

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

I was really up a creek. I didn't know exactly what I was going to do last weekend. I turned down a trip on the Icicle as it had just blown out, due to a slide. We had friends coming into town and wasn't sure when. Jerrod Gibbons, Okanogan Guide Service, came to my rescue with a late-evening phone call. He had heard that the fishing at Rufus Woods was very good and wanted to know if I would like to join him, along with his Dad Tom and young daughter Kaytlynn to find out. Well, you bet I would!

I didn't get a lot of sleep that night. I had to scramble around and get some gear together and I was pretty excited. I actually left my home in Leavenworth a 3 a.m. I didn't want to be late. I was to meet Gibbons at 6 a.m. in Omak. I got their plenty early.

I piled into his truck, said hi to Tom, who I have fished with a few times before. He often helps Jerrod on his boat during his guided trips on the upper Columbia for salmon. Plus I met his darling daughter Katlynn for the first time. She is not yet three years old, and even at 6 a.m. was ready to go fishing, chanting "fish on, fish on" all the way to the boat launch.

We put the boat in at the Tim Ranch and run the short distance up to the lower net pens. I suppose you heard about the fish kill due to nitrogen saturation of the water below Grand Coulee Dam. I thought the fish in the net pens and in the river just below the dam were toast. Not so. There were fish jumping in the pens while we were fishing and the river was loaded with fat triploids.

We began casting small jigs and spinners



to the pens and Jerrod and Tom caught several before I got onto the right gear. I switched from a bait casting set up with 12-pound line to my steelhead rod and spinning reel that had a 10-pound fluorocarbon leader. That made all the difference. I too began hooking fish.

We were about 20 yards off the pens and Gibbons used his T-1 on the kicker motor to control our drift. We slowly slid downstream and placed out casts as close to the edge of the pens as possible. We found that 1/4-ounce jigs were heavy enough in the current we had that day, to get to the bottom where

the fish were holding. Bright pink and purple jigs worked the best, and Tom Gibbons caught quite a few on an orange bladed spinner. We didn't use any bait or scent and pinched the barbs down on our hooks, so we could catch and release until we put our limit of two fish each in the fish box. Little Katlynn reeled in a couple of fish, while being cradled in her daddy's arms. It was just one of those kinds of days, where you were catching so many fish it was just plain fun.

In the course of the day we caught and released over 40 fish. There were a couple of smaller ones in the mix, but the majority of the triploids were at least 5 pounds. We released one early in the day that probably weighed close to 12 pounds. We didn't want to fill the fish box up early though, we were having a blast. We had two or three doubles on and just missed having a triple a time or two. When we decided to keep a fish, Katlynn would run to get "daddy's stick", the fish bonker, and would give the trout repeated taps on the noggin. Then she would run up to the bow and lift the lid on the fish box. She was a great little helper on the boat.

You'll want to catch the Fishing TV Show I did on our day's fishing next month. We all hope that the good fishing at Rufus Woods continues for a while. I'll give more details on fishing for triploids on my next e-letter that will be coming out soon. I will also be talking about walleye and bass fishing at Moses Lake in the next issue, too.

The 6th annual Budweiser-Longrange King Salmon Derby in Brewster is scheduled for August 5th through the 7th this year. I wasn't going to talk about it until later, but when I looked over the derby information this week I noticed that the entries are capped at 275. They have been accepting entries to the derby for a while now and it reminded me I had better get mine in, or I may miss my chance to fish it this year. It's easy to do. Just log onto brewstersalmonderby.com and you can print out an entry blank and get all the rules, too. If you haven't fished in this derby you're missing out. The community of Brewster really turns out and everyone that participates has a great time, whether they catch fish or not. Of course it helps that there are thousands of kings stacked up off the mouth of the Okanogan River at derby time.

Speaking of derbies, the annual Pike Minnow Derby is coming up this weekend. This is always great fun, with a ton of cash and prizes given away. I would get to Hooked on Toys or Bob Feil Boats and Motors and pick up an entry blank for the details.

Reach Dave at: www.FishingMagician.com or Fishboy@nwi.net

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