

# Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

## The Fishin' Magician

Salmon fishing is still getting a lot of attention in our region. Anglers are spread out from Brewster to the north to While Bluffs to the south. Good weather has encouraged salmon fishers to get out and put in their time, which is divided between late season summer run salmon and newly arriving fall run fish.

I really like fishing at Brewster and below Wells Dam this time of year. The summer run fish are very aggressive and are more willing to take a bait than earlier in the season. Many of these fish are near spawning and are released, but there are some that are bright enough for the smoker and even the barbeque. There is always a chance of hooking a bright fall run while fishing on the upper Columbia, too.

Last week representatives from the Department of Fish and Wildlife and fishing clubs met to honor one of our former members, Irv Conner, and get some work done. We knew that Irv would have approved of a meeting on the river rather than in a conference room. I brought my Jetcraft and Ron Oules, Reelentless Guide Service in Brewster, also a member of our "committee", brought his boat and we launched at Chelan Falls. Oules and I arrived before anyone else and discovered that neither of us had ever fished this area for kings. We were scratching our heads about where to put our boats and what to put on the ends of our lines.

When we loaded up and left the dock we pointed our boats up river. I put out Super Baits behind flashers on my downriggers, and I didn't have my lines

in the water much more than ten minutes when one of the rods went off. Dan Davies, of Leavenworth, reeled in a nice 23-pounder in the boat right off the bat! I stuck with this set up and although I got at least one more hit, should have tried something else. Oules had decided to jet plane herring, and although I took a fish quickly, he wound up putting three in his boat. One was a small jack, another was about like our fish. The third was a real monster, and weighed well over 30 pounds. I'm sure that if you wanted to try this area and do battle with big kings there are plenty more there.

Where we were fishing is near where the new special season for summer run salmon opened last week. The area is a tight one below the tail race of the Lake Chelan Powerhouse. This one is intended

for bank anglers. There are about 2,000 summer runs expected to return to this spot this year, and up to 7,000 could arrive here in the future. From what we experienced just downstream from here, I'd say it would be worth giving it a try. There are some rules specific to this new fishery and I would recommend that anglers interested in it go the Department of Fish and Wildlife web site and find the news release that describes them. I also want to mention that revenues from the Salmon and Steelhead Endorsement Stamp, which is required for this fishery, helped make this special season possible.

I have always liked fishing below Wells Dam this time of year. I wrap plugs like the Mag Lip Flatfish with sardines and have a ball catching some really big kings back trolling. I was reminded by Oules performance that I should bring some herring along no matter what time of year on the Columbia for kings.

I am getting mixed reports on the fishing for fall run salmon further down stream on the Columbia. Some days are good and others poor. When you travel south you'll see a big group of boats off the mouth of Crab Creek below Wanapum Dam. I talked to an angler that fished there recently. There were 25 boats and just two fish caught. This is a great place to look for fall kings, and it should get better and better as more fall runs make their way up stream. Over 300,000 fall runs have passed over Bonneville Dam, but they are

still coming in big numbers. I expect one of the best fall runs season in years, although late developing.

Steelhead anglers should be encouraged by the counts over Priest Rapids Dam. The forecast was for about 18,000 steelhead over Priest this year and I think that number will be passed. We should see closer to 20,000 like we had last season. There should be an announcement very soon on our seasons for this year and I expect to see all the tributaries open to fishing again.

The new Northern Pikeminnow Derby kicks off this weekend, with an orientation meeting at Crescent Bar at 6 p.m. on Friday evening. It looks like conditions will be great for the families that participate, and thanks to the folks at Quincy Valley Tourism and all the prize money and merchandise they are offering, the derby should be a success. I am anxious to learn how many pikeminnows are removed from the Columbia and who the big winners of derby are.

The next big event that families should make plans for is the Wenatchee River Salmon Festival. It's coming up on October 1st and 2nd. This is not only an award winning educational experience for youngsters; it is also a free event that offers a great number of hands-on activities. Kids will be able to learn how to shoot a bow and arrow, catch a fish, tie a fly, snowshoe, paddle a kayak and enjoy many other outdoor activities. I have been going to Salmon Fest for years, and wouldn't miss it!

Reach Dave at: [www.FishingMagician.com](http://www.FishingMagician.com)  
or [Fishboy@nwi.net](mailto:Fishboy@nwi.net)



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