The Acute Angler

FEBRUARY 2017 **Volume 50, Number 1**

GOFC News

Seafood & Awards Banquet

Friday February 17th starts at 6:30 pm

Come celebrate GOFC award winners with great eats and good company. The tentative menu includes, spiny lobster tails, crab legs, shrimp, fried fish and an assortment of side dishes.

Where: Ken and Debby Knopf's boat barn

Directions: Directions will be emailed to club members

Cost: $20 per person at door but please rsvp as soon as possible at

What to bring: A dessert to share and your favorite adult beverage (club will supply soda and bottled water).

Sheepshead Shootout

Cedar Key— March 11th

SIGN UP:

Prior to start the Tournament Committee must be provided with boat name, size and make, captain's name and name of all anglers on board. Also, the committee must be advised of any lady or youth anglers participating. Sign up online in advance here (by 9:00 pm the evening before the tournament.)

START:

6:00 a.m. on day of tournament from any port – GOFC communications are on VHF channel 68.

WEIGH IN:

Cedar Key City Park: All fish to be weighed must be in line at the scales no later than 5:00PM. Scales open at 4:00 PM. Winner will be announced at next club meeting.

AWARDS/PRIZES:

Prizes will be awarded on a per-boat basis. That means one boat can qualify for one prize (regardless of how many anglers are on a boat).

Winners are calculated based on the heaviest of 3 sheepshead per boat (each boat can enter/weigh up to 3 sheepshead). The boat with the heaviest total weight of (up to 3) sheepshead win the following:

- **First place – $125**
- **Second – $100**
- **Third – $75**
- **Fourth – $50**

Total weight is what wins — not quantity.

For example: if boat (A) catches 1 sheepshead that weighs 11lbs, and boat (B) catches 3 sheepshead which each weigh 3lbs, boat (A) wins FIRST (11lbs total), while boat (B) takes SECOND (9lbs total).

Monthly Meeting

Tuesday, 3/28/2017

Vet School, New Lecture Hall

Join us as Rick from Ricks Rods discusses building and selecting fishing rods

Raffle Prizes:

- First Prize – inflatable PFD
- Second – $20.00 gift certificate to Garys Tackle Box
- Third – $15.00 Gary's Tackle Box gift certificate.

The mission of the Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club is to promote and support recreational saltwater fishing in the Big Bend area; to provide educational and recreational experiences for its members of all ages; and, to promote responsible conservation of saltwater resources.

HOOK WARS!

No, I'm not talking about Captain Hook and Peter Pan, although the flying around part was pretty cool. I'm talking J hooks and circle hooks. At our January GOFC meeting guide Marrio Castello talked about rigging up for sheepshead. He uses a 2/0 circle hook (Owner or other good brand) with a 3/4 oz weight pinned about six inches above it and rigs his clients up the same way. The put on a chunk of shrimp and drop down. He suggested putting one bait on the bottom and one bait about a foot or so up off the bottom, and the third one going up and down between the other two. Then you noted which depth was working the best and adjust accordingly. When you felt a nibble, you left your bait alone. You would then feel the fish start to swim off. After you felt this, you would sing Happy Birthday (to yourself or out loud) and then begin reeling. Mario reported that the hook would pop into the corner of the fish's mouth and you could reel that critter in, remove the hook, and put that eight pounder in the box.

The next part will surprise you: I learned about fishing for sheepshead about 40 years ago. "No! Russ, you must have been only 8 years old!" I know, I don't look old. It seems that ethanol is a very good preservative. Anyway, I learned that you put down a bare jig, 1/4 to 3/4 oz depending on the tidal current, with a chunk of shrimp on it. At the first nibble, or preferably just before, you SET THAT HOOK WITH BAD INTENTIONS!! You would lose some, but you would get most of them, especially if you really drove the point of that hook two inches in. People who had a poor sense of touch, and missed a lot of nibbles and lost a lot of shrimp, would often just set the hook every few seconds whether they could feel anything or not. These people are fun to watch, but they do get frustrated.

Circle hooks came along and I, like others, used them for grouper because you could put your grouper pole in a rod holder in the gunnel when you got tired of waiting and the grouper would hook itself on the circle hook. It was also the case, especially in the beginning of circle hooks, that when we had a bite using a circle hook, we still SET THAT HOOK HARD! Circle hooks don't do well with this as we learned.

