

MIDWEEK BASS ANGLERS OF ARIZONA INC

Bass Bites

FISHING WEDNESDAYS - NOT WEEKENDS!



FEBRUARY 2016

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EDITOR: TERRY TASSIN

President's Perspective

By Gary Grimes



I am writing my article before the tournament this month, as I am leaving for Las Vegas early Thursday morning with my wife to celebrate my baby brother's 50th birthday. It's kind of weird to be using the word "baby" in the same breath as "50 years", time sure flies. One of my earliest fishing memories was that of the "Three Grimes boys," fishing from a small dock at Silver Lake, New Hampshire, trying to see who could cast the farthest. The competition ended rather early when my younger brother hooked my baby brother through the eyelid with a #8 trout hook. My Dad was none too pleased with us. He survived and my baby brother continues to love fishing to this day.

We are certainly fortunate to be able to wear shorts in February in Arizona. And may I add that "El Nino" is starting to feel like "El No-no," with regard to all the rain we were supposed to get this spring. I certainly wish more of the fish were taking advantage of the warm weather and moving up shallow, but apparently their calendar is different than ours. I met several of the guys of Midweek pre-fishing in the days leading up to the Saguaro tournament, and every one of them could count their total bites for the day with less than two fingers. Tournament day is tomorrow, and I really do not have much of a pattern, but neither has anyone I have spoken with, but fish we must.

Tough bites like the one at Saguaro are certainly frustrating, but I am convinced that conditions like this are what make us better fishermen. I recently fished Lake Oviachic in Mexico, and experienced both quality and quantity of fish, with 100 fish days being quite commonplace for many. It is quite possible to use the same bait all day long, fishing the same structure, and catch one fish after another. I imagine a person living in Mexico, fishing no other lake than Oviachic, might begin to

think that bass fishing is really quite easy. I believe we all know bass fishing is never always easy.

I have not fished for bass in many lakes outside of Arizona, but our lakes have to be a fisherman's boot camp compared to the rest of the country. Where else do you have a water column that extends from shore to depth's exceeding 100 feet? Active fish? Well we can throw spinnerbaits or crankbaits. Bedding fish? Our annual tournament to Lake Havasu in March has made many of us quite proficient in this art. Sluggish fish? How about drop shot, Texas-rig, or Carolina-rig. If that doesn't work, you can always toss a Senko, and enjoy a sandwich while waiting for the bait to descend. Deep fish? How about spooning for bass in 70 feet of water. I am convinced that if you can catch bass in Arizona, then you can

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"

catch fish anywhere in the world. I believe that is why Arizona anglers like John Murray, Clifford Perch and Josh Bertrand are as successful as they are.

Fishing should improve each month as spring moves into summer, with stops at Havasu, Apache and Alamo. I hope to see all of you at Lake Havasu in March for one and a half days of hook setting excitement as we fish one of the country's premier smallmouth fisheries. In case you forgot the dates, mark your calendar for March 15 and 16. Hope to see you all there.



Lake Saguario Report

February 17, 2016
By Terry Tassin

Next Meeting Next Tournament

Our next club general meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, 2 March** 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 Havasu on 15-16 March 2016**. Club launch headquarters, weigh-in location, and tournament hours will be announced.

Team Sean Ballard & Doug Cunningham Post Big 1st Place Win at Saguario

Taking home **1st Place**, Team **Ballard & Cunningham** weighed the winning creel of five bass weighing 16.49 lbs. Thanks to Doug's 6.45 lb bass the team also won **1st Place Big Fish** honors.

Sean Ballard: I want to thank Doug Cunningham for a fun day on the water. I have to tell you if you start your tournament day with your "kicker" fish, the rest of the day is so much easier, and having Doug's 6.45 lb fish in the boat 5 minutes into the day was awesome. It is highly recommended to start this way when you fish a tournament.

I was out two times the week before the tournament pre-fishing and not seeing any fish up on their beds had me a little discouraged, so I worked the flats in 15-20 feet of water and put two 3 pounders in the boat; this gave me a starting point for tournament day. Tournament day my plan was to fish for the pre-spawn bass early and later in the day work my way shallow. We put 10 fish in the boat with this strategy. We used jigs and dropshot all day (Bold Bluegill) my go to color and a (green pumpkin jig). The fish that were up shallow were very skittish so making very long casts to them was the key to putting them in the boat in the afternoon. The weigh-in crew did an excellent job again as usual. I can't wait for next month at Lake Havasu my - favorite trip of the year.



