

# The River News

The Official Newsletter of the Delaware River Fishermen's Association

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September-October 2023

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## Gregg Southrey Maintains AOTY Lead With Summer Bass And Catfish Catches

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DRFA angler Gregg Southrey is not letting up on the gas pedal as he continued to weigh in legal fish in the two most recent summer tournaments to stretch his AOTY lead to 97 points.

Gregg is the only angler to have weighed in six fish in the seven tournaments held to date. George Hoffman and Ron Soto remain well within striking distance with five fish weighed in to date.

That being said, nine additional anglers still have a shot at one of the top-three cash prizes in the annual competition. A complete accounting of all 24 anglers in the 2023 competition is included in the AOTY article on page 7 of this newsletter.

### President's Message

Fall, the season has changed again and the fish know it. The leaves change and fall as do the feeding patterns of the fish we chase. The air is nice and brisk in the morning and typically warms as the day moves along. The

water temperature will get cooler along with the air. Tournament season is coming down to the wire. There are still two tournaments to go and it is anybody's chance to catch a nice keeper and raise your standings. So as the season comes to a close, good luck, and be careful on the water. Boat smartly.

*Bob Jack*

### Help Needed For October Silver Lake Nature Center Family Fishing Event

The major Silver Lake Nature Center fishing event of the year – the Family Fishing Day – will be held on Saturday October 14 from 10:00 am until 1:00 pm.

We will need plenty of volunteers to man this event, as all open slots for participation have been filled and the event is closed to future registrations. This event is our major source of service hours that help defray the cost of our meeting space. Learn more at the upcoming September DRFA meeting and sign up to help at this event.

### Minutes Of The July Meeting

President Bob Jack called the July meeting to order at 7:04 pm with 18 members in attendance. The

minutes from the June meeting were read and approved.

**Treasury Report:** The Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$8,227.16 as of July 25. By comparison, last year's end-of-July balance was

### Important Dates

**Wednesday, September 27, 7 pm.** Monthly Meeting at Silver Lake Nature Center. Nominations for 2024 Club Officers.

**Saturday, September 30, 7 am.** Club Bass Tournament at Bulls Island Access Ramp.

**Saturday, October 14.** Family Fishing Day at Silver Lake Nature Center. 9 am start for DRFA volunteers. 10 am start for family participants.

**Sunday, October 15, 7 am.** SJBCA Bass Bowl Tournament at Union Lake In Millville, NJ.

**Wednesday, October 25, 7 pm.** Monthly Meeting at Silver Lake Nature Center. Nominations and elections for 2024 Club Officers.

**Saturday, October 28, 7 am.** Club Bass Tournament at the Byram Access Ramp.

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\$8,235.60 – a difference of \$8.44 more in 2022.

**Membership Report:**

Membership Secretary Rick Mawson stated that the membership was up by two new members, totaling 55 paid members as of the end of July.

**Tournament Report:**

Tournament Director Scott McDonough read the results of the July Catfish Tournament and described a bit of confusion at the tournament weigh-in. Scott emphasized the importance for members fishing in the same boat to differentiate which fish they weigh in at the scale. Whether or not it involves any difference in tournament payouts between the two anglers involved, any mix-ups between fishing partners can affect the Angler of the Year standings for other anglers in the annual competition.

In other business, Bob Jack submitted the roster of DRFA members eligible for the SJBCA Bass Bowl in October. Members qualify for the event according to their points earned from bass tournaments from the last event of the 2022 season through the end of September 2023.

**Youth Activities:** Because no applications were submitted for the planned Youth Fishing Derby, the event was not held. Potential participants who had earlier indicated interest were unable to attend on the proposed date of the event.

**Old Business:** Club merchandise available from the new provider of silk screened T-shirts, sweatshirts, embroidered hats,

mugs, etc. can be ordered directly from the supplier’s website. The club will make \$2.00 per item. Bryan Malkiewicz offered to deliver the finished merchandise to Club meetings and tournaments in order to save shipping charges for members.

