

# CITRONELLE FISHING: Club immediately successful

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coaches for Citronelle High. "There's no reason why females can't participate. At the college level, scouts are also looking to give scholarships to female anglers."

"We love being in the club," added Sawyer, who also plays halfback and defensive end for the Citronelle High football team. "I've been fishing most of my life with my dad and family. I've always dreamed of being on a fishing team. I would like to go to college and pursue football and fishing. I'd major in forestry. Working out and playing football keeps me busy, but I fish when I can."

Sawyer and Tyler usually fish together as a team. They normally compete in about 10 to 12 tournaments per season. Tyler loves to fish with spinnerbaits and crankbaits, landing at least one bass exceeding eight pounds. He plays baseball for Citronelle High and hopes to earn either a fishing or baseball scholarship one day to study forestry.

"It's a fun experience fishing on the team," Tyler echoed. "I've been fishing my whole life with my family. I never really looked into team fishing until we started putting the club together. It would be my dream to become a profes-

sional fisherman. Fishing takes up a lot of time, especially in the spring. We just have to make time. We usually get to miss school on the Friday before tournaments."

An adult "boat captain" also accompanies each of the student teams when fishing tournaments. The boat captain, usually one of the students' parents, but sometimes just a volunteer from the community, typically owns the boat. The boat captain drives the vehicle to the launch and stays with the student anglers throughout the day. However, the captain does not fish.

"In some cases, local anglers in the community who fish their own tournaments let us use their boats," Pippin explained. "At the junior high level, the adults drive the tow vehicle and the boat. Adults can help with things like the trolling motor while the kids are casting. They can't really interact with the kids as far as telling them how or where to fish. At the high school level, once the adult drives the members to



Huntley Dees

the launch, the students take over and operate the trolling motor. The adults can't offer advice to the anglers or help them fish. The adults are just there for safety reasons."

The club periodically raises money to help cover expenses such as the cost of fuel, lodging for out of town events, entry fees and other miscellaneous purchases. The Citronelle

Recreation Board bought uniforms for the team members. Other area businesses also help support the young anglers.

"The support we receive from the community is overwhelming," Pippin commented. "Randy Campbell, the Citronelle High School principal, is very supportive of the team. We want everyone in the area to realize that we have a need for these kinds of programs and give every kid the best opportunity we can. We want to grow more as a club and give more back to the community. As a club, we want to host some youth fishing tournaments and other events. We always need more volunteers to help."

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