

MIDWEEK BASS ANGLERS OF ARIZONA INC

B a s s B i t e s

FISHING WEDNESDAYS - NOT WEEKENDS!



OCTOBER 2015

ESTABLISHED JANUARY 27, 2005

EDITOR: TERRY TASSIN

President's Perspective

By Gary Grimes



The Midweek Bass Angler's 2015 October tournament was a two-day affair held at one of the state's most spectacular fisheries, Apache Lake. Twenty-three teams participated in the competition, with a full day on Tuesday and a half-day on Wednesday. Lots of fish were caught, including both largemouth and smallmouth bass, and several over five pounds were caught which you can read about later in this newsletter. I thought I would report on some of the signature highlights as I remember them.

The first thing that comes to mind about this event was the weather. It would be fair to say we had great weather, but very unlike what I was expecting. I

arrived at the lake on Friday before the tournament, as several of us like to go camp/fish for a few days when at Apache, there is absolutely nothing better than a Midweek fish camp. The weather experts were predicting chance of rain on Saturday, then clearing and warmer thereafter. Well they were wrong. We got rain on Saturday, Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. Sometimes the rain was light and fell sometimes at night. Sometimes the rain was a gentle pitter-patter; a few times it was a torrential spatter. Though it did not rain all the time, the threat of rain was ever present all the time, we even had hail on Tuesday night at 9 PM. We had several of our group who bunked in either tents or in the bed of their truck, and all managed to stay dry.

As you would likely expect in any good fish camp, there was lots of good food, plenty of beer and spirits, lots of colorful stories and teasing, and two nights of high stakes, low investment poker. Unfortunately I lost two decks of cards on the final night when the hailstorm blew sideways into our primitive poker parlor and soaked everything. Greg

Prather filled in for Gary Asmus and cooked 40 each brats and burgers for over 40 hungry anglers at our Monday night barbeque. Thanks to the Murdock's, Prather's, and Martlage for providing some great eats.

As for fishing highlights: Hobby Nelson blew his lower unit (under warranty) and yet still managed to fish; George Cobasky snapped his trolling motor shaft, and yet still caught fish. The wind was so strong on Tuesday afternoon that the Burnt Corral boat dock was blown off it's mooring and listed onto the boat ramp. No major angler injuries to report, though I saw a bunch of guys popping IBuprofen on Wednesday morning because of too much fun the night

Club Officers Elected for 2016

The **Board of Directors** is pleased to announce the election of the following members as Officers of the Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona Inc for the year 2016:

President: Gary Grimes
Vice Pres: Tom Savage
Secretary: Terry Tassin
Treasurer: John Reichard
Tmx Director: Jack Hughes

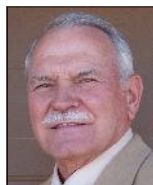
**Monthly Breakfast
Meeting**
**Deer Valley Airport
Restaurant**
702 W. Deer Valley Rd
Phoenix, AZ
**1st Wednesday of Each
Month 8:00 A.M.**

"We Practice Catch and Release"

before. Spencer Hand, Bill Blakeman, and Gene Turner all caught their personal best bass – great job guys and we are glad to have you in the club. Bryan Steele and Hal Hensey kicked butt, bringing in a two day total of 29.51 lbs, with Jeff Mason and Mark Durben right behind them with 28.56 lbs.

Finally, there are so many individuals who helped make the event a success: Jack Hughes coordinated a great tournament; Gary Martlage, Nick Wampach, Tom Savage, John Milkint did an outstanding job at the weigh-in; all of the guys who helped with cleanup after the barbeque (Greg Prather, Richie Rojas, Neal Burns, Ernie Arvizu, Tom Savage, Tony Medina, Gene Turner, Lou Hirlemann, and anybody else who helped).

Speaking of helping, there are also the countless acts of assistance that the guys of Midweek provide one another while at camp, whether someone needs a little gas, needs a tow, forgot their power cord or generator, sharing of fishing advice, or just a warm cup of coffee in the morning. You won't find a better bunch of guys anywhere.



Lake Apache Report
October 20-21, 2015

I guess I should be happy I had to miss the tournament. After reading the fishing reports and hearing of all the rain, I would probably have pneumonia after fishing and camping for four days in the rain.

I would like to congratulate club member **Bill Blakeman** for catching his personal best a 4.80 lb largemouth and also catching his first ever smallmouth. Bill we are glad to have you with us and it only gets better as you go along.

And the winners are!

