



**MIDWEEK BASS ANGLERS  
OF ARIZONA INC**

**B a s s B i t e s**

**FISHING WEDNESDAYS - NOT WEEKENDS!**



**JUNE 2020 EDITION**

**15 YEARS OF SERVICE TO FISHERMEN**

**CLUB ESTABLISHED JANUARY 27, 2005**

**EDITOR: TERRY TASSIN**



**President's  
Perspective**

*By Gary Grimes*

June is the time of year when we hopefully have finalized our choices for the following year's tournament schedule. We choose this date because many of our lakes fall within the Tonto National Forest, and they begin accepting applications for permits in August. TNF (Tonto National Forest) issues permits on a first come, first serve basis. Creating a great schedule is difficult, but we make choices with a couple of principles in mind.

Firstly, our goal is good turnout. Good turnout is not important to us because we can brag about great numbers, but rather because that means a majority of our group is able to participate. Several factors contribute to participation. Many of our guys still work, and are unable to make the several days commitment that some of our lakes require, like Havasu and Martinez. Cost also becomes a factor, as some lakes require missing work and purchasing lodging accommodations. These factors must be considered in order to allow as many guys to participate as possible. While we will still schedule lakes like Martinez or Havasu, we usually try and avoid scheduling more than two per year.

The other unavoidable factor is weather. In Arizona, we have two great seasons that never seem to last long enough, spring and fall. During these months, guys can sleep in the backs of their trucks rather comfortably, and can easily fish all day and not need an IV drip connected to restore essential body fluids when done. Hotels are not needed, and camping is great. It just doesn't last long enough. We attempt to schedule lakes like Roosevelt, Alamo, Martinez, Havasu and Apache

during the spring and fall. Local lakes, like Pleasant, Bartlett, Saguaro and Canyon we usually reserve for the winter and summer, because of the unfavorable weather. These are all lakes that you can easily fish in half a day, including travel time. You can get up early and go to the lake, fish for 6 hours, and be home before afternoon traffic begins.

The third factor we have been forced to consider of late is fishability. I consider fishability as how easy it is for our anglers to catch a limit of fish. Having been in the club for 10 years, I have both experienced and witnessed the experience of fishing an entire day without a bite, which means no fish. There is nothing more humbling than being blanked during a tournament. About 4 years ago, the Salt chain of lakes (Apache, Canyon, and Saguaro), experienced a golden algae bloom that continues to this day. The problem has decimated fish populations and increased fish mortality rate for tournament anglers. Fish can still be caught at these lakes, but only by a handful of fishermen. And even if you are lucky enough to find fish at these lakes and catch a limit, a real danger still exists that releasing these fish after the weigh-in the fish will die because the water by the ramp is problematic.

All of these factors are considered when selecting a schedule. We usually try and put Canyon and Saguaro

**Happy  
Father's Day!**



**CANCELLED UNTIL FURTHER  
NOTICE - WATCH FOR EMAILS**

**Monthly Breakfast Meeting  
Deer Valley Airport Restaurant  
702 W. Deer Valley Rd  
Phoenix, AZ  
1st Wednesday of Each**

**“We Practice Catch and Release”**

on the schedule in spite of the problems, because we have to schedule so far in advance, hoping conditions will improve. When we determine that the fishability is still poor, we change lakes. That is what we did last year, and what we did this year. Unfortunately, this limits our choices of local lakes to two; Pleasant and Bartlett. Consequently, this summer we fished Bartlett back to back, and will fish Pleasant back to back in July and August. Not ideal, but our choices are rather limited. I guess we should be thankful that we even have options like this available living in the middle of a desert. Hope to see you all next month at Lake Pleasant. Reminder, we will be launching from the east side of the lake, at



**Tournament Report  
Lake Bartlett  
June 17, 2020**

Pleasant Harbor. They offer discounts to anyone who has served in the military, making the cost \$2 a vehicle.

Let's hear from our winners on how they caught their fish at Bartlett Lake this month. In case you are wondering why all the teams only weighed three bass the answer is during the hot summer months we go to a three fish limit to make it easier on the fish while in the livewell.

