FISHIN' TALES

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Are fishing tournaments bad?

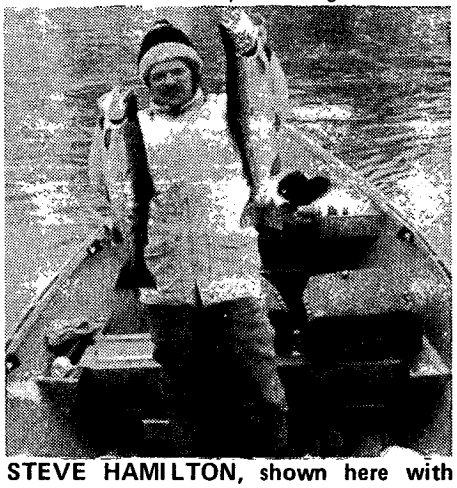
Tournaments . . . we have them, other fishing clubs have them. There are tournaments to support charities, there are tournaments for large and small cash prizes to the participants. Chambers of commerce stage tournaments to encourage more tourism in the hopes of boosting local businesses. Cities, towns, even state governments (at the least in the form of large fish awards such as Michigan's own Master Angler Award program) sponsor or are otherwise associated with them.

Yet tournaments, something that we as Steelheaders have long taken for granted, have lately been coming under scrutiny from different quarters, and that scrutiny, as you might guess, is largely of a critical nature. "Who cares?," you might reply. Well, I think all of us in the Detroit Area Steelheaders should care, because what is going on now may turn out, in retrospect, to have been the opening salvos in a long battle to put an end to fishing tournaments. It could even be that this emerging assault on competitive fishing events is part of the growing movement to curtail or eliminate sportfishing, just as certain radical groups are seeking to abolish hunting.

I think that we ignore these fledgling attempts to limit our rights as fishermen at our own peril. Over the years we, as organized sportfishermen, have been caught napping on such issues as Indian fishing rights, commercial fishing regulations in the Great Lakes, the abomination known as snagging, the raids on fish and game funds by special interests, etc. Each time we have been forced by events into a *REACTIVE* rather than an active, anticipating mode, and each time, we wind up losing ground. Sometimes we lose a little, sometimes we lose a lot. Once in a while, we manage to regain a portion of what we lost, but we never seem to completely recover our losses.

I say this issue of competitive fishing is an issue we should address NOW, while we are still on a relatively strong footing. Why should we let opponents of our sport have a clear field for their attacks before we respond to them? Let's take away that free ride we usually give them, and instead try to meet them head-on for a change.

Elsewhere in this issue of **Fishin' Tales,** you will find reprints of an editorial, some letters, and an article dealing with the desirablility of fishing tournaments. These materials have appeared over the last 18 months or so, most of them in just one publication, **Salmon Trout Steelheader.** I'm glad to note that one of our own, former Club President Steve Hamilton, has been active in presenting his views right along. Other material on the subject has shown up from time to time in newspapers, on television, and in general circulation magazines. It's almost always from a negative point of view, and it seems that positive replies (if any are even offered!) never get heard, something we Steelheaders SHOULD NOT ALLOW to happen.



STEVE HAMILTON, shown here with the results of his efforts on the Big Manistee River, has been a consistent advocate of sportfishermen's rights.

Read what's in this issue on the subject, and then let me hear what your attitude is. I'll publish all comments I receive from club members. Also, do your homework and be prepared to offer intelligent rebuttal and reply whenever you see or hear anti-fishing articles, comments, etc. Speak out now, while we as sportfishermen are still ahead of the game.

I'll have more to say on this question of tournament fishing in a future issue.

—Joel Garinger, *Editor*

Club enjoys a great Oscoda tourney

TED WARROW, Boat Tournament Chairman, reads off the preliminary standings at the recent Detroit Area Steelheader Oscoda Tournament. A report, with complete standings and pictures can be found on Page Six and Page Seven.

