

Fishin' Tales

April 2005
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www.detroitsteelheaders.org

Inside this Issue

- 1 April Meeting
Club Shirts
Salmon Stakes Tourney
- 2 Tournament Dates
Salmon Stakes Tactics
- 3 Spring Insprection
- 4 Web Site
Photo Contest

Detroit Area Steelheaders, Inc.
P.O. Box 1255
Sterling Heights, Mi. 48311-1255



April Meeting

The April regular member meeting will focus on the Salmon Stakes. Come to hear and share good information.

As always, the general meeting takes place at 7:30 P.M. in the hall at 6177 Chicago Rd. (east of Mound Rd., North of 13 Mile Rd.)-Warren,

CLUB T-Shirts

At the April meeting we will be selling this year's annual special 30th Anniversary Edition T-shirt at a special price; M, L or XL for \$10.00 and 2XL or 3XL for \$12.00.

Grand Haven 2005 Two Day Tournament

The DAS will be traveling to west Michigan to the beautiful port of Grand Haven. The tournament will start on Saturday, May 21st with the 5:00 AM captains meeting at Chinook Pier located at the Municipal Marina. Lines in by 6:00 AM, first fish call at 9:00 AM, second at Noon, pull lines at 2:00 PM, be in line for the weigh-in by 3:00 PM. Day two will start at 6:00 AM Sunday with no captains meeting, again fish calls at 9:00 and Noon, pull lines at 2:00,

weigh-in at 3:00. Port Captain is Bob Jones, Bobby's Toy. Cell is 734-751-1767.

The weigh-in will held at the Municipal Marina at the little park on top of the hill. The park is next to the parking lot at Chinook Pier. Keep in mind a city ordinance prohibits any alcohol consumption at the park. Hot dog, brats, chips and pop will be served during and after the weigh-in.

Historically Grand Haven has been one of the clubs best tournaments for amount of fish caught and variety available. Big kings are common, smaller kings very common with a few Browns, some Coho, Steelhead and Lakers. Spoons are the lure of choice in May at Grand Haven; however don't dismiss the idea of flasher/fly or meat rig. The majority of my success has been spoons. Michigan Stinger bloody nose has been a personal favorite. I mix up the spread with mags and regulars Silver Streaks; the dolphins are good producer as are yellow tail.

Structure is scarce at Grand Haven. Small drops and ledges will hold fish. I have points in my plotter that hold fish year after year. Fish can be anywhere this time of year. The best advice is to head out straight west until you hit clean water or start marking fish. I have done well in 25FOW up to 250FOW; all depends on the wind and waves. Look for the warm pockets of water to find bait and fish.

Fishing Lake Michigan at this time of year can be tricky. Spring weather can be very unstable. I had a personal experience last year that I don't ever want to repeat. Pay close attention to changing weather, storms can move very quickly. I was caught in one on a Friday morning pre-fishing outing that was clocked at 80 mph coming across the lake. We saw the storm, it was at least 10 miles away, we pulled lines and it was on us. We had a long eight mile ride back. The best advice I can give you; make sure you have the pier heads in your GPS, stay calm, slow down and ride with or quarter to the waves. Visibility will be nil, have your crew keep a sharp eye out for other boats. You can not out run it, it will win. Keep your boat speed slow, but enough rpm that you can keep your boat under control in the wind and waves. Lower you antennas, keep everyone seated and ride it out. It would be best to let another club boat know that you are out there prior to lowering your antennas. Keep in mind this is one of those once in a life time chances that it can happen to you, just be prepared and know what to do if you do get caught.

The best boat launch is the Harbor Island Launch which is maintained by the city. I believe the cost to launch is \$5.00, on the honor system. Be aware, the parking lot is checked on a regular basis, if you are not displaying a current launch ticket in your window you will receive a ticket. If you are leaving your boat trailer overnight make sure you put it in the grass/dirt over flow lot. I left mine in a blacktop overflow lot last year and it was moved to the grass lot, complete with broken

chain and bent rim. The launch is easy to find; when coming into Grand Haven you will be coming off of highway 104 and turning north onto highway 31. You will go over the Grand River, stay in the right lane and the service road and sign are at the very foot of the bridge. Turn right and follow the signs.