**Team Jeff Mabry & Mark Durben  
Catch 4.45 Iber Win 1st Place  
Team & 1st Place Big Fish**

Taking home **1st Place**, Team **Jeff Mabry & Mark Durben** brought to the scales the winning creel of three bass weighing 9.39 lbs. Thanks to Jeff's 4.45 lb bass the team also won **1st Place Big Fish** honors.

**Jeff Mabry:** This tournament is a pretty easy one to talk about. I started the morning throwing topwater

**Next Meeting - Next Tournament**

Our next club meeting for 2020 scheduled for **Wednesday, 1 July** 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) [has been cancelled](#) due to the Corona Virus situation. Pairings will be announced by email when completed.

The next club points tournament is scheduled for **Lake Pleasant on 15 July 2020**. Club launch headquarters and weigh-in location will be announced. Tournament hours are **Safe Light to 11 AM**.



**1st Place Mark Durben & Jeff Mabry**

(super spook junior) and caught the big fish in the first 5-10 minutes. I never caught another fish on the top. The next two fish we put in the boat were both caught by Mark Durben throwing a Texas rigged brush hog. The first three fish we caught were the three we weighed in for the tournament and they were all caught in the first 45-60 minutes of the tournament. We caught a few more fish the rest of the day, but could never make an upgrade and probably went the last two or more hours without a fish.

Its always fun fishing with Mark. It's nice when your co-angler puts the fish in the boat to win the tournament. My thanks go to the weigh crew for a fast weigh in, nice seeing it go by so quickly and no lines.

I know I sound like a broken record, but I still see people releasing fish from the ramp and not the dock. It is summer and fish need to get back down deep after they are released. I found three floaters when I released my fish after the tournament. I swam two of them down 10 feet or so and they took off perfectly. The third fish did not survive. If fish are lying on their side in your live well they are not okay. Just put weights on their bottom fins to keep them upright and release them over deeper water. They should have the energy to get deep enough to regulate themselves. Nobody should leave their fish floating in the water. I fish most of the club tournaments and will always help if you have a problem fish.

**Mark Durben:** This is the second time Jeff and I have fished together and I am always impressed by his knowledge of the lakes, and his ability to put us on fish.

Our 3 keepers were all caught in the first hour and in the same general area. We doubled back after going past the start boat to the left of the ramp a few hundred yards or so. Jeff caught the first and biggest fish on a topwater lure on one of his first few casts, just slightly off shore. We fished that area for about 10-15

minutes and then moved outside of a point where I caught the next 2 keepers on a Texas rig watermelon green baby brush hog. We caught a few other fish throughout the morning but those first 3 were the three we weighed in. Jeff is a great guy to fish with, and he always made sure I had water to fish. I appreciate fishing as a co-angler with him.

## Gary Martlage & Tom Atherton Fish Humps And Rock Piles For 2nd Overall

In **2nd Place** Team **Gary Martlage & Tom Atherton** weighed three bass for a total weight of 8.54 lbs. They also took 2nd Place Big Fish honors with a 3.64 lb bass.

**Gary Martlage:** I haven't had the opportunity to fish with Tom Atherton since 2 years ago at Apache, so I was looking forward to it at this tournament. Tom is a great person, and fisherman. We had a fun day on Bartlett, catching a lot of fish, and enjoying the great weather. I told Tom I would have 2 poles on the front of the boat, both loaded with jigs. I am a firm believer that to stay away from the smaller bass, larger baits are required. We fished main lake underwater humps and rock piles to catch our fish. I enjoyed the day until my partner started complaining about "dogs burning their feet



**3rd Place Tom Savage & Lester Rapp**

on the hot asphalt" (private joke), and I knew it was time for the weigh-in. Thanks Tom for a fun day.

## Team Rapp & Savage Fish Rock Structure For 3rd Place Finish

Team **Lester Rapp & Tom Savage** weighed three bass for 8.21 pounds and took home **Third Place** honors.

**Tom Savage:** Congratulations to Jeff Mabry and Mark Durben for their very impressive summer bag of three fish; well done. We got lucky with the weather, pretty nice for the middle of June. Lester Rapp and I decided that we were going to concentrate our efforts on rock structure in 15-20 feet of water. We felt that we weren't going to catch a lot of fish, but that the ones we did catch would be bigger fish. We only caught three fish and they were spread throughout the day. It was hard staying with the plan when you go hours not getting a bite. Lucky for me Lester was a great guy to fish with and I look forward to fishing with him again some day.