FISHIN' TALES is published monthly by the DETROIT AREA STEELHEADERS. *Views expressed in it are those of the authors, and the Editor. Its purpose is to inform members of events which affect sportfishermen, and to teach and guide the public to respect and appreciate our Great Lakes, rivers and land.*

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* * *

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LUDINGTON TWO-DAY TOURNAMENT PROMISES A "BIG KING" BONANZA

The Ludington tournament will be 'history' by the time of our next meeting, so here are the particulars:

LUDINGTON TOURNAMENT—JULY 26-27

First Day

Skippers' Meeting: 5:00 a.m. at the Bath House
Tournament Start: 6:00 a.m.
Fish Calls: 9:00 a.m. and 12:00 noon
Tournament End: 2:00 p.m.
Weigh-In: 3:00 p.m.

Second Day

Skippers' Meeting: 5:00 a.m.
Tournament Start: 6:00 a.m.
Fish Calls: 8:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.
Tournament End: 1:00 p.m.
Weigh-In: 2:00 p.m.

This tournament is scheduled to coincide with the presence of BIG KINGS, so be sure to be on hand for this one! Good luck to all!!!

—Ted Warrow
Boat Tournament Chairman

PLEASE NOTE: Until further notice, President Mitchell requests that *NO VENDORS* set up at Members' meetings. *ALL* space is needed for seating the membership!

Coming Events

MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Last Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m.
Knights of Columbus Hall, 6177 Chicago Road, Warren

July 29, 1986 ▪ August 26, 1986 ▪ September 30, 1986

KEN ROGERS, FIELD EDITOR OF FISHIN' TALES AND SKIPPER OF "THE BOSTON WHALER" WILL HAVE HIS FULLY RIGGED BOAT AT THE JULY MEMBERSHIP MEETING FOR A QUESTION & ANSWER SESSION
DON'T MISS IT!!

BOAT TROLLING TOURNAMENTS

DATE	LOCATION	CONTACT
July 26-27	Ludington (Two-Day)	Ted Warrow, 427-1353
August 16	Manistee	Ted Warrow, 427-1353
September 6	Frankfort	Ted Warrow, 427-1353

NOTE: Anyone interested in helping run a tourney please call Ted Warrow, 427-1353.

Steelhead tournaments—At what cost??

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Guest Editorial which appears below triggered an exchange of letters and comments on a subject which has begun to surface more and more during the past couple of years--whether there are any 'moral' and 'ethical' justifications for fishing tournaments. We are reprinting other materials on the general question of the propriety of tournament fishing elsewhere in the issue because we think it is a subject which ought to command our attention as Steelheaders.

♦ ♦ ♦

Over the years, steelhead river tournaments have become increasingly popular. Some of these tournaments are born out of an idea to promote a tackle shop, a product, or specialized technique, while others are designed to bolster local economies or increase public interest.

For whatever reason, I think these tournaments undermine higher goals and values, the sum of which form the backbone and stability of our precious steelhead runs. I strongly oppose tournaments, fish-offs, or any organized outing that has as its focus the taking of steelhead for competitive purposes. I have read many articles about tournaments staged in the Northwest and in the Great Lakes. It is now my turn to make the case against them.

Fifteen or twenty years ago, a time when relatively few anglers seriously pursued steelhead, the thought of releasing a steelhead was not part of the angler's consciousness. But as steelhead habitat was threatened, fishing techniques refined, and as numbers of anglers steadily increased, we came to acknowledge (with the help of fisheries research) that we too must take responsibility for sustaining our fishery through wise angling practices. We clean up rivers, rebuild habitat, build gabions, and encourage catch-and-release.

Tournaments are a direct negation of these efforts because the emphasis is placed upon *competition* instead of *conservation.* Tournaments are based on the catching of either the largest fish, the most fish, or total poundage of a day's catch. The angler becomes oriented toward a personal goal without any regard to the consequences his success might have upon a particular fishery. This is the very mentality that destroys fisheries.

