



The Newsletter of the . . .

The Reel News



Serving the Northeast Florida Fishing Community Since 1959

Volume 47 Issue 4

April 2007

Presidents Castings



**Club President
Eddie McGowan
Bite This**

It's finally here... the race is ON... the 2007 club tournament season has started. This year's River Tournament had a good show of boats participating but a weak show of fish at the scales. Brian Hackbart took first place with 19.9 Lbs. Danny Del Rio came in second with 13.1 Lbs. Pete St. Laurent came in third with 9.5 Lbs.

It hurts to report this, but Brien also set a new club record with his 11.3 Lb Sheepshead, taking that record from me!

All you "Wanna-Be" Captains of the Year better sharpen your hooks, re-spool your reels, check your drags and arrange your tackle. Who will win C.O.T.Y.?

Captains, PLEASE go through your boat's SAFETY GEAR and replace out of date, worn out, or faulty equipment. Add or upgrade any items if you can. This is not a place to scrimp on what you have or want to buy --- YOUR LIFE MAY DEPEND ON IT!

I look for fishing to only get a lot better in April and May. The Wahoo season had been really good with some good Tuna and Mahi thrown in the bag also. Everything is looking good for a great fishing season!

Eddie

Fishing Reports & Other tall Tales



**Jeff Rodda
Fishing Committee
Director**

Well the Captain of the Year race is off and running. Our leader with a big win in the first tournament is Brian Hackbart. He had an 11.3 Lb. Sheepshead! Along with a couple of other good size sheepshead to put the rest of us to shame. Brian's fish is a new club record, taking the record away from none other than our President Eddie McGowan!

The Wahoo bite is still going, and people are reporting consistent catches of Tuna and Mahi. There are even reports of the occasional Sailfish and Marlin being caught out at the ledge.

As the water continues to warm up, you can look for the Grouper to start moving to the deeper water and the Snapper to start moving in closer. With all the 18" to 19" snapper caught last year, I would expect to start finding some legal size Snapper all over out there this year.



Pete St. Laurent, one hardworking Fish, erMan.



Pete St. Laurent is starting his Marine Electrical Service business. He knows what he is doing and does a professional, clean, quick and neat job. I have seen him work and highly recommend him.



Pete's

Marine Electrical Service
914 Misty Mountain Dr. W.
Jacksonville FL. 32225

(904) 220-9199
Cell 343-6002
Bustnreds@hotmail.com

Pete St. Laurent
Owner

Service or Electronics' Installation we come to you.

Bob Houghton knows where the Grouper are. Here are some pictures from his fishing trip Feb. 9th with his son Bobby Houghton, on the West Coast of Florida. They had a limit of 20 but elected to keep 16. Limit in the Gulf is 5 grouper over 22 inches, with 1 red grouper over 20 allowed in that aggregate.



Left to right; Myself, Tim Gordon ,My Son Bobby; & Ken Maresco.



Bobby Houghton holds up a nice keeper form their recent tent trip.



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Rob's Fishing Lore

GOT CRABS? What Do You Do?

There are a few of among us that have found themselves in a particular situation that specialized knowledge is needed. In this case, crabs, what do you do when you have them? Who would you turn to for advice? Would you seek counsel from a friend or someone who's been there? Would you speak to a stranger about this? A consensus of opinions would be don't tell your wife! Some things are best kept quite until there is no chance of getting out of the situation you find yourself in. This year's El Cheapo Sheepshead Tournament found fishermen scrabbling for crabs. Yes, (due to global warming) the winter has brought forth some wickly cold temperatures just a few short weeks prior to the 7th Annual El Cheapo Sheepshead Tournament. These temperatures have reduced the crab population because they have gone into hiding to avoid the freezing cold temperatures brought on by running our outboard motors during the summer causing this wicked global warming we are seeing here in North Florida. It seems that a few weeks before the event, crabs were few and far between but you could find some here or there. Well, if you were clever and "got crabs" before the great crab outage of '07 what would you do with them?

