**Sponsored by**

**Okeechobee Sheriff's Office**

**Glades Sheriff’s Office**

**504 NW 4th Street**

**Okeechobee, FL 34974**

**863-763-3117**

**First Responders**

**Hookin Specks for**

**The Ranches**

**February 10, 2024**

Tournament Director: Michael Hazellief 863-532-0646

Tournament Officials: Shannon Peterson 863-634-7616

Gary Johnson 863-843-5341

**2023 Information Packet**

Captain’s Meeting, Boat launch, Weigh-In, and awards ceremony are conducted at the Scott Driver Pavilion. Boats will launch at 7 AM, according to boat number, lines out (Stop Fishing) at 3 PM. Weigh-in opens at 2 PM, and all boats must be checked in at the pavilion by 4 PM. Food and awards ceremony starts at 4:30 PM

**All proceeds to go directly to the Florida Sheriff’s Youth Ranches on behalf of Sheriff Noel E. Stephen and the Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office, along with Sheriff David Hardin and The Glades County Sheriff’s Office**

Entry Fee: $125.00 per boat Biggest Speck for an additional $25.00

1ST Place $2,000.00 1st Place 70% of total

2nd Place $1,500.00 2nd Place 30% of total

3rd Place $1,000.00

4th Place $500.00

5th Place $250.00

10th Place receives entry fee reimbursement

**No more than 100 Boats allowed**

**Please make checks payable to:**

**Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office Attn: Shirley Nasralli**

504 NW 4th Street

Okeechobee, FL 34974

Phone: 863-763-3117

**The fee must be paid in cash at the Okeechobee Sheriff's Office during the week of the tournament or at the Captain’s meeting the night before the tournament for us to have the cash for the payout.**

Should you have any questions, please contact the Okeechobee Sheriff's Office or any of the tournament officials*.*

**Tournament Rules and Information** (Please read carefully)

1. All entries are for one (1) boat, and no more than two (2) persons will be allowed in a participating boat during tournament hours. At least one of the team members must be either active or retired Firefighters, Paramedics, EMTs, Law Enforcement, Dispatchers, Detention Deputies, Doctors, Nurses, honorary discharged, active duty or retired Military. Auxiliary/Reserve/Volunteers of the previous professions are also allowed. Proof of Active or retired identification will be required during check-in.

2. Each boat will have one or more functioning aerated live well(s). Each live well(s) shall be inspected by a tournament official before the tournament’s starting time to ensure live well(s) are operating properly. All boats must have required Coast Guard safety equipment & kill switch.

3. Check-in will start at 0530 underneath the pavilion at Scott Driver. All boats must go through check-in for boat inspection before launching.

4. All boats must have water-craft liability insurance in effect & life jackets must be worn at all times that the combustion engine is running.

5. Starting position will be in the same order as when payment was received. All boats must start and finish from the same location.

6. **Fishing time shall be from 7 AM until 3 PM**. All boats must be checked in at the Scott Driver pavilion by 4 PM. In the event of fog, the “launch team” will determine if a launch can be accomplished.

7. No culling fish at the ramp allowed. (Penalty = disqualification)

6. Once a boat has been launched, it cannot be reloaded and transported to another location during tournament hours. The contestant must always fish from the boat. (Penalty = disqualification)

8. Any contestant late for the weigh-in at the designated site shall be disqualified.

9. No contestant (for safety reasons) should leave the weigh-in site until he is certain that a Tournament Official has checked off his name. Any contestant leaving the water earlier than the designated weigh-in time is requested to notify another contestant or call the cell phone of a Tournament Official.

10. **Teams may weigh in seven (7) live crappie**. All seven crappie must be alive when entering the weigh-in line. Once you enter the weigh-in line, your fish will be counted and checked by a tournament official.  Dead fish will be removed then you may weigh in your remaining live fish. Teams presenting more than seven fish will be disqualified**.  *During fishing/tournament hours, you can have the maximum amount of fish the state law allows.  At the time of weigh-in, your seven (7) weighable fish must be separate from other fish.***

11. Only one (1) Biggest Speck entry is allowed per team. Teams will have that fish designated as their big fish at the weigh-in and show entry to the weigh-in master at the time of weigh-in.

12. A maximum of two baits per pole may be used during tournament hours following Local and State laws. Live and artificial bait may be used. STINGER HOOKS are PROHIBITED. TRAILER HOOKS are PROHIBITED. Crankbaits with treble hooks are allowed.

13. Limit of eight (8) poles per team can be fished at once during the tournament. Teams may use rod and reel combos, hand-held pole and reel combos, or hand-held poles.

14. Crappie must be hooked and landed with a rod or pole by team member(s). Crappie must be hooked through the lip or in the mouth. Landing nets may be used.