Anyway, I was fascinated with Marrio's presentation and went to the Tackle Box (one of our advertisers!) and bought some 2/0 Owner circle hooks and some 3/4 oz weights. I described Marrio's presentation to the guys in the Box, most of whom seemed to be using the same preservative that I do, and they shook their heads wisely. "Gotta set that hook!" was the consensus.

So now to the scientific experiment. I went out to a wreck off Cedar Key that holds sheepshead with a friend of mine. We anchored up near a couple of boats that were already there and who were catching (and keeping) some rather small sheepshead. My friend tied on a jig, put on a shrimp and soon had a fish. I got my rig out with the circle hook and put it out. I carefully sang Happy Birthday (one verse was all I could stand) and started reeling when I got a bite. Sure enough, I brought in a small sheepie, maybe 2 lbs. I got another one or two and I was thinking "OK, this seems to be working." But the next one that came had swallowed the circle hook and it hadn't popped out into the corner of the fish's mouth. I pulled on the leader but the hook

wouldn't come loose. I cut the line and released the fish. The next fish came in the same way and I cut the leader again. Fish with hooks in their stomachs didn't seem like a good thing. In the meantime my friend, John Feiber, was bringing in fish after fish and they were getting bigger.

It was time to adjust. I had a second pole already rigged with a 1/4 oz bare jig, so I put on a piece of shrimp, threw it out and SET THAT HOOK!! YEAH! In about an hour, we would up with about 20 or so sheepshead, biggest about 6 lbs. (Later weighed at exactly 6.00) We kept 3 and released the rest.

I think Mario was using larger pieces of shrimp than I was, so maybe his fish weren't able to swallow the rig the way mine were, I don't know. I think I will try bigger circle hooks next time I try this technique. I'm not convinced that you can catch more sheepshead the new way than with the old one, and I think it might be better for a guide to use the circle hook technique with inexperienced anglers. Hey, those people don't know how to SET THAT BARB! They might not feel the nibble either, which is pretty light from a sheepshead.

If you are thinking that my hook set descriptions are a bit nasty, then you might try spearfishing. But I rather doubt this is easier on the fish.

Russ "HOOK 'EM HARD" Roy

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Presidents Message

It was nice to see some new faces at our January meeting take the time to introduce your self to a new member make them feel welcomed. Sheepshead shoot out is coming up and hopefully we will have a big turn out . If you have an idea for a speaker for upcoming meetings give me their info thanks.

Ed Ellett, CPCU, CLU, CIC

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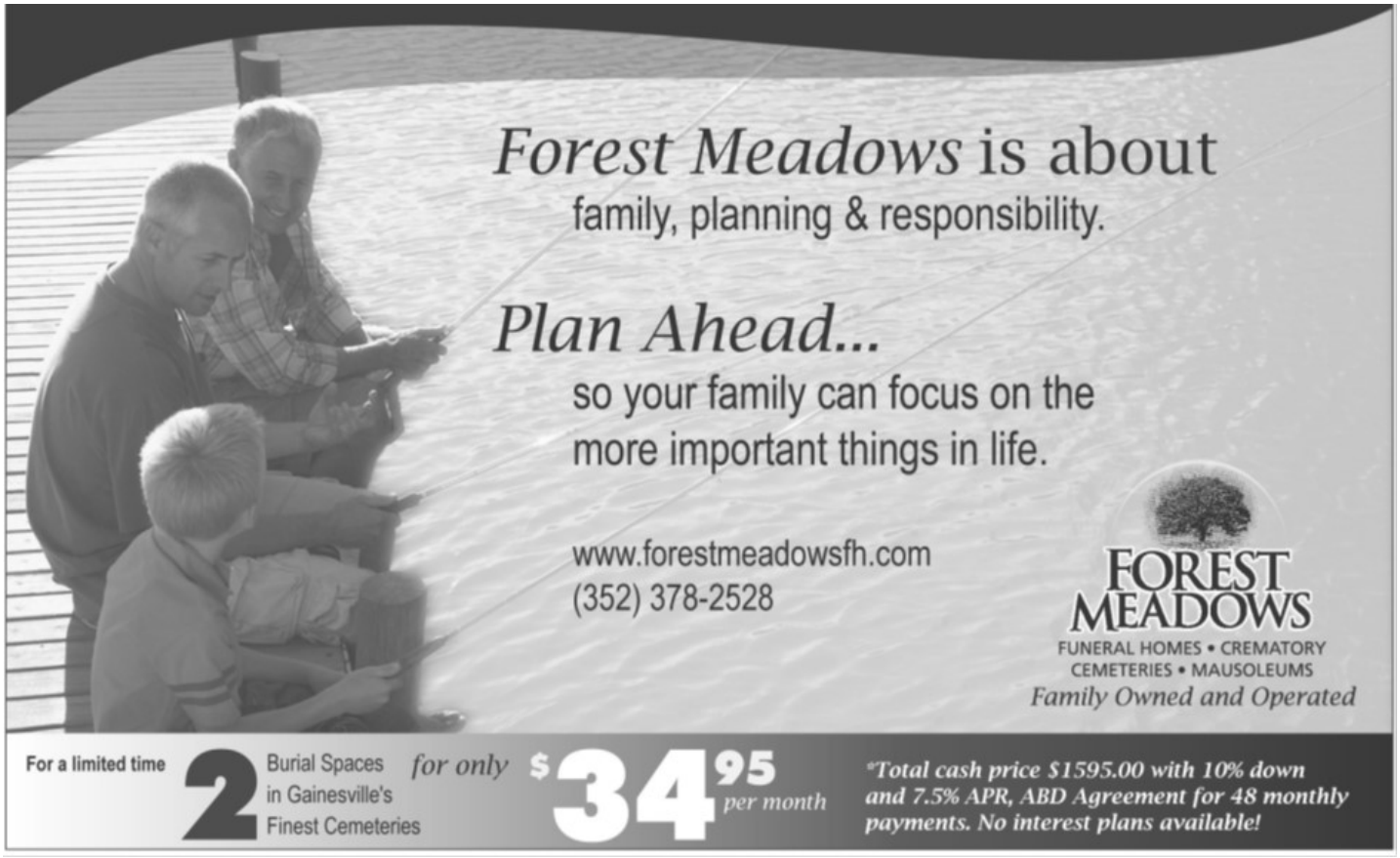