The Rules By Gary Grimes

The board presented a tournament rule change to the members attending our February meeting, and it was unanimously approved. The change has to do with really big goon-fish. The policy will be incorporated into the tournament rules at the end of the year and reads as follows: During a tournament, if a team catches a goon fish so large as to not reasonably be expected to survive in the live-well all day long, or such fish is so large that it will affect the survivability of the bass if it is kept in the live-well all day long, then that fish may be weighed on the lake during the tournament and released. The weighing of the large goon-fish must be done by a team that is also fishing the Midweek Tournament, but it has to be a team other than the team that caught the fish. A photograph is also recommended. After a weight is verified by both teams, write the weight down and release the fish. At the weigh-in, tell the Tournament Director what you caught, how big it was, and who verified its weight. In the event that this happens to more than one boat during a tournament, if the weights of the two fish are within 10% of each other, then a tie will be declared (this is done because of using two separate scales).



1st Place
Doug Cunningham & Sean Ballard

Doug Cunningham: I fished with Sean and had an absolute blast. I was really nervous how this tournament was going to go considering it might have been BED time, but fortunately that wasn't the case. Most of our fish came from sitting in 20 feet of water casting into shore. I was working the jig and Sean was throwing the drop shot. As most of you know, I usually love tossing a 1oz. jig on Saguaro, that wasn't the case; I never even picked it up. The grass was thick so I decide to swim a 1/2 oz green pumpkin jig. It turned out to be the right move. My third cast was the big boy. Sean was dying considering he had just made his first cast. The rest of the day just got better. Sean and I both caught 2 more solid fish a couple of hours later.

I really want to thank Sean for a great day. I feel we really complimented each other by

Membership

As of February 19, 2016 the Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona consists of 92 active members.

always doing something different from each other. We never threw the same thing. I also want to thank the lovely lake of Saguaro; you will always have a place in my heart.

Gary Martlage & Spencer Hand Finish 2nd Overall

In **Second Place** the team of **Gary Martlage & Spencer Hand** weighed five bass for a total weight of 15.93 lbs. Spencer's 6.18 lb bass was good enough to provide a **2nd Place Big Fish** payoff for the team.

Spencer Hand: Gary Martlage put me on fish like a champ. I caught all of my fish up river on cliffs and sloping shoreline at 20 to 30 feet. I used a 5 inch

Robo Worm Morning Dawn with a chartreuse tail all day on a drop shot. When I told Gary I wanted to use something else he quickly shut that down. Not two minutes later I pulled another one in. I didn't pick up anything else. I used a Pflueger Presidential Reel on a 6'9" Abu Garcia Rod Medium Action with 8 lb Seagar line, Gamakatsu hook and a half ounce weight. We had a limit before noon and we culled out two fish. The 6.18 pounder was caught off a cliff wall a half hour before the tournament ended. I spotted the fish under an overhang in 35 to 40 feet of water. When I hooked it I thought it was a catfish. When it hit the surface Gary grabbed the net and calmed me down. The fish did not fight much.



"I'll admit, Fred- this is the worst case of backlash I have ever seen"

This was my Personal Best and the best I have done in any tournament. Thanks to Gary Martlage for giving me my best day on the water.



**2nd Place
Spencer Hand & Gary Martlage**

Gary Martlage: After pre-fishing Monday, I decided to "just go fishing" since I did not think that bed fishing would be an issue at Saguaro. I knew a few fish might be up, but the majority of the fish would be spawning in a few weeks and months to come. My partner, Spencer Hand, was excited to just catch a few fish, and he sure did! We started out in a pre-spawn pattern; I threw a large crankbait on a few choice deepwater ledges, while Spencer was given the task of drop-shotting the shallows. By

8:00 AM he had put 3 solid fish in the boat and I had not a bite! Keeping with our plan, we moved to the river, and continued the same pattern; I worked the deep ledges and he kept up with the shallow bite, drop-shotting a Robo Morning Dawn with chartreuse tail. Spencer boated another nice keeper before we moved back to the main lake. We stopped in the same area where he had caught the first three fish and Spencer boats another one!

