



West Craven Highlights

News From Along The Banks Of The Neuse



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SIX PAGES

Davis Makes National Championship

Vanceboro Angler Makes His Mark

By MO KROCHMAL
Special to the
West Craven Highlights

Being from the immediate area did not to be a major factor for the fishermen competing in the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society Southern Divisional tournament that completed its weeklong run in Washington with the final weigh-in and awards ceremonies on a rainy Friday afternoon on the waterfront.

Of the 141 entrants in the tournament, eight were from the Chocowinity, Vanceboro and Washington area.

Ed Davis of Vanceboro emerged the area leader, finishing third in the individual standings with a total catch of 20 pounds, four ounces.

He earned a check for \$1,000 and will advance to the B.A.S.S. National Championship in Chattanooga, Tenn. Davis was in seventh place the first day and then leveled out at third.

The remainder of the area representatives were paced by J.T. Evans and Washington's Frankie Jones, respectively, in 18th and 19th place.

Evans, a Chocowinity resident and an employee at Merritt-Holland in Greenville, said he had to fish different areas than the ones he usually fished.

"I went to some of the places I usually fish," he noted. "The water looked like chocolate milk."

Thus Evans said he fished Chocowinity bay and Broad Creek.

Although he had to pay a \$250 entry fee, Evans said the tournament was well worthwhile.

"I probably wouldn't have fished it if it had been out-of-state," he said.

Neil Woolard of Washington, who finished tied for 50th place with North Carolina state cham-

(See DAVIS, Page 5)



The largemouth bass this youngster is holding was the biggest captured the first day of the B.A.S.S. Southern Divisional Championship

Johnson Helps Tourney Run

By MO KROCHMAL

Without Kenny Johnson, there may not have been a Bass Anglers Sportsman Society Southern Divisional tournament in Washington last week—or one that went so smoothly.

The 33-year-old Johnson made a 22-hour drive from St. Louis last week to set up the weighing platform and stage that B.A.S.S. officials used in the afternoon weigh-in processions.

Johnson drove to St. Louis from Yankton, S.D.—the site of the third of five Divisional Tournaments held by B.A.S.S. this season—last weekend and then made his way to Washington.

After the tournament officials had left the Farmers' Market Friday, Johnson was still there—tearing down and packing the stage and weight equipment for the return trip to B.A.S.S. headquarters in Montgomery, Ala.

Johnson, who is married with a wife and two children, said he has worked with B.A.S.S. for 14 years. When not working in the mailroom at B.A.S.S. headquarters, Johnson takes to the road.

His job—aside from setting up and taking down—is to troubleshoot.

That, he says is not a problem. He glides easily through crowds of tournament fishermen.

If you want to find out who caught the big fish of the day, let Johnson ask for you.

With a quick, albeit cunning



Kenny Johnson

question, a fisherman will divulge his information to the ever-smiling Johnson.

Should a reporter get caught in a sudden downpour, as happened Friday afternoon in the weigh-in procession, Johnson is

quick to find a raincoat. Should the scale break down, Johnson is the man they call.

Troubleshooter. Johnson said he got his experience working B.A.S.S.'s pro circuit.

"My father-in-law worked with Ray Scott," Johnson said. "He's been with B.A.S.S. for 18 years now."

Johnson said his first job with B.A.S.S. was to help the staff members enjoy a get-away in Mexico—taking care of setting up camp and—troubleshooting.

"We went 250 miles across the border into Mexico where the staff members would fish certain areas," he said. "They had a fishoff just to see how many they could get. They had a heckuva good time."

Johnson said he thought the fishermen in this tournament had a good time too.

He noted the field was larger than the other three Divisional tournaments he has worked this year.

"This was a beautiful site for the tournament," he said. "I was very impressed. And, the people here were bending over backwards to help out. Some towns we go to are real slow."

While Johnson was unique in his work, he also was unique in another aspect.

He was one of the few blacks if not the only black person involved in the tournament.

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Davis accepts plaque and money from officials

No Tax Hike Seen In County, If Proposed Budget Is Okayed

NEW BERN — Craven County's proposed \$29.8 million budget recommended last Wednesday will not include a tax hike, according to Craven County Manager Tyler Harris.

The proposed budget for fiscal year 1988-89 will be reviewed by the county commissioners and a public hearing will be held on it before July 1.

The proposed budget is about \$2 million higher than the \$27.9 million budget the county is currently operating under, and approximately \$1.5 million more than was actually spent since July 1, 1987.

The proposed budget would leave the county's tax rate at 61.85 cents per \$100 valuation.

The budget proposal includes

a request for 14 new employees, some to be hired with state funds and some hired with combined state or federal and local monies. Harris said about two of the proposed employees would assume responsibilities the county had formerly contracted with outside firms to do. Harris said the move

(See BUDGET, Page 5)

Not-So-Typical Tennessee Champion Finds Area Different

By JIM GREEN
Sports Writer

When John Gordon isn't fishing, he's either racing cross-country on a motorcycle or water skiing. After all, he loves all three activities—he's enjoyed them since he was 10 years old.

"I love motorcycle racing, water skiing and other water sports," Gordon said. "Those are my other hobbies besides fishing."

Motorcycle racing? Water skiing? Doesn't sound like what a Cookeville, Tennessee fisherman should do in his spare time. "I know," Gordon said. "Those two hobbies are exactly opposite

to fishing. They produce adverse situations."

Like loud noises or rippling water—stuff that scares fish away.

Gordon said he's not sure what scared the fish away from him during the Bass Anglers Sportsman Society Southern Divisional Tournament this weekend, held on the Pamlico and Tar Rivers.

"But I learned a lot of things from being in this tournament," he said with a gleam in his eye. "Things were so much different here than back in Tennessee."

Gordon, 46 and a civil engineering teacher at Tennessee

Tech, said the Pamlico-Tar took a little getting used to.

"For one thing, I fished lakes in Tennessee," he said. "Many teams had trouble adapting."

"But I found a creek about five miles from here, and I don't think anyone knows about it yet," Gordon added. "The other guys on my team brought in some good catches, but overall, we spent most of our time in that creek in very shallow water. I'm not used to fishing that way in Tennessee."

Gordon did not have a good three days of practice, landing just one fish—a four pounder. He said being a deep water tritic

ture fisherman, he had a difficult time trying to locate the best spots.

"And all the extra work I do, like studying topographic maps and reading tide tables didn't really help me," Gordon said.

Gordon has been racing motorcycles cross-country for 25 years. He said it is an interesting passion for him.

"I am in eduros (endurance races), where you race against the clock over a certain distance," he said. "The highway patrols give us the okay to cross the highway to reach the trails." "I talked to my wife the other day and she said the all-new

skiing equipment I ordered has come in," Gordon added. "So I'm looking forward to using it this summer."

But ever since his father gave him a fly reel for his 10th birthday, Gordon says he has been fishing.

He earned his way into the Southern Divisional by becoming state champion in the tournament at Lake Chicommaw in Chattanooga, Tenn., where the winners of the Southern Divisional are headed next.

But even though he and the Tennessee team didn't fare as well as they had hoped, Gordon said he enjoyed the hospitality

and warmth that area businesses showed him.

"I've had a ball here," he said. "The people have been great. The local businesses have given me the safest places to fish, the right equipment to use, good safety measures including where not to fish, and the hotels have been good to me. I haven't had a moments trouble from anybody. I'm impressed."

If he could change anything the next time he fished on the Pamlico, what would it be?

"Nothing," Gordon said. "Except finding some more of those creeks."