## Team Rusty Murdock & Pat Johnstonbaugh Find Deep Fish To Finish 4th Overall

Taking home **4th Place**, Team **Murdock & Johnstonbaugh** weighed three fish for a total weight of 7.53 lbs.

**Pat Johnstonbaugh:** I'd like to congratulate Jeff Mabry & Mark Durben on their win. I don't know what their



**2nd Place Tom Atherton & Gary Martlage**

### Membership

As of June 19, 2020 the Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona consists of **120** dues paid active members.

exact weight was but I heard it was a lot, especially for a 3 fish limit. Great job guys.

I had fished Bartlett the last couple of weekends and it seemed to fish the same as tournament day - smaller fish near shore and bigger fish required going deeper. Rusty Murdock and I decided that our strategy would be to fish mid lake reefs and rocky points. We started in the morning throwing Texas rigged craws and worms and brought in fish fairly quickly, though nothing big. I tried a spinner bait and a shad swimbait, both with no luck. I brought a crankbait but I wasn't confident that the reaction bite was happening. We were getting bit in the 10 - 15 foot range using green and green/orange craws. I caught one of our keepers on a Zman stick bait - green pumpkin upper and orange sparkle on bottom. The majority of my fish came from green chigger craws - Texas and Shakey rigged, dragged on rocky bottoms. I had practiced on the previous Sunday and caught a small spinner bait fish, no buzzbait or frog fish and a few fish on a Rico popper. I had luck with a green Senko (red and green flake) wacky style which I threw on tourney day as well; which produced a lot of fish; just not on game day. I could catch fish on the shady side of submerged trees, but it was typically shallow and usually had smaller fish.



**4th Place Pat Johnstonbaugh & Rusty Murdock**

### Tournament Statistics

Sixty-three contestants fished 6 hours each, bringing 90 bass to the scales for a total weight of 169.19 pounds with a 2.69 pound average total catch per fisherman. The average weight of each fish was 1.88 lbs. All fish but two were released back into the lake after weigh-in to fight again another day.

Rusty and I clicked well together as a team, confirmed by the fact that we only tangled our lines together 2 or 3 times! Our bigger fish came later in the day in 15 to 25 feet of water as we were able to regularly cull our fish every hour. All together I had a great time fishing a tournament with shorter hours on a hot day and enjoyed fishing with a great partner. To all the staff that help out with set up, weigh in, etc. your time and efforts are greatly appreciated. Thank you for conducting another successful outing!

## Gary Grimes & Dennis Thiel Use Jigs And C-Rigs To Finish 5th

A three fish bag weighing 7.51 lbs was enough to earn Team **Grimes & Thiel** the **5th Place** money.

**Gary Grimes:** Congratulations to Jeff Mabry and Mark Durben on a great win. This is the second month we have fished Bartlett this summer and I am certainly impressed with the better quality fish being caught by our group. I was paired with long time member Dennis Thiel, who I rarely get to fish with. Dennis is a super fun guy and very easy to fish with, and also a great co-angler. We had about 4 key spots we hoped to be able to fish, but we were not able to fish any of them due to another boat being there first. Fortunately, I had several other spots that I had scouted that we were able to fish. We avoided the shallow shoreline, and keyed primarily on water 15-20 feet deep. All of our fish came off the bottom, using either jigs or C-rigs. The three fish we presented were caught in three different locations, so movement was the key for us. Our bite was slow and soft, meaning you had to be very focused on your rod and line in order to detect a fish. Fun day and the weather was great for June.



**5th Place Gary Grimes & Dennis Thiel**

**Dennis Thiel:** I was fortunate enough to draw our esteemed president Mr. Gary Grimes as my boater for this event. What a nice guy and a great time on the water we had!

We were not able to prefish together but we did prefish individually before the tournament. He had caught a couple of nice fish in practice and I had as well. We talked Monday before the tournament and devised a game plan. I had been throwing top water early in the morning but after talking it through with Gary I agreed they had all been small fish. So I did not even take my top water rod along. We were going to fish deep rocks with jigs right from the start.

