



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

Serving the Northeast Florida Fishing Community Since 1959



Volume 55 Issue 2

February 2015

EL CHEAPO SHEEPSHEAD TOURNAMENT



The 2015 EL Cheapo is Here!



The 15th annual El Cheapo Sheepshead Tournament and Fish Fry will be held on February 21st.

For those of you who have never fished this tournament before, welcome to "The World's Largest Sheepshead 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 15th edition of this tournament the best one yet! This year our Grand Prize winner will receive a **18 Foot Center Console Carolina Skiff with a 60 Hp Mercury 4 stroke motor on a Magic Tilt Trailer plus a Replica Taxidermy Mount of the winning fish!** This is the 9th year that Mercury Marine has partnered with us and the 7th year for Carolina Skiff. For 2nd place we have a brand new Carolina Skiff J-15TH with a 25 HP Mercury 4 Stroke on a Magic Tilt Trailer for this year's Tournament. **Check out Page 6 for the top Prizes.**

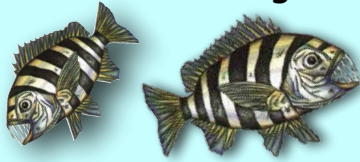
All for just catching one fish!





PRESIDENTS CAST NET

Tom Darga



JOSFC and the Friendship that can be built with New Members and Existing Members.

Many of our new members are coming in with smaller Bay boats or Skiffs. I think this is a great addition making JOSFC more diversified in the fishing community. To be a successful club it is necessary for the club to recognize and change to the times. Beginning last year the Board of Directors recognized this challenge and began to take action. In response we have added the Inshore Slam Triple Challenge fished January 3rd 2015. Inshore Slam tournament was a huge success with 14 boats signed up and 8 weighing in fish.



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What made this Tournament successful is that 1st and 2nd place were won by Steve Shaw and new member Dustin Girard. With the success of the Inshore Slam and the River Tournament averaging 15 boats participation the Board voted on January 5th to add the Sheepshead Tuneup in January of 2016

Does adding more JOSFC Tournaments to the schedule make us better? Not really, what does make JOSFC better is the enthusiasm and interest in fishing the tournaments and the friendship it builds. If creating a more diversified tournament schedule accomplishes this I am for it. Of course we still have all of the original tournaments with the Blue Water and NonLive Bait open to 100 miles offshore for the big boys as people like to say. Throw in 2 trolling tournaments 1 Kingfish warm up tournament along with the Ladies Tournament (originally known as Powderpuff,) Light tackle tournament and Nonlive tournament and I believe we have a strong overall schedule that will bring out the best in every fisherman and women. Remember you only have to fish 3 tournaments to qualify to win one of the fishing boards and with 10 tournaments remaining on the schedule this year you have plenty to choose from.

As Club President I feel that it is my responsibility and the Board of Directors to ensure that we continue to grow not only in membership but in diversity. Things can become stale and as enjoyable as it is for the monthly meetings JOSFC needs to redirect itself back to the fishing community and the joy of being on the water with other members and friends. It was this vision that originally started this club and I believe we have a great opportunity to once more share this vision with each other and other members from Jacksonville. It began this year with the Triple Challenge Tournament and will continue with our partnership this summer with Jacksonville Kingfish Association and concluding with the Bottom Tournament in August. Let's have fun this year and remember why Fred Morrow and others began this club.

Thank you

Tom Darga

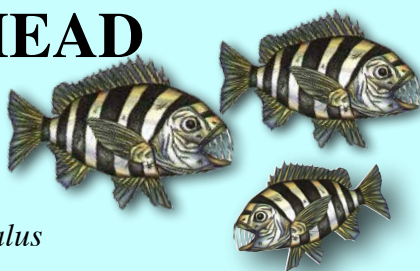
JOSFC President



Yeti Coolers

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 sheephead are most commonly about 1-8 pounds (.5-3.6 kg) and 14-18 inches (35 cm). Maximum known lifespan of the sheephead 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 sheephead 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

Four young adults recently lost their lives in a boat collision at night and none of them were wearing a life jacket. It is difficult to see a person in the water in the day time and especially so at night. Even though only two of them lost their lives because of drowning after they were thrown overboard, it could have been much worse since none on either boat were wearing life jackets. Luckily, only two were thrown into the water and they were found dead the next day.

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 accessible when not worn and those with missing or torn straps should be replaced.

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.

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.

Here are the results of the Rules committee meeting and the final vote of the Board of Directors for the Rules changes for 2015

JOSFC Proposed rule changes approved at the January Board Meeting. Rules proposed at December 11th Fishing Committee Meeting.

1. Sheepshead to be placed on all boards light tackle, ladies, men's, Jr. Angler both boards - **Passed**
2. Rename Powderpuff to Ladies Tournament must be 18 and older to fish. **Passed**
3. In the event of a tie with the same number of fish, the heaviest combined weight of fish listed will win board. **Passed**
4. Start time on River Tournament, Triple Challenge and Sheepshead Tune up changed to 7:00 AM with 2:00 to 4:00PM weigh in time. **Passed**
5. Weigh in time for all tournaments 3-5pm. Except Triple Challenge, River, and Sheepshead Tuneup 2-4 p.m. **Passed**
6. Need to have photo picture to verify weight of fish slip - **Failed** - 9 against 1 for
7. Eliminate rule having to fish 3 tournaments to be eligible to win Fishing Boards - **Failed** - Unanimous vote.