Well, I'm glad for my co angler, as he stated he had caught more fish than all of last year! I finally went to the dropshot and contributed to the catch (Spencer had 5 fish in the boat, before I had a bite!). After a few more upgrades, we went to a deepwater ledge to finish out the day. At 2:30 PM, Spencer yelled for the net. He said it was BIG; I told him it might be a catfish, as the area has provided some large ones before. As I was watching his line, I did not see the familiar roll of the fish, and said you might have a good bass. A few seconds later, from the 50 foot depth, came this huge fish with his mouth agape - a 6 pounder was netted! What an awesome day! I was glad to contribute to Spencer's "best day of fishing ever", as I honed up on my netting skills! I was proud of Spencer's day and glad to be part of it. I am looking forward to fishing with Spencer again!

Johnson & Brown Hear Reel Drag For 3rd Place Overall Finish

Team **Ron Johnson & Rick Brown** weighed five bass for 14.50 pounds and took home **Third Place** honors.

Don Johnson: I had the privilege to fish with Rick Brown. I started good with a 1 1/2 lb bass on the first cast. Then I caught a real rat sized fish three casts later. These were on drop shots. Then Rick took up the cause for the rest of day with his Carolina rig. He caught two 3 pounders and a couple of other smaller fish. At the end of the day we felt that we were close to a check. So at 2:52 PM I decided to take control and caught a 4 plus pounder.

We fished in 10 to 20 feet of water. This is only the fourth time I have been on the lake so I turned the boat over to Rick. It was a good refresher on what the co-angler faces. I also got to know the lake. It was probably the best fishing lesson I have had in a long time.

What can anyone say about Rick's fishing ability, he is fabulous.

Rick Brown: Don and I got to

Your Fishing License

Although this is the time many anglers renew their licenses, our licenses are now valid for 365 days from the date of purchase. [Buy your license online](#) and fish our great state for a year (and help conserve all species of wildlife while doing so.)

FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions)

Co-Angler FAQ: There is a new addition to the FAQ page located at www.midweekbassaz.com that covers most of what a co-angler needs to know when fishing one of Midweek's Tournaments.

prefish together on Friday and my son Rhyan and I went out again on Tuesday morning. Fishing was not what I expected; it was really tough! Don has not fished Saguaro but a couple times, so he let me pick the spots and control the boat on tournament day.



3rd Place
Don Johnson & Rick Brown

Don got right to it, catching two fish right away, a 1.5 pounder and a 0.5 pounder on dropshot in 11 feet of water. Finally, at about 11 AM I caught two nice 3 pounders, again in 10 feet of water, on some steeper banks. I said to Don "it would be great if our 5th fish would be our largest, lets catch a 6 pounder". I broke out an 8" Huddleston and began tossing it. With every turn of the handle, all I could think of was the monster that was about to strike. Then I heard Don say "get the net". I grabbed the net just in time to scoop up his 6 inch fish - not the 6 pounder I was hoping for. We laughed about that a little bit. I told Don, "your next fish I want to hear a little drag noise". At about 2 PM, we culled those two 0.5 pounders with a couple of 1.5 pounders

(20 to 30 feet of water). One last move for the day, at 2:52 PM. On Don's first cast he called for the net. I grabbed the net, got to Don, to hear the sweet sound of his drag going. I net the fish, and look at Don with a big smile and he says to me "there's the drag you asked for", it was our best fish of the day a 4 plus pound bass. Don is a really great fisherman and a great guy. He took care of the fish all day, caught our big one, and gave up control of his boat. I hope to fish again with Don, especially at Apache.

Team Senft & Milkint Overcome Illness For 4th Overall Finish

Taking home **4th Place**, Team **Gary Senft & John Milkint** weighed five fish for a total weight of 10.14lbs.

Gary Senft: Five days before the tournament I got the flu, so that meant no pre-fishing and my partner John Milkint also became sick.

