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Matt O’Dillon from Macon has caught a lot of fish while completing his wildlife degree at ABAC.

ABAC Student’s Fishing Prowess Depends on Lucky Hat

TIFTON—For Matt O’Dillon, catching fish is all about the hat.
“You have got to have the lucky hat if you’re going to catch fish,” O’Dillon, president of the Bass Fishing team at Abraham Baldwin Agricultural College, said. “It makes a difference.”

O’Dillon, a wildlife management major from Macon, helped to start the ABAC team four years ago. Since that time, he and the other team members have won “about five or six tournaments.” The competition has been fierce, and the travel has been relentless.

“We do a lot of traveling, and we catch a lot of fish,” O’Dillon said. “We have traveled all over the Southeast, from northwest Alabama at Lake Pickwick to south Florida down at Lake Okeechobee.”

The ABAC team competes against fishermen from colleges across the nation. At one time this spring, the team was ranked 16th in the nation in the Cabella’s Association of Collegiate Anglers against over 100 NCAA Division I colleges and universities.

“We fish the Georgia Southern trail mainly,” O’Dillon said. “That’s against all the teams in Georgia. But at Lake Pickwick, we fished against 200 teams. There was a team there from Harvard and a couple of teams from Hawaii.”

O’Dillon loves using crank baits but his favorite jig catches the most fish. Is there any truth to the adage that “you have to hold your mouth right?”

“It’s technique,” O’Dillon said. “It’s all in the technique. Weather plays a big role. I love fishing in cloudy weather. But the main thing is my lucky hat.”

Somewhere in between his days on the lakes of the land, O’Dillon has found time to go to his ABAC classes. He plans to graduate in December.

“I started out in vet tech but I saw how much fun wildlife was so I transferred over,” O’Dillon said. “I have been in love with it ever since. I’d recommend ABAC to anyone. It’s a blast.”
Advisors for the ABAC fishing team are Dan Miller and Brad Barbee. Prospective fishing team members can contact them at dmiller@abac.edu or bbarbee@abac.edu.

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