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Welcoming

The salmon fishing action on the upper Columbia River exploded this past week, with anglers scoring excellent numbers of kings during the CCA Salmon Derby in Wenatchee. Sockeye fishing has been outrageous from Wanapum Dam to the Brewster Pool. The salmon fishing is really just taking off, too, with kings and sockeye still making their way over Priest Rapids Dam in great numbers.

The first annual CCA Salmon Derby. sponsored by Hooked on Toys, Town Ford and many other local sponsors was a tremendous success. In spite of very heavy flows for this time of year, the 70 anglers registered for the derby turned in over 40 salmon. There was even some drama at the weigh station in the final minutes before the deadline. With 14 minutes remaining on the clock, Stuart Hurd turned in two fish, one of which weighed 31 pounds, 4 ounces, taking first place away from Austin Moser who had been at the top of the board since Friday. His final catch also put him in third place for total weight.

The way the final standings read was as follows: Big Fish first place was taken by Stuart Hurd with his 31-pound, 4 ounce fish. Second place was won by Austin Moser with a 27-pound, 8 ounce king. In third place for big fish was Shane Magnuson with a 25 pound, 6 ounce king. In the Total Weight category, first place was won by Brandon Collins with an

even 100 pounds. Second place was taken by Shane Magnuson with a catch weighing 97 pounds, 8 ounces, and in third place was Stuart Hurd with a catch that tipped the scales at an even 88 pounds. Stuart Hurd banked a total of \$3,250.00 for his efforts in the derby,

Shane Magnuson an even \$3,000.00. Brandon Collins



took home \$1,750.00 and Austin Moser fattened his wallet by \$1,750.00.

There were other winners later that evening at the banquet. Everything from rifles to hair cuts were won through raffle drawings, and a mystery weight winner took home a 4 hp four stroke motor from Bob Feil boats and motors. Everyone was treated to a great meal at the Eagles Lodge, and the place was packed with the derby participants and their families and friends. The banquet was a perfect finale to the event. Everyone agreed that the first year's effort, chaired by Peter Flohr from Hooked on Toys,

was a huge success and they are all excited about next year's derby. The fishing success anglers experienced

has people really looking forward to the next derby. which is the Budweiser-Lowrance King Salmon Derby

in Brewster, scheduled for August 3rd through the 5th this year. Timing should be perfect for this one, too, as it appears that conditions will be ideal this year in the Brewster Pool. The water temperature in the Okanogan will be high enough to create the thermal barrier that makes for excellent fishing in the Brewster Pool. Sockeye are already stacking up in huge numbers off the mouth of the Okanogan and the kings will be milling around this same area by the thousands when derby time comes around. I would be getting my tickets for this derby right now, as there is a ceiling on the number of tickets that will be sold for this one. To get all the derby information, along with the rules, and to get a registration form on-line, log onto www.brewstersalmonderby.com

If you don't want to miss out on the great fishing for kings and sockeye this year and would like to get the advice of some real pros, you'll want to attend the free seminar at Town Ford on Wednesday, July 25th, beginning at 6 p.m. Shane Magnuson, Upper Columbia Guide Service, will be there

providing step by step instructions on exactly how he rigs for summer run salmon on the upper Columbia River. Also, Ron Oules, Reel-Lentless Guide Service, will be on hand to give a presentation on fishing for sockeye in the Brewster Pool. If you want to catch more of both of these species, and want to have an edge going into the Budweiser-Lowrance King Salmon Derby, better be at this one.

Anglers will be happy to know that fishing for salmon is now open above Wells Dam. Fishing

below Wells has been out of the question with the heavy flows and a launch that has once again been

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blown out. Fishing above the dam is much more fisher friendly and the opportunity to take both kings and sockeye very good. Tolling off the barrier above the dam can be very productive, but be aware that fish can be lost when they run under the debris that is piled against this barrier. It happened to me last summer.

It hasn't happened yet, but I wouldn't be surprised to see another release of triploids from the net pens at the top end of Rufus Woods Reservoir. Water has been spilling over Grand Coulee Dam again this year, which prompted last year's release. As I say it hasn't happened yet, but could be a possibility. If it does, another huge fishing opportunity will occur in our region. Last year the fishing for triploids on upper Rufus Woods was spectacular.

I also want to remind anglers that I still have room for more anglers to go to the Sea of Cortez with me in November. I added a fishing calendar to the information page so you can see what we'll be fishing for down there. Just log onto my web site and click on the Travel button at the bottom of the left hand side of the Home Page.

Hang onto your hats anglers. There's a fishing party going on here in our region on the Columbia River. Come and join the fun!

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