Team Bryan Steele & Hal Hensey Explore Pyramids For 1st Place

Taking home **1st Place**, Team **Bryan Steele & Hal Hensey** brought to the scales the winning creel for two days of fishing of ten bass weighing 29.51 lbs.

Bryan Steele: I fished with Hal Hensey, and we had a great time together. It was one of those rare tournaments where basic execution issues didn't get in our way-no missed fish/break-offs, no equipment issues, and we even found some cooperative fish. Good times with a bit of good luck!



1st Place
Hal Hensey & Bryan Steele

Prefish: We scanned ledges and points to find that many of the offshore fish were setup in the 20-25 feet range. We did not fish for them and decided to try our luck for them on tournament day. We fished different shorelines to see if we could get a shallow water bite going but didn't find anything

Tournament Statistics

Forty-five men fished 15 hours each, bringing 180 keeper bass to the scales for a total weight of 354.82 pounds with a 7.88 pound average total catch per fisherman. The average weight of each fish was 1.97 lbs. All fish were released back into the lake after weigh-in to fight again another day.

Next Meeting
Next Tournament

Our next club general meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, 4 November** starting at 8:00 AM, at **Deer Valley Airport Restaurant** (just one mile north of I-101 at the intersection of 7th Ave & Deer Valley Road). We hope you will come early and have breakfast together.

The next club point tournament will be at **Lake Bartlett** on **18 November 2015**. Club launch headquarters and weigh-in location will be announced. Tournament hours are **Safe Light to 3 PM**.

that gave us confidence. So, the basic plan on tournament day was to dropshot the habitats with finesse worms to try to get a solid limit and then deep crank and jig the ledges/points in the afternoon for upgrades.

Day 1: Fishing the habitat was a slow, steady payoff throughout the morning. I think Hal had 4 fish in the box to my 1. We kept moving from habitat to habitat every 30-45 minutes to find an active fish or two. After culling a few times, Hal hooked into a nice fish around 11:30. It was a 4.40 pounder, but it looked a lot bigger than that when we got it in the net! Great job Hal! That fish put us at 13.2 lbs for the day - all fish on dropshot (Morning Dawn and Light Oxblood colors), all from the 2006 "Pisces Pyramids" habitat project. We then spent the next 3 hours deep cranking and jiggling ledges/points in 15 to 25 feet to get us an upgrade and blanked - not a bite. After that failure, we decided to just stick to fishing habitats for Day 2.

Day 2: We lucked out with a short lived frenzy of catches right off the start, which gave us over 11 pounds in the first 45 minutes - fun stuff right there! We kept moving from habitat to habitat and found a couple of upgrades that put us back at the 13.2 lbs mark. Around

10:30, I decided to pick up the 10XD crank again and try to smash it against a 10 foot boulder that came up to about 15 feet of water. It worked! After chucking that crankbait around for hours the previous day, **finally**, a 4.50 pounder smacked it after crashing into the deep water boulder—this was the only fish that didn't come from the habitat on a finesse worm. This fish put us over 16 lbs for the day.

In case you are wondering what the habitat we were fishing looks like, here is a picture of the 2006 Pisces Pyramid habitat project at Apache.



Hal Hensey: Four days of fishing is a whole lot for me, but as I spent more time with Bryan Steele on the water, I enjoyed fishing more and more. Usually I can get pretty disappointed with myself when I'm not catching fish. Bryan raised my expectations for Tuesday with his comments about the lake and how it was setting up, keeping me eager

to fish. He had a plan and I was ready to help all I could.

Tuesday morning started out with Bryan catching fish #1 and I followed with the next four after which Bryan said now we are ready to fish for bigger bass. From then on he caught several bass, keeping me busy with the net. Along the way he explained how we had plenty of time to improve our weight. We caught several more to gradually upgrade and then I caught a 4.40 lb bass which got me even more excited. After a busy day we finished with 13.28 lbs.

Wednesday morning started out fast with Bryan catching four bass, and I followed with #5 all in less than 30 minutes. We moved around many times during the short day and continued to upgrade to a good sized limit. We needed to cull two smaller bass to make a competitive weight and Bryan was more aggressive than

Veterans Day Nov 11



Membership

As of October 23, 2015 the Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona consists of 107 active members.

ever, which kept me busy with the net. Then, on a crankbait, he caught a 4.5 lb largemouth, which put us at just under a 30 lb total weight. This made my week of fishing complete, seeing Bryan using his electronics to set up a plan, and me catching more fish than I ever expected. Needless to say, I would be very pleased to fish with him again.