Club members voted 10-0 to adopt a new version of the DRFA logo including a more natural river contour to standardize the new merchandise. It will be implemented upon approval of the final modified artwork. Hats will need to be ordered in lots of 12 by the club, but individual hats and any other merchandise in the supplier’s list of offerings can be ordered by members as one-off purchases.

Bob Jack once again issued an appeal for a Show Coordinator to ensure the most efficient scheduling and payment for winter-outdoor-show fundraising and membership recruitment.

**Environmental Report:** John Pedrick discussed dissolved oxygen levels related to rising water temperatures and elevated water flows throughout the summer and noted that they are expected to decline again as water flows recede to more normal levels. Scott commented on the importance of good live well management to keep fish alive during the August bass tournament.

**Fishing Reports:** Frank Beck fished Lambertville to Stockton on the day before the meeting to catch five smallmouth. He and Ron Soto fished the tidal river on the day of the meeting to catch

eight catfish but did not report any large fish.

Pete Antoniewicz reported no luck fishing the river out of Darby Creek the week before the meeting. He and Bryan Malkiewicz had one smallmouth fishing north of Camden on the day of the meeting. He reported seeing lots of eel grass but not a lot of fish.

Scott reported catching no bass in Darby Creek on the high tide the weekend before the meeting but did catch five bass in Big Timber Creek as the tide was going out.

The 50/50 drawing for \$40.00 dollars was won by Scott McDonough. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 pm.

**Minutes Of The August Meeting**

President Bob Jack called the meeting to order at 7:04 pm with 14 members in attendance. The minutes of the July meeting were read and approved.

**Treasury Report:** Treasurer Eileen Kicinski read the financial report, which showed a balance of \$8,122.85 as of August 30, which was \$89.90 better than the \$8,032.95 end-of-August balance in 2022.

**Membership Report:**

Membership Secretary Rick Mawson stated that the membership remained the same as last month, at 55 members.

**Tournament Report:** In the absence of Tournament Director Scott McDonough, Gregg Southrey provided the top-line

**KEY CONTACTS:** *Tournament Hotline:* 267-934-2148 • *Email Address:* [DRFA\\_TheRiverNews@hotmail.com](mailto:DRFA_TheRiverNews@hotmail.com)  
 • *President:* Bob Jack, 609-760-0281 • *Vice President/Tournament Director:* Scott McDonough, 215-989-0153 •  
*Treasurer:* Eileen Kicinski, 215-713-4951 • *Recording Secretary/Newsletter Editor:* Pete Antoniewicz, 609-751-7545 • *Membership Secretary/Webmaster:* Rick Mawson, 267-934-2148 • *Youth Activities Director:* Charles Bay, 609-744-8260 • *Tackle Bag Coordinator:* Pete Marcolina, 215-637-4555 • *Trustees:* Frank Beck, Harry Wirebach, John Pedrick, Gregg Southrey

results of the August Bass Tournament.

Bob Jack reported that the SJBCA Bass Bowl event will be held on Union Lake in South Jersey because the group was not able to get a permit for the event at Beltzville Lake as planned.

**Youth Events:** Bob Jack reported on the South Jersey Sportsman’s Club event two weeks prior to the meeting. The event at the Salem Canal had a turnout of 80 to 100 youth participating in archery, air-rifle, kayaking, and SJBCA-mentored fishing activity.

Members were reminded that the DRFA will be supporting the Family Fishing Day at Silver Lake Nature Center on Saturday October 14. Volunteers will be needed to help prepare the fishing poles, to man the stations where the children will be taught how to cast, and to supervise the lakeside fishing activity. Full details will be available at the September meeting.

**Old Business:** After some initial artwork revisions, the Club is still waiting for the final artwork from our new supplier to be approved.

Bob Jack asked if any guest speakers were lined up through the end of the year. Dave Wermuth is going to check back with our previously scheduled snakehead fishing speaker and with Steve Horvath formerly of Delaware Valley Outdoors.