Wednesday morning came and we were boat number 15 and had to see other boats pull into the first couple of spot choices of Gary's. So we ended up pulling onto a rock pile just past Yellow Cliffs and I hooked up on a bass with my third cast and into the livewell it went. I was using a Tokyo rig with a green pumpkin chigger craw. Well I thought here we go this will be a nice day on the water for us; which it was "for us" but not as much for me as I struggled most of the rest of the day. I did however have multiple opportunities to improve my netting skills over the course of the morning as Gary put some nice fish in the boat on a jig and a Carolina rig. Never found any big schools of fish but catching one here and two there was good enough for 5th place.

Thanks again to Gary and all of Midweek Bass for putting on another great tournament.

### Jeff Mason Fishing Solo Finishes In 6th Place

Team **Jeff Mason** weighed three bass for 7.48 pounds



**6th Place Jeff Mason**

and took home **6th Place** honors.

**Jeff Mason:** Congrats to Jeff and Mark on their win and a great 3 fish limit for Bartlett. I fished Bass Junkzy on May 30th at Bartlett with team partner Lyle Dalby and finished 3rd with 13.27 lbs. Lyle and I caught our first 3 fish on an Evergreen topwater walking bait up towards the mouth of the river.

This sounded like a good plan so on our club tournament day I went first thing to the same area and caught the 3 fish that I ended up weighing in by 5:45 AM. One of the fish was a 2 pounder that I was hoping to cull but was unable to do so by the end of the day. Last Friday I had pre-fished and had done really well way up the river catching fish on frogs and flipping so I decided to run back up there, but was unable to increase my weight. It was a fun day overall.

### Team Amos Davis & Gary Asmus Finish 7th Overall

In **7th Place** Team of **Davis & Asmus** weighed three bass for a total weight of 7.16 lbs.

**Amos Davis:** Congratulations to Jeff and Mark. Gary Asmus and I had a pretty slow day. We did get to reminisce about past clubs and people we knew. Our fish came on jigs on main lake points. They were all typical Bartlett fish really shallow and then deep 25 feet. I guess other club members got there before we did. Our Catfish goon fish was caught on a jig in 25 feet of water in the main lake. I enjoyed fishing with Gary, he is an outstanding angler.

**Gary Asmus:** It was a pretty good day on the



**7th Place Gary Asmus & Amos Davis**



**8th Place Donny Stevens & Vern Ridgway**

water. All of our fish came on a jig in shallow water. It was fun fishing with Amos Davis and we had a great time, although he's a bit squeamish when handling a cat fish.

## **Team Vern Ridgway & Donny Stevens Take 8th Place**

Team **Ridgway & Stevens** weighed three bass for 7.04 pounds and took home **8th Place** honors.

**Vern Ridgway:** I had the pleasure of drawing the talented Donny Stevens for my co-angler this month. Monday was practice day with some fish found here and there, but quality fish were few. We decided to run the bank with reaction baits during the tournament to fill out our first limit; we then proceeded to go deeper with plastic in order to cull up. We fished mostly main lake points, and the tourney went fast.

## **The Rules**

*By Gary Grimes*

### **Pre-tournament Meeting Attendance:**

Attendance at the tournament's pre-start meeting is mandatory. Yet month after month we still have members who fail to attend. All I can say is irritating!! The meeting lasts less than 10 minutes, and allows us to communicate valuable information, including lake limit, cost sharing, health reminders, reminders on release of fish and dead fish, side pot, as well as letting us know you are here. In addition, with the absence of our regular monthly meetings due to the present health pandemic, we use this time to communicate information face to face that you otherwise would not hear. Please help us in this regard and thank you to the majority who are always in attendance.