The Municipal Marina has excellent facilities with many floating docks and warm showers. Reservations can be made on line through the DNR reservation system. I suggest you make the reservation if you want a floating dock, as they go fast. The Marina can be reached at 616-847-3478; hours are 8 to 5 this time of year. The Marina can be hailed on VHF channel 9 and 68.

There are many excellent motels, bed and breakfast and campgrounds in the area. Restaurants abound as well. There is something for everyone here, if you want to bring the wife, Muskegon offers a couple of nice shopping malls and is only a short 20 minuet ride south on 31. See the handout at the April meeting for all the listings for the area or log onto www.grandhaven.com for complete listing, area guide and event schedule.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me; Bob Jones at 734-751-1767 cell or 248-486-5049 at home. For you newcomers out there, make sure you make this tournament, it is one of our closer tournaments and one of the best. Alternate contact is out trolling director, Joe Von Grabe, Sloppy Joe. Joe can be reached at home, 586-293-7688, or his cell at 586-945-4334. Hope to see you there.

2005 Boat Trolling Tournaments

April 23 - St. Joe
Al Wiechert-734-368-5737

April 30 - Salmon Stakes
Dean Meyers

May 21 - Grand Haven 2 Day Bob Jones

June 4th - Pt. Austin Team Doubles
Blaise Pewinski

June 18 - Special People
Doug Karakas

June 25 - Frankfort
Bob Fiesel

July 16 - BFQ

August 6 - Ludington Ladies Day
Bill Stanely

August 13 - Ludington
Mike Vigus

August 27 - Manistee
Bob Paradise

September 10 - Grand Haven
Chris Nytko

Trolling Director
Joe von Grabe "Sloppy Joe" 586-293-7688

Salmon Stakes

Over the years we have fished in many early Spring tournaments in Southern Lake Huron. Some we won. Some we did really well. Some we struggled. But regardless, we always learned a little and went into the next one with more skill and confidence. The one thing we found was that good planning brought good luck.

While we are not fishing the Salmon Stakes in 2005 we would like to share with you how we would approach the tournament to improve your odds of success.

The first step is to understand fish migration and then where the fish are. In general the fish start at the Southern end of the lake and move North as

the weather improves. Believe it or not, at early ice out there have been reports in prior years of salmon being taken as far south as the Grosse Point Boat Club on Lake St Clair. The St. Clair River has also given up many excellent catches of Spring salmon.

For this tournament we would initially look at an area from the mouth of the St Clair River North to Forestville. That's still a stretch of 45 to 50 miles.

We remember some tournaments being won by boats fishing the mouth of the river. Others were won by boats fishing off Lakeport State Park. One money tournament was won by a boat fishing deep water off Lexington. Another tournament was won at the clay banks South of Sanilac. One tournament was won by a boat fishing off the trailer park just North of Sanilac and another tournament won North of Sanilac off Cherry Creek. So does that mean I can fish anywhere? Absolutely not, because tournament have also been lost at each of these sites. You must find the fish.

The first thing I would do is to try to talk to people who have pre-fished the area. "Where has the action been?" I'd suggest www.detroitsteelheaders.org as a great place to start. Come to the April meeting as there will be lots of info. However, I'd plan to fish North of where I heard the fish were. I'd also try to keep in contact to try to make sure they didn't move faster or slower North than I expected.

Next, I'd check my maps for GPS co-ordinates. I'd get co-ordinates for the hot spots and

especially the creeks. Warm water creeks can be a key indicator of where the baitfish are and thus where the salmon or brown trout are. Lakeport State Park, The Boy Scout Camp, the Clay Banks, The Trailer Park, Cherry Creek, etc. Put them in your GPS unit now; not later. Ask a buddy for co-ordinates or try the web site.

If I am pre-fishing, I launch the boat based upon my club/ web information and based upon wind direction. If the wind is expected from the South, I would launch at Lexington, maybe run South and then troll to North of Sanilac; finally pulling out at Sanilac. If it's out of the North, I might launch at Harbor Beach or Sanilac depending upon where the reports said the action had been.