I knew the fishing was going to be tough so drop shot and flick shake was my ticket to catch fish. We started in the coves across from the snags. I started with a flick shake with watermelon candy worm. I used the lightest rod I had with 4 lb test line. I caught two fish in the first hour - after that nothing for two hours. We moved up the lake caught two more then nothing. We went back to the start spot and I saw a nice fish in 12 feet of water. I worked on that for 15 minutes the fish was not interested. I was almost

ready to quit then the fish moved in and ate the bait. Five bites 5 fish that's all we had then the day was over. No fish on drop shot, four on flick shake, and one on a bed. Even though John was pretty sick he stuck it out all day and netted the fish.



4th Place
Gary Senft & John Milkint

John Milkint: Gary's article said it all concerning the tough bite that we faced. I wanted to add, that Gary, knowing that I was not 100% physically, set it up with the net close to me so that I wouldn't have to go very far to get it and he brought every fish around to where netting them was not a problem. It was a lesson in finesse fishing with a flick shake as the bait. It was a pleasure, more an honor, to have the opportunity to fish with Gary. I have had some wonderful opportunities to fish with boaters in Midweek Bass who are as good as anyone in the country when it comes to bass fishing. Now I can add Gary Senft to that list of special people.

Mason & Jolley Drop Shot For 5th Place

A five fish limit weighing 9.92 lbs was enough to earn **Jeff Mason & Bob Jolley** the **5th Place** money.

Bob Jolley: Jeff Mason and I pre-fished for a few hours a week prior to the tournament and we were only able to catch one fish on that day. So we weren't too optimistic about the tournament but it went better than we had expected, especially for Jeff. Jeff did all the catching and I did all the landing and fish handling on tournament day and it was a great time on a beautiful day.

We were the 30th boat out at the start and by the time we got to the spot Jeff wanted to fish it was already covered, not by one of our members but a local fisherman. Several other spots that Jeff wanted to fish were also taken by tournament boats so we took pot luck and started fishing any areas on the main lake that were open. We tried several different lures but drop shooting with Robo Worms was the only method that worked. I couldn't get bit on a drop shot but Jeff is very proficient with a drop shot and I got a good lesson on how it should be done.

I really enjoyed fishing with Jeff, he is very accommodating and a fun guy to fish with and I hope I get paired up with him again.

Congratulations to Shawn and Doug on their win and thanks to the weigh-in team who did a

great job with the largest number of boats the MBA has ever had!



5th Place
Bob Jolley & Jeff Mason

Jeff Mason: Congrats to Sean and Doug, great job on what I thought was a tough day. My partner Bob Jolley and I pre fished Saguaro last Wednesday and only caught one fish so we knew it was going to be a tough bite. We searched for beds while pre-fishing and found quite a few beds but nobody was home. On tournament day we were hoping the fish would be on the beds with the nice weather but that was not the case for us. We ended up drop shooting all of our fish moving all around the lake and fishing spots where Bob and I had caught fish in the past. We got nine bites all day and got six fish to the boat; all of our bites came off of underwater rock shelves.

I really enjoyed fishing with Bob and hope we get paired again.

Steele & Seibly

Celebrate Seibly's First Club Tournament Finishing in 6th Place

Bringing four fish to the scales weighing 9.20 lbs was enough to earn Bryan Steele & Mike Seibly the **6th Place** money.

Mike Seibly: I am new to the club and this was my first tournament with Midweek. I have been fishing tournaments for a number of years and you never know how they come off until you get to the ramp. I thought the tournament director did a great job and ran a pretty tight ship. He did a good job and made it clear on how things were going to unfold.

Also you could tell by the overall atmosphere that this is a good group of guys that enjoyed getting together to fish.

I first met Bryan Steele on Tuesday morning to do some scouting & pre-fishing. Right from the start you knew he was a good guy and we were going to get along just fine.

The main thing we found out was, yes the bass were coming up on the beds but they weren't sticking to them. Make one cast at the bed and they wouldn't even look at your bait, they just slowly swam away. We knew Wednesday was going to be tough.

Tournament day we started about 30 feet deep on a shelf. (Sorry I don't know the given names for the structure on this lake). It was the shelf on the

left side of the main lake before going through the canyon. We thought we would start there until it was light enough to see the beds. Bryan caught a small fish about 1 1/2 lbs. He tried to bring it up slow but the fish had other ideas. Even though he fished it, the fish didn't make it.