**New Business:** Bob Jack discussed the possible list of shows for us to attend this winter at the VE Club and at the Palmyra Flea Market – and perhaps at the Oaks Show if we can get our original table location. Bob expressed the importance of getting a Show Coordinator like Joe Newton to optimize opportunities and minimize costs. Pete Marcolina volunteered to

manage the Tackle Bag Raffle if we anticipate enough show attendance to make the effort worthwhile.

Members were reminded that any changes to Tournament Rules or Bylaws for the 2024 season need to be submitted by the September meeting.

Nominations for Club Officers will also be opened at the September meeting and again immediately before the election at the October meeting.

Eileen Kicinski raised the topic of our annual Holiday Party at Georgine’s Restaurant. The party will be held on December 13<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> and we will be required to guarantee 30 attendees at \$24 a head to reserve the room.

**Environmental Report:** John Pedrick discussed an [article](#) about the Neshaminy Creek’s ranking in a [study regarding PFAS contamination](#). The Neshaminy Creek had the second highest concentration of PFAS chemicals

in the Philadelphia region, behind only Valley Creek in Chester County. The residual-chemical source at the Willow Grove Air Force Base feeds into the Little Neshaminy Creek which in turn feeds the main Neshaminy Creek.

John also reported on another [article](#) from NJ Advance Media about how a non-profit environmental activist group – Environment New Jersey – ranked the Delaware River as the fifth most polluted river in the United States based on Federal EPA data – with 6,719,436 lbs. of permitted discharges per year. Most of that was due to the DuPont Chambers Works in Salem County, NJ, which is legally permitted to emit 5.3 million pounds of effluent.

**Fishing Reports:** Tim Lang reported an algae bloom on the Assunpink Lake in New Jersey. Dave Wermuth noted that the swimming area at Spruce Run Reservoir was closed due to an

### 2023 Tournament Schedule

*All DRFA Club tournaments are free and open to dues-paying DRFA members, with club-funded payouts of \$50, \$30, and \$20 awarded to the top three places. Participants also accrue points for the Angler of the Year competition based on their top six finishes among the nine regular Club events. (There are no tournament entry fees, however, ramp, launch, and/or parking fees may apply.)*

*Except for the Shad Tournament, there is also a voluntary \$10.00 lunger pool with a 100% payout to pool participants for the three heaviest pool fish – 60%, 30%, and 10% – at tournament’s end.*

*New members may register on the morning of any of these events before check-in time. Weigh-in is at the time specified. Late entries will not count.*

*Always check the DRFA website or the Tournament Hotline (267-934-2148) the night before the event to learn about potential rescheduling or relocation due to weather or water conditions.*

<u>Date</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Location</u>
Sat. .... 9/30.....	Bass .....	7 am - 1 pm .....	Bulls Island, NJ Ramp
Sat. .... 10/28....	Bass .....	7 am - 1 pm .....	Byram, NJ Ramp

algae bloom, but the lake was still open for fishing.

Frank Beck reported catching six smallmouth bass while fishing the river from above Stockton and down to Lambertville with Joe Newton the week before the meeting. Pete Antoniewicz reported catching 17 smallmouth (up to 12") but caught three larger fallfish (up to 16.5") while fishing the Lehigh River near Bowmanstown the Saturday before the meeting. Dave Wermuth had no fish while targeting bass on the river with his grandkids a few days before the meeting.

The 50/50 drawing for \$30.00 was won by Chick Bay. The meeting adjourned at 7:50 pm.

### Atlantic Sturgeon Severely Compromised In The Delaware River

A recent article in the Bucks Courier Times eNewspaper highlighted the latest status of Atlantic sturgeon in the Delaware River and efforts by the Delaware Riverkeeper Network to improve it.

