

OUTDOORS

2017 Tar River First Hickory Shad Contest

I am proud to announce that the 7th Annual Tight Lines 2017 Tar River First Hickory Shad Contest will be partnering again with Captain Mitchell Blake, Captain Jeff Koen, and FishIBX to headline our contest prize package. FishIBX, Inner Banks Charters, is donating a \$400 half-day guided fishing outing that will accommodate 2 lucky anglers. This exciting trip will be the cornerstone of this year's prize package. I am thrilled to once again have FishIBX's generous participation. It adds value and substance to our annual contest and prize package to have the involvement of FishIBX quality professional guide service.

I get so excited and enthusiastic about this annual contest that I forget we have some readers that might not know what in the world I am talking about, so please allow me to clue you in. Tight Lines Tar River First Hickory Shad Contest is unique because it has NO sign-up, NO registration and NO fees, and that should make your participation an absolute NO-brainer. Contest is open to everyone. Rules are few. You shad fish? You're in!

Simply be the first person to present a freshly caught (within stated boundaries) Tar River hickory shad at Roberson & Dupree Shoe Store, Monday thru Saturday, 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., at 418 North Main Street in Tarboro, and you will receive a substantial prize package that includes the aforementioned FishIBX half-day outing for 2, cash, various merchandise, gift cards, and gift certificates. Prize package is building nicely and it is hopeful the total value this year will match or exceed last year's array of awesome gifts. The prize package becomes a very nice reward for a single, any size hickory shad caught chugging up the Tar River in the advance scout-

ing party.

Start date for our 2017 contest will be Saturday, January 14th. Boundaries for the Tar River contest extend from the NC Highway 42 Old Sparta Bridge to the Falls of the Tar River at Battle Park in Rocky Mount. That is approximately 48 miles of beautiful, meandering Tar River for YOU to capture the season's first hickory shad. We do not employ the SBI (Shad Bureau of Investigation), so an honor system is in effect.

As our 2017 shad contest prize package continues to grow, I decided to separate our sponsors into gold, silver, and bronze categories.

Gold sponsors: FishIBX, Inner Banks Charters, Tarboro Association of Saltwater Sportsman (TASS), and a very kind and thoughtful anonymous benefactor who is placing \$200 cash in our prize package for the simple reason he likes our contest and wants to help make the prize package extra special. Done! He seeks no attention or recognition. How very extraordinary! I am beside myself with respect, admiration, and appreciation for his selfless generosity.

Silver sponsors: Carolina Sales (Dan'l Boone Inn country ham), Piggly Wiggly of Tarboro, Roberson & Dupree Shoe Store, Country Sunrise Grill & BBQ, Custom Jimmy D Shad Rigs, SPCA Alliance of NC, Edgecombe-Martin EMC, Caroline's Creations and Unique Gifts, Dog Days Inn, and the Henry Knight family. Local hickory shad aficionado and a past winner of our contest, Henry Knight, is making a personal donation of a \$50 U.S Savings Bond. Wow! How exceptional is that?

Bronze sponsors: Nash Rod & Reel, Mama's Pizza, Creative Salvage, Harrells Rod Repair, Dry Cleaning By Wayne, Marrow-Pitt Ace Hardware, Addie's Southern



RICK GOINES
Tight Lines



CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Captain Mitch Blake, of FishIBX, Inner Banks Charters, is enjoying some measurable winter fishing results in eastern N.C. tributaries, including some triple digit striper days. For more information see FishIBX at www.fishibx.com or call 252-495-1803.

Chic Restaurant, Thorne Drug Company, Greenville Marine Outdoor Shop, Tarboro Coffee Shop, The Tarboro Weekly, and La Fiesta Mexican Restaurant.

How can you help us thank those all important sponsors? Glad you asked. Easy-peasy. When feasible and appropriate, give these sponsors an opportunity to earn your business. Thanking them with your business for sponsoring our First Shad Contest is just one more good reason to spend your hard-earned bucks with these nice people.

A special atta-boy pat-on-the-back to Wayne Harrell, who is continually a big Tight Lines supporter of everything we do, and always a big help assisting us in acquiring

shad contest sponsors. He is our unofficial, unpaid, and sometimes under-appreciated sponsor go-getter. Thanks Wayne-O! We DO appreciate you and your efforts.

Avid angler and regular Tarboro Weekly Tight Lines reader (had to get that in there), Henry Brown of Pinetops, caught the first Tar River hickory shad of the 2016 season. He was fishing the mouth of Town Creek near Old Sparta, Sunday afternoon, February 21, 2016. Brown's very capable net man was his grandson, Caleb Boseman. Wifey and I enjoyed an outing with Henry and Caleb at Susan's Sweet Water Lake in Williamston with Captain Jeff Koen, of FishIBX at the helm. We had a ball catching those feisty hybrid rockfish.

Jimmy Dupree Jr, inventor and owner of Custom Jimmy-D Shad Rigs, in addition to donating a variety card of rigs to our prize package has agreed to an additional bonus card if the winning fish is caught on a Jimmy-D. The bonus card will be 6 of the identical rig that caught the winning fish. To qualify and receive the bonus card of rigs, the angler needs to bring in the rig used at the same time the winning "hick" is checked in at the shoe store. Again, honor system in play.

Prize package consists of 100 percent of donated gifts and items. Tight Lines derives no profit or financial consideration or advantage from instigating and managing this annual contest. Why do we do it? Wifey and I enjoy the interaction with anglers and sponsors.

Rick's Soapbox - Tight Lines' friend and fellow shad enthusiast, Mike Johnson, of Macclesfield, recently had knee surgery. Our kind thoughts and prayers are with him as he recovers.

Johnson is a fixture during shad season at the boat ramp in Battle Park. During the peak of shad season, he puts his boat in EVERY DAY, sometimes twice a day. He is popular among the regular bank-jockeys because of his friendly, helpful attitude. He is always an accurate barometer of Tar River shad catching activity in Battle Park. From all your shadster friends, feel better, and get those new knees in good working, shad-catching condition.

Looking forward to getting my large, slow-moving hindquarters out of your way this upcoming shad season, as you back your boat down the Battle Park boat ramp for another exciting shad adventure.

Catching fish? Good for you! Stay warm out there! Clue us in on all the good details at carolinaangler@gmail.com. Large file, high resolution fishy pix float our boat too.

See you on the water, my friend!