

The Fishin' Magician

Welcoming
Dave Graybill

To The
Nickel Ads
Classifieds

You would probably think that I went right back to steelhead fishing after reading about the nice fish that I caught below Wells Dam. You'd be right, too. I joined my friend Rollie Schmitten and his wife Barbara for a morning trip on the Columbia, but this time off the mouth of the Wenatchee. We weren't as lucky this time though, only catching one big pike minnow and missing one good bite. I was a beautiful morning to be on the water and Barbara brought along some delicious home made cookies that helped ease the disappointment of not hooking any steelhead.

I did make another salmon fishing trip last week. This time I traveled to the Vernita area on the Columbia River. What a great fall I've had. I

have fished White Bluffs twice and below Wanapum, and now have made it to Vernita. I wrote about my past experiences on this eleven mile stretch of river from the Vernita Bridge to Priest Rapids Dam. It was really great to be back to this salmon-rich water.

I was invited by Brian Nielson, who provided part of the seminar at Town Ford recently. His buddy John Stephens keeps a motor home near the Vernita launch when the fish are there, and we took his boat out in search of kings. John is an expert with a plug-cut herring, but the river was running too fast for this tactic, and we switched to Super Baits on this day.

We missed a fish pretty early in the day, and then had a very long period with no action at all. We were sticking to the area known as the King Hole, starting well up river and then drifting down into the heart of the salmon-producing water. We didn't see any fish caught and no fish roll until very late in the morning. Finally, we noticed some activity on the water. Fish started to jump and roll and we saw a couple of fish caught.

We decided to make a radical change in our approach. Stephens dug through his box and dug out a couple of the good old style Super Baits in the lemon-lime color. This had proved to be a good color at White Bluffs for me, so we thought

it would be worth a try. We also moved our baits up off the bottom and put our riggers at 27 feet and fished the baits closer to the boat.

On our first drift back down through—Wham! A king grabbed the lure, and Brian fought it to the boat and Stephens netted it. We were sure that we had cracked the code and would catch a bunch before we had to head for the launch, but it wasn't the case. We just flat ran out of time before we could put another fish in the boat.

It was a wonderful day, though. The three of us had a blast telling stories and talking tackle and favorite fishing areas. The time flew by, and we plan to get back to Vernita before it closes for the season.

Something I noticed on my way down to Desert Aire in the early evening the night before and on my way back home the next day. There wasn't a single boat off Crab Creek below Wanapum Dam. I can only guess that the fishing has slowed in that area. Typically there will be boats trolling around near the mouth of Crab Creek right up till dark this time of year. Maybe anglers are waiting for a fresh batch of fish to move up into the area. They shouldn't have to wait too long. Fall kings are crossing over Priest Rapids Dam at a rate of up to 1,000 a day right now. Wanapum should light up soon.

I want to remind everyone that the Icicle Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the local Chapter of Ducks Unlimited have joined forces to offer area sportsmen a new and different event. On Sunday,

October 10th they are going to hold a salmon BBQ and Trap Shoot at the Cashmere Gun Club. For just \$25.00 you can take part in the salmon BBQ and the Trap Shoot. The box of shotgun shells for the trap shoot has been donated by Der Sportsman in Leavenworth and Hooked on Toys in Wenatchee. For those fifteen years of age and under the fee is just fifteen dollars. The event will start at 10 a.m. and end at three. There will be shooting games that will be fun for all ages. They encourage everyone to bring their field guns and give it a try. To get your tickets, call 509-860-1510, or 509-548-0903. You can purchase tickets on-line by logging onto wa.ducks.org.

I really got to expand my fishing territory with another trip to Anaconda, Montana. I think there is some four wheeling in the plan for an extended weekend with family this time, and I also will be packing my fly rods. I hope to fish some of the small streams in the area, as I did on my last visit. I watched an angler in a pontoon boat battle a big rainbow on Georgetown Lake last time, too, so I may make a few casts from the shore on this great lake. I really hope to be able to make a few casts on the Big Hole River, which isn't far from Anaconda. Whatever I manage to do while there I will be sure to let you know what it was like.

Be sure to check the Fishing TV Page on my web site for the shows coming up this month.

Reach Dave at:
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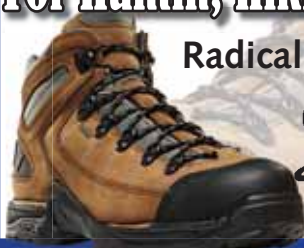
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