

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

The Fishin' Magician

The high water we're experiencing throughout the region hasn't hurt the fishing as badly as many thought. It has kept the fishing good on the Icicle River well past when many turn to other kinds of angling. Salmon anglers on the high and fast upper Columbia have been doing better than expected.

I had a day on the Icicle that I am sure I will never duplicate. I had planned on fishing with Kevin Winters and who showed up at the take out, but Shane Magnuson, Upper Columbia Guide Service. He didn't have a trip booked that day, so Winters and I jumped into his boat. We made our way down the river and dropped the anchor in the spot known as The Pipe.

The day was forecast to be warm, but wet and it proved to be just that. It rained on us off and on while Magnuson rigged the Spin-N-Glos and herring and we waited for legal fishing time. We didn't have to wait long to see some action on the rods. We had a few herring mangling bites and Kevin put a nice springer in the boat in the first half hour.

My rod started doing the Icicle Dance soon after, and when the rod bent over straight and hard I pulled it from the rod holder and set the hook. The fish immediately ran into the middle of the river and headed down stream. This was a heavy fish and stayed well below us in the faster water. Magnuson could tell it was a big fish and we settled in for a long battle. The Abu Garcia line-counter reel went up to 170, and I got the fish into 50. Then it took off again and ran the counter up to 150. I got it back to 30 and out it would go again. The fish thrashed

on the surface with its head out of the water for a moment and I knew I was in trouble. I couldn't believe the size of its head!

When I got the fish close and Magnuson slid the net under it we all celebrated. When we got it out of the net and laid out on the bottom of the boat we were in awe. It was huge! Winters said that he had caught a 26-pounder about a week earlier and this one was clearly much larger, easily over 30 pounds. There were lots of high fives and back slapping, and I know my knees were still knocking when we took our seats to watch our rods for the next bite.

We hadn't waited 15 minutes when my rod started bouncing again. I patiently waited for the fish to fully take the bait, and when Magnuson shouted "Get Him!" I set the hook. Once again the fish took off down the river. I pumped it up toward the boat, only to have it scream off down stream again. We watched the line counter numbers decline and zoom up. I kept steady pressure on the fish and worked it

for very long. Magnuson, Winters and I will never forget this day. It was the kind of day we always talk about now we had had one. Wow. You can follow the action by visiting my Blog.

There were real concerns about the opening of summer run salmon fishing on July 1st. There was so much water moving in the Columbia

hard, never letting it rest. It finally got close enough for Magnuson to see it, and said "I can't believe it. This one's bigger than the last one!" We really celebrated this time. Two huge fish back to back. What a day on the Icicle.

We quit early, as planned, at about 9 a.m. and headed for the take out. We had seven fish, including two jacks, three very nice 10- to 13-pounders and two monsters. We took a bunch of photos on the ramp, and I wore myself out trying to hold up the two big fish. I couldn't do it

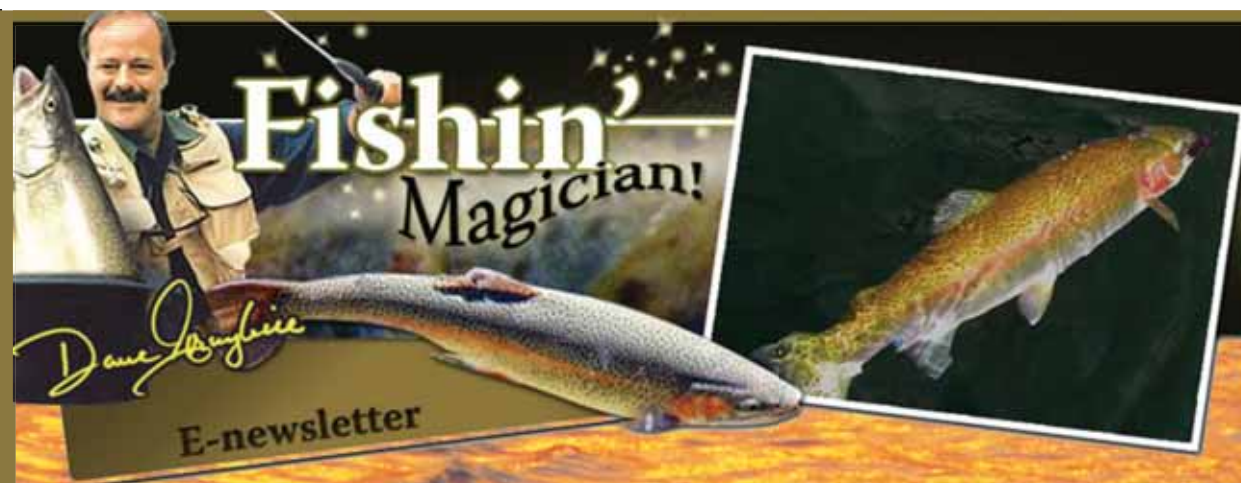
that it was generally thought that the fishing would be tough. I stopped by Hooked on Toys on Friday morning and just before I left Stuart Hurd brought in a nice fish to be weighed. It was the only one taken locally so far and I thought it might be the only one. There were some fish coming from Wanapum, where the fishing typically is better on the opener. When I checked in a Hooked on Toys the following day, there had been a whole bunch of fish weighed in. Saturday was a whole lot better than Friday. Maybe it was a combination of lower flows and more anglers on the water. What is clear is that there are plenty of summer runs out there to catch right now.

Now that the season is opening and everyone is out "practicing", it's time to get your tickets for the Budweiser-Longranger King Salmon Derby in Brewster. It's coming up August 5th, and you had better get your ticket before it sells out. You can do so by logging onto brewstersalmonderby.com. You'll get ticket information and other details.

I just sent out my latest free E-Letter, and if you didn't receive it I suggest that you click on the E-Letter button on my web site and get on the list. There are feature stories on Moses Lake, the Icicle River and Rufus Woods Reservoir.

These are exciting times in our region. Summer run salmon season is open, and the Icicle River spring season continues to be great. My next trip is with my wife to Rufus Woods, it's still hot, hot, hot!

Reach Dave at: www.FishingMagician.com or Fishboy@nwi.net



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