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Fish entered in Ellett contest January & February

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Time to renew your club membership

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If you'd prefer to support the US Post Office, complete the NEW MEMBERSHIP/RENEWAL form (download from the website) and mail it to the GOFC Treasurer.

Debby Knopf, Treasurer
Gainesville Offshore Fishing Club
3324 W. University Avenue
PMB #337
Gainesville, FL 32607

Please make your check payable to GOFC.

Or just bring cash, a check or a credit card to the next club meeting and pay Debby at the meeting.

IMPORTANT GOFC CONTACTS

WEBSITE: www.gofc.us

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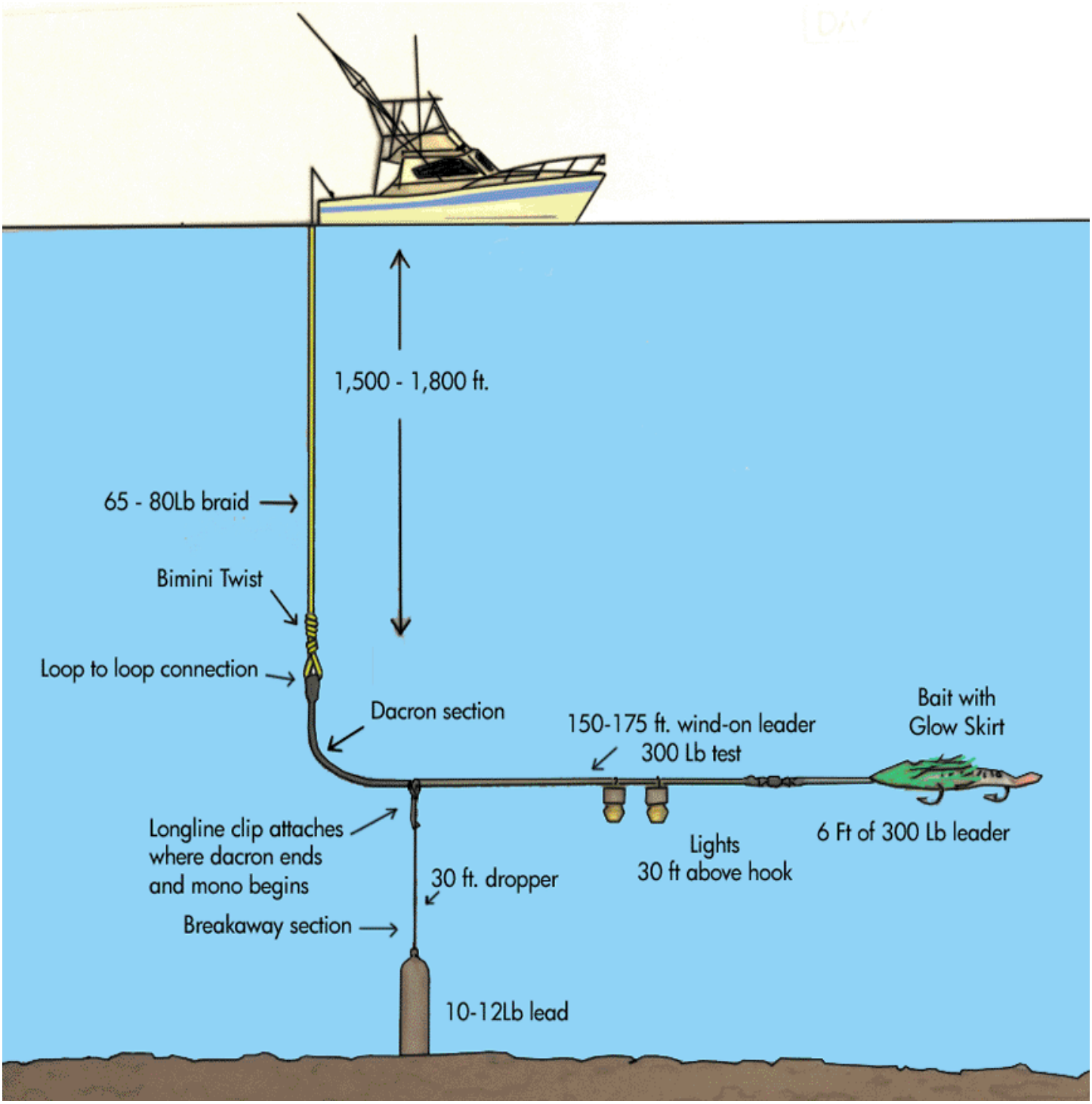
http://www.landsautotrim.com/

Sword fishing out of Saint Augustine

This was my 6th trip sword fishing so my knowledge is limited but I have learned a little. So we headed out of Villano Boat ramp in Saint Augustine at 4:00 A.M. hoping to land a sword fish. Off we went to start our day in 1600 feet of water drifting over some hilly bottom. We set the baits and pointed the boat south motoring into the gulf stream to control our drift. So there we were 5 guys staring at a rod tip looking for a twitch or bump . Well there was a lot of watching and waiting with no bite. So this went on for about 11 hours then it was hey did you see that the rod double bounced! Once the strike was detected the bait was raised 10 feet to take it away from the fish and get a reaction strike. It worked and so we were hooked up got the fish up in about an hour stuck a harpoon in it and that was that.