Here are the rules for the NEW tournaments.

Inshore Slam Tournament rules

October 3rd, makeup Oct 10th

1. Eligible species Flounder, Trout - all 3 varieties, Redfish
2. Boundaries = Mouth of the Mayport Jetties to 100 yds. South of the Buckman Bridge.
3. Hours - Lines in the water at 7 a.m.
4. Weigh in starts at 2 p.m. to 4 p.m.
5. Fish to be weighed - 1 fish from each species is to be weighed to complete the Inshore Slam. When more than 1 angler completes the 3 fish slam, the winner will be determined by the 3 fish aggregate weight. If a Slam is not completed by any angler, an angler with 2 of the 3 fish will beat 1 fish with a heavier total weight.



Sheepshead Tune-up rules

January 2016

1. Eligible species - Sheepshead
2. Boundaries - 100 yds. South of the Buckman Bridge to 1 mile East of BR.
3. Hours - Lines in the water at 7 a.m.
4. Weigh in starts at 3 p.m. to 5 p.m.

Fished to be weighed - A total aggregate of 3 Sheepshead can be weighed. Winner will be determined by the combined total weight.

Are your flares still in date?
They have an expiration date, and the Coast Guard checks!

How about your fire extinguisher?

Is it good, the right type and big enough?

How about your first aid kit?
is it just a couple of bandaids or good enough to handle a major injury?

Check them NOW, not when you need them!



It looks like Tony Thompson's Grandson, Bryce Fagan found a comfortable place on the boat! His FIRST trip out and he had a great time!

ATTENTION MEMBERS ONLY

Ok, you non-members and former members can read this also.

This event is where we get our operating funds for the year. We still need some volunteers for the Kitchen, and bodies for the Captain's Bag Stuffing as well as crew for Friday set-up and to run the site Saturday! It is a lot of fun, you probably won't even realize you are working! This is YOUR Club, Just show up and we will have work for you to do!

Yeti Coolers just came on-board as a Sponsor! I see some extra Raffle tickets being sold!



Wear these, they don't work in the cabin!

At least do it while under way, especially entering and leaving the

inlets, they can get rough in seconds with other boats wakes!



How about this for some GREAT prizes!

CAROLINA SKIFF
ANYTHING IS POSSIBLE



First Place Prize!

Carolina Skiff JVX - 18 Center Console with a Mercury 60 HP 4-Stroke on a Magic Tilt Trailer



Second Place presented by **JOSFC** a Carolina Skiff J-15TH Tiller with a 25 HP Mercury 4 stroke on a Magic Tilt Trailer.



Atlantic Coast Marine presents 3rd Place with a 15' Gheenoe with a 4 stroke Outboard

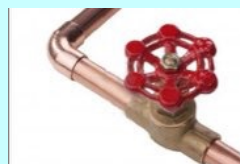


How about this for 4th Place!
presented by: (They Teamed up)





One (1) Entire Week's Stay at Nosara Paradise Rentals. PLUS a Fishing Charter, PLUS \$1,000.00 Cash!

5th Place by:
Styles Smith Plumbing



\$750.00 Cash

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2 Board Meeting	3	4	Club Meeting the Chili Cook-Off and Ms Emily's B-day	6	7 Club Clean-Up Day
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19 Club Meeting Captain's Bag Stuffing Night	20 Club Set-Up for the El Cheapo & Capt Meeting	21 THE EL Cheapo Tournament
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30			February		



Coming Events:

Feb. 5 - Club Meeting, Chili Cookoff & Ms Emily's Birthday Party

Feb 7 - Clubhouse Clean-up day

Feb 19 - Club meeting / El Cheapo Captain's Bag stuffing (Need lots of people to show up)

Feb 20 - Set up day for the El Cheap & Captains Meeting

Feb 21 - The El Cheapo Tournament!

Tournament Schedule for 2015

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

The River Tournament -	March -	21 -	28 -	Chris Rooney
The Non-Live Tournament -	April -	11 -	18 -	Greg Wallace
The Unlimited Trolling Tournament -	May -	2 -	9 -	Jack Ogin
The May Trolling Tournament -	May -	16 -	23 -	Steve Grant
The Junior Angler Tournament -	June -	13 -	20 -	Jack Ogin
The Kingfish Tune-Up Tournament -	June -	27 -	July - 11 -	Rob Cripe
The Ladies Tournament -	August -	1 -	8 -	Greg Wallace
The Light Tackle Tournament -	August -	22 -	29 -	Jack Ogin
The Bottom Tournament -	September -	5 -	12 -	Rob Cripe
Triple Challenge Tournament -	October -	5 -	12 -	Steve Shaw

Gary Newman
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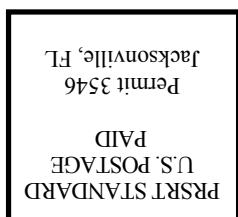
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