Through fisheries research, we have proved rather convincingly that sustaining hearty runs is dependent upon a gene pool that includes steelhead characteristics that are genetically best suited for the river. This is because offspring from these fish have the best chance of surviving, whether naturally produced or produced through hatchery rearing. In general, the heartiest fish from a river system are the wild ones, those which, through generations, display charcteristics that make them most fit for survival. As tournament emphasis is toward size, numbers and poundage, is it realistic to think that someone competing for a trophy or prize would ever think of releasing a wild fish?

Furthermore, many of the largest natives that inhabit our river systems are wild steelhead. While this is somewhat of a given in the Pacific Northwest, recent studies have established beyond doubt the existence of considerable wild runs in the Great Lakes, especially in Michigan. East or west, we can ill-afford to lose these fish. They are our most precious resource because they are the link to quality fish and quality runs. Do anglers who fish steelhead tournaments have this kind of foresight?

We bitterly attack the practice of Indian gill netting because it selects for the largest steelhead, but don't tournaments do the exact same thing? In steelhead tournaments, we have created the "social gillnet" because the emphasis is on catching and killing the "big one." This is precisely what I mean about taking responsibility for our fishery.

It is unlikely we can reverse Judge Boldt's decision in Washington or Judge Fox's decision in the Great Lakes, and 'scapegoating' minorities and the state fisheries is a tired cliché that an informed public will no longer buy. But, we can outlaw or greatly discourage steelhead tournaments. Will we meet this challenge?

Our generation of steelheaders are today's riverkeepers but we will not always be here. What about our young people? Will they show a similar foresight, or will "looking out for number one" be their slogan? Maybe that is dependent upon what we model for them.

Steelhead tournaments are a bad model for our young people because they stress the importance of *acquisition* instead of the *pursuit and challenge of sport.* With such models as exemplified through steelhead tournament fishing, how can we hope that tomorrow's riverkeepers will help to sustain our steelhead runs if, from a young age, they do not focus their attention upon what's best for the fishery?

Fish stories, techniques and good times are all subjects I would rather discuss but at this stage of the game, we have realized that a commitment to sustaining and improving our fisheries is the only ticket to insure that we will have more of the same in the coming years.

Steelhead tournaments are an obstacle to our goals and values becuase they stress competition instead of conservation, they have as their emphasis the angler as opposed to the fishery, their vision is today versus tomorrow, and they point our young anglers down a road leading to disaster. That is why I ask you to join me in opposing all steelhead tournaments in the Pacific Northwest and in the Great Lakes.

—Jed Davis

Reprinted from the March, 1985 issue of Salmon Trout Steelheader.

♦ ♦ ♦

For more on this question, see Page Four and Page Five.

TOURNAMENTS CONDEMNED AS "OBSTACLES TO CONSERVATION GOALS"

Tournament fishing controversy heats up

NOTE: The following letter was printed in **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** July 1985.

SUPPORTS STEELHEAD TOURNAMENTS

Editor:

This letter is in response to Jed Davis's guest editorial, "Steelhead Tournaments—At What Cost?" (**Salmon Trout Steelheader,** February-March '85).

