

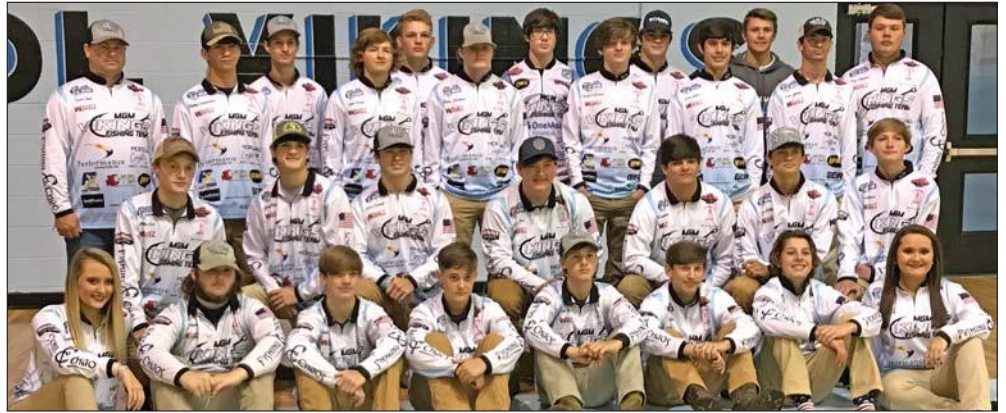
MGM's proud anglers

BY JOHN N. FELSHER

Before a big event, Brandon Lee, Preston Freeman and 40 other team members, including some girls, wear their jerseys to class at Mary G. Montgomery High School and Semmes Middle School in Semmes, something millions of student athletes do in schools across the nation. However, these student athletes worry more about boat control than ball control.

Brandon, a 17-year-old senior and president of the MGM Vikings Fishing Team, and Preston, a 17-year-old junior, both fish bass tournaments for their school. Preston also plays on the MGM High School football team as a linebacker.

"I really don't see any difference in how people around the school treat us for being on the fishing team compared to the football team," Preston advised. "Everyone loves our tournament jerseys. It's a big responsibility being on both teams. It takes a lot of time and we still have to keep our grades up. During football season, we might have a game



The Mary G. Montgomery High School Fishing Team.

MGM Fishing Team photo

on the Friday night before a tournament. I have to leave that night to go to the lake for the tournament. That's rough. I'll try to take a nap in the car on the way there."

Under the leadership of Brandon's father, Chris Lee, the MGM fishing team parent sponsor and coach, the team formed in 2015. Now, they fish Alabama Bass Federation and Alabama B.A.S.S.

Nation tournaments against other high school teams in the local area and around Alabama.

"Fishing is not recognized by the state of Alabama as a school sport, but a club like any other club in the school," Coach Lee explained. "Student fishing events are growing at a rapid pace in

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J.SMITH CONTRACTORS

The Ultimate Metal Building
P.O. Box 158
Chunchula, AL 36521
Cell: 251-751-0009

Email: jsmithcontractors@yahoo.com

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