One of the challenges is that the federal government does not currently treat the strain of Atlantic sturgeon in the Delaware River as a genetically distinct endangered population. They are classified along with other East Coast populations that are believed to be healthier and even increasing. By contrast, U. S. Geological Survey research shows that the Delaware River population could be as low as 250 breeding adults.

Delaware State University fisheries professor Dewayne Fox says that the Delaware population faces different obstacles than their Hudson River counterparts, something he equates to "death

by a thousand cuts." In addition to pollution and low dissolved oxygen levels, they include vessel strikes with larger container ships in the relatively narrow and shallower channels of the Delaware. Even dredging attempts to deepen the channel can cause direct deaths from the dredges as well as disruptions to habitat, foraging, and spawning.

Subscribers to the Bucks County [Courier-Post website](#) can access the full story there. A quick [Google search](#) or a visit to the [Delaware Riverkeeper website](#) can also provide additional background on the topic in general and on the Delaware Riverkeeper's [Dino On The Delaware](#) campaign.

### 2023 Edition Of Annual Raft Trip Was A Washout

Once again, Mother Nature disrupted the scheduling of our annual raft trip above Port Jervis. Daily discharge flow levels were 50% or more above their long-term median level for the entire month of August and more than double the long-term median for most of the month.

Only in late September did water levels approach comfortable levels for the float and by that time Kittatinny Canoes had cancelled their weekday rafting offering in that stretch of water.

It looks like we will need to start considering an earlier start to our scheduling period next year, even if water temperatures do not reach optimum levels.

**NOTE: Nominations for Club Officers open at the September meeting; elections will be held at the October meeting.**

### Bass Bowl Participants To Be Finalized With September Results

Every year, the fishing clubs in the South Jersey Bass Club Association are invited to send three teams of two anglers to participate in their year-end Bass Bowl Fishing Tournament for bragging rights among the Association's member clubs. The DRFA has traditionally offered slots to the top six bass anglers based on points earned in all DRFA bass tournaments since the last Bass Bowl. This year that includes the results of last October's final bass tournament on the non-tidal river as well as all 2023 tournaments scheduled through September 30 of this year. If any of the top six anglers cannot attend the Bass Bowl event on Sunday October 15, their slots will be offered to anglers with the next closest point totals.

Here are the current standings as we approach the final qualifying tournament for this year's event. These standings can still be influenced by the results from the September 30 tournament.

#	ANGLER	PTS.
1	Pete Antoniewicz	298
2	Casey McDonough	291
3	George Hoffman	289
4	Gregg Southrey	284
5	Rich Hoffman	284
6	Bryan Malkiewicz	281
7	Scott McDonough	198
8	Frank Beck	195
9	Joe Newton	190
10	Charles Bay	188



**From A to Z:**

**Persistence Has Its Merits And Rewards**

I have shared boat seats with scores of fishing partners of various experience levels over the years – some better than others and some who have taught me more than others, whether intentionally or unintentionally.

Sometimes the lesson is about a new lure or bit of tackle (*learning to fish tubes on braided line*). Sometimes the lesson is about a new technique (*such as really s-l-o-w-i-n-g down my presentation when fishing a suspended jerkbait in cold water*). Sometimes the lesson is about where to fish (*as in “Get out of the pool!”*).

Other times it is about a new strategy or a new perspective on reading the water. But sometimes it is as simple as just ‘sticking with it’ when the going gets tough.

My most recent DRFA fishing partner, Bryan Malkiewicz, has been a good influence on me. As a more avid Internet surfer than I am these days, he is always bringing new bits of information to my attention.

But perhaps the most valuable asset he has taught me is his patience and persistence even when confronted with my second-guessing of when and where to fish in practice or tournaments. That includes him catching legal fish in the waning minutes of a tournament or taking the time to doctor his lure with flash or scent when the bite is particularly tough. And sometimes just breaks the ‘rules’ I have in my head based on past experience.

That is why I encourage fellow anglers not to be closed-minded about fishing with new partners. I think the amount of perspective to be gained from sharing a back seat with a new partner can more than compensate for the effort of getting used to a new angler. Who knows, it could even pay off in a higher finish for you in a Club tournament.

