

Dave Graybill

The Fishin' Magician

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The thunder storms that rolled through our region last week were bad news for anglers in many ways. It kept them off the water for a couple days for sure. Up north it cooled the water temperature in the Okanogan River and sockeye and king salmon that were held up in the Brewster Pool on the Columbia shot up into the Okanogan. The good news is that there is hot and clear weather coming and fishing will improve in the Pool very soon.

There is plenty of good king fishing ahead for anglers in the Brewster Pool. Over 45,000 summer-runs have passed over Wells Dam so far this season, but 57,000 have come over Rocky Reach Dam. That means that there could still be over 10,000 fish still to arrive in the Pool. If we have a good string of consistent weather anglers will be able to really do some serious harvesting of these summer kings. The bite is early here. I made a run to Brewster on Sunday and had my gear down between 6 and 6:30 a.m. I was about an hour late. There were still some fish being caught when I got there, both kings and sockeye. The bite died not much later, though. We toughed it out, but to no avail. A word to the wise; be there before first light if you want to cash in on kings on the Brewster Pool.

There are a couple of good reasons to fish the Brewster Pool this coming weekend. The king bite should be back and going strong, and the annual Ray Stanley Memorial Bass Tournament will be held out of Pateros. The tournament has been going on for years and is an area favorite. I know that the Central Washington Bass Club is going to make a strong showing for the tournament this year. If you want to



learn more about it you can send an e-mail to shanstan1@hotmail.com or call Shannon at 509-679-6406. This is a great local tournament that is a lot of fun and fishing should be great!

Another fishery that is at its peak right now is the fly fishing for small rainbow on the Icicle River, above the Snow Lakes trail head. The river did rise and get some color when the storms hit, but it has dropped back into perfect shape for wading. I got out on the river just before the storms and had an amazing couple of hours. I found trout all along the stretch of river I was fishing and although I started early in the afternoon, it didn't matter. I fished a Parachute Adams and caught close to 30 fish. Most of them were 8 or 9 inches, but some were close to 10 inches--real whoppers for the Icicle.

There are a number of reasons I like to fish this small stream for the small trout. One is that it is a really fun way to cool off when we have a hot day in Leavenworth. It can be a hundred degrees in town, but in the high 70s up the valley. The water is warm and splashing around in a pair of shorts sure cools you down. The other thing about fishing this small water is that it is great practice for bigger water and bigger fish. The same principles apply. You learn how to cast and land a fly on the water without slapping the line. Drifting a fly naturally can be a challenge and it can be learned on this small water. Finding out which flies these small trout take transfers to bigger water, too. I almost forgot to mention the quiet calm of the stream and the scenery on the Icicle. When I am on this small river I forget about everything else. It's great therapy.

It won't be long before the fall run fish will be making their way into our region. There is an all-time record of over one million fish expected this year. The fishing in the Hanford Reach and below Priest Rapids Dam was fantastic last season and will be even better this year. I will be heading down to the Columbia River Gorge in the middle of September to do some fishing for these fall kings. Eric Granstrom and I will be at Fish Camp and we got a bunch of these up river brights there last year. I am taking a bigger cooler along this time.

If you haven't seen the news release there has been some enhancement on fall fishing this coming season in the

Hanford Reach and up to Priest Rapids Dam. Anglers will be able to keep six salmon a day, with three being adults. People had better start looking for good deals on freezers and smokers because there will be a load of fall fish caught this season. I will be offering a couple of seminars on fishing for fall kings at Town Ford and at Bob Field Boats and Motors. Keep an eye on the reports on my web site, at FishingMagician.com, and in future columns here in the Nickel for the dates and times of these seminars. I will be announcing them very soon.

I am also going to make my first tuna trip ever off the coast of Washington on the 1st of September. I know a lot of folks around here have made these trips and have raved about how much fun it is to catch these tuna and what great eating they are, too. I will be taking the video cameras along on this adventure and will be sharing with you all soon after we get back. Should be a great show.

If you haven't fished for the fall salmon in the Hanford Reach and want to spend a day with a guide, better book your trip now. Guides will be booked up fast this year. It's going to be a great season. I can't wait!

Reach Dave at:
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