



THE WAY IT WAS

Elizabeth Davis Watkins brought us this picture of the Class of '45 and since it is involved in reunion activities this week, we thought it would be appropriate to run. Front row, left to right: mascots Dougie Bogie Dietz and Buddy McNeil; second row: Olive Dean Smith Chap-

man, Lucy Mayo Northrop Landrum, Ann Muncy Price, Elizabeth Davis Watkins, Sally Ann McNeil, Betty Lee Oliver Beadle, Eleanor Lee Rees Jones; third row: Joe Walton, Wyatt Gay, Wallace Moore, Nickey Coleman and Douglas Jones.

The fishing report

By Jim Harper
Staff Writer

King mackerel that had favored Oak Island pier fishermen since early May moved offshore to the Yaupon Reef area this past weekend and provided excellent action for live-baiters trolling there.

While some kings were taken on piers, the preponderance of action was on the artificial reef. Enjoying the outstanding fishing Saturday were participants in the season's first Oak Island Fishing Club tournament.

Winner of that tournament was Harold Matthews, with a 21-pounder; but next day Matthews returned to the scene and boated a 46-pound king.

Besides good kingfishing, the reef also provided excellent cobia action for live-baiters. On Saturday, Ray Harrelson had a 55.3-pounder, and Andre Minor caught a cobia weighing 47.5 pounds.

Steve Smith at Sure Catch Tackle in Southport reported that trollers pulling live pogies were also bringing in some citation-size Spanish mackerel.

Robert Prince had an 8.7-pound Spanish on Sunday, Dickie Aldridge had a 7.8-pounder and Rick Warrick recorded one at 7.6 pounds.

Smith noted that while some of these anglers were finding fish right over the artificial reef, others were doing well trolling along nearby tide lines.

Meanwhile on the piers there were cobia, kings and a few large blues.

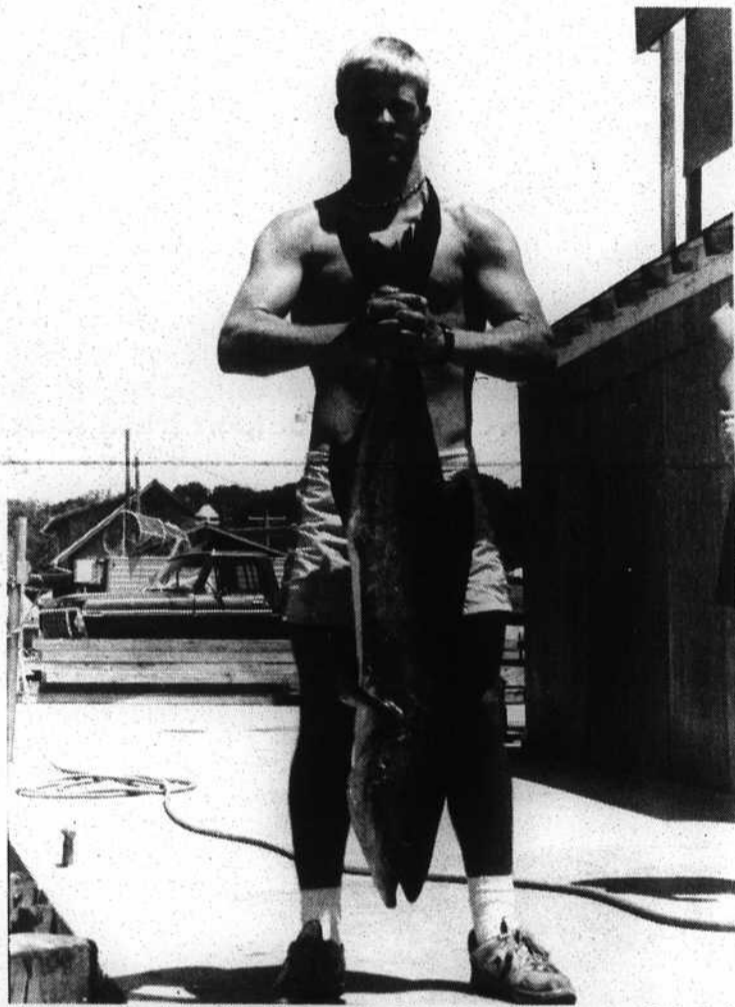
Jim Ratcliff at Long Beach Pier reported a 55-pound cobia caught by Melvin Jennings on Sunday, a 33-pound cobia and a 12-pound king.

