



THE FISHERMAN'S INSIDER

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What was lookin' like just another long, hot summer took a serious turn for the better the end of last week. The Kinkster is on the ballot with over 130,000 verified sigs and the Neasy Ol' Grandma made it with just under 110,000. Ya gotta wonder, the Lass of many last names was payin' a c-note a day for her folks to get sigs on her petition yet barely a third held up to scrutiny by a Fort Worth car dealer. The Kinkster was all volunteer and had less than a 20% kick rate. A reminder to you offshore boat owners, Queen Carol was the witch that sat with her mouth shut a few years back when Parks & Wildlife was tryin' to raise a l'il dinero for their budget by havin' every marine vessel register with the state and pay a fee. Sales tax was never mentioned in any discussion but when the ink had dried come to find out that if it weren't for Julius Collins and an eleventh hour scramble to Austin the strippers as well as a bunch of other folks would've taken another shot where the sun don't shine. He got an exemption for workin' boats over 65 feet and grand fathered boats owned for five years or more from the 5% sales tax. The witch did put some damn fine fisherfolks out of bizness, George Tate comes to mind, Parks & Wildlife did get about a roll or so they were seriously needin' but the big bucks and I've heard figures rangin' up to half a billion went strait to hell in the general fund. Also Jimmy Buffet has hopped aboard the Kinkster's bandwagon; the last time I seen the likes of this was back in the late 80's. The Texas Horseman's Association held a gig in Big D with George Strait, Willy Nelson and a thoroughly liquefied

Jimmy Dean. Petitions were signed and a bunch of dinero was raised and about a year later horse racin' in Texas was legal.

Now to finish last week's business. Where I left off was the Gulf Council had voted to begin a plan amendment in Tampa to divide the Gulf into separate management zones for red snapper. Part of this was Dr. Roy Crabtree's intransigents on the total allowable catch. Roy is head of the Southeast Regional Office of the National Marine Fisheries Service and still refuses to consider the fatal flaws in the population model pointed out by the Shipp-Minton letter. Why he is so intransigent is anybody's guess cuz he ain't telling but he'd just returned through a vote on a TAC reduction from 9.12 million pounds down to 5 or so million pounds, a draconian measure that would've killed the recreational sector. The affect it would have on the commercial is unclear since it's pretty clear that NOAA-NMFS is clueless on the actual haul which is reasonably speculated at around twenty million pounds in Texas alone. Dr Crabtree's



Travis Howard caught and released this huge Texas snook fishin' with Captain Phil Hill; the fish was estimated at 20 pounds.

reaction to the proposed plan amendment comin' to a vote was, to steal a phrase from Jap Cartwright, was as if he'd just opened the fridge and found Fidel Castro hidin' behind the lettuce. He went pale in shock then red in anger when the vote affirmed the plan action. He still refuses to consider the fact that the red snapper stock recruitment is habitat dependant and there has been a considerable increase in habitat over the last fifty years due to the oil and gas industry. And per Jim "Bulldog" Smarr of the RFA- Texas you ain't seen nothin' yet cuz Jerry Patterson head of GLO is

sittin' on a pile of dinero for use in the artificial reef program and the plan is to sprinkle these jewels around every pass along the Texas Gulf Coast.

Forth of July weekend means a two day marlin hunt for the club, weigh-in will be over by Dirty AJ's at the Sea Ranch Marina Saturday and Sunday from 6-7:30.

We welcome your fishin' photos. Drop them by 2680 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 BASE will be returned.