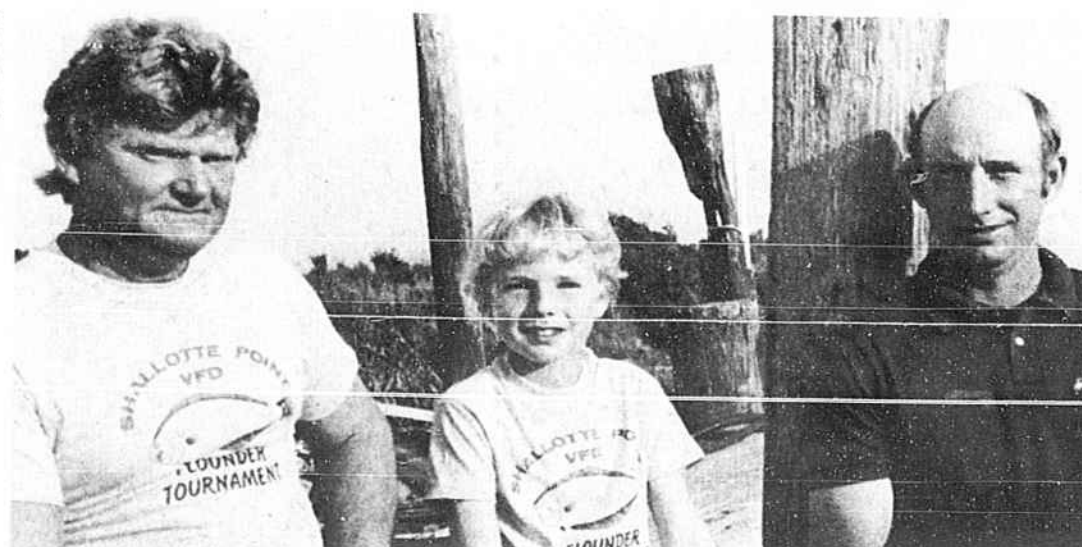




A LINE FORMS at the weigh-in station (background) Friday as boats check in past spotters Mike Potts and Jimmy Pigott.



JAMES "PEE WEE" HEWETT, Willard Causey and Lonnie Causey shared the \$100 daily prize Friday for their catch of 22 fish.

STAFF PHOTOS BY SUSAN USHER

Point Native Wins Tourney With 3.89-Pound Flounder

BY SUSAN USHER

A Shallotte Point native used his father's boat and his father's advice last weekend to catch a \$1,000 flounder, claiming the top prize in the 2nd Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department Flounder Tournament.

Shorty Caison, a Point native who lives in Wilmington, was fishing with his wife Janice aboard the "Chub Drowner," owned by his father, Archie Caison, when he landed the winner.

His 3.89-pounder was only four one-hundredths of a pound larger than the third-place fish, and two one-hundredths of a pound larger than the second-place fish.

William Clyde Watts and George Delaney placed second, earning \$600 for a 3.87-pound flounder that had led the field Friday. Boyd Walters of Lumberton finished third, receiving \$200 for a 3.85-pound fish. Eddie O'Briant of Shannon and sons Matthew and Kevin, earned \$100 for a 3.15-lb. entry.

Mr. and Mrs. Jack Rimer of Marion, S.C., won the \$400 aggregate prize for the five fish with the greatest combined weight, 10.79 pounds.

Daily catch prizes of \$100 each went to W. Lonnie Causey of Shallotte, James "Pee Wee" Hewett and Willard Causey for 22 legal-size fish they turned in Friday, and to William R. Davis of Autreyville and C.V. Downing of Fayetteville for nine fish they weighed in Saturday. Davis' boat had turned in one less fish than Causey's on Friday.

Amy Williams of Shallotte won a wristwatch for a 2.82-pounder, the largest fish caught by a woman, while 10-year-old Mark Logan, son of Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Logan of Seaside, claimed the child's prize of a rod-and-reel for a 1.67-lb. flounder caught aboard the family boat, the "Twenty Bird."

A 2.12-lb. flounder caught by eight-year-old Matthew O'Briant was disqualified for the child's prize because one boat could not claim two prizes.

Caison didn't know it at the time, but he had secured first place 15 minutes after the fishing began 7 a.m. Saturday.

"We caught it on what is known locally as Middle Ground Shoal, in the Shallotte River," he said. "We had it at 7:15 a.m. this morning. We just rode him around all day."

Mrs. Caison said she had hoped to catch one just as large, but didn't.

In fishing the shoal, Caison said he was only following advice offered by

his father over supper Friday night. "He said the flounder dropped off the shoal at low tide and to try there."

"He says it; I do it," Caison added.

Eighty-two boats entered the tournament, up from 68 a year ago, said Co-Chairman Mike Potts, and 280 fish were weighed in, 220 on Friday and 60 on Saturday. Fish turned in Friday weighed an average 1.06 pounds each, he added.

While catches were lighter Saturday, at least one fisherman, Mrs. Caison, said she thought the average weight of those fish turned in was greater.

Organizers also said they thought most fishermen kept part of their Saturday catch to take home. The largest number turned in by a single boat was nine, compared to 22 on Friday.

A change in wind direction brought rougher water Friday afternoon, Brunswick County Sheriff's Detective David Crocker said, but no thunderstorms to interrupt the fishing. Crocker, along with the U.S. Coast Guard out of Oak Island, provided security on the water.

Potts said a rules change offering cash prizes for the largest number turned in daily had encouraged fishermen to turn in more of their catch, which was served at a fish fry Saturday night at the fire station.

Weigh-in was administered by rules committee members J.B. Harrison, Bob Hoff and Palmer Suggs, with tournament biologist Jeff Howe checking each entry to make sure it was freshly caught and met the state minimum length of 11 inches. At least three fish were disqualified because of size.

A graduate student in marine biology at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington, Howe said he had no freshness problems with any entry. He checked for four criterion: clear eye lenses; red or pink gills; firm flesh; and a "nice shine" in the color of the skin.

On Saturday evening, Potts said the tournament was satisfactory.

"We're glad to have all these boats and we hope to have more next

year," he said. "We're satisfied because the money's going to a worthwhile cause." The financial results of the weekend were not immediately available.



SHORTY AND JANICE CAISON show off the 3.89-lb. catch that won the \$1,000 grand prize in the Shallotte Point Volunteer Fire Department Flounder Tournament. The couple shared the fishing expedition, but Caison laughingly said the money's his to spend, since he caught the flounder.



C.V. DOWNING of Fayetteville and William R. Davis of Autreyville claimed the \$100 daily prize Saturday, with nine fish.



MR. AND MRS. JACK RIMER of Marion, S.C., turned in the five fish with the greatest combined weight over the two-day tournament, winning \$400. Above, Rimer checks Friday's catch as deadline time approaches.



TEN-YEAR-OLD MARK LOGAN won the child's prize, a rod and reel combination, by landing a 1.67-pound flounder.



CLYDE WATTS AND GEORGE DELANEY missed first place and an additional \$400 by a mere two one-hundredths of a pound, with this 3.87-pounder that took second prize.



EDDIE O'BRIANT and sons Matthew (left) and Kevin (right) of Shannon claimed fourth place and \$100 with this 3.15-pound fish.

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