Carl Collins at Ocean Crest Pier reported a 53-pound cobia, some kings and a couple of bluefish weighing 14 and nine pounds -- all on live bait.

Billy West at Yaupon Pier said Rocky Teal had a 20-pound cobia there Sunday.

All piers reported good whiting action and Ratcliff said pompano weighing up to one pound were being caught on shrimp and blood-worms.

Tony Bivalacqua at Wildlife Bait and Tackle No. 2 said a surf caster in Yaupon Beach had 15 nice speckled trout on live minnows Saturday, and said that at the Lockwood Folly Point bait fishermen were landing



Michael Clewis hefts a 30-pound cobia, one of two he and his father boated during Oak Island Fishing Club competition Saturday. Big cobia, kings and Spanish mackerel were abundant on the Yaupon Reef all weekend.

spots, croakers and nice blues.

Smith reported that river fishermen were catching whiting near buoys 9 and 13, and said drift fishermen were doing well with flounder in the Jaybird Rip.

Both boat and pier fishermen caught nice red drum near Caswell Dock at midweek, Smith said, adding that there had been good black drum fishing at Pfizer Dock and good sheepheading with fiddler crabs near river pier pilings in several locations.

Jimmy Price at Wildlife Bait and Tackle No. 1 said he had seven flounder and 11 speckled trout for a party on Sunday -- the trout hitting grubs and the flounder taking buck-tails tipped with squid.

And Price also reported good flounder and puppy drum fishing in the Sunny Point area.

Smith said that Southport charter boats did well both on reef fish and

on larger game during the week.

Capt. Mervin Darnell on the *Fugitive* had 24 kings and a big bull dolphin for a party on Sunday, and Capt. Chris Pardue on the *Marhuna* reported 16 kings, a large barracuda and two nice dolphin the same day.

For the weekend, inside fishermen can look for flounder in the Jaybird Rip, as well as around structures in the Cape Fear River. While mullet minnows are generally too small to net right now, flounder can be readily taken on mud minnows.

Lure casters and trollers can look for speckled trout and puppy drum around shell points and along marsh banks, and red drum can be expected at dropoffs near Caswell Dock and also at the Bald Head marina mouth.

Inshore trolling for king mackerel, cobia and big Spanish will likely be good for the weekend. The bait of choice now is menhaden, with the

larger baits considered better, but small bluefish and any small panfish can be effective when presented over artificial reefs or near tide lines off the Cape Fear and Lockwood Folly bars.

Offshore anglers will do well with reef fish over offshore ledges, and light lines should take kings, barracuda, dolphin and amberjack in the same locations.

County boxers reach regional

Three members of the Brunswick County Boxing Team have advanced to the regional U. S. Junior Olympic Championship.

The boxers competed with others from North Carolina and South Carolina in a preliminary tournament last Friday in Albemarle.

Travis Murrell, 15, of Bolivia, Thomas Lowe, 14, of Southport and Darnell Hill, 14, of Southport, all received first-place trophies.

Ezikile Wedderburn, 13, of Southport lost his bout against Brandon Godfrey of Rutherfordton in the 100-pound class and was awarded a second-place medal.

Hill defeated Carlos Lloyd of Wilmington in the 132-pound class by a 3-0 decision. Murrell and Lowe were unopposed in their weight classes, 178 and 139 pounds, respectively.

