NWMSU Bearcat Open & Fishing Club

By: Andrew Nordbye

 Saturday, April 7th, 2012, Northwest Missouri State University’s Fishing Club will be hosting their annual Bearcat Open on Mozingo Lake. Colleges from all over Missouri, Kansas, Iowa, and Nebraska will be coming into town to compete in the tournament. The tournament take-off is at 7a.m. and the weigh-in is at 3p.m. Teams consist of two school members on the same boat. The team that has the most weight out of the five possible fish to keep will be the winners.

 The Northwest Fishing Club was started three years ago in 2008 by a few students and a professor, Brett Ware. The current club president is Tyler Ruoff. When asked about how the club has grown over the last three years, Tyler said, “The club started off with just a few of us guys. We called it the Northwest Bass Club. Now we have changed our name to the Northwest Fishing Club. We have a lot more members than in the past and currently have about fifty members in the club.” Over the last three years this Fishing Club has seen exponential growth. Tyler thought that the club would continue to grow as long as members showed support, and were actively involved in the club.

 The Northwest Fishing Club is involved in many tournaments. Club members fish tournaments affiliated with the FLW Collegiate Program, Boat U.S. Collegiate Program, and Under Armor B.A.S.S. series. Members also fish dual tournaments with the University of

Missouri and the University of Kansas. This past December, Andrew Nordbye and Troy Dobson traveled down to Lake DeGray in Arkansas. They fished a Boat U.S. tournament on Saturday and finished in third place. When Troy was asked about his experience at Lake DeGray, he said, “The tournament went great! Andrew and I took third place. We were only a couple pounds short of winning the tournament.” He also said that it was a ten hour drive from Maryville, and they did really good for having never fished that lake before.

 This spring and summer, the Fishing Club plans on fishing four central division FLW tournaments. If placed in the top three finishes at any of the tournaments, the team will win up to $10,000 and qualify to fish the regional tournament. If placed in the top three finishes at the regional tournament, the team will move to nationals.

 These tournaments are costly, and the club raises money through sponsors and fundraisers. Tyler said, “The club has done a ‘Guess the weight of the fish’ fundraiser at homecoming where people paid one dollar to guess the weight of the bass for the chance of winning free Chiefs football tickets or Bearcat football tickets.” The club is also sponsored by Big Birds Bait, Wal-Mart, Gemini, The Tackle Box, N2IT, and a few other local sponsors. “The average cost to send one team to a tournament is around $300 to $500”, says Tyler.

 The Northwest Fishing Club plans on increasing the number of tournaments they fish each year and plans on growing the club. Tyler says, “With school, work, and student activities going on, it’s nice to just get out on the water and catch a few fish. It’s relaxing and is a reward to all the hard work that you have been putting forth.”

Works Cited

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