

## Sun Country 2011 Championship – Lake Amistad NRA

The 3 days of pre-fish offered rain, wind and dead calm so putting a pattern together proved difficult to say the least for some of the teams, and with a full moon each night things might have been less than favorable but all teams competed under the same circumstances and gave it their all during the tournament. A special thanks to the Del Rio Chamber of Commerce, the Ramada Inn Del Rio and Rudy's Barbeque for their support during our week long stay. Another thanks to our Ranger dealers and anglers for without them the circuit wouldn't exist.

Day One brought dead calm conditions and some good limits but Ray Gorman and Jimmy Liles took the lead with the Big Stringer of the tournament totaling 26.14 pounds anchored by a 10.08 pounder. Not to be outdone Jim and Gail Criswell brought in the Big Bass for the Tournament with a 10.88 pounder and third place overall with 21.46 pounds. Fritz Staver and Matt Abeyta would start a consistent run for the week with 22.49 pounds and second place heading into Day Two. Trent Huckabee and Bobby Brotherton stumbled on day one weighing in just 10 pounds and definitely giving everyone some breathing room but no one thought they would do that again and the next two days would show that to be true. Bill McCoun and Walter Burnett and Kenny Hansel and Bob Lechel would round out the top 5 and one of these teams would make a charge on Day Two while starting to sort out the teams with solid patterns.

Day Two was again calm and hot but the quality of fish dropped off dramatically with the exception of Bob Lechel and Kenny Hansel as they weighed in 20.91 pounds anchored by a 7.99 pounder raising their total to 40.81 pounds and taking the overall lead after Ray Gorman and Jimmy Liles stumbled a little with just 10 pounds but managed to hold on to second place overall. Jim and Gail Criswell fell off with a 10 pound sack but did hold on to third place overall with 35.48 pounds. Trent Huckabee and Bobby Brotherton weighed in the large sack of the day with 21.75 pounds and Second Big Bass at 7.46 pounds moving them up to Eighth place overall and causing more than a little concern for the teams in the top 5. Fritz Staver and Matt Abeyta had a solid limit but fell to fourth while Doug Stewart and Steve DelValle brought in another good limit and climbed from 6<sup>th</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> overall. The Top Ten were all within striking distance but would need Kenny and Bob to stumble but it would still be a dog fight.

Day Three brought the 20 mph winds forecasted for and caused some fishing spots to become almost unfishable but as usual with a fully rigged Ranger boat up for grabs nobody complained. Mike Chisum and Joe Bennett weren't bothered by the wind as they brought in 21.42 pounds catapulting them from twenty fourth place all the way to fifth as some teams could not fish their water. Doug Stewart and Steve DelValle fought the rollers to bring in another solid sack for fourth place overall with 49.26 pounds. Fritz Staver and Matt Abeyta like the fourth place team turned in another solid limit to take 3<sup>rd</sup> place with 50.47 pounds and Trent Huckabee and Bobby Brotherton continued the charge edging ahead of Staver and Abeyta for second place overall just .18 pounds ahead. The congratulations go out to Kenny Hansel and Bob Lechel though for a solid stringer and holding on to their 4 plus pound lead and winning Champion honors. Kenny credited the win to Day Two's large bass after suffering an emotional family loss that day before. All teams had a great time and the awards ceremony on Friday night showed the true camaraderie shared by our organization.

Thanks again to all and we will see you in February at Amistad to start the year.