Not a good way to start; small fish with a 1/2 lb penalty. I hooked a small fish a few minutes later but it came unbuttoned. Both of us were using a drop shot rig.

Then we went thought the canyon and hit the small bays on the left. If it was too choppy to see we would move across to the other side of the channel. We moved back and forth most of the day trying to pick the spots we could see the best.



6th Place
Bryan Steele & Mike Seibly

Bryan caught his biggest fish off a bed. I believe he used a drop-shot with a small white worm. I wasn't having much luck and the fish wouldn't even look at my white lizard. So I ripped the lizard in half so all I had was the two back legs and tail, rigged it drop-shot about 6-8 inches above the weight. That

got me two fish off the beds. Bryan then found a real hog on a deep bed. We would work it for a while then leave her alone and would come back later and try again. We did this 3 or 4 times. Finally Bryan thought he had a good tap and set the hook. All he got was a large scale and boom she was gone.

I enjoyed the tournament and will definitely plan next winter so I can fish more of these events.

Neil Burns & Tom Atherton Finish 7th Overall

Bringing five fish to the scales weighing 7.95 lbs was enough to earn Neil Burns & Tom Atherton the **7th Place** prize money.



7th Place
Neil Burns & Tom Atherton

Tom Atherton: Fishing in my second tournament ever, I'm giving all the credit to Neil. We fished hard to catch our limit; he ran back and forth to several of his spots trying to get them to bite. We threw

everything at them, but all they wanted was the drop shot.



Weighing-In *By Jack Hughes* Tmx Director

Just Some Thoughts

Jerry Askam: The year was 2006, George W, Bush was President and the nation was still reeling from the attack on the World Trade Center, Iraq Dictator Saddam Hussein was captured and sentenced to death for crimes against humanity. It was 10 years ago, November 2006, and Jerry Askam decided to fish his first tournament at Lake Roosevelt with Midweek Bass Anglers. He must have enjoyed it because he managed to fish the next **99 consecutive tournaments** until February 2016. The consecutive tournaments came to an end with the February 2016 Saguaro tournament and Jerry was down hard with the flu and potential pneumonia. When I was told Jerry was sick and would not fish I thought to myself Jerry will fish because I have seen him on other occasions fish when most members would have stayed home – but it was not to be. We all wish Jerry a speedy recovery and I am sure he has already made up his mind to beat the 99 consecutive tournaments.

John Hawkins: John was the start boat for the largest tournament the club has ever had. The morning launch was excellent and John needs to

be congratulated on his handling of the start. The launch was as smooth as could be expected and everyone knew that boat wrapped in blue lights was the start boat. John, I have had four different members who have contacted me and said with those blue lights and the way you handled the start we should ask you to always be the start boat. I told them I would ask you and I am sure I already know the answer (laughing out load) but I had to ask.

Weigh-in Team: I want to thank all the members of the weigh-in team for the way they handled the largest club tournament ever. It went very smoothly, quickly, and there was no long wait in the line. I think the most we ever had waiting in line was four and that was just briefly. Great job guys!

Next month is Lake Havasu and for you new members it may be the most popular tournament of the year. Proof of its popularity was shown to me when I got home from the Saguaro tournament and I had six entry forms for Havasu in the mail.

Photo Scrapbook - Lake Saguaro February 17, 2016



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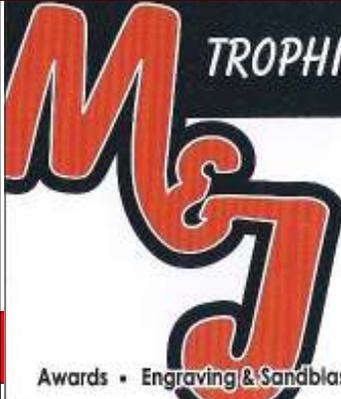
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Access Midweek Bass Anglers Internet Web Site at: <http://www.midweekbassaz.com/>

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

**Mike Aguayo (B)
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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 March

Ron Malnar
Luke Speitzer
Sean Ballard
Lew Southard
Joe Kane
Jerry Grina
Garland Potts



**Midweek Bass Anglers 2016
Tournament Schedule**

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