

# Madole brothers capture gold at 17th annual TOBI

By DONALD GERVAIS  
Lakecaster Correspondent

Richard and Ronnie Madole didn't have a leprechaun in their weigh bag at the final weigh in of the 17th Annual Texas Oilman's Bass Invitational (TOBI) on St. Patrick's Day, but they did have the luck of the Irish, as they won the tournament by a margin of 0.11 pounds-the weight of a keychain.

Richard and Ronnie led the tournament on Day 1 with the largest stringer of the tournament- 25.28 pounds, however victory was not assured when the largest fish of their Day 2 catch was announced to be 2.48 pounds. The Shreveport brothers let out a sigh of relief when their two day total of 37.06 pounds was announced.

John Schweitzer and partner Bill Ligon were barely beaten with their combined weight of 36.95 pounds. The anglers may well feel like "Never the bride, always the bridesmaid," in their 5th second place finish in oilfield tournaments during their 15 years of fishing together. The team improved one notch from their 3rd place Day 1 standing.

Barry and Brad Barone, a father and son team from Picyune, Ms, slid one notch in the standings from their second place of Day 1 to 3rd overall with catches of 21.84 and 8.78-pounds.

Big Bass of Day 1 and of the tournament went to Mike Albertson and partner Patrick Malloy with a Toledo Bend lunger of 9.71-pounds. The same margin as the total stringers, 0.11 pounds, separated the big bass and runner up big bass of the tournament. Kory Martinez's 9.6-pound lunger was barely beaten but was Big Bass for

Day 2.

"It's all for the kids," is the TOBI motto, the kids of the Texas Children's Hospital, the main beneficiary of the TOBI. Dr. Brewer, Chief of the Nephrology Service at the Houston hospital was on hand at Saturday's finale to accept a check for \$120,000, the largest ever donation from the TOBI.

"TOBI is honored to do this for the kids at the hospital and proud that we do the yearly children's fishing tournament and the gifts we give to the patients and siblings each Christmas," said Jimmy Moore, TOBI president. "The nephrology department doesn't receive the monies as the cancer or cardiac units do. They have named an exam room the 'TOBI Room' in our honor."

Payback to the anglers was the largest ever. \$112,525 was returned to the anglers. The top 150 teams each day earned a check as did the top 150 overall finishers. The top 5 big bass each day also received checks. The fishing teams earned their money this year under trying conditions.

As if on cue, North winds began to blow across the Big Bend's 362,000 acres at the 7 a.m. fishing time on Friday to challenge the 350 teams entered in the contest. The north winds continued to blow throughout the day, gusting to 25 mph, making fishing conditions tough and boating hazardous. Three teams managed to bring in 5-fish limits over 20 pounds on Day 1. Under the bluebird skies of Day 2 and south winds gusting to 15 mph, no limit over 20 pounds was recorded. The Harpers were close with 19.15 pounds and took the honors of big stringer for the day.

Butch and Joan Harper of Hemphill, married and fishing together for 36 years, made a comeback from their Day 1 standing of 166th place to take 14th place overall. Butch and Joan are well known by East Texas oilfield fishermen for their involvement in the South East Texas Oilmen tournaments. The first place finish on Day 2 was the best ever for the couple. Joan caught four of their five-fish from the back of the boat, including her kicker fish of 6.92 pounds. Moore was the first angler to try to recruit Joan to be his partner for next year's tournament; Joan however declined and said she was keeping Butch. The Madole brothers are likely to stay partners as well.

"We went back to the same place we caught the 25 pound sack on Day 1," said co-champion Richard. "We caught 25 fish but they were all small, the big ones had moved out. It was the only place we had found fish in practice so we stayed and ounce by ounce we improved the limit. The last one we culled made the difference to get 11.78 pounds today."

Richard piloted his Blazer bass boat, powered by a Yamaha engine to the northern Louisiana side of the lake where they targeted fish in 2-6 depths, concentrating efforts on points with Carolina rigged (1/2-ounce sinker) Zoom Centipedes-watermelon-colored. Tackle of choice were Loomis fishing poles with Shimano reels, spooled with 20-pound Berkley Big Game line-green colored. Their biggest fish on Day 1, a 7.41 pound bass came at 7:30 a.m. on their second bite of the day.

Consistent 18 pound limits each day earned Schweitzer of Houston and Ligon of

Pleasant Hill, the runners up spot. Schweitzer ran his Champion bass boat, powered by an Evinrude motor to the Texas South end of the lake where he used his Lowrance electronics to locate grass beds in 6-8 foot depths. They pitched spinnerbaits and Carolina rigged Baby Brushhogs with Shimano rods and reels, spooled with Gamma fluorocarbon lines in 15 and 20-pound test to get their back-to-back limits.

The Barones, who lost house and business to Hurricane Katrina, made their way to Toledo Bend to fish their third TOBI and claim 3rd place. Father Barry credited his son with most of the catching, including the 8.78 bass (2nd big bass of the day) which anchored their Day 1 limit.

Richard piloted his Team Skeeter bass boat, powered by a Yamaha engine to mid-lake areas on the Texas side south of the Pendleton Bridge, where they targeted fish in 12-15 depths around grass. He used Shimano reels spooled with Stren-low visibility line and Buzzy Custom Rods. The rods are not made by someone named Buzzy, the rods actually buzz. Hidden in the handle of the bait and casting rods is a AAA-battery and a vibrator. A button on the rod activates it and sends a buzz through the pole and down the line. A review of the product can be found at: [http://www.bass-resource.com/fishing\\_lures/buzz.html](http://www.bass-resource.com/fishing_lures/buzz.html).