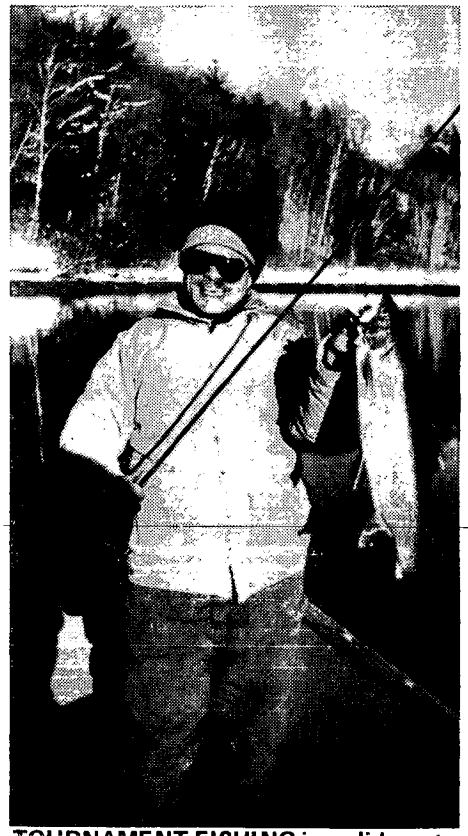
I have been fishing for Great Lakes trout and salmon for over a decade. I am a past president of the Detroit Area Chapter of the Michigan Steelheaders and remain the longest tenured director of the chapter. I met Jed Davis while he still lived in Ann Arbor, Michigan. I read his articles written about fishing in the Northwest. Sometimes I agree with his opinions and sometimes I do not. His aforementioned guest editorial is one to which I take strong exception.

In his article Jed makes frequent use of generalities, treatment of personal opinions as proven facts, and changes from first "I" to third person "we." Who is the "we" for whom he is spokesperson? Does "we" include **Salmon Trout Steelheader?** I do not have a problem with Jed's statement, "I think these tournaments undermine higher goals and values." That is a clear opinion, one I happen to disagree with. Here are some facts:

The Detroit Area Steelheaders Chapter has held river tournaments since 1975. The tournament rules restrict participation to members only, have an 18-inch minimum size limit (Michigan law has a ten-inch minimum), and allows only one fish to be entered per angler.

The results show these tournaments have minimal impact on steelhead stocks. The largest turnout has been 25 anglers (we have 450 members), with 18 steelhead being the most ever caught.

The Detroit Area Steelhead Tournaments are a social affair and not the competitive contest Jed Davis labels them. The Steelheaders organization promotes and protects the fishery resource. We have spent countless hours and dollars to that effect. The statement implying that steelhead tournaments are an obstacle to conservation goals and values is false and an insult to the Detroit Area Steelheaders. Our tournaments are a good way for our beginning anglers to tag along with more experienced ones and learn. Education is high on our priority list and tournaments are one of our educational tools.



TOURNAMENT FISHING is a valid sportsmen's pursuit, according to Hamilton.

I can't speak for the other steelhead chapters in Michigan, but from my personal observations their turnouts and catch rates closely parallel the Detroit Area Chapter's.

Frankly, I am disappointed that **Salmon Trout Steelheader** published Jed Davis's guest editorial, for a reader can only conclude that **Salmon Trout Steelheader** has the same opinion as Jed and is therefore willing to print his opinions as facts.

—Steve Hamilton, Director
Detroit Area Steelheaders
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan

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NOTE: The following letter was printed in **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** January 1986.

GROSS DISTORTION

Editor:

After reading Steve Hamilton's reply to Jed Davis's guest editorial in the February-March issue of **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** I am compelled to comment on Hamilton's gross distortion of what he calls facts.

First, Hamilton makes reference to the Detroit chapter as if its practices represent all Michigan chapters of the Michigan Steelheaders. This is not true, far from it. Tournament steelhead fishing is very popular among other chapters, sometimes attracting upwards of 75 anglers who crowd into a river only to leave it a mess for the Department of Natural Resources to clean up the following week. Having once been a member of the Livonia Metro-West chapter that competed against the Detroit chapter, I observed a lot of snagging of steelhead off spawn beds as well as anglers who would conceal a foul-hooked fish as a legal. In fact, on the Rifle River, I saw one participant snag 13 browns in one day. I was stunned but everyone seemed to accept this behavior.