There are several basics for crab care. First, you have to consider how you might hide them from your wife. Just imagine how surprised she will be to know that you have crabs. Not many self respecting indigenous mammal would ever agree to allow crabs in the home. Telling your wife or girlfriend you have crabs may lead to a speedy divorce or breakup because they are not likely to understand. Then again, if your wife or girlfriend understands why you have crabs and agrees to board them temporarily, then hang onto that one because you have a real winner. Secondly, please survey how many crabs you have. Crabs need space to roam. Sharing them with a friend may or may not be a good idea depending on your friend's marital philosophy. If you have a bunch of them then a lot of space is needed. I have heard of a wheel barrow being used as a crab pen. If you have more than a couple of quarts then a sizeable area is needed. It is likely you will need to create a pen for their safety. For one or possible two quarts then about three five gallon buckets would do. Please remember that crabs are climbers and any pen you may devise needs to prevent the crabs from escaping. Cardboard is differently a bad idea. A garage or house full of crabs is not exactly what you're after and if any get a hold of your spouse then that divorce maybe

looking pretty good to her. The smooth plastic sides of the five gallon bucket are a winner when it comes to keeping the crabs from climbing.

Next, when boarding crabs, temperature comes into play. As stated previously, global warming has caused such wickly cold temperatures recently. These very cold temperatures can cause shrinkage among your crab population. Shrinkage is never a good thing. Your crabs will prefer a warmer climate. A popular place at the home is the garage area because the crabs are out of site and out of mind. Under general hard freezing conditions may I suggest a move indoors to possibly the kitchen until the freezing temps have passed? Once your area has been selected, then pen accommodations are looked into. A little sand maybe in order. Sand will keep your crabs from getting too home sick. Otherwise, just a little salt water maybe needed to keep them damp. You cannot overwhelm them with water or else risk loosing them.

After, the pen is set up your special guest will require food. Since crabs tend to eat the fish they catch or wash up on their mud flat then it stands to reason that they prefer: meat! I have heard of using dry dog food or cat food. But think about it, does a dead fish really become that hard while floating in the water. I think not. Canned dog or cat food maybe preferred. However, meat is what they want. I would suggest chicken, beef or pork. It may take your crabs a few days to get use to their new surrounds before they start to dine.

Now that your crabs are warm, fat and happy they need to stay that way until their moment of glory arrives. As your herd has remained in tact due to the specialized care you have given them then please go one extra step further. Safe transport from your home to the boat ramp is needed. Please keep crabs out of a drafty speeding boat heading to the jetties or else they may fly out of the boat and escape making all your work for naught. Once anchored up at the jetties, then begin impaling your crabs with an extra sharp wire jig and throwing them to the rocks. Best of luck in the 8th Annual El Sheepshead Tournament.

Best Wishes for Fishing,
Rob Darner





Top's Tips Safety First

**Top Ingram
Safety Officer**

Float Plan!

The club tournament schedule for this year began with the River Tournament. Since our future tournaments will be offshore, we need to give a lot of thought to our equipment and safety before heading out to our favorite honey hole offshore.

To ensure that your outing on the water begins and ends safely, the first thing to do to ensure the safety of your trip on the water is to develop a float plan and leave it with your spouse, significant other, some other reliable person, or your marina. Ask the custodian of the plan to contact the Coast Guard or other local authority if you do not return by the indicated time on the plan.

Recently, a story in the local paper headlined "High drama, high seas" told the story of a local boater on a 35-foot Viking and how a float plan and the proper equipment on board prevented a loss of life. The boater had filed a float plan, left it with his wife and was proceeding to his destination about 30 miles offshore when a fire broke out and destroyed the boat. Fortunately, the boater had not only filed a proper float plan, but had extra safety equipment on board such as an EPIRB, life raft, ditch bag and hand held radios.

