

Welcoming **Dave Graybill** To The **Nickel Ads** **The Fishin' Magician**

I had a great time last week. I got to go fishing three times, and saw some great fish caught, some of them my own. If you haven't been able to fish the lower Columbia River, from White Bluffs to Wanapum Dam, you had better get geared up and go. There are already some big fall-run salmon being taken in this stretch, and the main wave of the huge run coming up river hasn't even hit yet.

I fished at White Bluffs on a Monday with my fishing buddy, Brian Muller, from Moses Lake. I hadn't been to White Bluffs in years and was very pleased to be invited to join him. He knows his way

around on this water and knows where to put the lures, too. We started up river above the launch and drifted down. The fish were found below the power lines on this particular day, and we caught three fish in four passes through this area. I actually got two of them, which was a real treat for me. Muller had suggested that I bring some Super Bait in the lemon-lime color with me, and I'm glad I did. I got my two fish on them, and when he switched to the same color he got one. My wife Eileen taped a great video of our day on the water that you'll be able to watch on my Fishing TV Show in October.

I was back to White Bluffs on Wednesday. This time I was fishing with Shane Magnuson of Upper Columbia Guide Services. He had two clients from Yakima on board, so my job was to run the video camera. We started fishing just above the launch and once again, the fish were lower in the hole, below the power lines. At 7:30, just when I had sat down with Shane and started doing the intro for the video, a king hit. I grabbed the camera from Shane's client Tom, who was doing the shooting, and he grabbed the rod. The fish was one of the most spectacular fighters I had ever seen. It grabbed

the Super Bait Plug Cut off the rigger and headed straight across the river for about 50 yards. Then it turned in a wide arc and came back and ran past the back of the boat. The whole time it was on top of the water and throwing up water like a remote-controlled hydro, and I got it all on video. We were all happy when that fish was put in the net.

We trolled around for a while longer, but Shane wanted to give Wanapum a try, so off we went. After launching below the dam, we ran down and joined the fleet that was trolling off the mouth of Crab Creek. We saw a few nice fish caught by other boats, and even had an extended battle with a fish that swept our gear. It was quite an effort between the two boats getting the gear cleared and cut away while the big king ran around. We were all pleased when that fish was brought to the net. Not long after that one of our rods went down and Shane's other client, Kevin, battled a twin to the one caught at White Bluffs to the net.

All of the salmon that I have mentioned were caught on the Super Bait or Super Bait Plug Cut. It seems to be working very well for these fall kings. The lures are being pulled behind Pro Troll flashers of a variety of colors and fished a range of depths of anywhere from 19 to 29 feet was what I have noticed. Other than the two smaller fish I caught, most of the kings are running from 24 to 30 pounds.

I am planning another trip down river; this time to Vernita and the stretch of river from Priest Rapids

Dam down to the bridge. I can't wait to see what the fishing is like here. More and more kings are showing up every day, and I sure hope there are a couple of big ones waiting for me at Vernita.

I also got to get out after steelhead for the first time this season. My fishing buddy Rollie Schmittten wanted to see how his new 14-foot boat would handle the water below Wells Dam, so off we went. We were after both steelhead and kings and had the boat loaded down with gear. We tried for steelhead first, and I am glad we did.

We made a couple of passes along the bar and may have had a weak take or two, but our luck changed when we tried the other side. Our bobbers hadn't been out very long when mine disappeared. I set the hook and knew immediately that I was into a good fish. I even thought I had a king for a while. The fish didn't jump or come up. It just stayed down no matter what I did. When it swam by the boat and I saw the broad back I was still convinced that I had a king. It wasn't until the fish tired and turned on its side that Rollie and I knew we had a steelhead. The hatchery, fin-clipped hen was dime bright, with just a hint of color on the gill plate. Rollie did a great job of sliding the net under this beauty and boy did we celebrate. When I got home I measured it and it was 33 inches long and fat!

That was my first taste of steelheading for the season, and boy am I pumped now!

Reach Dave at:
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