15. Scales will be set up and open at 2 PM. Teams are allowed one (1) weigh-in on tournament day.

16. Combined weight of the fish will determine the winner. In the case of a tie for first place, the big fish of each team will determine the winner. Second place and on down, all ties split the combined purse of that prize level.

17. No contestant shall fish within 25 yards of another contestant’s boat when anchored & trolling motor up.

18. All protests must be made in writing to Tournament Director before payout

19. All winners must be willing to submit to a Polygraph examination and/or voice stress test if requested.

20. Boat engines must not exceed the HP rating plate & safe boating must be conducted at all times.

21. Payment is $125.00 per boat plus $25.00 to enter the Biggest Speck category (optional). Paying early by check, make checks payable to **Okeechobee County Sheriff’s Office. Payment at Captain’s Meeting is CASH ONLY.**

22. All boats are asked to remain inside Lake Okeechobee. Any boater found outside the allotted area will face disqualification.

**ANGLER CODE OF CONDUCT AND SPORTSMANSHIP**

**Code of Conduct**- Contestants participating in this event shall abide by this code of conduct and the applicable rules for the event in which they are participating. Contestants shall, at all times, conduct themselves in a manner becoming of a professional. Contestants should refrain from comments to the media that unreasonably attack or disparage the integrity of tournaments, tournament officials, sponsors, fellow members, or fellow contestants. Responsible expressions of disagreement with our policies are acceptable; however, attacks upon the integrity of the rules or officials are not tolerated. Public comments that an angler knows, or should reasonably know, will harm the reputation of this tournament or sponsors shall be considered unacceptable conduct and may result in disciplinary action. Contestants shall demonstrate professionalism and integrity in support of the sport of professional fishing. Any angler who violates any portion of the Angler Code of Conduct may be subject to sanctions up to disqualification.

**SPORTSMANSHIP**

Contestants in this tournament are expected to follow high standards of sportsmanship, courtesy, safety, and conservation. Any infraction of these fundamental sporting principles may be deemed cause for disqualification. Use of drugs (other than those purchased over-the-counter or prescribed by a licensed physician) by any contestant during the tournament will not be tolerated and shall be cause for automatic disqualification from this and all future tournaments. Any contestant(s) deemed under the influence by the tournament director may be disqualified. Maximum courtesy must be practiced at all times, especially with regard to boating and angling in the vicinity of non-contestants who may be on tournament waters. Any act of a contestant which reflects unfavorably upon efforts to promote fisheries conservation, clean waters, and courtesy shall be the reason for disqualification. All contestants are bound by the prevailing statutes and regulations of the various states within which they fish. Contestants are responsible for researching of fishing and boating regulations. Chemical substance addiction or abuse, the conviction of a felony or crimes involving moral turpitude or other conduct reflecting unfavorably upon efforts to promote safety, sportsmanship, fair competition, and compliance with tournament rules shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation and/or for disqualification after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. Any disqualification suspension from or other disciplinary action regarding any tournament or fishing organization shall be grounds for rejecting any application for participation in a tournament and/or disqualification from this tournament after circumstances are reviewed by the Tournament Director. A written statement may be accepted by the tournament director from any contestant in question.

**PUBLIC CONDUCT, SPORTSMANSHIP, AND COMPETITIVE INTEGRITY**

Contestant agrees that the integrity and competitive honesty of fishing contests is paramount to any crappie fishing tournament circuit’s continued existence and success. We reserve the right to refuse service to any potential contestant and enforce its tournament rules at its discretion. Contestants are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the highest standards of morality, honesty, fair play, and sportsmanship. Contestants will not do anything which shall be detrimental to the tournament, its sponsors, or competitive fishing in general. Contestants agree to conduct themselves, at all times, with regard to public conventions and morals. Contestants agree not to engage in any conduct that will reasonably tend to degrade him/her or bring this tournament into public hatred, contempt, ridicule or tend to offend the fishing community or integrity of competitive angling.

**SAFE WATER LEVEL**

The minimum lake level to start the tournament is 12’. If at any time during the tournament season the water level drops below 12’, the tournaments may be suspended until the water level has moved back above the 12’ minimum. If, due to low water level, the tournaments are suspended, the tournament officials will announce the revised qualification for the Classic.

**PROCEDURES FOR FOG DELAY**

In the event of fog, and since our concern is always for the safety of fisherman participating in the tournament, the tournament officials will determine if a launch can be accomplished at safe-light or, if foggy, how to cautiously proceed.

**Plan #1** If due to fog conditions, we do not think a traditional tournament boat launch can be accomplished with a high degree of safety we will delay the launch until such time that the tournament officials determine it is safe to do so.

**Plan #2** Prior to 7:00 a.m. a full refund can be issued, if requested by your team’s “boater”, at the sign-in table. Acceptance of this option will cancel your participation in the tournament.