After the crew abandoned the boat, continued to send a MAYDAY message, and the EPIRB was activated, the Coast Guard contacted the boater's wife to verify certain facts. The wife advised the Coast Guard that if the EPIRB was on, the crew was in trouble. A boat that had seen the smoke came to check and advised the Coast Guard it would stand by until they arrived on scene as their boat was too small to take all the crew on board. Remember, if you have an EPIRB, make sure it is registered so there will be a contact person listed in case it is turned on in an emergency. There have been cases where an EPIRB was purchased, not registered and when activated was useless. The following statement by this boat captain is one of us should follow: "If I tell my wife we'll be in by 8:30, and we're not in, and she hasn't heard from me – don't start worrying, start calling the Coast Guard."

Hopefully, the above experience will remind all of us to file a float plan before we leave home for the launch ramp. The float plan should contain your name, address, phone number, name and description of your vessel, names of other persons on board, trip details including geographical location of your destination, the route you will take to get there, and/or GPS numbers if possible, time of return and time to call local authorities or Coast Guard if you do not return by the scheduled time. A properly executed float plan could be a lifesaver in an emergency if you have to abandon your vessel at sea, or break down, with no power for your radio to

communicate your location and notify someone of your need for help.

The local Coast Guard station phone number is 904-247-7311. Make sure the person who has your float plan has this phone number, or put it on your float plan.

A properly executed float plan would enable the person in custody of the float plan to initiate a timely search for you if you did not return by the time specified. Time could be a critical factor in saving your life in a real emergency. A sample float plan is available in the boating safety materials rack at the Mayport clubhouse.

File a float plan each time you go boating/fishing to help ensure your safety on the water.

May you continue to enjoy safe boating throughout the year.
Top Ingram
Fish Tales



Ships Galley.....

**Sidney Duncan
Hospitality Director**

Alright, so you have caught an Amberjack, Jack Crevalle or Bonita and heard that they are not any good to eat..... WRONG! They can be quite good table fare.

First with the Bonita, when you catch it, bleed it well. (Cut the gills and put it in water, live well or a stout line and hang it by the tail over the side for a couple of minutes) now with either fish, fillet it and then marinate it in milk over night or if frozen thaw in milk and marinate it in milk.

A little lemon, butter, garlic and seasonings to taste and grilled they are nothing to shy away from!

Here is the other tip that most of you don't do or remember is to add a Table spoon of Vinegar to your oil if frying will make your fish, shrimp, chicken, etc. absorb less oil and taste fresher and sweeter!



Steve, this is a Spanish Mackerel

EL CHEAPO Fun Facts:

- 291 Total Boats Registered
- 269 Boats checked in & fished
- 134 Boats weighed fish in.
- 744.3 Lbs. of Sheepshead weighed in!
+ another couple of hundred Lbs donated.
- 11 Lbs. 9 oz. Biggest fish
- 1 Lb. 4 oz. Smallest fish
- 5.55 Lbs. Average weight of fish
- 103 Boats were repeat entries
- 187 Boats were new to the tournament
- 21 Club members fished the tournament
- 500+ dinners served
- 260 shirts and hats sold
- 187 Miles (as the crow flies) the longest distance traveled to participate. St. Petersburg, Fl
- 157 Miles the second longest distance, from Tallahassee, Fl.
- 73 Volunteers worked the tournament
- \$17,420.00 paid out in prizes!
- Finally 64 Sponsors donated over \$31,500.00 !

SAILFISH POT PARTY AND TOURNAMENT

Date: April 21, 2007

Time: 6:30 P.M.

Place: Ramallah American Club
3130 Parental Home Rd
Jacksonville, Florida

Menu: Steak, Oysters, Chicken Wings, & Beer
(Bring your own oyster knife).

Prizes: Drawing will be held for items of merchandise

Hello boys! It's that time again, and yes that is a picture of me giving the thumbs down symbol: which makes me the winner of the of 2006 pot. The fish was caught aboard my boat, the "Try-N-Hooker", with crewmember Bobby Sundy. Plans for the 2007 Pot Party are underway and registration is now open. Please tell your friends and crew about the party. I plan to make it a good one, so make your plans for the 2007 Sailfish Pot Party.