**Do you have a ‘lesson-learned’ story to help a fellow angler avoid trouble or have better fishing experiences?**

Contact  
**The River News Editor**  
 Pete Antoniewicz at  
[petea2z@mac.com](mailto:petea2z@mac.com) to share it  
 for the benefit of all in a future **From A to Z** column.



Chris Hoffman, 1<sup>st</sup> Place



Gregg Southrey, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



Chick Bay, 3<sup>rd</sup>

**September Catfish Tournament Results**

A modest turnout did little to compromise the quality of entries, as the average weight was 5.53 lbs. among the seven anglers who brought a catfish to the scales.

Chris Hoffman returned to the Club Tournament scene to take first place with a 7.38-lb. channel cat, edging out AOTY leader Gregg Southrey who weighed in a 7.26-lb. fish.

#	ANGLER	WEIGHT	LENGTH	POINTS
1	Chris Hoffman	7.38	25.50	100
2	Gregg Southrey	7.26	25.25	99
3	Charles Bay	6.98	25.00	98
4	George Hoffman	5.52	25.00	97
5	Rick Mawson Sr	5.17	23.00	95
6	Anthony Scholl Sr	3.68	21.50	93
7	Ron Soto	2.75	19.75	92

## August Bass Tournament Results

The incoming tide during the August 12 bass tournament might have challenged some of the participating anglers. (Only 7 out of 17 registered anglers for the tournament brought a legal fish to the scales.)

But the father-and-son team of Scott and Casey McDonough didn't let that stop them from wrapping up the top two spots in the competition – Casey with a 3.10-lb. largemouth and Scott with a 2.56-lb. largemouth.

The remainder of the field was more than 0.75 pounds behind, although AOTY leader Gregg Southrey slipped in near the bottom of the standings to maintain his grip on first place in that annual competition.

#	ANGLER	WEIGHT	LENGTH	POINTS
1	Casey McDonough	3.10	16.75	100
2	Scott McDonough	2.26	15.50	99
3	Pete Antoniewicz	1.54	14.75	98
4	George Hoffman	1.54	14.25	97
5	Rich Hoffman	1.05	12.75	96
6	Gregg Southrey	0.98	13.25	95
7	Charles Bay	0.91	12.00	94



Pete Antoniewicz, 3<sup>rd</sup> Place



Gregg Southrey, 6<sup>th</sup> Place



Casey McDonough, 1<sup>st</sup> Place



George Hoffman, 4<sup>th</sup> Place



Chick Bay, 7<sup>th</sup> Place



Scott McDonough, 2<sup>nd</sup> Place



Rich Hoffman, 5<sup>th</sup> Place

Check the Tourney Hotline  
267-934-2148 for potential  
changes the day before  
each DRFA Tournament.



## Gregg Southrey Maintains Lead In 2023 AOTY Standings

With all tournaments in the tidal river now completed, attention turns to the non-tidal river for the final two bass tournaments of the season.

Despite Gregg Southrey’s steady lead over the past few months, both the top spot and the next two runner-up spots are open to other competitors based on where they finish in the final two tournaments and whether their closest competition weighs in a legal fish in one or both of those events.

Technically, any of the top 12 anglers in the current standings could finish in the money for the year.

Because only the top six scores of the year count for each angler, some lower-ranked anglers can realistically leapfrog higher-ranked leaders in the standings by finishing ahead of those leaders in each of the remaining tournaments.

Greg Southrey can add to his point total if he can finish in ninth place or higher in just one of the tournaments. George Hoffman can close the gap by finishing ahead of Gregg and getting a high enough point total to replace his current lowest score of 95 points in the June Bass Tournament.

Ron Soto can also move up by finishing ahead of Gregg and earning finishes totaling at least 12 points higher than his 91 points in the May Catfish Tournament and his 92 points in the September Catfish Tournaments.

