

THE FISHIN' INSIDER

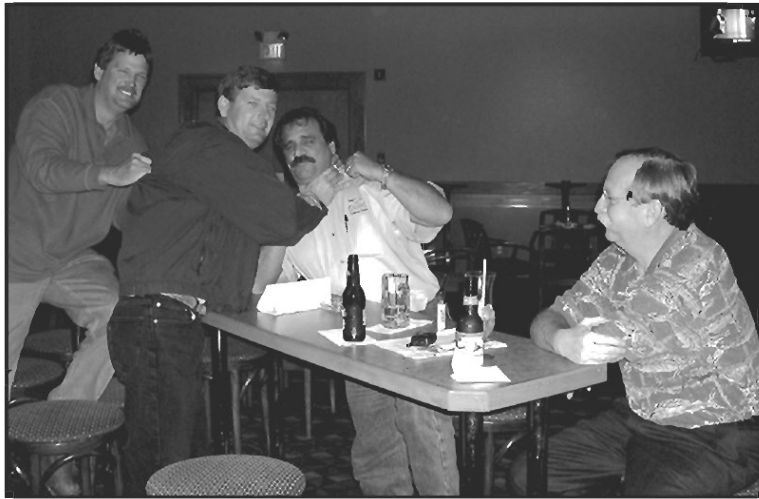
by I.B. Hooked
Member Outdoor Writers Association of America and
The Texas Outdoor Writers Association

PLEASE NOTE: WE AT THE COASTAL CURRENT ACCEPT NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE FOLLOWING NOR CAN WE IMAGINE WHY WE AGREED TO PRINT IT.

Poor Richard Leard, he was the Gulf Council staff member runnin' the show at last Monday evening's scoping session at the Sheraton in Brownsville. I might add that this was one well attended to-do. Ya got the unholy alliance of Phil Calo, Patrick Murphy and Russell Stockton, the Coastal Conservation Association, the Recreational Fishing Alliance and the Texas Shrimp Association and some other near-do-wells in the crowd. I'll give Richard this, he knew he was in a hostile environment so before he opened the floor for comment, he stated that all the changes contemplated in the Draft Amendments for red snapper and shrimp had not factored in the fact that economics had the shrimp fleet draggin' at 30% of norm and that Dennis-Katrina-Rita-Wilma had pretty much wrecked

the recreational and commercial fishin' bidness east of Beaumont.

Enter the screechers. Josh Fields of the CCA lambasted the council for not forcing the shrimpers to do more to reduce shrimp trawl by-catch and for generally coddling



The unholy alliance, Russell Stockton, Patrick Murphy and Phil Calo with Jim Smarr lookin' on. Club Catzz was hoppin after the meeting.

shrimpers at the expense of recreational fisherman. Harley Laundrie of the TSA lambasted the council for not forcing each and every recreational fishin' boat to get a federal permit to catch red snapper. He also mentioned all the misery the shrimpers have been through because of the Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtle and didn't seem to think the l'il beggars should still be on the endangered species list. I think the boy may have a point on that one, ever since Ila Loetcher conned our

brothers to the south, specifically the ranchers around Rancho Nuevo into lettin' her and her followers protect the hatch they've been repopulatin' like crazy. Before then the nests were raided by us two legged critters cuz of an ol' wives tale that claimed if ya fry up the eggs with some roe they were guaranteed to put lead in the pencil if ya know what I mean and I think ya do. Jim Smarr of the RFA pointed out that the council was rigged cuz of the east of the Mississippi gang that has the majority vote on all issues. That the data used to make stock assessments was as seriously flawed as the computer models themselves, that Texas should be a separate fishery cuz we're a deepwater fishery and that their rules sucked because of the forced regulatory by-kill. He also mentioned that if they'd just let us keep the first 5 to 7 fish no minimum size the fishery would be in much better shape than it already is. At least he didn't moon the burns. Matt Murphy made some eloquent comments that summed up the problem. The folks that're makin' the regs ain't fishermen, they're political hacks controlled by the bunny huggers that want to turn the gulf into a frigg'n' petting zoo. I'll drink to that.

We welcome your fishin' photos. Drop them by 2600 Padre Boulevard on the Island, or mail them to I.B. Hooked, c/o Coastal Current Weekly, P.O.Box 2429, South Padre Island, Texas 78597. Be sure to include the name of the angler, weight and type of fish, where caught, and name of boat if applicable. Photos with SASE will be returned.