The Buzzy rod was used to buzz a Senko, watermelon-red colored, rigged Texas style with a 1/8 ounce sinker, around submerged grass in 12-15 foot depths. The big bass was also the second bite of the day for Richard and came at 7:05 a.m. Their Day 2

catch gave them a 31st place finish for Day 2.

"I've netted several big fish for my partner Patrick over the years," said Albertson, a Houston angler, "It was his turn to net one for me." The Big Bass of the tournament was the largest Toledo Bend bass for the Sierra Engineering employee, who had two previous #2 big bass awards in TOBI tournaments.

The fish bit at 10 a.m. at mid lake in 5 feet of water on a 3/8 ounce gold/silver tandem willow leaf spinnerbait. Albertson was using a Kistler rod and Shimano reel, spooled with 20-pound Sunline fluorocarbon line. He and his partner have been fishing together for 18 years. They claimed 9th place on Day 1 and 13th place overall.

Day 2 big bass angler Kory Martinez did not touch his 9.6-pound lunger until he carried it from the live well to the weigh in scale. After a hard fought acrobatic struggle the fish was lipped, un-hooked and put into the live well by his 10-year fishing partner David Rutley of Marrero, La.

"I had an emotional moment and had to lie down of the deck and recover," said Martinez. It is the biggest bass of the Houma angler's life, who won the Louisiana Spot Clay Champion in 2005 and is nationally ranked in clay shooting competition.

The lunger struck a watermelon fluke, mid lake on the Louisiana side at 1:50 p.m. He was using an All-Star rod and Curado reel spooled with 10-pound test Stren green line, weighted by a split shot.

Each angler in the TOBI is eligible for the luck of the draw bass boat given away at the finale. The winner of this year's 2000XZ bass boat, powered by a Yamaha engine

was Douglas Littleton of New Caney, Tx.

"Are you sitting down?" he asked his wife on the telephone after his name was drawn. "I won a \$38,000 boat." Littleton's wife had to be reassured by Matt Pase, of Dawson Marine in Beaumont that indeed he had won it.



"This is the 10th Anniversary for Skeeter Boats with the TOBI," said Moore. "It is because of the fishermen, sponsors, directors and workers that the tournament is possible."

A dozen members of the Skeeter Team were on hand during the two days to give demonstration rides in various Skeeter boat/Yamaha motor combinations. John Presley, sales manager of Dawson Marine in Jasper, was on hand to present the boat to Littleton, who until now had been fishing from an 18-year-old boat.

Survivability of the 2,310 fish brought to the scales was over 99.9% due in part to the anglers handling of the fish and the proficiency of the TOBI weigh in workers. It was the second year the tournament used laptops and a network to stream line and hasten the return of the 5137-pounds of fish into the water. Members of the junior class of Negreet High School worked as fish runners to earn money for their prom.

Steve Foster of Amazon Tours, in Coppell, Tx. returned to the TOBI and held a drawing for a trip for peacock bass in Brazil. The proceeds of the drawing, between \$8-9 thousand were donated to the Children's Hospital. The winner of the trip was James Rodney. The TOBI awarded \$1,000 to the Toledo Bend Lake Association's Restocking Program.

## Few Ready Mix Concrete Co. Community Calendar April 2007

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> •Jasper Air Show, Call 384-2626 for more information  Palm Sunday  <b>April Fool's Day</b>	<b>2</b> • Jasper Lakes Area Humane Society, 5:30 p.m., City Hall •Deep East Texas Arch. Society meeting, Newton County History Center, 7 p.m. • JJHS-Pep Rally, 2:45 p.m.	<b>3</b> • JEDCO monthly meeting, 6 p.m., City Hall • Friends of Job, Frst Baptist Church Parlor, 6:30-8 p.m. Call 698-2358 for more info • Rowe-5th grade Math TAKS • Rowe-6th grade, Lufkin Zoo	<b>4</b> • Rowe-5th grade, Lufkin Zoo	<b>5</b> •TopsTX Chapter 1065 meet every Thursday, 5:45 p.m. First Bank and Trust Board Room. Call 381-8642 or 383-0357 • JISD- End of 6 weeks • Few- PRIDE Carnival	<b>6</b> • JISD- School Holiday  Good Friday	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b>  Happy Easter	<b>9</b> • East Texas Art League, 6 p.m. • Commissioners Court, 9 a.m. • City Council Meeting, 6 p.m. • School Board Meeting, 7 p.m.	<b>10</b> • Chamber of Commerce Embassy Club Meeting, 12 p.m.	<b>11</b> • Book Lovers Club, 2 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, Call 698-2602 for more information	<b>12</b> • Woman's Civic Club of Jasper, Kentucky Derby Luncheon, Swann Hotel, 11:30 a.m.	<b>13</b> • JISD-Report Cards	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> • Chamber of Commerce Executive Meeting, 10:30 a.m. • Board of Directors Meeting, 11:30 a.m. • "Caring Friends" Luncheon, Belle Jim Hotel, 11:00 a.m. • Friends of Job, First Baptist Church, 6:30-8 p.m.	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> • Pine Country Gem & Mineral Society, monthly meeting, 7 p.m. Lutheran Church Fellowship Hall	<b>20</b> • Parnell-Carnival	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> • East Texas Photography Club monthly meeting, 7 p.m., City Hall • Parnell-4th grade Spring Musical	<b>25</b> Secretary's Day 	<b>26</b> •TopsTX Chapter 1065 meet every Thursday, 5:45 p.m. First Bank and Trust Board Room. Call 381-8642 or 383-0357 •Few-1st grade program • Parnell-GT to Health Museum Houston • Rowe-Mad Science Party	<b>27</b> • Rowe-Group picture • Rowe-5th grade Spelling Bee • Few-Olympics	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>					

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