



FISHING TALES



High winds force delay at Port Austin

As in years past, high winds were upon us at Port Austin this year. The Saturday tournament only went on until about 8:30 a.m., when the announcement was made to cancel the fishing competition for the day, due to high winds. We rescheduled the picnic to 1:00 p.m., so that those who wished to could try to get out and fish during the afternoon. At the same time, it was announced that tournament fishing would restart at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday, and run until 1:00 p.m.

Since there was no contest on Saturday, the Team Doubles were also cancelled, thus making Sunday the backup tournament day.

We started on time on Sunday. Most boats headed northeast once past the light, into Laker territory. Early reports had Lake Trout on the bottom, with some King Salmon and Lakers mixed and suspended in 80' to 120' of water.

The first Fish Call had several boats with three, four and five fish, while a few boats didn't have any. The second Fish Call showed most boats had fish and were catching up, while only four boats still reporting a shutout.

At the weigh-in, all boats had a catch, with "Sea Hag" taking first place, "Hawkeye" in second, and "Aquarius II" claiming third place.

The Big Fish prize also went to "Sea Hag"



FIRST PLACE: "SEA HAG" with Blaise Pewinski and crew.

with a nice 17.06-pound King Salmon. When the weather finally cleared up, the fishing was good for Lake Trout, and a few King Salmon were also caught.

I hope to see you all real soon at the dock at a future tournament.

— Ron Hartman, "Molly Frair"

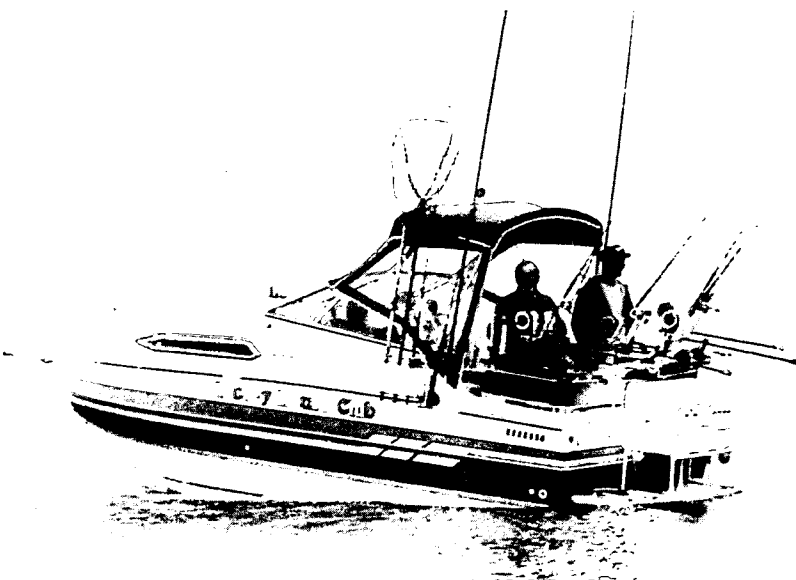
PORT AUSTIN TOURNAMENT

June 4, 1999

23 boats entered

PLACE/BOAT/SKIPPER

- 1) SEA HAG Blaise Pewinski
- 2) HAWKEYE Larry Walters
- 3) AQUARIUS II Chris Nytko
- 4) MARY K Kenneth Kuhar
- 5) ANTICIPATION Rob Pinsky
- 6) LIL' SCRATCH Dick Shirk
- 7) SLOPPY JOE Joe Von Grabe
- 8) TOMORROW'S DREAM Mark Stosiak
- 9) BLUE STAR II Stanley Bilek
- 10) MY TREASURE Joe Golaszewski
- 11) THE BRAT Ron Maschke
- 12) JUST ONCE Bill Nutting
- 13) MOLLY FRAIR Ron Hartman
- 14) LOKI ONE Dave Roehr
- 15) MICKEY MOUSE CLUB Bob Buero
- 16) IN-SEINE Colleen Pruett
- 17) CAPT' HOOK II Doug Karakas
- 18) GOLDEN OLDIE Howard York
- 19) TYGER Ty Voigt
- 20) CRUSADER Mike Vigus
- 20) DREDGE Edward Hill
- 20) MAIN SQUEEZE Walt Pohorily
- 20) STEEL-N-TIME Scott Zaslong



DETROIT STEELHEADER BOB BUERO and his "Mickey Mouse Club" crew enjoy the fishing action at Port Austin.
More Port Austin pictures on Page Four.

