

# South Cove set to host high school anglers

BY BROOKS GALLMAN  
THE JOURNAL

SENECA — When one hears the mention of high school sports, chances are fishing is not one that immediately springs to mind.

But, high school fishing clubs around the state are hoping that won't be the case much longer.

Today, a number of those clubs from around South Carolina will be taking part in the inaugural High School Fishing State Championship on Lake Keowee, hosted by The Bass Federation in partnership with FLW Outdoors.

Mark Gintert, the National Youth Director for The Bass Federation, said the goal of the event is simple.

"The intent of our program, which is the Stu-

## THE DETAILS

**What:** High School Fishing State Championship

**When:** Anglers will launch beginning at 7:30 this morning, and the final weigh-ins are set for 3 p.m.

**Where:** South Cove Park on Lake Keowee

dent Angler Federation, is to number one, get kids off of the couch and back into the great outdoors," he said. "That's our driving goal to get these kids to form after-school fishing clubs.

"These tournaments and events we're doing around the country are kind of the catalyst to get them excited and involved in it."

While high school fishing is not currently a sanctioned event by the South Carolina High School League, Gintert

and those participating hope the event will grow the awareness of the sport in hopes of competitive fishing one day becoming a fixture in the high school sports world.

"Our hope is as this program grows around the country, as it has in many states, that these kids will start to have competitions between member schools," Gintert continued. "If the state high school athletic associations want to pick that up and run with it, they certainly can."

The high school anglers will take off from South Cove Park on Lake Keowee beginning at 7:30 a.m., with the final weigh-ins scheduled at 3 p.m. The championship consists of a team format, with each school bringing a two-person team comprised of students in grades 9-12.

Supporting the event locally are the City of Seneca, the Oconee County Parks, Recreation and Tourism department, the Oconee County Chamber of Commerce and the Clemson University Collegiate Bass Fishing Team.

Seneca Mayor Dan Alexander spoke on behalf of those organizations earlier in February when the event was announced.

"We are very excited to be hosting the inaugural South Carolina High School Bass Fishing Championship," Alexander said.

Up for grabs is not only the title of state champion, but also a \$500 scholarship to the winning team from Clemson University if the champions decide to attend the school.

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South Cove Park on Lake Keowee will host the inaugural High School Fishing State Championship today.