

CLASSIC I — *A REFLECTION*

Crappie Anglers of Texas State Championship
October 25, 2008
Cedar Creek Lake

It was with great interest when I first saw Ernest Paty's forum post inquiring about interest in forming a Crappie Club.

Fast forward to Saturday, October 25, 2008. The early morning dew on our boat needed to be wiped clean as we were still in our early morning stupor of shaking off the night's lack of sleep. It was easy to recognize this was a special day and that adrenaline would get us through the day.

As we mingled outside the motel, others were preparing their boats as well. Morning exchanges of well wishes were greeted with mixed nervousness and good cheer; and of course the BS began in earnest easily enough. If ever again I hear "I just hope I catch seven fish" from a well-known fisherman, I think I'll \$^&@# him.

After prepping the boat, getting rods readied, we headed on down the road to gas up and to get 'minners' — 12 dozen in all. Guy Skinner was standing in line behind me. I wish I had a picture of him when I loudly proclaimed to the minner man, "give me all you have".

Next stop was the landing/ramp. We were anxious to get the boat launch to beat the traffic. After all, CAT had 20 boats to launch not counting the few locals. With my trailering skills at its best, we easily launched. Once on the water, final preparations were made, including the mandatory life vest.

What a sight to behold, viewing the 20 boats on the water with navigation lights on in the early pre-light morning. As the boats mingled waiting for the official start I chanced to reflect on how nine tournaments later, here we are in October fishing the inaugural CAT Classic. What a privilege and tribute for each qualifier to fish in the very first Classic.

We had the good fortune of drawing the first starting position. As motors quieted, the starters (lucky for Guy and Floyd!) began the call out for boat 20 to begin. As we idled to the starters, I had a few moments to think how fortunate I was to have joined CAT, qualified for the Classic (my number one goal) and having the luck to have been paired with the Angler of the Year but better yet, to have the privilege of fishing with a fine gentleman, Paul O'Bier.

It was with an incredible surge of adrenaline as Paul and I idled by the starters when Paul hit the hammer. With the boat pointing to the stars, and feeling the exuberance of youth gone by, I couldn't help but let out a war whoop. I wondered what it must look like for those behind seeing boats taking off. It must have been quite a sight but it was really only a fleeting

thought as I quickly refocused on the vastness of the wide-open waters of Cedar Creek before us — the Classic was on!

Congratulations to “I hope we catch seven” Jerry Hancock and Alec Dyer for winning the inaugural CAT Classic and to all Classic participants.

Keep your line wet, and all will be well.

Jimmy Leonard
October 26, 2008