#	ANGLER	POINTS	WEIGHT	LENGTH
1	Gregg Southrey	581	29.91	122.00
2	George Hoffman	484	23.21	105.00
3	Ron Soto	470	16.75	80.75
4	Charles Bay	386	17.36	76.75
5	Pete Antoniewicz	386	14.42	77.50
6	Rich Hoffman	384	16.20	79.50
7	Rick Mawson Sr	375	13.37	76.75
8	Bryan Malkiewicz	373	13.92	72.25
9	Casey McDonough	292	7.20	51.25
10	Anthony Scholl Sr	287	10.06	60.00
11	Frank Beck	286	10.45	56.50
12	Dave Wermuth	281	9.04	55.75
13	Dan Wermuth	200	18.00	51.35
14	Scott McDonough	196	5.38	36.00
15	Joe Newton	192	6.79	38.50
16	Chris Hoffman	100	7.38	25.50
17	Shane Seliga	99	2.79	18.00
18	Bob Kuntz	98	4.49	21.25
19	Pete Marcolina	96	5.42	23.00
20	Patrick Baranowski	96	1.84	15.00
21	Devon Seliga	95	1.64	14.00
22	John Pedrick	94	4.93	23.00
23	Anthony Scholl Jr	94	1.58	14.25
24	Matt Weinhardt	90	0.77	13.00

Chick Bay, Pete Antoniewicz, and Rich Hoffman can also pass Gregg for the top spot with a pair of top-place finishes in the two remaining tournaments as long as they finish ahead of Gregg by four or five points in at least one of those tournaments.

The remaining six anglers in the running for the second and third spots need to score well in both tournaments and/or have multiple anglers above them fail to weigh in a fish in one or both events.

The number of potential finish sequences underscores the importance for all competitors in the AOTY race to participate and do their best in the last two events. This will make the final standings equally competitive across the entire DRFA tournament season – from the first event to the last.

Good luck to all!



**The Delaware River Fishermen's Association**  
**PO Box 21145, Philadelphia, PA 19154**

**THE RIVER NEWS** is the bimonthly newsletter of the Delaware River Fishermen's Association. The DRFA typically meets the last Wednesday of each month, 7:00 pm, at the Silver Lake Nature Center, 1306 Bath Road, Bristol, PA. All interested sportsmen and women are invited to attend our meetings and join the organization.

### **Don't Forget These Supporting Members Who Help To Keep Our Club Afloat**

Remember our supporting business members who provide added financial support, share their fishing knowledge with our Club members, or support our Club and youth fishing efforts with their facilities or products.

When we return that financial support by patronizing their businesses, be sure to make specific mention of our appreciation for them helping to fund our guest speakers and our tournament cash prizes. Without their support we would not be able to provide the same opportunities to our current members or to attract potential new members.

**Ed Scannapieco And Sons Plumbing, Inc.** • Complete plumbing services • Feasterville, PA, • [espinc2428@gmail.com](mailto:espinc2428@gmail.com) • 215-333-3006

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**White Oak Ice Co.** • 350 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020 • Self-Service Crushed Ice, Blocks of Ice • 215-639-1080.

**Tow Boat US** • 32 Kirkwood Circle, Brigantine, NJ 08203 • Delaware River Service Package Available • 609-517-2822

**Rusty Balls Tackle & Guide Service** • 2440 W Columbia St, Allentown, PA 18104 • [@rustyballsguideservice](https://www.instagram.com/rustyballsguideservice) • 484-239-4723

**Pennsylvania Yacht Club** • 2189 State Road, Bensalem, PA 19020, 215-245-9883

**Silver Lake Nature Center** • 1306 Bath Road, Bristol, PA • 235 acres of woods, lakes, marshes & meadows, 4.5 miles of trails

We also recognize our Associate members – the [South Jersey Bass Club Association](#) and [Delaware Riverkeeper Network](#) – who provide relevant information and additional fishing experiences for DRFA members.