

# Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

## The Fishin' Magician



where the river takes a sharp bend, and kings often lay in the channel here. We had a fish in the boat before it was light enough to use my camera! The 15-pound king hit a Super Bait, behind a flasher. We kept at it here until full light, and then headed down and across the pool to the channel below the mouth of the Okanogan.

We lined up in the channel, put the baits out, and had a fish on in less than 10 minutes! The fish threw the hook before we got a chance to get a look at it, but we thought for sure we were in for some fast action here. While we trolled we watched several boats land sockeye. There are still a surprising number of anglers targeting sockeye. I can see why. Even though the sockeye numbers have thinned, there are still a lot of bright ones being taken, and the occasional king is grabbing the sockeye gear.

We stuck with the Brewster Pool for a couple of hours, and only landed one other salmon. It was less than 12 inches and was released. While this was going on, Shane was already planning his next move. He was brining plug-cut herring.

He turned the boat south and we ran to the launch in Pateros. We put the boat back on the trailer and from there we traveled in our separate vehicles to the launch about two miles above Wells Dam.

When we arrived at the fishing grounds, Shane changed strategy. He did keep a Super Bait behind a flasher out on one rod, but the other three

were set out with straight herring. Shane explained that the water was a bit cooler in this area of the river and the herring bite had been pretty good. He also said that he had caught fish as shallow as 11 feet and as deep as 40 here, but most were in the range of 25 feet deep.

We began trolling a path that took us close to the new debris barrier, turning above the top end of the barrier and back down. We kept at this for some time before we saw a rod tip start to bounce. Shane grabbed the rod, set the hook and turned it over to Greg Thomas, the fellow from Butte. He had yet to land a fish, and he sure picked a good time for it to be his turn.

The fish ran Thomas around the boat a couple of times and refused to come to the boat. Thomas would crank it in a ways and then loose all that he gained and more when the fish decided to keep its distance from the boat. When Shane finally slipped the net under the fish and hauled it aboard we all were astounded. It was a whopper. Shane guessed its weight at 37 pounds! It was a sleek bright fish, too. We weren't done yet either. Rod Hartman, from Ohio, got another small king in the before we called it quits.

It was a great day, and I got it all on video.

I think that the possibility of catching this number of kings of this size and quality would be good enough reason not to give up on the summer run salmon season just yet. I even heard of anglers casting

Super Baits from the shore above Wells Dam taking fish with fair consistency. I have got to give that a try. Imagine battling one of these big fish from the bank!

I want to remind everyone that the Director's Roundtable is coming up on September 8th in Brewster. It will be held at the Columbia Cove Recreation Building, which is near the launch, and is to begin at 5:30.

If you haven't noticed, the steelhead numbers this year are very, very good. In fact I was told that they are well above the 10 year average. Over 304,000 have already passed over Bonneville Dam. An amazing 15,000-plus have come over Priest Rapids Dam. The wild to hatchery ration is very good this year, too. Things look very bright for this year's season on the Columbia and the tributaries. If you are a steelhead angler I would start getting your gear together. The season may open well in advance of last year. I can't say exactly when, but I would keep an eye on the Department of Fish and Wildlife web site for announcement sometime soon.

After my experience aboard Shane's boat it is hard to think ahead about steelhead fishing. I want to get in on more of this summer run salmon action. It's exciting!

Reach Dave at:  
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