We were fishing a single hook skirted lady fish about 100 feet off the bottom.


1,500 - 1,800 ft.
65 - 80Lb braid
Bimini Twist
Loop to loop connection
Dacron section
150-175 ft. wind-on leader
300 Lb test
Bait with
Glow Skirt
Longline clip attaches
where dacron ends
and mono begins
Lights
30 ft above hook
6 Ft of 300 Lb leader
30 ft. dropper
Breakaway section
10-12Lb lead

Blast and Cast

In mid-January, my son DJ and I went to Crystal River for a "Blast and Cast". We met up with good friend and fishing/hunting guide, Clay Shidler of Hang'em High Sport Fishing Charters. We left the dock talking about the redfish bite and how the cooler waters of winter push the fish into the creeks and backwaters. The three of us took off down the river to the mouth of the gulf. After making our way to the back country, we started casting, 5" DOA glow baits into the creek. The wind was from the West and the tide was coming in pretty hard. After a bit of no bites, Clay pulled us to a bend in the creek and said "Let's try live shrimp under a cork". The current pulled our baits past the bend and down the creek. The weeds and grass on the corner of the bend kept catching our lines so Clay pulled us up to the bank and said "hop out". We could see ripples of water going over an oyster bar and Clay told us to throw in behind the bar because there's an eddy. I threw the first cast and let the current push it into the eddy and down goes the cork. BAM – a fine redfish of 26 inches. My son threw into the same area and BAM – his cork goes down, another nice slot redfish. Three more casts to that area and another keeper redfish. Five casts, three sweet reds!! Limit for red-fish are now one per person, so our Redfish day came quickly to an end.

Blast and Cast