

January 2017

BAY AREA

Tom Craighead and Bob Grosso Take the 2016 Classic Crown



Tom Craighead and Bob Grosso, team Richards Quality Automotive, were early favorites going into the 2016 Classic. They had won the May tournament and had spent some time learning Okeechobee. They managed to find a good limit on day one with 15.74 pounds but they knew that the big ones were still out there. They would go out boat one on day two and struggle to find quality fish. They managed to find another limit that went 11.64 pounds. Would that be enough? Their total of 27.38 pounds would be enough to hold on to first place and give them the crown of Classic Champion 2016. Tom and Bob both flipped all day long but did manage to put a few fish in the boat on swim baits.

Meanwhile Elton and Dennis Brewer had found 12 pounds on day one but got into some bigger fish on day two. They managed 14.51 for their second day total with a 4.73 pound big fish to almost catch our first place team with 26.52 pounds. Our tournament director, Gary Ford and his partner, Joe Hobson thought they were onto something good on day two also their 14.58 pound bag on day two was the largest of the day and netted a total of 26.16 pounds to claim third place. Team Car Shop would claim the fourth-place trophy with a 23.19 pound two-day total. Our day one second place team was Mike and Pam Hardy. Their first-day total was 15.44 which held the lunger for day one of 7.17 pounds. On day two the big fish eluded them and ended up with a total of 22.85 pounds to hold down fifth-place. Mark Kummelman and Kyle Stokes would get a sixth place finish with 21.91 pounds followed in seventh place by team RPM, Justin and Jeff Richards. They would manage a total of 21.83 pounds. Eighth place belong to Matt Smith and Michael Reid with 21.69 pounds followed by our Team Angler of the Year, Steve and Ryan Mekdeci. They would bring in 21.60 pounds for ninth place. 10th place belong to Dan Burns and Mike Wojcik. Bill Polanowski's old partner did well for his memory. Bill will be sorely missed in 2017. Big fish for day two would belong to the team of Chuck Pons and Mark Rees with a 5.31 pounder after a slow start on day one they managed 13.30 on day two to finish 11th place overall.

The all-important Betty Lou award would go to the team of Greg and Lee Allen. They managed to lasso the dink of the tournament with a .80 pound beauty. Even with that fish in their bag they managed to finish in 12th place overall.

This tournament was so close that from 28th place to sixth place was decided by a little over 7 pounds. Thirty-one teams brought a two-day limit to the scales and only four teams didn't have 10 fish after day two. Although the big fish eluded us this year, Okeechobee shined once again. The fish were plentiful and this year, the weather was wonderful. Roland Martin's Marina was once again a great host and the steak dinner was once again fabulous. This was one of our best classics ever as 38 teams qualified to fish but only 35 competed. And with a little over \$18 a pound being paid it was also our highest paying tournament of all time.

Tournament Entry Fee Increases This Year

The tournament entry fee will increase this year from \$60 to \$65. The extra \$5 will go to the Big fish of the year, Dink of the year, and to the 1st, 2nd, & 3rd place finishers in the TAOY race. The rest of the fees remained the same. Here's a break down for you;

Per person

Florida B.A.S.S. Nation dues	\$25	per calendar year
National B.A.S.S. Nation dues	\$30	per calendar year
Bay Area Bassmasters club dues	\$20	per calendar year

Every member is required to be a B.A.S.S. member and we encourage you to purchase and maintain your membership. If you can not do this we will sign you up. Yearly dues are \$25.

Here are your totals that don't include any tournament entry

First meeting sign up fee with active B.A.S.S. MEMBERSHIP per person	\$75
First meeting sign up fee without active B.A.S.S. MEMBERSHIP per person	\$100

After your initial sign up each tournament is only \$65.

I hope that made it a little simpler for everyone. Hope to see everyone Tuesday night. From the sounds of it, we will be seeing some new faces this year. Bring your friends and relatives along with you and lets make this year HUUUUUUUUUUUUUGE!