Steelhead: The potamodromous strain

That animals migrate huge distances, surviving the rigors of the wild, is truly a wonder of nature. Moreover, that some fish species can move between fresh water and salt water is remarkable. Such a feat requires drastically shifting kidney functions to regulate the amount of salts in the blood stream. Steelhead in their natural range do just that, and more than once.

Movement to and from salt water for the purpose of spawning is called anadromy. That term is erroneously applied time and again to any fish that migrates long distances. However, Great Lakes Steelhead are potamodromous, meaning they move entirely in fresh water to fulfill their life requirements.

In the Great Lakes, the tributary streams are home to Steelhead for about one to three years, when the instinct to pick up stakes hits. They will then reside in the Great Lakes for about two to six years before returning to their natal streams to spawn. No one knows for sure, but biologists believe that Steelhead find their natal streams by imprinting on the chemical "smell" of the water in their individual streams.

Most Steelhead spawn only once, but some individual fish have spawned up to five times throughout their life. Multiple spawns are rare, though. A 30-inch female Steelhead may drop 10,000 eggs, of which only two may return to their stream several years later to spawn.

IS IT A RAINBOW OR A STEELHEAD?

Much controversy existed over the Steelhead's taxonomy in years past. Is a Steelhead just a Rainbow Trout on vitamin supplements, or is it a completely different species? Formerly, two different species existed: *Oncorhynchus mykiss* (*Oncorhynchus* means hooked jaw) for Steelhead, and *Salmo gairdneri*, for Rainbow Trout.

The current thinking is that there are obvious differences between the two fish, but not enough to warrant distinct species status. Only one species is now recognized, *O. mykiss*.

The scientific name change follows a recent alignment of all inland North American

trout to the genus. The Steelhead is a sea-run phase of Rainbow Trout. They are essentially different varieties of the same critter, in much the same way that Japanese Coi and common Carp are the same fish, or a Rhode Island Red and a New Hampshire Red are both chickens.

LOOKING BACK

If it weren't for the railroads, Steelhead might have been a late arrival to the Great Lakes. The U.S. Fish Commission outfitted special railroad cars in the mid-1870's to transport fish literally from all over the country. Smallmouth Bass went to Maine, Carp to Kentucky, and Steelhead to the Great Lakes (two out of three ain't bad!).

Michigan was the first Midwestern state to stock Steelhead, but not without resistance. Trout fishing purists raised concerns about debasing Michigan's Brook Trout streams. The purists lost that argument, and the first load of wild Steelhead arrived in Michigan in 1876.

These first fish came from the Federal Fish Hatchery in McCloud, California. According to Wolverine writer James Clyde Gilbert, "The greater part of this first shipment was already hatched. [One] third went to the north branch of the Paw Paw River, and [one] third into the Boyne River, Charlevoix County. These last were planted from the old G. R. & I. train by a Conductor Banks, who stopped the train for that purpose." Where the rest went is not clear.

Over the ensuing years, various strains of Steelhead from Oregon, California, and Washington made their way to the Midwest. Once the Steelhead populations were firmly naturalized, Michigan began propagating and stocking the fish themselves. By 1915, Paris State Hatchery was turning out about 5 million fingerlings a year. These were in addition to whatever natural reproduction existed at the time. Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin followed Michigan's lead and got their Steelhead programs underway by the early 1890's.

Steelhead proved very adaptable to Midwestern waters. Sport and commercial fisher-

ies developed around this immigrant fish. The Great Lakes Steelhead fishery prospered until about the 1930's. Then things got bad, not only for Steelhead, but for many other aquatic organisms. The Great Lakes took it in the shorts with heavy industrial development, locks and dams, and the Welland Canal. Industrial pollution degraded water quality, locks and dams impeded upstream migration of fish, and the water connection to the Atlantic Ocean created by the Welland Canal brought two unwanted immigrants - alewife and sea lamprey.

