

The Fishin' Magician

Welcoming

Dave Graybill

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I was looking at another dismal weather forecast for this past weekend and wondering what in the heck I was going to do. I was really eager to do some fishing, but what? Shane Magnuson, good friend and guide called. He had a trip planned to Lake Roosevelt and Rufus Woods. Would I like to jump on board and do some shooting for one of my Fishing TV shows? Problem solved. I jumped at the chance and jumped into the Ford F-150 and headed for Coulee Dam.

I met Shane on Saturday morning at the Spring Canyon boat launch on Lake Roosevelt, and was soon joined by his fishing party. It's a good thing that he had a big boat. It turned out that there were a total of seven people on board when we left the dock, including his new Lab pup Jules. We chugged out onto the big lake in a stiff breeze and I helped Shane put out five rods.

We were in search of kokanee and rainbow, which have been plentiful and big this winter. I had stopped at Coulee Playland on my way up and they reported that kokanee had gotten scarce on Roosevelt recently. We decided to target the kokanee with our lure selection. If there were rainbow in the area we would probably get them on the same gear.

Our array included Rapalas on planers and hoochies behind trout dodgers in the side rod holders and another Rapala straight out the back. The Rapalas included bright orange, floating number 7s, and one in the new "purplescent" color. The hoochies were either pink or orange, and the hooks were baited with white shoepeg corn. We put the Rapalas out 70 pulls before hooking them to the planer board releases, and the hoochies 120 feet out before putting the rods

in the holders.

We started well above Spring Canyon in our search for fish, and didn't find any until we were just about back to it. Then we started to get some action, and it got better the further down we trolled off the beach. We caught fish on the Rapalas and the hoochies. Most of the fish we caught were rainbow, but we landed some kokanee, too. At one point we were close to having a triple on, and once I hooked up while putting the line out on the rear Rapala rods. Like any day there were lulls in the action and then quick flurries. We sure ended up with a nice fish box full of fat rainbow and three kokanee. One of the rainbow was at least 20 inches long.

On Sunday morning, we headed for Rufus Woods. We launched just above the middle pens and ran up the reservoir a few miles. There was a shoreline there that Shane had found fish in before and it was well suited for a strategy he wanted to try. He's always up to something different, and I was very interested in seeing how he could manage to back-troll on Rufus—with planer boards!

He had a great spot picked out, and we had great current, too. Managing to back troll two side rods and two planer boards is not for the faint of heart, but Shane made it look easy. We ran diving Rapalas



all around, not long into the first drift we hit pay dirt.

The outside planer board released snapped and the line went tight. I grabbed the rod and started cranking. I was using one of my 7-foot kokanee rods loaded with 10-pound test, and the fish wasn't coming in easy, but it was coming. I slowly gained line and got the fish next to the boat. What a surprise. It was a brown trout! A beautiful 21-incher that was the brightest I have ever seen.

We celebrated this fish and headed further down the reservoir and tried this method in a different area. We didn't have any success, so decided to try yet another area and yet another technique. This time we slid over to the bank and tried bouncing some blade baits along the bottom below the middle

net pens. Sometimes these can be deadly for both walleye and triploids, but not this day. We headed for the launch promising each other that we would come back to Rufus Woods and continue to try some new things until we felt we could catch fish, even on a tough day.

On my way up on Friday, I got a chance to check out some of the lakes on the way, and I stopped by the Desert Fly Angler and talked to my buddy Darc Knobel. I had to ask about the fishing at Rocky Ford Creek. I have only fished it once this winter and hoped to hear the fishing was lousy. No such luck. The Ford has been fishing great, with some good hatches coming off the water on the rare warm days.

Just north of Soap Lake I saw that Lake Lenore had open water at the bottom and top ends, but still lots of ice in the middle. I am sure the water is very cold and I haven't heard anything about people fishing here since it opened on March 1st.

There is still quite a bit of ice on Banks Lake, and the Marina at Coulee City is completely covered with ice, but it looks pretty thin. I would wait until it clears before I try for the perch here.

I sure enjoyed the fast action and quality of the fish that are being caught on Lake Roosevelt. I just may make another run up there next week at try it in the new Jetcraft!

Reach Dave at: www.FishingMagician.com
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