Take A Warrior Fishing Is Catching On At West Point Lake

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The forecast for Saturday was partly cloudy with a 90 percent chance of fishing.

It all worked out for the best on West Point Lake at the 4th Annual Take A Warrior Fishing event. Technically this is not a tournament, but it is a special outdoor activity that is growing in popularity and meaning.

This fishing get together was made for American heroes like Tim Cooper and Carl Burnett.

“This is like coming home. They’re showing us some love. We fought together, and now we’re playing together,” said Burnett, who served in the U.S. Army from (1977-2010), including some tours in Afghanistan, Germany and Italy.

Cooper is a military type, too, with a flair for fishing.

“This is therapy being in the outdoors. I lost one monster (largemouth bass). He popped the line on the motor. But I also caught eight (bass and catfish),” said Cooper.

Burnett gave West Point Lake some high marks, too, last weekend. Burnett caught three bass, and his largest fish weighed in at 2.94 pounds. Blake Spradlin was the captain on Burnett’s boat.

From bow to stern there were 53 fishermen and 47 captains in this angling event out of Highland Marina Resort. It was a worthwhile cause.

“We know there’s fish out there. West Point Lake has been nationally recognized. Some of these veterans mark this event on their calendar (every year),” said Rebecca Fink, the director for the Take A Warrior Fishing. “Everybody is smiling, and there are so many friendships.”

There was fish, too, of virtually every size and almost every freshwater species in this event on West Point Lake. David Abernathy of Newnan caught some of those fish, including a 6.11-pound striped bass.

“He kept circling our boat and bending my pole over. The fishing was great. This lake has a lot of fish,” said Abernathy, the Army veteran.

Abernathy caught 60 stripers, hybrids and catfish in five hours. The angler was using live bait. Victor McCarden of Valley, Ala. was in the fishing event as well, and he came for more than a pole-bending adventure.

“This was a fellowship, and it was a stress relief. It was awesome,” said McCarden, an Army veteran, who served in Afghanistan from 2009-1010.

McCarden caught some 2-pound crappie with live bait.