**Lake Shipp And the Entire
Winter Haven Chain Will Be A Busy
Place Saturday**

The Winter Haven chain will be a busy body of water on Saturday. I have heard that there were at least three more tournaments going out of various ramps on the chain. Your best bet is to get there early, get your boat checked, and relax for blast off. We weigh-in at three o'clock but make sure you're at our first meeting to get the details of weigh-in. Please put in at the large ramp on Lake Shipp because another tournament is launching out of the small ramp. Looking forward to a another great season and we will see you Tuesday night and again on Saturday morning. Good luck

Chris and Rick Walters With The Adventures Of The New Guys

Chris and Rick joined Bay Area last year at about the half way point of our season. They did a great job in every tournament they fished . They earned a check in 4 tournaments in a row with a 4th, 5th, 2 third place finishes and 11th to end the year. Chris wrote some great stories to go with their catches and he thought he would share them with us. Here you go;

Lake Kissimmee – September 10th, 2016

Rick and I have limited experience on Kissimmee and had low expectations coming into the tournament considering so many of our competitors know the lake so well. But a good practice improved our spirits and a top ten was once again on our minds by tournament day.

We ran south and noticed our spot looked a bit different then when we were prefishing. The water had risen a good bit so the fish would be able to spread out a little more than they could in practice. We were both throwing topwater and it didn't take long to start catching fish. Once we caught our first fish we had a limit within the next 20 casts.

The fishing was great, we were catching a lot and were able to fish the area more completely with the higher water level allowing us to go anywhere we wanted. I caught a 5 lber around 10 am and there were multiple 3 lbers caught throughout the morning. At around noon we were happy with our 14 or 15 lbs and thought we would make the top 10. I made what I thought was a perfect cast way back under some overhanging tree limbs, but I got snagged. Rick decided to try a senko while I re-tied. On his first cast and as he was telling me he was switching to a senko he set the hook. It was a good one and fought hard. That fish really put our great day over the top. She was over 6 lbs and pushed us to 18 lbs for the day.

The weigh in was set up by the boat ramp because someone else had the stage. When we got to the spot to weigh our fish our bag fell off of the scales and our fish went sliding towards the water. Luckily Rick is a ninja and grabbed two of our fish, one that was halfway in the water. I grabbed another and we were able to weigh in. We had 18.01 lbs and squeaked out a top 3 finish.

Lake Istokpoga – October 8th, 2016

Rick got away for 1 day of prefishing and I didn't get even that. He found fish and was able to put together a pattern that we thought would work well if the weather didn't change everything.

The morning of the tournament was my very first time on this lake and I was excited to finally fish the famous Lake Istokpoga... But the weather changed everything. We set out from the house in the middle of a hurricane that was coming through Sebring as we were heading there. The wind and rain had done a number on the water and by 10 am it was clear that Rick's pattern no longer existed. So we just went fishing. We caught 2 dinks in the south canal one on top and one flipping. Then we fished what seemed like the entire lake without a bite. Finally late in the day and with 2 barely keepers in the boat we found some fast moving water. Rick caught the rest of our limit on a weightless senko and I broke one off. I have to get used to switching from 50lb braid to 17 lb fluorocarbon...

At the end of the day we tied for 11th with 8.44 lbs and were happy to have continued to catch a limit in each of the 5 tournaments we had fished. We fished the final 5 tournaments of the regular 2016 season so we didn't qualify to fish the classic. I can tell you that we are ready to get back to it and look forward to fishing our first full season with Bay Area Bassmasters. Chris Walters



New Meeting Location For 2017

Don't forget the new meeting location will be at Beef O' Brady's at 812 W. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. in Seffner. Their number is 813-661-7343 if you need it. This location is just about two miles east of I-75 on the south side of the road. It is located in Parsons Village Square which also has a Winn Dixie and a Family Dollar store. Easy to find and has a great meeting room. I'm looking forward to a mic this year, My voice is usually hoarse after I leave a regular meeting. It's shaping up to be another great year so make your plans to be there and lets get this party started!

The Ina Mahoney Bill Polanowski

Hospice Challenge Raised

\$4668.66 in 2016

What a fabulous year for The Ina Mahoney Hospice Challenge. This year it will be given in the name of our long time friend and member who lost his battle with cancer in 2016, Bill Polanowski. Through your generosity, Bay Area Bassmasters raised over \$4600 this year. That is absolutely incredible. Thank you, thank you, thank you! That is by far our best year ever and it will bring our total hospice donations to \$23,376.66. We would also like to thank Buddy's Home Furnishings for there support. Their beautiful 52" Ultra HD 4K Television help raise some great money. We would also like to give a great big thank you to Pam Hardy. She went out on her own and solicited (probably not the best word choice) bunches of gift certificates from lots of local restaurants and businesses. This helped the raffle tremendously. Once again I want to thank each and everyone of you for your continued support of this great organization. It's through continued donations that Gulfside Hospice is able to continue to help those in need without charging them a dime. We hope that none of need their services but if you do, it's good to know that they are there for you. Thank you Bay Area and thank you Gulfside.