Both invaders immediately took up permanent residence and a population explosion ensued. The parasitic sea lamprey sucked the life blood from the important sport fish populations in the Great Lakes. They preyed on the larger fish, removing the brood fish from the populations. Alewives gleaned the lake bottoms of eggs and fry, and sport fish populations experienced a precipitous decline.

With the sea lamprey under control by the 1960's, biologists turned more attention to Steelhead having recognized they were one of the few fish spared the alewife's wrath. Given that Steelhead spawn in the rivers where alewives won't ascend, the young fish weren't vulnerable. By the time Steelhead smolts descend to the Lakes, they are too big to be preyed upon by alewives. In fact, it is the alewife that serves as prey for the Steelhead.

The lakes and rivers have become much more hospitable places for fish. Water quality has greatly improved, and so have the fisheries.

- Craig Springer

Coming Events

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Last Tuesday each month at 7:30 p.m. K. of C. Hall, 6177 Chicago Road, Warren
JUNE 27, 2000 • **JULY 25, 2000** • **AUGUST 29, 2000**

BOAT TROLLING TOURNAMENT SCHEDULE

DATE	EVENT	PORT CAPTAIN
July 29	ROGERS CITY	Joe Von Grabe, (810) 293-7688
Aug. 12	LUDINGTON	Bob Mitchell, (248) 828-8034
Aug. 26	MANISTEE	Mark Stosiak, (810) 777-9833
Sept. 9	HARBOR BEACH	Ed Wilczek, (810) 757-7365

CREWS Hot Line

NEED A CREW?
Looking for crew members to fish with you in Detroit Area Steelheader Boat Trolling Tournaments?

▼ ▼ ▼

WANT TO CREW?
Want to fish in Detroit Area Steelheader Boat Trolling Tournaments but don't have a boat?

Call the Crews Hot Line to match up with a Skipper looking for crew members, or to get crew members for your boat during the 1999 season. Contact:

LARRY BOYER: (313) 495-1342
DOUG KARAKAS: (248) 545-1181

Netting Fish 101

Slipping a net under a tired fish sounds easy. In reality, this skill is anything but. More hooked fish get away at the net than at any other time during the fight.

Unfortunately, the reason so many fish get away often boils down to human error.

For the record, anyone who hasn't botched a netting job hasn't fished very long. We've all lost our share of fish, but with the right strategy and mindset, anyone can improve his or her netting skills.

The first step in successfully netting a fish is selecting the right tool for the job. Every season I witness the same situation numerous times: A couple of anglers are teaming up to net a nice fish, but the outcome is brutally obvious. The team is handicapped with a net that's half the size required for the job, and disaster is as eminent as if the net had a hole in the bottom.

You wouldn't use a spoon to shovel snow, but it's amazing how many anglers use landing nets that are too small for the task. Select a net that's large enough to easily hold whatever species you're most likely to catch.

I own three nets suitable for the species I fish for most often. My landing net collection includes a small hoop model with a three-foot handle for Trout and Panfish, a larger hoop model with a six-foot handle for Walleyes, Northern Pike, and Bass, and a much larger version with a long extension handle designed for trolling up larger Walleyes, Steelhead, Muskies and Salmon.

A good landing net should be equipped with a coated nylon bag that will help prevent hooks from tangling in the mesh. Those rubber nets on the market are great for keeping lures from getting tangled, but I've seen fish hop out of those nets as fast as they are scooped up. Rubber nets are shallow enough that a netted fish can easily catapult right back into the water! I've also seen powerful fish such as Northern Pike stretch open a hole in the mesh and go right straight through the net. Either situation will usually end up in disappointment for the angler.

In addition to a net that's large enough for the job, get in the habit of holding the net handle in one hand and the net bag against the net handle with the other. This grip prevents the net bag from snagging on a cleat, rod holder, or something else at the moment of truth. When the net goes into the water, re-

lease the bag so that you can easily and safely slide the fish inside.