THIS IS A STAG EVENT

TO WIN THE POT:

1. You must buy a ticket and fill out the attached form.
2. Catch the first sailfish of the season after the night of the party. The sailfish may be released (recommended). If it does not meet the minimum size limit, which is currently 63" from the tip of the lower jaw to the fork of the tail, it must be released. If the winning fish is released, picture proof must be

Sailfish Cont. top Right Column

Sailfish Cont.

provided to me (contact 220-0179) within 24 hours of the catch or the catch shall be disqualified. This picture proof shall include a gesture (to be announced the night of the Pot Party) made by the winning tournament participant (example: thumb down), or the picture will not be accepted as proof.

3. Winning fish must be caught within the limits of the latest Jacksonville Offshore Sport Fishing Club's Chart
4. Boats must depart and return from the St. Johns River jetties.
5. If the successful angler is not in the pot, but his captain is, the captain is the winner.
6. If only the successful angler is in the pot, he is the winner.
7. If both the successful angler and his captain are in the pot, the captain is the winner (cash to be divided as agreed between them).
8. Entries for the pot will be accepted until midnight June 30, 2007 or until the fish is caught, whichever comes first.

THE WINNINGS:

1. The winner will receive the cash contents of the pot less party expenses.
2. The winner's name and boat name will be placed on the pot trophy, which the winner holds until the pot is won next year.
3. The winner is responsible for organizing next years Sailfish Pot Party.

Good Fishing! Tight Lines!
Randy Young

Loud Hailings

**Newsletter Editor
Bill Breen**



Leigh Davis, our Program

Director, says that if you have a suggestion for a guest speaker or know anyone he can trick into giving a talk at the club, be sure to give him their name so he can contact them. Lets help Leigh out!

I really like to feature PICTURES of club members with some good catches. Either give me a hardcopy at a meeting (I will return it to you) or Phone, Fax, or E-mail me your pictures at: PH# 904-254-2791 Fax#904-213-9786 breenw@bellsouth.net
Don't forget to include your name spelled correctly and the fish weight.

Anyone can submit an article for the Reel News just send or give it to me at any time.

Instant Crew, Just Add Water

<u>Name</u>	-	<u>Phone</u>	-	<u>Availability</u>	-	<u>Can call the Night before.</u>
Pete St.Laurent	-	220-9199	-	Most weekends	-	Up to 8:00 pm
Gene Fulgham	-	641-9970	-	Any day	-	Up to 8:00 pm
Dale Karg	-	451-2251	-	Most weekends	-	Up to 10:00 pm
Frank Grassi	-	234-7369	-	Weekends & Some days	-	Up to 8:00 pm
Sara Meier	-	H= 786-5608 C= 812-322-1519	-	Weekends & Some days	-	Up to 10:00 pm

Associate Member of the Month

Boathouse Discount Marine

5615 Blanding Blvd.
Jacksonville, FL. 32244-1922
904 - 778 - 7775

This is one of our long time supporters, and we too often forget that they have what you need!

Boathouse Discount Marine is our complete parts supplier. Need Hydraulic fluid for your trim tabs? Need an anchor ball ring? How about a part for your engine or trailer. The odds are that they have it in stock! Not only do they have it, but usually it is considerably less expensive than the other shops.

One of our own members, Derek Siegal works there so don't be shy, give Derek a call to find the parts and price of your boating needs!

Remember to shop at our sponsors and support them as often as you can,

Riding on the Bow of a Boat

At the EL CHEAPO Captain's Meeting, one of the things I asked participants NOT to do on the water was allow passengers to ride the bow of the boat. Following the meeting, a participant came up and asked me about how that was defined, what was/wasn't OK etc.

I answered that it was always an unsafe situation but any given law enforcement officer has discretion whether to stop and cite an operator. Participant wanted to know what the statue said and I replied he'd have to look it up in State of Florida.

I don't think he was satisfied with that answer, and I don't know if he's a club member or the question will come up again, but here's how it's enforced:

The vessel must have a manufacturer-provided seating area on the bow or riding there is unacceptable. So a railing doesn't count, needs to be a seating area like the "bowrider" boats have. Some larger boats have a forward "rumbleseat" and that's acceptable. The removable bow pedestal seats like bass boats have are not acceptable. Better to consider the requirement to be a "permanent" or "built-in".