When I look at the efforts of all member boaters in our club who love to fish, and the expenses they incur to make these tournaments happen, it makes me feel very lucky to be a Midweek Bass Anglers member.

Last thoughts; I caught all of my fish on drop shot/morning dawn Roboworms. I would like to thank Gary Grimes for offering me bed space in his camper, and keeping me out of the stormy, rainy weather for three nights.

Jeff Mason & Mark Durben Find Big One For 2nd Place

In **Second Place** the team of **Jeff Mason & Mark Durben**

weighed ten bass for a total weight of 28.56 lbs. Thanks to **Jeff's** 5.43 lb bass the team also wins the **2nd Place Big Fish** prize

Jeff Mason: First of all, congrats to Bryan and Hal for two great days of fishing under tough conditions. I say tough because we didn't catch a lot of fish, but managed to catch the right ones. I really enjoyed fishing with Mark Durben, and I look forward to fishing with him again.

We managed to hold a 2 1/2 lb lead after the first day over Bryan and Hal, catching all of our keepers on a drop shot, with a red crawler Robo Worm. To start the morning, we caught 3 good fish out of a tree by the Marina. We moved across the lake off the steep walls and caught our biggest fish of the day a 4.97 pounder, and moved down towards the dam on the same side and caught our 2nd biggest fish. We caught a few more fish the rest of the day, but were unable to cull any small fish. On Wednesday we were the third to the last boat out, and we went to our starting spot from Tuesday but someone was already there, so I just went to a deeper bank just past our spot and started throwing topwater lures. Mark and I both missed a nice fish on topwater that would have really turned our day around. Both Mark and I caught two of our keepers on topwater, and I caught the 2nd big fish of the tournament (5.43 lbs) on a drop shot off the steep walls again. We fished hard the rest of the day and

made a couple of small upgrades, but it wasn't enough. I would like to thank the club for a great meal on Monday night, and all the poker guys for a great time



2nd Place
Jeff Mason & Mark Durben

Mark Durben: I got the opportunity to fish with Jeff Mason and we had a great time, though Jeff did almost all the catching. Jeff has fished these lakes a long time and had Apache wired for where to

NOTICE!

Changes to Club Bylaws & Tournament Rules for 2016

All previously proposed changes will be voted on at the 4 November meeting. All approved changes will become effective on January 1, 2016. A copy of the approved revised bylaws and tournament rules will be provided to all members by January 1st.

HAPPY HALLOWEEN!



fish. The first day we caught three fish off a spot just past the marina on dropshot rigs and by 7:45 AM we had a limit. Jeff then landed a few more on dropshot/red crawler including the 4.97 pounder. We picked up more fish throughout the day, but no upgrades.

The second day we started at some cliffs along deep water. Jeff had a big fish come unbuttoned halfway to the boat and I caught a smallmouth, both on topwater. We moved across the lake, continuing with the topwater and I had a big one snap me off under the boat. Jeff continued to pick up fish throughout the day on dropshot and I couldn't get bit except for a few small ones. Jeff is not just knowledgeable but a great guy to hang around with for a day & a half. I hope I draw him again and am able to contribute more to the team effort.

Team Ridgway & Brown Junk Fish To 3rd Place Finish

Team **Vern Ridgway & Rick Brown** weighed ten bass for 21.48 pounds and finished in **3rd Place**.

Vern Ridgway: Our 3rd place team made up of Rick Brown and I fished from the campgrounds to the dam each day, throwing top waters, drop shots, Shakey heads and jerk baits (mostly junk fishing) in 5 - 20 feet of water.

Overall we had to scratch them out and caught only 6 fish on Tuesday with only one

culling opportunity. Day two was a better bite but smaller fish and we threw the same lures at them we had used on Tuesday. 1200 Noon came quickly and the tournament was over.

