FLW Outdoors takes Oconee by storm

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COURTESY OF FLW OUTDOORS

FLW Outdoors will bring its professional Bass Fishing Tour to Lake Hartwell and Oconee County during the coming week.

If you ever wanted to talk to a professional bass fisherman, get an autograph or earn a chance to get in the boat and go fishing with one, this week is your chance.

The FLW Tour will be making its second stop of the season at Lake Hartwell next week from Friday through Sunday. In advance of the tournament, an entire bass fishing circus will be rolling into town with multiple opportunities for fans and spectators to rub elbows with the pros.

The festivities begin today from noon until 2 p.m., when selected tournament pros will be on hand at area Walmart locations in Seneca, Central, Anderson, Eastanollee (Ga.) and Hartwell, (Ga.) to meet and greet fans and sign autographs while displaying their wares and talking bass fishing.

On Wednesday from 5-7 p.m., FLW will present "Chevy Pro Night" at Scenic Chevrolet in West Union. Scheduled to appear in person will be anglers Jay Yelas, Larry Nixon, Anthony Gagliardi, Bryan Thrift, Luke Clausen, Dion Hibdon and special guest Jimmy Houston.

In addition to the event in West Union on Wednesday, anglers will be visiting local schools and speaking to students. Select FLW Tour anglers will visit four area schools as part of the "Get Outdoors. Go Fish!" project from the FLW Foundation.

At the assemblies, anglers will talk to students about the different aspects of fishing and how they apply to different subjects like science, technology, engineering and math.

Students are asked to submit an essay to the FLW Foundation answering a question about the sport of fishing. One winner per school will be selected to go on a VIP fishing trip with an FLW Tour pro along with a parent or guardian on Friday or Saturday.

The school visits are scheduled for Westminster Elementary School from 7:45–9:15 a.m., Seneca High School from 8:30–10:15 a.m., James M. Brown Elementary School in Walhalla from 9:40–10:50 a.m. and T.L. Hanna High School in Anderson from 10:20–11:45 a.m.

On Thursday, the tournament will officially start, as the entire field will launch between 6 and 7 a.m. from Clemson Marina.

Fans are invited to stick around to enjoy the Folgers Morning Takeoff with coffee and donuts served at Clemson Marina at 7 a.m.

Anglers will return to Clemson Marina at 3 p.m., when with the first day weigh-in will be held.

On Friday, the takeoff and breakfast will be repeated at Clemson Marina from 6-7 a.m., with coffee and donuts served at 7 a.m.. Friday's weigh-in will convene at Clemson Marina at 3 p.m.

On Saturday, the Folgers Morning Takeoff will be held once again at Clemson Marina from 6-7 a.m. During the day, as the anglers compete on Lake Hartwell, the FLW Expo will open at noon at the Walmart in Seneca.

Saturday's weigh-in will also be held at the Seneca Walmart beginning at 4 p.m.

On Sunday, the final day of the event, the pared-down field of anglers will launch from Clemson Marina between 6-7 a.m. at the Folgers Morning Takeoff.

The FLW Expo will resume at the Walmart in Seneca at noon and conclude at 4 p.m., when the anglers will return to Walmart to determine the winner of the event.

A live concert by Chris Janson will also be held at the Seneca Walmart at 3 p.m. on Sunday.

IN OTHER NEWS

FLW College Fishing is headed to Lake Keowee from Thursday to Saturday for the FLW College Fishing National Championship presented by the Lowrance Insight Genesis College Cup.

A total of 49 college teams will be competing for a top prize of a Ranger Z117 boat and entry into the 2014 Forrest Wood Cup, the world championship of bass fishing.

Anglers will take off from South Cove County Park at 7 a.m. Weigh-in will be held at South Cove County Park starting at 3 p.m. on Thursday and Friday. Weigh-in Saturday will be at 3 p.m. at the Seneca Walmart. Takeoffs and weigh-ins are free and open to the public.

OUTDOOR COLUMNIST Phillip Gentry will be host the "Upstate Outdoors" radio show live today during FLW Pro Day at the Walmart in Seneca from noon until 2 p.m. Come out and register to win a VIP fishing trip with an FLW Tour pro and a combo prize package. "Upstate Outdoors" can be heard on WORD 106.3 FM or online at www.word1063.com.