Again, that's How it's enforced, doesn't mean it's Always enforced.

I hope this helps if you see this issue again.

As always, good to see you and support your tournaments. I look forward to the next opportunity.

Respectfully,
John Davis FWS

Sun	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thur	Fri	Sat
1	2 Board Meeting	3	4	5 Club Meeting	6	7 Non-live Club Tournament
8	9	10	11	12	13	14 Times Union Redfish Spot Tournament
15	16	17	18	19 Club Meeting	20	21 Sailfish Pot Party Club Meeting
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30				<i>April</i>	

Coming Events:

April 5, 07 - Capt. Robert Johnson of the Charter Boat Jody Lynn will be the guest speaker talking about bottom fishing.

April 14, 07 - Times Union Spot Tournament

April 21, 07 - Sailfish Pot Party - 6:30 pm at Ramallah Club



Tournament Schedule for 2007

Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	Date	-	Rain Date
Non-Live Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	April 7 st	-	April 8 th
May Trolling Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	May 5 th	-	May 6 th
Unlimited Trolling Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	May 19 th	-	May 20 th
Junior Angler Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	June 16 th	-	June 17 th
Kingfish Tune-up Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	July 14 th	-	July 15 th
Powder Puff Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	August 4 th	-	August 5 th
Light Tackle Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	August 18 th	-	August 19 th
The Bottom Fishing Tournament	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	September 8 th	-	September 9 th

Associate Members

• *ACM Electronics* • *Advance Marine* • *Adventure Landing* • *Wild Adventures* • *American Transmission* • *Anthony & Sandra Spa* • *Arlington Bait & tackle* • *Avid Angler* • *B & M Bait & Tackle* • *Baitmasters of South Florida* • *Boaters World* • *Boathouse Discount Marine* • *Bryan McGowan Charters* • *Ballyhood Top Gun Trolling Lures* • *C & H Lures* • *Cabelas* • *Cannon's Bait & Tackle* • *Carey Chen Art* • *Consignment Boat Sales* • *Custom Marine Components* • *D & S Fishing Specialities* • *D.J. Connection* • *Deonas Boatworks* • *Dexter Russell Cutlery* • *Dockside Inn* • *Donovan Heating & Air* • *Florida Sportsman* • *Gary Newman Insurance* • *G & W Marine* • *Gear 4 Fishermen* • *Greater Jax Kingfish Tournament* • *Guy Harvey Publishing* • *Hubbard's Marina* • *Hydro-Shield* • *Power-Pro* • *International Crew* • *Jacksonville Marina* • *Jacksonville Scuba Center* • *Kershaw Knives* • *Knight Electric* • *La Mee Florist* • *Land Roofing* • *Lindgren-Pitman, Inc.* • *Loadmaster Trailers* • *Mercury Outboards* • *Mac's Prop Savers* • *MacMedia Graphics* • *Mann's Bait Company* • *Maxima America* • *Mike's Taxidermy* • *Ocean Get Away* • *Ocean Waves Sunglasses* • *Okuma Fishing Tackle Corp.* • *Penn Tackle Mfg.* • *Production Drywall* • *Pier 17* • *Rick's Bait & tackle* • *River Marine* • *Roffers Ocean Forecasting Service* • *Salty Styles* • *Sea Tow* • *Sea Dance Charters* • *Jacksonville* • *Seafood Galore* • *Captain Dave Sipler's Sport Fishing* • *Solomon's RV & Boat storage* • *Southern Propane* • *Speedy MacTwist* • *SSI Custom Plastics* • *St. John's Seafood & Steaks* • *Strike Zone Fishing* • *Surefire LLC* • *Team Fish Industries of America* • *The Billfish Foundation* • *The Florida Sportsman Club* • *Thrifty Outdoors* • *West Marine* • *Workman's Kwik-Fix Plumbing* • *Woody Wax* •



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