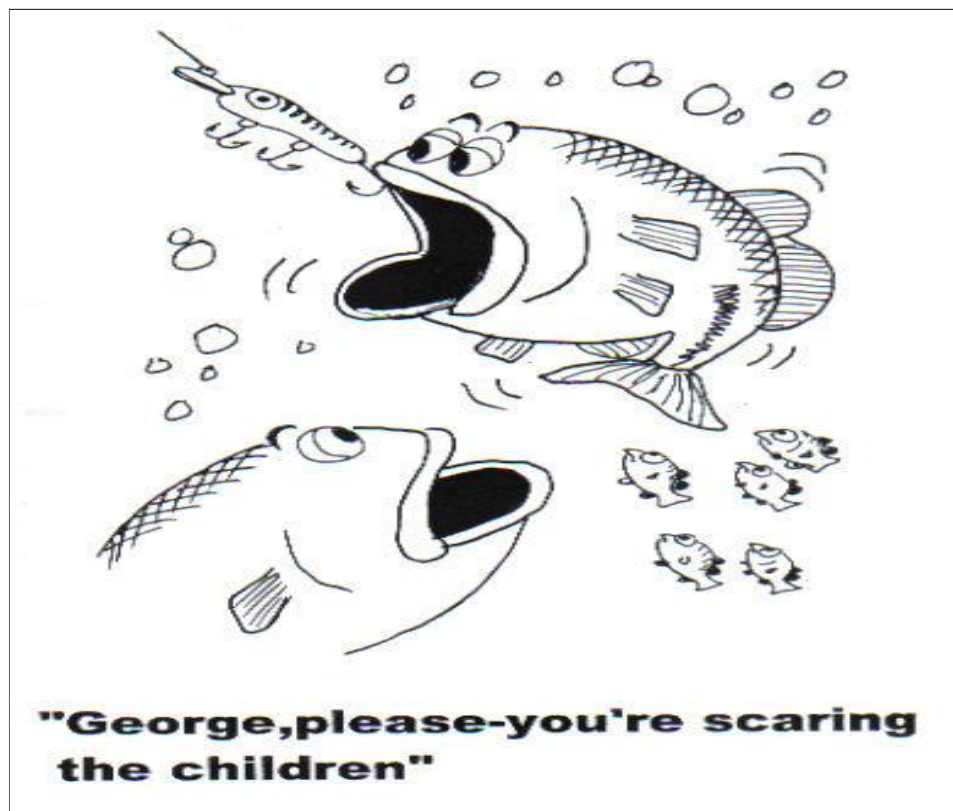


3rd Place
Rick Brown & Vern Ridgway

Rick Brown: Another great draw for me. Vern is a great fisherman; he put his time in on the water and had some good

spots for us to fish. The fish just didn't participate as much as we wanted. We caught most of our fish on outside points, usually close to the banks that were pretty steep. We caught a couple on top water lures, Carolina Rig, Shakey head, and a few on dropshot rigs. I would say fishing was pretty tough but we were fortunate enough to get our limits. I had a great time fishing with Vern. I also had a blast at the poker table with all the guys; it had been a while since I had made it to one of those games with the club. There was a lot of trash talking going on, mostly by our president G2. That guy is bad when he drinks. Well, at least I think it was him, maybe it was me. My memory was a little fuzzy the next morning. Thanks for the whisky, Burns!

Top Water & Drop Shot Key to 4th Place Finish



for Team Prather & Jolley

Taking home **4th Place**, Team **Greg Prather & Bob Jolley** weighed ten bass for a total weight of 20.11 lbs.



4th Place
Greg Prather & Bob Jolley

Bob Jolley: Greg Prather and I didn't pre-fish together on Monday so we made our game plan on Tuesday while floating in the start area. We both agreed that we would start with top water and go to a cove where Greg had found fish while he was pre-fishing on Monday. I had on the lucky top water popper early in the morning and we had our limit (all smallmouth) in the boat by 7:30. When the early bite died we used the run and gun approach the rest of the day and tried spinner baits, crank baits, rip baits, jigs and drop shots. It was slow for a couple of hours then Greg got the hot hand and started culling, mostly largemouth, on a Morning Dawn drop shot. We hammed and egged it the rest of the day and culled several

times ending up with a little over 8 lbs.

Day two didn't start out like day one and we couldn't buy a top water bite and didn't have anything in the boat until after 9:00. Greg finally figured out that the largemouth were around large boulders close to deep water and he boated four nice largemouth before I finally started to contribute with a couple of culling fish. All of our fish on day two were caught with dropshots rigged with Morning Dawn Robo Worms. We had almost 12 lbs on day two which was a good comeback from day one and put us in the money.

One of our catches on day two came when my drop shot rig was hung up in a rock and we were trying to retrieve it. I went to the front of the boat to try and free it when Greg got bit and had a fish on. At that moment I stood between Greg and the fish with my rod over Greg's head as he was trying to bring the fish to the boat. I managed to reach the net with my left hand and was luckily able to land the fish with one hand. Fortunately the fish, which was in the 3 pound range, cooperated and swam into the net. It would have looked very strange to anyone who might have been watching. We laughed about it and said we finally had a pattern but didn't know how we could possibly duplicate it.

