailer.



15' 4" L
3'8" Beam
120 Lbs Weight
675 Lbs Capacity!

Max 10 HP

How is this for the El Cheapo's **3rd Place Prize!** A 15'4" Gheenoe with a 6 Hp 4 stroke motor on a Galvanized Trailer.

This is presented by **Atlantic Coast Marine!**



SweetWater Brewing has covered **4th Place** with a 12'6" Stand up Paddle Board and 9' Kayak!



Donovan Heat & Air fills in 5th Place with \$1,250.00 CASH!

We will be paying down to 15th place, AND have a Club Members Only Tournament within a Tournament, \$20 to enter, see Rob Cripe for the details and to enter.





Tom Darga
JOSFC Vice President



Calling All JOSFC Members

In case you are unaware JOSFC made a donation to Mayport Elementary Marine Sciences during the past year. Monica and I worked at several science fairs during the past school year which included the Saturday Spring Fling that is held in March. During these fairs we discussed the importance of artificial reefs and the impact that fishing has on Jacksonville. During these fairs we were approached by the Principal and the Science Department about coming back this year to continue with fishing seminars.

I have recently been contacted by Mayport Elementary to head up a fishing club that the students want to participate in. The FWC has stepped up and donated poles and other equipment to the school for the club, what the school does not have is volunteers to help out with the club. As many of you know JOSFC has taken steps to become part of the community in joining with the Kingfish Tournament last year. JOSFC has an excellent opportunity to become involved with the students at Mayport Elementary. Many who have Moms or Dads that are on deployment.

I am asking for you to consider donating a few hours during the next several months in helping out with this worthy cause. It may just be rigging some poles or volunteering some time while the children are fishing at the Jacksonville pier or Hanna Park on a Saturday. Occasionally I would like to have a barbeque at the club house on a Saturday with the children fishing down off of the river bank. If you are interested in donating some time for this cause please contact me at the club meetings. I will update the membership on upcoming events once this club is up and running. Who knows we may have future members in the making just by showing an interest in them now.

Thank You
Tom Darga
JOSFC Vice President



Fishing Rule Changes for this year!

First, we have added a 10th Tournament to our list of "Captain of the Year" points Tournaments, the **Triple Challenge**, for Redfish, Trout and Flounder, and it will be the first of the tournaments for the 2014 / 2015 year. It will be held in November, counting for the 2014 / 2015 fishing year.

We have added Tarpon to our Men's, Ladies, Junior Angler and Inshore Boards. This will be a catch and release slot, and the total number caught will dictate who's name is on the board. For example I catch a Tarpon and my name goes on the board. Paul catches a tarpon but as I was first my name stays there. Now Paul catches a second Tarpon, now he knocks me off and his name goes up. At the end of the year, whoever caught the most Tarpon earns that ONE slot on the Board, and it counts as one (1) fish for your total number of fish on the board.

For the Unlimited Trolling and Non-Live Tournaments that can go out past the chart to 100 miles, the Check - IN time has been moved to 6:00 PM to 8:00 PM so you have more time to get back.

We moved the number of boats to have a tournament to 3 boats. Your grace or late arrival time to check out or to show up and check out was moved from 15 minutes to 30 minutes.

We changed the rule that you had to be present to get your Fish-Slip, to we will hold it until you show up to get it or someone can pick it up for you, but if not picked up by the Awards Banquet they will be voided.

The Weigh-in time for the Junior Angler Tournament has been changed to 2:00 PM to 4:00 PM and for the boards and Junior Angler tournament the kids can fish from anywhere, bridges, pier, beach, river or boat. However Captain of the Year points will only be awarded to Captains that take kids fishing from their BOAT!

For the Boards and River Tournament and Triple Challenge Tournament the Western Boundary has been moved from the Railroad Bridge to 100 yards South of the Shands Bridge.

We added Mangrove and Mutton Snapper to the Boards.

Finally we moved Kingfish and Barracuda from the Unlimited Board (Which is for bottom type fish caught outside the chart.) to the Blue Water Board (Which is for Striking Fish caught outside the chart.)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
February						1 
2 	3 Board Meeting 	4  	5 	6 Club Meeting Chili Cook-Off 	7 	8 Club House & grounds cleanup 8:00 AM 
9 	10  	11 	12 	13 	14  	15 
16 	17  	18 	19 	20 Club Meeting Captains Bag Stuffing 5:30 pm 	21 Set-Up day for the Captains meeting 	22 The El Cheapo!  
23 	24 	25  	26 	27 	28  	

February 6th - Club Meeting Annual Chili Cook-Off

February 8th - Clubhouse & Grounds fix up & cleanup for El Cheapo

February 20th - Captain's Bag Stuffing before Club Meeting 5:30 PM.

February 21st - It Starts . . . Volunteers needed to help with setting up for the Captains meeting that evening. We don't have to setup the tents, but we still need to do everything else, so we will be busy all day!

February 22 - THE EL CHEAPO!!!!!!

Tournament Schedule for 2014

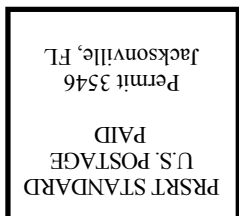
Tournament - - - - - Month - - - - - Date / - - - - - Alternate
- All are on Saturday -

The River Fishing Tournament -	March - - - - - 8 - - - - - 15 - - -	Chris Rooney
The Non-Live Tournament -	April - - - - - 12 - - - - - 26 - - -	Fishing Director
The Unlimited Trolling Tournament -	May - - - - - 3 - - - - - 10 - - -	Chris Rooney
The May Trolling Tournament -	May - - - - - 17 - - - - - 24 - - -	Jack Ogin
The Junior Angler Tournament -	June - - - - - 14 - - - - - 21 - - -	Jack Ogin
The Kingfish Tune-Up Tournament -	July - - - - - 12 - - - - - 19 - - -	Chris Rooney
The Powder Puff Tournament -	August - - - - - 9 - - - - - 16 - - -	Fishing Director
The Light Tackle Tournament -	August - - - - - 23 - - - - - 24 - - -	Fishing Director
The Bottom Tournament -	August - - - - - 30 - - - - - September - 6 - - -	Chris Rooney
Triple Challenge Tournament -	November - - - - - 8 - - - - - 22 - - -	Fishing Director

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