

Angler hopes to qualify again for bass tourney

Eight years ago, as an amateur breaking into the bass fishing tournament scene, Livonia resident Art Ferguson earned a spot in the prestigious B.A.S.S. Masters Classic by finishing first in the amateur Federation Tournament. As the only amateur in the tournament, it was an honor he'll never forget and to this day Ferguson is one of just three Michigan anglers to have ever qualified and fished in the Classic.

This year, Ferguson is embarking on yet another bass fishing journey that he hopes will lead to another berth in the Classic. Ferguson finished 16th last year in the B.A.S.S. Masters Eastern Invitational standing, which earned him a berth in the

B.A.S.S. K Mart Top 150 Pro-Am tour where he'll compete against the top bass anglers in the world.

The competition will be fierce, but Ferguson won't be battling the odds alone. Ferguson's cousin, Bloomfield Hills resident Kyle Green, has also qualified for the Top-160 circuit through money winnings and will join Ferguson in a quest to reach the Classic. Technically, they'll be competing against each other, but they'll be able to help each other along the way as well.

"Kyle and I will be working and rooming together," said Ferguson. "We'll be able to do some pre-tournament fishing together, and we'll room together when we're on the road. It will be nice

to have someone there that you know and it will help to cut down on some of the expenses, too."

Expenses will be high. The tournament trail rolls throughout the eastern and southern United States and begins Aug. 23-29 on the Potomac River in Maryland. Ferguson estimates it will cost him upwards of \$20,000 to complete the circuit. Although he gets support from sponsors such as Jan's Sports Shop, Hamilton Chevrolet, Terminator Titanium Spinner Baits and Northfield Manufacturing, he still needs to fish well to break even.

"I couldn't have broken into the Top 160 without my sponsors, but I'll still have to do well

to make any money," said Ferguson. "If I do well in the first two tournaments I should be OK, but if I don't make any money early, I could be in trouble. Hopefully, I'll do well and things will work out."

So far this summer, things have been working out very well for the 35-year-old angler. Besides running a guide service on Lake St. Clair and Saginaw Bay, Ferguson has been busy fishing the local bass tournaments.

He has won two open tournaments on Lake St. Clair, and after three tournaments in the Michigan Division of the Red Man Tournament Trail, Ferguson was in first place in the point standings. He has two

fourth-place finishes and one eighth-place finish.

The top five anglers in the division at the conclusion of the sixth tournament advance to the Red Man Regional where a fully-rigger bass boat is up for grabs.

In his spare time, Ferguson has been busy with cable TV and radio engagements.

Locally, you can get fishing tips and facts from Ferguson each Thursday at 6:40 p.m. on Sports Wrap on WJR (760 AM) radio. He'll also be featured in an upcoming fishing show called O'Neill Outside.

The show was filmed on Florida's Lake Okechobee, where Ferguson guides during the winter, back in March. It will air at 12:30 p.m. Friday, Aug. 14 on

the Sunshine Network, 1:30 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 15, on the Outdoor Channel and 7 a.m. Sunday, Aug. 16, on the Outdoor Life Network.

Northern exposure

Bob Collins has enjoyed a great summer of fishing. He traveled south and fished Cape Hatteras, North Carolina earlier this year and ventured to Key West Florida to wet a line as well. But the Oxford resident admits, "It doesn't get any better than catching a large fish from a local Oakland County lake."

That's exactly what Collins did early last month. Fishing on Squaw Lake in Oxford, Collins hooked and landed a mighty 6-pound, 34-inch Northern pike.

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

ARCHERY

STATE 3D

Detroit Archers will host the state 3D championships on Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 22-23, on its walk-through course in West Bloomfield. Call (810) 661-9610 for more information.

WWCCA 3D

Western Wayne County Conservation Association will hold a 30-target 3D shoot on Sunday, Aug. 23, on its walk-through range in Plymouth. Call (313) 463-9943.

JUNIOR OLYMPICS

The Oakland County Sportsman Club in Clarkston offers a Junior Olympic Archery Development Program beginning at 1 p.m. on Sundays. Call (248) 623-0444.

JUNIOR ARCHERS

A weekly program for junior archers begins at 9 a.m. Saturdays at Detroit Archers in West Bloomfield. Call (248) 661-9610 or (313) 835-2110.

CLINICS

WATERFOWL HUNTING

The Bluewater Chapter of the Michigan Duck Hunters Association and the Perch Point Conservation Club will hold a clinic on how to hunt waterfowl beginning at 8 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 22, at

the Perch Point Conservation Club in Marine City. Admission is \$10 and kids age 16 and under accompanied by an adult will be admitted free. Call (810) 412-7141 or (248) 852-7326.