Along the way, I would watch the graph looking for baitfish and watch water temperatures looking for warm water areas. I would try shallow water and would spend some time in deeper water. It's just as important to eliminate areas as it is to find good areas.

Only after pre-fishing would I decide where to moor the boat for the night. That decision would be based upon what I found from my pre-fishing, tournament day weather forecast and listening to the radio on the water. I want to be on fish as early as possible on tournament day. I don't want to spend an extra hour running with no lines in the water.

Tournament day, I'd place my bet and set up at my pre-determined spot. I'd troll in an "S" pattern North or South until I hit fish and then I troll in and out to try to stay on them.

Through the day I'd slowly work to deeper water, occasionally taking a troll back into the shallows; especially once traffic cleared out.

This program may not be a "guarantee", but experience has shown that a good plan makes for good luck. EI-Lin Charters

SPRING INSPECTION

OUTDRIVES and ENGINES:

- Inspect rubber outdrive bellows for cracked, dried and/or deteriorated spots (look especially in the folds), and replace if suspect.
- Check power steering and power trim oil levels. Replace worn-out zincs.
- Inspect outer jacket of control cables. Cracks or swelling indicate corrosion and mean that the cable has to be replaced.
- Inspect fuel lines, including fill and vent hoses, for softness, brittleness or cracking. Check all joints for leaks and make sure all lines are well supported with non-combustible clips or straps with smooth edges.

ENGINES- FUEL SYSTEMS:

- Inspect fuel tanks, fuel pumps and filters for leaks. Clamps should be snug and free of rust. Clean fuel filters.
- Inspect cooling hoses and fittings for stiffness, rot, leaks and/or cracking. Make sure they fit snugly and are double-clamped.
- Every few years, remove and inspect exhaust manifold for corrosion.
- Clean and tighten electrical connections, especially both ends of battery cables. Wire-brush battery terminals and fill cells with distilled water.
- Inspect bilge blower hose for leaks.

MISCELLANEOUS:

- Check expiration dates on flares and fire extinguishers.
- Check stove and remote tanks for loose fittings and leaking hoses.
- Inspect bilge pump and float switch to make sure it's working properly.
- Inspect dock and anchor lines for chafing.
- Update or replace old charts, waterway guides.
- Check shore power cable connections for burns, which indicates the cable needs to be replaced.
- Make sure your boating license and/or registration is up-to-date. Don't forget your trailer tags.
- Review your boat insurance policy and update coverage if needed. Be sure you have fuel spill insurance coverage.
- Make sure you have a properly sized and wearable life jackets in good condition

Detroit Area Steelheaders, Inc.
 P.O. Box 1255
 Sterling Heights Mi. 48311-1255

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

MEETING NOTICE – PLEASE DO NOT DELAY

for each passenger, including kids and pets.

Courtesy Boat US

DAS Web Site

www.detroitsteelheaders.org

With the boat trolling season starting up, I would like to encourage members and non-members alike who have not visited the Detroit Area Steelheaders website to surf on over and look around a bit. Club news, copies of current and past newsletters, club tournament, outing, and meeting info, links to weather and fishing sites, and an extensive club photo gallery are all available online. The Tournaments page has links to information on the ports the club will be fishing, and will be updated with tournament results as the boat trolling season progresses. The Message Board is a great place to exchange information



and get current fishing reports, and I encourage users to add their own reports as you get out on the water.

Jason Adam -Webmaster-

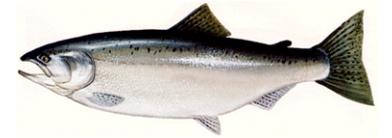


Photo Contest

Detroit Area Steelheaders announces the 2005 Fishing Photo Contest. Photos taken this ice fishing season through the end of boat trolling season are eligible. Prizes include \$100, \$50, and \$20 Gift certificates, and framed prints of the winning photos. Complete rules and information are available on the DAS website, or e-mail photocontest@detroitsteelheaders.org. A picture is worth a 1000 words(and maybe \$100), so keep your camera handy.

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