January's meeting will be Tuesday, the 10th at Beef O Brady's in Seffner. The address is 812 W. Dr Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. at 7:00



2017 Schedule

Month	Meeting/Tour.	Location	Ramp	
January	10 14	13 Fishing	Winter Haven	Lake Shipp Ramp
February	7 11	Allstate	Lake Harris	Hickory Point
March	7 11	RPM Inc.	Lake Kissimmee	Camp Mack
April	4 8	Richards Quality	Lake Istokpoga	98 Ramp
May	9 13	Walpole	Lake Okeechobee	North End
June	6 10	Lucky Dog	Lake Harris	Hickory Point
July	5 (Wed) 8	T. A. Mahoney Co	Lake Toho	Southport
August	8 12	Car Shop	June in Winter	Public Ramps
September	5 9	Cartwright Reality	Lake Istokpoga	98 Ramp
October	10 14	?	Lake Kissimmee	Camp Mack
November	7/14 11-12	Bay Area Pool	(Club Classic)	TBD

FBN Central Dates

February	4	Team Qualifier	Kissimmee	City Ramp
February	5	Pro/Am Qualifier	Kissimmee	City Ramp
March	4	Pro/Am Qualifier	Lake Harris	Hickory Point
March	5	Team Qualifier	Lake Harris	Hickory Point
May	21	Pro/Am Qualifier	Lake Harris	Hickory Point
August	19	Pro/Am Qualifier	Lake Henderson	TBD
TBD		Open Tournament/ Folds Of Honor		TBD

Bass Club 4-Man Team Championship

July	15 & 16	Harris Chain Of Lakes	Hickory Point
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FBN Championship Dates

Sept 30—Oct 1	Team State Championship	Kissimmee	City Ramp
October 28-29	Pro/Am State Championship	Scott Driver Park	Okeechobee

[For more info on The Florida B.A.S.S. Nation tournaments go to floridabassnation.com](http://floridabassnation.com)

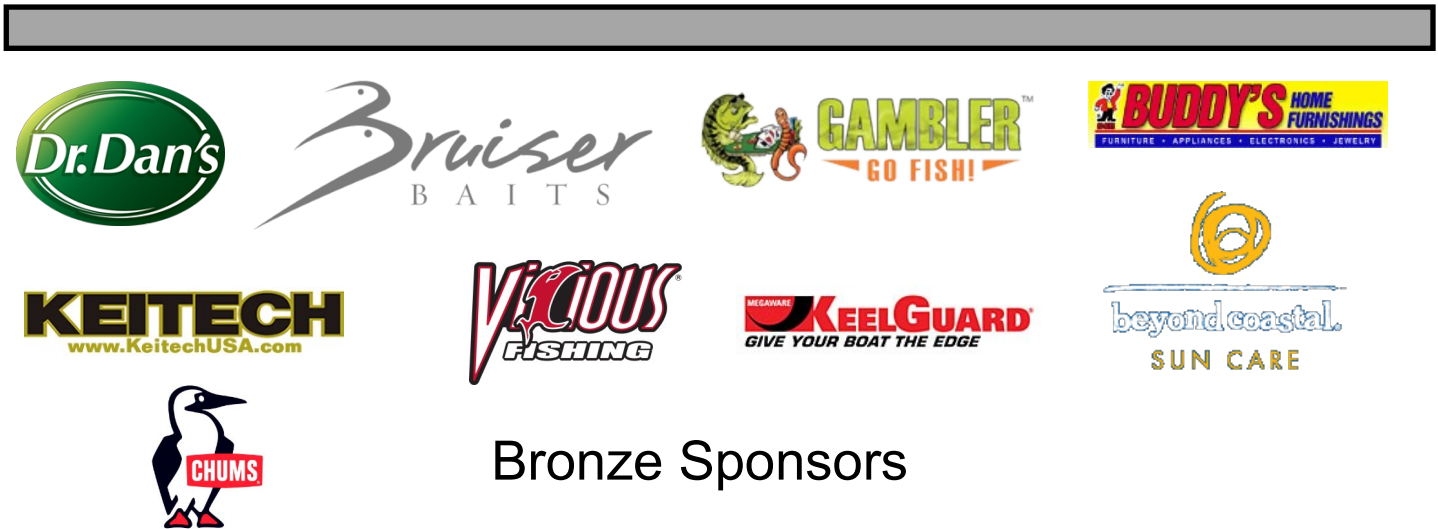
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