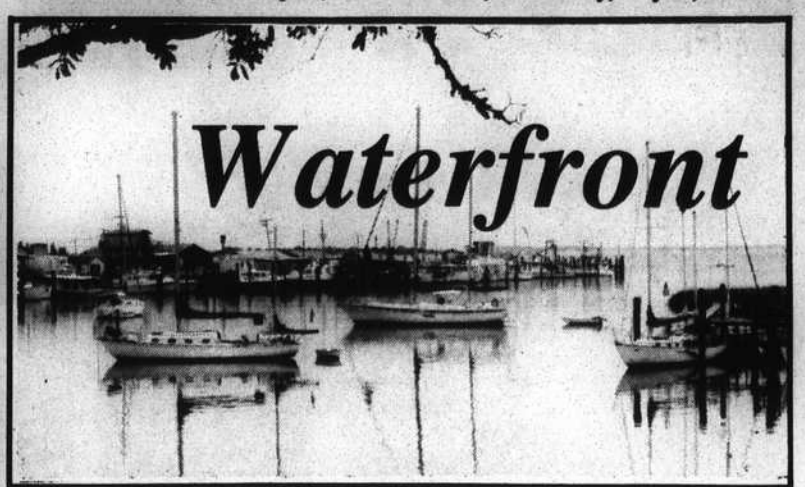
The three boxers will compete in the regional championships scheduled for June 12 in Palm Beach, Fla. Wins there would take them to the National U. S. Junior Olympic Championship tournament June 21-27 in Gulfport, Miss.

Harold Matthews wins fishing event

Harold Matthews on the *Sundance* won the first Oak Island Fishing Club king mackerel tournament of the season Saturday with a 21-pound fish.

Randy Way was second with an 18-pounder, and Dick Warrick was third with a fish weighing 15 pounds.

The next of the monthly club tournaments will be June 19, with sign-up and captains' meeting at 7 p.m. June 18 at Sure Catch Tackle.



A plume of black smoke drifting northward across the Bald Head Island marsh Sunday afternoon marked the end of an obscure but thoroughly distinctive waterfront landmark.

Flames destroyed the abandoned Bluff Island homestead of Junior Stephens, burning both structures there to the ground and becoming a slow brushfire which fire officials decided to leave to nature.

The blaze in fact was the second at the site, where a structure was reportedly consumed by flames in 1983. Then as now the location was not visited by either firefighters or insurance adjusters, so that incident was not thoroughly reported.

The Stephens homestead site on Deep Creek, a tributary to Bay Creek and Cape Creek, is on the way to nowhere so very few people ever saw it. One of those who did on occasion was Marine Fisheries enforcement officer Donald Goins, who said Stephens had abandoned the place at least three years ago and moved to Tennessee. Goins said he believed Stephens lived on the island for about six years.

"I was there about a month ago," Goins said Monday. "I walked all through the house and it was abandoned."

In fact the land there is part of the general Bluff Island complex ceded by Bald Head developers to the state in the early 1980s.

The Southeast Atlantic Fishery Management Council, which sets fishing rules for federal waters off North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida's east coast, will hold public hearings soon to obtain comment on proposed changes in reef-fishing regulations.

After various hearings and public input by mail the council will decide in August what changes to make in fishing regulations in waters that extend from three to 200 miles off our shores.

Three proposals of particular interest to local commercial fishermen concern quotas for snowy grouper and golden hindfish, prohibited possession of speckled hind and warsaw grouper and required tending of all sea bass pots.

A June 8 hearing will be at 7 p.m. in the Wrightsville Beach Holiday Inn. Written comments may be addressed to director Robert K. Mahood, SAFMC, One Southpark Circle, Suite 306, Charleston, SC 29407-4699. Further information on proposed regulations is available from that address, or by calling Carrie Knight at (803) 571-4366.

Acting county manager John Harvey is being consulted by Jerry Gaskill, director of the NCDOT ferry division, on setting up an advisory committee to help the ferry system -- of which the Southport-Fort Fisher link is a major part -- become more "customer oriented."

Gaskill has written to Harvey about his hopes to promote the ferries as tourist attractions, and is seeking Harvey's advice on who might be a good local representative for such a planning and promotional group.

"In 1992 the ferry division transported over 700,000 vehicles ... with 50 percent of those being from outside the state," Gaskill wrote. "This suggests that the traveling public is looking more to our ferries as a tourist attraction."

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Sketch by Bernard Case

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