TURKEY HUNTING

Jay's Sporting Goods of Clare, the Michigan DNR and the Michigan Wild Turkey-Hunters Association will be conducting Michigan's first fall turkey hunting workshop beginning at 9 a.m. Saturday, Sept. 19, at day's. Fall hunting techniques, calling, the use of decoys, laws, turkey biology and much more will be discussed by some of the state's most noted turkey experts.

FLY TYING

Paint Creek Outfitters in Rochester offers a variety of fly tying classes for beginners and advanced tiers. Call (248) 650-0440 for more information or to make a reservation for an upcoming class.

HUNTER EDUCATION

Wayne County Sportsman's Club will hold several hunter education classes in the upcoming months at its clubhouse and grounds in Romulus. These classes will be taught by certified instructors. Students must be present for both days of their

respective class. All equipment will be provided. Classes will be offered Oct. 3-4, Oct. 17-18 and Nov. 7-8. Cost is \$10.50 and includes lunch both days. To pre-register call (313) 941-9688 after Aug. 15.

WINGSHOOTING SCHOOL

Hunters Ridge Hunt Club in Oxford will host the Fieldport Wingshooting School on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12-13. Master gunfitter and certified instructor Bryan Billinski, who is credited with bringing sporting clays to the United States, will lead the school, which will cover all aspects of proficient shooting. Call (616) 938-0707 (daytime) or (248) 637-2446 (evenings) for more information.

FESTIVALS

POINTE MOULLEE WATERFOWL

The 51st annual Pointe Mouillee Waterfowl Festival, formerly known as the Michigan Duck Hunter's Tournament, will land at the Lake Erie Marsh in Brownstown Twp. on Saturday and Sunday, Sept. 12-13. The event features the annual Mid-west Decoy Contest, one of the biggest events of its kind. There will also be wildlife art, taxidermy displays, an outdoor trading post stocked with hunting and fishing equipment and much more. The Monroe Sporting Collectibles Show will be held in conjunction with the festival on Friday, Sept. 11, at the Monroe Holiday Inn. Call (734) 379-9902 for more information or call Pointe Mouillee at (734) 379-9692 on Mondays or Wednesdays.

SEASON/DATES

GOOSE

The September Canada goose season will be Sept. 1-15 in the Lower Peninsula and Sept. 1-10 in the Upper Peninsula. (The counties of Huron, Tuscola and Saginaw will be closed for the early season.) The daily bag limit is five.

WATERFOWL

Waterfowl hunters have until Aug. 28 to apply for a reserved hunt permit.

METROPARKS

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS

Most Metropark programs are free while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration

and a motor vehicle permit are required for all programs. Call the respective parks toll free at the following numbers: Stony Creek, 1-800-477-7766; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3192; Kensington, 1-800-477-3178.

1998 PERMITS

The 1998 Huron-Clinton Metroparks annual vehicle entry permits and boat launching permits are on sale at all Metropark offices. Vehicle entry permits are \$15 (\$8 for senior citizens). The annual boat launching permits are \$18 (\$9 for senior citizens). Call 1-800-47-PARKS for more information.

BATS 'R' UP

Enjoy an evening with and learn about the bats during this program, which includes a slide presentation and an outdoor observation session, which begin at 8 p.m. Friday, Aug. 14, at Indian Springs.

HURON RIVER CLEANUP

Volunteers are needed to help clean refuse from the Huron River between Hudson Mills Metropark and Delhi Metropark. The cleanup will take place 8 a.m.-1 p.m. Saturday, August 16. Volunteers should meet at Delhi Metropark. Lunch and snacks will be provided. Call (734) 426-

8211 for more information.

GEOLOGY BADGE

Junior Girl Scouts can complete their requirements for the geology badge during this program, which will be held throughout the day on Saturday, Aug. 15, at Indian Springs. Participants should call ahead for times.

ECOLOGOY BADGE

Junior Girl Scouts can complete their requirements for the ecology badge during this program, which will be held throughout the day on Saturday, Aug. 15, at Indian Springs. Participants should call ahead for times.

SHADY LAKE

A naturalist-led hike along a tree-shaded trail begins at 10 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 15, at Kensington.

SLOPPIN' THE HOGS

Agas five and older can help feed and water the farm animals during this program, which begins at 3 p.m. Saturday, Aug. 15, at the Kensington Farm Center.

BUTTERFLIES AND HUMMINGBIRDS

Learn how to plant a garden that will attract butterflies and hummingbirds during this program, which begins at 2 p.m. Sunday, Aug. 16, at Kensington.

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