Greg is a very experienced fisherman and I had a lot of fun fishing with him. He was very accommodating which made it

very easy for me as a co-angler. We had a great time, had a lot of laughs and managed to win a few bucks to boot and I hope I we can get paired up again.

Thanks to the weigh-in team who did another terrific job!

Team Wells & Milkint Drop Shot Secret Color For 5th Place Finish

A ten fish limit weighing 19.14 lbs was enough to earn Team **Steve Wells & John Milkint** 5th Place money.



5th Place
Steve Wells & John Milkint

John Milkint: Steve Wells and I finished in 5th place with a limit each day. Steve had pre-fished a couple of days the prior week and had identified a couple of areas where he had caught some bass. Steve and I fished on Monday to identify some additional areas where we might fish on tournament days staying away from our "hot spot" until Tuesday.

This seemed to be a good plan since no teams on Tuesday morning were on our spot. As some plans go, this didn't work out so well since we found no fish on this spot. We worked it hard but the fish that were there the prior week had moved on. Now we just had to go fishing. Steve tried to get a reaction bite with topwater and spinner baits before we turned to the "little known" technique of drop shotting. That seemed to work for us on Tuesday with a result of several bass which we culled to the final weight. As far as lure colors, Steve had a secret color which was hand pored by an unknown supplier. I had to revert to the dreaded Robo-Worm morning dawn. Even though we both caught fish I have to admit that Steve's special worm did seem to catch more than his co-angler. Steve kept going back to reaction baits all day Tuesday with minimal result mumbling about having to revert to a drop shot to catch fish.

I, not being that concerned with the method, but liking the idea of catching fish stuck with using plastics. Mixed in with Robo-Worms was a Senko now and then and that also worked, bringing in our heaviest fish, a 3.70 pound Smallmouth.

Wednesday was a little different with topwater lures finally producing some fish for us. I was excited to catch a couple on a topwater spook; not that we didn't also catch some on the drop shot. Steve did use the last of his special worms and it was about that time the bite stopped for us.

None of these bass were caught on the pre-fishing identified Hot Spot even though we went back there several times. Unfortunately we couldn't get that kicker fish to push us higher in the final results. Steve is a joy to fish with and any co-angler drawing Steve will enjoy the experience. Apache was a great venue with the club members gathering for food and drink as well as some exceptional poker playing.

1st Place Big Bass Caught On A Dropshot By Jim Buchanan Of Team Buchanan & Johnson

Jim Buchanan: Don Johnson and I had a great trip. The weather was a little iffy. Don is a good person and a great fisherman and I hope we hook up again.

Regarding the large bass (6.25 lbs), all I can tell you is that we fished across from the launch ramp down to the left. Don knew right where to go. We started fishing top water baits, and then we went to the drop shot. Between 10 and 11 AM on Tuesday we went back to the spot where we began. I threw out a drop shot and it got tangled in the motor; Don picked up the motor and I got it loose and lo-and-behold there was a fish on my line strung out about 100 feet behind the boat. It jumped out of the water and I told Don that's a big fish. It was a good fighter and kept going deep. After a great battle Don finally netted the fish. The whole time I was fighting the

fish I kept thinking "I'm going to lose this fish because my line may have been compromised by being dragged over the prop". All I can say is it was meant to be - lucky I guess.

Team Gary Martlage & Bill Blakeman Win Goon Fish Prize

Gary Martlage: The 31.11 pound Carp Goon Fish was caught on a dropshot 6 inch Robo Worm, off an underwater island behind Turtle Island. It took about 15 minutes to get the Carp in with 8 lb tippet line. Bill Blakeman (my co-angler) stood next to me with the net when I hooked up. I told him to sit down, since "this might take awhile!"

It definitely was the highlight of my trip to Apache! There were some other highlights....Bill Blakeman caught the largest bass he has ever caught (4.80 pound largemouth bass), and his first smallmouth bass! It sure is nice to share these moments with members of the club!

Member Guest Column By Bernie Kowalski

"Let's Laugh With Bernie"

As most of you know I live in Sun Lakes and fish 2 or 3 times a week. Usually I'll catch 3 or 4 catfish and 2 bass in an hour. Today I decided to try a lure I've never used before.

I caught 3 catfish and hooked 2 nice size bass but never landed the bass on shore.

Both times they got off the lure just before I could land them. I couldn't figure out why.

Well I decided to call it quits when all of a sudden I noticed a **plastic cover** on the hook!