Here's another netting tip that applies to trolling. When trolling, the forward motion of the boat usually causes a hooked fish to surface. A fish splashing on the surface just out of net range is like watching a quarterback throw a pass that you can see is going to be intercepted. Splashing about on the surface often gives the fish enough leverage to throw the hook and escape.

To avoid this situation, slow the boat down once the fish has been hooked, and put the engine in neutral as the fish nears the boat. This helps to keep the fish below the surface until it can be wrestled into net range.

Trolling puts a lot of strain on the fish, line and hooks. To increase the odds of landing fish, it is best to use a large net with an extension handle that can be used out away from the boat if necessary.

Position the angler fighting the fish directly behind the net man so both participants can monitor the fish. Watch the point where the line enters the water. Reel in the fish using a slow and steady retrieve, and as long as the fish is coming toward the boat, keep it coming. When the fish decides to turn and run, stop reeling and let the fish pull against the drag. The moment the fish stops running, turn it's head back toward the boat and apply steady pressure again.

Don't try to net the fish too soon. Stabbing at the fish as it goes by rarely ends in a successful landing. More often, the fish is missed completely or, worse yet, the hooks catch on the net and the fish tears free.

When the fish is tired out, you will be able to lead it to the net. Your job is to bring the fish to the surface at a location where the person on the net can easily reach the fish. Don't try to net the fish under the surface. Wait until the fish's head hits the surface before scooping up the fish in one smooth motion.

A good net job is a beautiful thing that ends in excitement and smiles.

- Mark Romanack

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Editor's Note - You can find more articles written by Mark Romanack at the website www.alloutdoors.com. This is a good website, offering lots of fishing and hunting stuff. Other websites likely to be of some interest to Detroit Area Steelheaders include:

- www.boaters.com. Features Raytheon tech experts, *et al*.
- www.boatscape.com. Offers free local weather information.
- www.igfa.com. This is the place to go to research fishing records.

Salmon and Steelhead size rebounded in 1999

After troubled years of mediocre fishing, rampant disease, and lower fish numbers during the 1990's, Michigan's lake Salmon and Trout may be ready to boom.

Increases are being reported in trophy-size Steelhead, Coho and Chinook Salmon - good for efforts to lure more anglers (and their wallets) to Michigan waters. The state's fishery ranks eighth among states, yielding \$1.5 billion each year according to a 1998 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service survey.

Last year, nearly 700 Coho Salmon of more than 12 pounds, the minimum for Master Angler recognition, were caught, state officials said. Also, trophy Chinook Salmon more than tripled. In 1999, Lake Huron and Lake Michigan anglers landed 216 fish of at least 27 pounds (the largest weighed 40 pounds!), compared to 70 in 1998.

"We had a banner year, a wonderful year," said Cameron Garst, a charter captain who runs fishing trips on Lake Michigan out of Traverse City. "We can only hope this year goes nearly as well."

Big Steelhead also reached record levels 1999. More than 70 fish weighing more than 17 pounds (the benchmark for trophy status) were caught last year, compared to only 11 trophy Steelhead in 1998.

The exact reasons for the wave of bigger fish aren't clear. But lake scientists credit a bumper year in alewives for the sudden gain in weights and sizes. "We had an abundance of alewives last year. Dead alewives littered Lake Michigan's beaches, and Salmon gorged on them," said Gerald Rakoczy, a Michigan D.N.R. biologist.

"By the same token, populations of alewives were their lowest in the mid-1990's, the years of our poorest Salmon fishing," he said.

Closer control of bacterial kidney disease (BKD), which still plagues Salmon stocks and destroys thousands of fish each year, has combined with the extra food to help nurture bigger fish, some experts say.

In 1995, it was estimated that 30% of Lake Michigan Salmon carried BKD, which is inherited and carries no health threat to anglers. Today, D.N.R. biologists say less than 10% of Michigan Salmon are affected.

Pere Marquette River guide Ed Nemanic, embraces the fish boom. Although he depends on dollars from anglers who arrive from throughout the Midwest to fish the river, the sight of so many Steelhead this spring has been a form of payment in itself.

"There have been days when I've wondered if every fish hadn't gone out to lunch in Lake Michigan," he said. "Not this year." From *Michigan Outdoor News*, June 2000.

