

The Fishin' Magician

Welcoming
Dave Graybill
To The
Nickel Ads
Classifieds

The opening of the summer-run salmon season is a couple of weeks away, but there is still plenty of great fishing going on here in Central Washington. Anglers are keeping busy catching kokanee on Lake Chelan, spring salmon on the Icicle River, and what has me pumped is the bass fishing on Banks Lake.

I traveled to Banks and met Keith Jensen, who runs the tackle shop now at Big Wally's in Coulee City. Jensen told me that I may have just hit it right for good smallmouth fishing on Banks. The water temperature had just risen to encourage the smallmouth to start bedding, so fishing in the south end should be pretty good.

It was better than good. We put in at Coulee City Marina and only ran around to other side of the dike to find fish. I hooked the first one, which was a nice 2 1/2-pound smally. It was easy for me to get this one as Jensen had rigged me up with his latest favorite bass lure, an Optima Swim Bait. Fish loved them, and in fact we fished the whole time without changing. We fished a couple of different colors but it didn't seem to matter. These baits really worked.

We spent most of our time in 5 to 10 feet of water casting to the points at the marina and along the shore, gradually working our way up lake. Any area that had boulders was very good and when he took us to a road bed it was excellent. There were fish all along this shore, though, and the good news is that it should get even better. The smallmouth are



just starting to show up and bed here now, so this could be just the beginning of the hot smallmouth fishing at the south end of Banks. We caught at least 30 fish. I know we took ten out of one bay. Just think. Fifty fish days are very possible and as I say it's just getting started.

I also spent a late evening fishing for walleye on Banks. I met Lou from Coulee Playland and Oulin Smith, who works for the Department of Fish and Wildlife. We didn't get on the water until after 4 p.m., and just as we were loading the boat at the Northrup Launch we were hit by wind. The lake had been calm all my way up from Ephrata and then just as we launching the wind filled the boat with stuff blowing off the trees and put a good chop on the water. Wouldn't you know it.

We ran from Northrup to the back side of Steamboat Rock, where Smith had limited in just two hours two days earlier. We missed a couple of fish, caught a big perch and then wham—a double! Turns out that was it though. We made a few more turns in this area, tried the Poplars for while and finished up pulling crank baits in Moon Bay. That was just bad luck. Smith showed me photo after photo of fish well over 20 inches he has taken this year on Banks, and told me about a fish his friends have landed over 30 inches. Banks has been very good this year for walleye and good at producing some big fish, too. We were also encouraged by the amount of weeds that we were seeing. Normally we would be complaining about weeds, but after the draw down this is the best sign of the quick recovery of the lake. I am very anxious to get back to Banks for walleye again. If I hit the weather right, it will be great.

Looking at the fish counts it looks like now is the time to get out on the Icicle. It appears there are even more spring salmon than I expected in the Icicle and catch rates have really come up in the past week or so. I have been invited to do a float with my fishing buddy Kevin Winters and I am excited.

I also think that the dates for the salmon derby in Wenatchee is going to be perfect timing for the summer runs. Things are running behind this year. The season will open on July 1st, but their dates of July 13th through the 15th should be just right for good

numbers of fish to be in our area. The derby is less than a month away, so you should be getting your tickets. You can learn all about the derby and how to get tickets by going to their web site at www.wenatcheesalmonderby.com.

Another event that you will want a ticket for is the World's Deadliest Catch Show coming to the Town Toyota Center. The Discovery Channel's Sig Hansen will be there and will appear on stage on July 20th after an all you can eat crab feed! You learn about this by going to www.towntoyotacenter.com.

You may also want to keep checking in on my web site, too. I traveled to Loreto, Baja Mexico in May to scout out a guide service, and resort for a fishing trip on the Sea of Cortez. Loreto has been a sport fishing destination for over 50 year. We will be fishing for yellow tail tuna, roosterfish, snapper and grouper. There is only room for eight for this trip, so look for the announcement about signing up through Journey Travel and Tours very soon.

I hope you all had a good Fathers Day and took your Dad fishing. We did. The list of place to go and species to fish for just keeps getting longer here in our area. I'll be out trying as many of them as I can. See you on the water!

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

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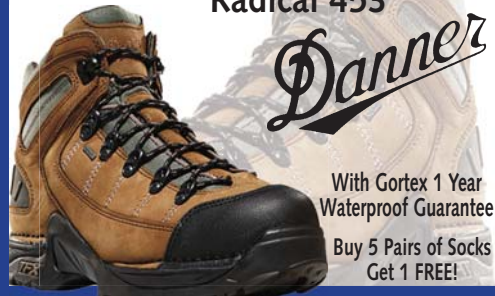
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