Glad I was alone so no one could tell on me!



Weighing-In

By Jack Hughes
Tournament Director

Well Apache is in the books and I think it is fair to say what a great tournament even with the unusual weather. Both Gary Grimes and I were very pleased at the number of members who stepped up to help in all phases of the tournament. Thank you to all who attended!

Our next tournament is the final one for the year at Bartlett. I would like to remind all members to get their entry forms in to me early. There has been a growing trend of people calling me or Terry saying they forgot to enter. For Apache I had five calls between 5 and 8 PM the night before the club meeting and Terry had 2. Normally this is not a problem, but either Terry or I have to put the money out before the drawing to cover those late callers and it is starting to become quite a sum. This last tournament I started telling them to give their entry form and funds to someone going to the meeting. All of the members I told made the drawing on time. That does not mean you cannot call me at the last

moment to enter and our club policy is if possible leave no member on shore if he wants to fish.

As we all know bass fishing is an expensive sport and like everything else the cost of fishing will rise in 2016. Below are a few hints on lowering your overall cost with some advanced planning. A few other reminders now that the schedule is firm for 2016.

Havasu State Park camp ground is a great deal for our Havasu tournament and if you stay at the state park you eliminate the \$10.00 per day entry fee to the park. The sites there all have, electricity, water, picnic table and most have shade over the picnic table. Make your reservations now.

As most of you are aware we have a planned tournament at Alamo in 2016. I have been asked when we are going to make the final decision if we are fishing Alamo. It is 90% assured at this time we will fish Alamo. Since this tournament scheduling is conditional based upon conditions at Alamo. The MBA Board is looking at reviewing the conditions at least 60 days in advance to make our best guess at that time on proceeding with the tournament as scheduled or moving to another location. This is a precautionary review for safety with launching and water conditions. If El Nino comes through as predicted we should have zero problems and the tournament

should happen as scheduled.

As I said at the club meeting we have elevated the planned increase of fees within Tonto National Forest to a higher management level. We have gotten their attention and have shown where there is a potential of violating some potential congressional actions for military, Purple Heart Awardees, and disabled vets. They are also taking another look at the fee rates for Seniors. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN WE WILL BE SUCCESSFUL BUT THEY ARE LISTENING WITH OPEN MINDS.**

As of right now I recommend all members in early December purchase a Tonto Pass for a year because I believe they will be honored no matter what the authorities do. You will save money even if we are successful in lowering some of the rates. **WHY early December, because they are anticipating a shortage of passes to be purchased at the end of December.**

Finally, the planning for the January End of Year Awards banquet is in its final stages. I am proud to say with the actions taken by the board this year it should be the best one we have ever held. There will be plenty of prizes for all and we have again made special provisions for the women (who are not club members) to be eligible for numerous cash prizes for attending. So plan on the second Wednesday of 2016 to start your year right and attend a true first class evening.

Photo Scrapbook - Lake Apache - October 20-21, 2015



Where the money is made in bass tournaments!

Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona - 2015 Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen

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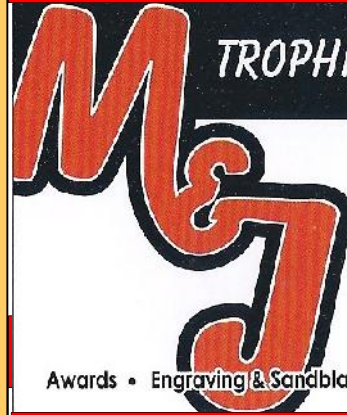
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Access Midweek Bass Anglers Internet Web Site at: <http://www.midweekbassaz.com/>

**Welcome to New
Midweek Bass Anglers
Since the Last Newsletter**

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Individuals wishing to purchase a club shirt or cap can order directly from our provider - **M & J Trophies & Apparel**, 10802 N. 43rd Ave, Glendale, Arizona. See their ad above.

Best Wishes and Happy Birthday

Born in November

Ingo Moura

Jason Christy

Mike Edgar

Ron Chambers

Mike Shaw

Floyd Vaughan

Randy Bosket

Dennis Thiel

George Cobasky



**Midweek Bass Anglers 2015
Tournament Schedule**

21 January	Bartlett
18 February	Saguaro
17-18 March	Havasu (1.5 Days)
15 April	Apache
20 May	Roosevelt
17 June	Saguaro
15 July	Bartlett
19 August	Saguaro
16 September	Roosevelt
20-21 October	Apache (1.5 Days)
18 November	Bartlett