- CORRECTIONS -

In the May issue, the name of the skipper of the second place boat in the River Crab tourney was reported incorrectly. Ron Maschke is the skipper of "The Brat." Also, the correct site for the July 29 Steelheader tournament is Rogers City. We regret the errors.

More Port Austin finishers

2000 "SKIPPER OF THE YEAR"

(Standings through June 4, 2000 - Best 2)



3rd Place: "AQUARIUS II" with Chris Nytko and crew.



5th Place: "ANTICIPATION" with Rob Pinsky and crew.

PLACE/SKIPPER	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	J	Total
1) CHRIS NYTKO	75	1	1	3						2
2) STAN BILEK	1	5	5	9						6
3) RON MASCHKE	2	75	6	11						8
4) BILL NUTTING	50	2	7	12						9
5) MARK STOSIAK	8	6	4	8						10
6) KEN KUJAR	50	7	11	4						11
7) DAVE ROEHR	50	10	3	14						13
7) MIKE VIGUS	9	4	13	50						13
9) HOWARD YORK	50	12	2	18						14
10) DICK SHIRK	10	75	10	6						16
10) RON HARTMAN	50	3	14	13						16
10) JOE VON GRABE	50	9	18	7						16
13) BOB BUERO	50	3	17	15						23
14) DOUG KARAKAS	11	13	15	17						24
14) JOE GOLASZEWSKI	14	75	75	10						24
16) COLLEEN PRUITT	50	75	9	16						25
17) TY VOIGT	75	75	8	19						27
18) BLAISE PEWINSKI	50	75	75	1						51
19) BOB JONES	50	14	50	75						64
20) ED HILL	75	75	16	50						66
20) LARRY WALTERS	75	75	75	2						77
22) MIKE LEHTO	3	75	75	75						78
23) ROB HELZER	4	75	75	75						79
24) TOM MOORES	5	75	75	75						80
24) ROB PINSKEY	75	75	75	5						80
26) TIM BUSCH	6	75	75	75						81
27) ED HOREN	7	75	75	75						82
28) HANK BACZYNSKI	75	11	75	75						86
29) MARK BRADLEY	12	75	75	75						87
29) RICK VANERMEIDEN	75	75	12	75						87
31) LOU BACSIKIN	13	75	75	75						88
32) JIM FITCH	15	75	75	75						90
33) DANNY COLOMBE	50	75	50	75						100
33) WALT POHORILY	50	75	75	50						100
33) GEORGE DANIELS	50	75	50	75						100
36) DAVE SCHATZBERG	50	75	75	75						125
36) BRUCE BEACH	50	75	75	75						125
36) JEREMY MARANOWSKI	50	75	75	75						125
36) RON KOSCIELSKI	50	75	75	75						125
36) JOEL GARINGER	50	75	75	75						125
36) VERNON FAHRENKRUG	50	75	75	75						125
36) JOHN KRASINSKI	50	75	75	75						125
36) BOB KSIONZEK	50	75	75	75						125

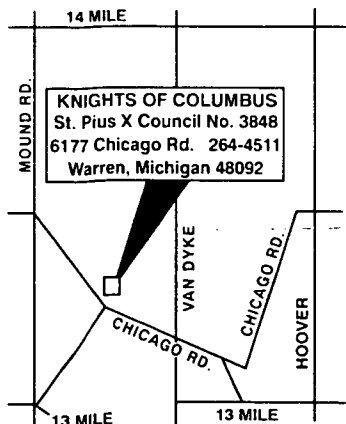
50 = See Rule IV-E

75 = See Rule IV-F

A = River Crab B = St. Joseph C = Grand Haven D = Port Austin E = Harrisville
 F = Rogers City G = Ludington H = Manistee J = Harbor Beach

The DEADLINE for the July issue of FISHIN' TALES is July 5, 2000

Here's how to get to
DETROIT AREA STEELHEADER
 Monthly Membership Meetings



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

Address Correction Requested



DETROIT AREA STEELHEADERS

MEETING NOTICE — PLEASE DO NOT DELAY!