## **Weighing-In** *By Gary Martlage* **Tournament Director**

Another one for the books. This tournament was different, as only 3 fish were brought to the scales, since our modified rules went into effect. There were a few bets in the parking lot that some team would bring in a 5 fish limit, but everyone seemed to listen at the morning meeting, and it was all good. Since we have our general meetings on "hold", it is very important for all to read the Tournament Fact Sheet, and ATTEND the pre-tournament meeting. There are always a few things for discussion, and it also helps the co-anglers to pair with their boaters, so we can run a smooth tournament. I know it's early, especially in the summer, but please try to be on time. One last point to cover. Guys, PLEASE release your fish from the **end of the dock and not from the shore**. The fish will have a better chance of survival if you release them over **deeper** water. We will be putting in place an additional step for survival of the fish. Jeff Mabry has volunteered to help with "floaters" that you release. He will be there to capture the fish should they float from the dock. He will work with the fish for release, or harvest the ones that will not submerge. We **DO NOT** want to leave a lake with any fish floating at the ramp!

Kudos to the start boat, as the tournament started without any problems. Also, THANK YOU teams for reporting to the Weigh Master that they were in, and not weighing fish. We want to make sure everyone gets off the lake, and no one is left stranded. Thanks again for cooperating with the social distancing use of the weigh-in line cones. Nobody wants to get this terrible virus, but one will really feel bad if they give it to a fellow fisherman.

Lake Pleasant will be our next stop, due to the limited lake choices we have to fish. I hope everyone has a safe and healthy month, and see you all in July.

## A Few Reminders

By Gary Grimes

### Recommended Boat Services.

I want to recommend a couple of shops that you might consider for your boat service.

The first is Wickenburg Marine. The owner, Ace, has been working on boats since the 70's. It is a small shop catering to bass fishermen. They service the Wild West Bass Trail, and several other tournament circuits. Ace understands how important it is to keep our boats on the water, so he gives bass fishermen priority. He will be servicing my new Suzuki 250SS. He is capable of servicing the newest motors and boats and is an authorized Minn Kota service center. He is knowledgeable, fast and reasonable. Wickenburg Marine phone number is 1-928-684-3111.

The second is Cherokee Trailer. There is absolutely nothing worse for a tournament angler than trailer problems. With many boats, uneven tire wear is caused by bent spindles, and the only remedy is to replace the axles. Regardless of the issue, Mike at Cherokee Trailers has 40 years experience in all types of trailers. I recently had him replace and upgrade the axles on my new Phoenix. Mention that you are a member of Midweek Bass to both these guys if you use them. Cherokee Trailers 480-970-1332.



### Money Matters By Vern Ridgway Treasurer

Tournament entry forms are best sent in early for processing. I'm new to the job and require more time to process them. John Reichard was the master of the game, and he leaves big shoes for me to fill. Please help me to better serve you by sending them in early.



## Remember these?

For those who never saw the Burma Shave signs, here is a quick lesson in our history of the 1930s and '40s. Before the Interstates, when everyone drove the old two lane roads, *Burma Shave* signs would be posted all over the countryside in farmer's fields. They were small red signs with white letters. Five signs, about 100 feet apart, each containing 1 line of a 4 line couplet and the obligatory 5th sign advertising Burma Shave, a popular shaving cream. Here are some of the actual signs - read from the bottom up:

**Burma Shave**

**YOUR BRAINS  
ARE IN IT**

**YOU NEED  
YOUR HEAD**

**TO GAIN A  
MINUTE**

**DON'T LOSE  
YOUR HEAD**

## Sound Off

Let us hear from you. The newsletter is your vehicle for communicating and sharing with other club members.

Many of you have things to say, opinions to share.

Contact the Editor who would be delighted to hear from you.

**Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona - 2020 Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen**

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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**

Please meet and welcome our new members.



**Club Apparel**

Individuals wishing to purchase a club shirt, jersey, or cap can order directly from our president.

**Best Wishes and Happy Birthday**

Born in July

- Ricky Boehm
- Todd Gentner
- Terry Johnson
- Gary Martlage
- Scott Olivier
- Greg Prather
- Jack Shearer



**Midweek Bass Anglers 2020  
Tournament Schedule**

- |              |           |
|--------------|-----------|
| 15 January   | Bartlett  |
| 19 February  | Martinez  |
| 18 March     | Alamo     |
| 22 April     | Roosevelt |
| 20 May       | Bartlett  |
| 17 June      | Bartlett  |
| 15 July      | Pleasant  |
| 19 August    | Pleasant  |
| 16 September | Roosevelt |
| 21 October   | Roosevelt |
| 18 November  | Alamo     |