As a former member, I, along with others, suggested changing the name of these fishing get-togethers from "tournaments" to "outings" and at the same time eliminating the awarding of ridiculous trophies for the largest slab of meat. These suggestions were either ignored or opposed, sometimes quite angrily. I ask Mr. Hamilton if, in fact, the tournaments are as he says, a "social affair" and not the "competitive contest" inferred by Mr. Davis, why then are they called tournaments? As a former member of your organization, the answer is crystal clear: A good portion of the Michigan Steelheaders encourage competitive angling to the exclusion of any harm it might do to the environment or fishery. This is why I find Steve Hamilton's remarks so disturbing.

—George Calhoun
Detroit, Michigan

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NOTE: The following letter was printed in **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** May 1986.

MICHIGAN STEELHEAD TOURNAMENTS

Editor:

My original letter to the Editor in support of steelhead river tournaments in Michigan (**Salmon Trout Steelheader,** June-July '85) emphasized that we are all entitled to our opinions. Each of us is exposed to a different environment and develops different perceptions.

George Calhoun's comments (**Salmon Trout Steelheader,** October-November '85) demonstrate those points.

While he is mistaken in saying I made reference to the Detroit chapter of the

Continued on Page Nine . . . /

Competitive fishing: state fish agency views

By 1978, competitive fishing for black bass in the United States had grown to more than 12,000 tournaments annually, involving over 730 individual bodies of water. Even a casual observer of sport-fishing trends would recognize that enthusiasm for competitive bass fishing continues and tournament fishing has expanded dramatically to include other species as well.

Extensive efforts were made during the early 1970's to document potential biological impacts on resources generated by competitive fishing. While short-term biological impacts appear to be generally acceptable to managers, questions linger about delayed mortality, redistribution effects, and other more subtle impacts on fishery populations.

At the same time, philosophical conflicts continue to emerge between competitive fishing advocates and those who define "quality fishing" in terms of experimental attributes other than competitive results. These conflicts create decision dilemmas for fisheries managers. To assist those fisheries resource managers and other people with direct interest in competitive fishing, this nationwide survey of fisheries agencies, which replicates in large part a survey conducted in 1979 by B. Shupp, was conducted to meet the following objectives:

1. Determine trends in competitive fishing for black bass occurring between 1978 and 1983.
2. Obtain an initial measure of competitive fishing for other species nationwide.
3. Describe positive and negative impacts of competitive fishing as ascribed by managers of fisheries resources.
4. Describe current state management posture toward competitive fishing.
5. Identify continuing research and policy needs associated with competitive fishing.

METHODS

In February 1984, a questionnaire was mailed to all 50 state fisheries leaders. A follow-up letter and a second copy of the survey was mailed to non-respondents one month later. The questionnaire solicited descriptions of the nature and extent of competitive fishing in each state, the nature of agency regulation of tournament fishing, if any, and included a series of questions aimed at identifying perceived impacts of competitive fishing and needed additional information.

Six of the 11 questions were phrased to allow comparison to Shupp's earlier findings. Five the six new questions simply expanded Shupp's questions to cover species other than black bass. One question addressed policy and research needs associated with competitive fishing. Unfortunately, state-by-state comparisons for the two survey years were not possible but regional comparisons are included.

RESULTS

Forty-six (92%) states returned completed questionnaires and often included additional documentation of competitive fishing and/or regulations in their respective states.

All 46 of the responding states reported tournament fishing within their fresh waters. Tournament fishing for black bass was reported by 44 of the 46 states in 1983, as compared with 44 of 49 states reporting in 1978. Reported bass fishing tournaments outnumbered competitive fishing for all other species by a factor of ten. The estimated number of bass tournaments declined from over 12,300 in 1978 to 7,400 in 1983 (See Table 1.). Three fewer states reported for 1983, which presumably accounts for a part of this decline. Maryland, Mississippi, Vermont and Wyoming failed to respond to the 1983 survey; the 1978 non-respondent was Hawaii. Even considering this lack of data, there appears to have been a modest decrease in the total number of black bass tournaments. At the same time, the number of participants per tournament increased consistently in all regions. Survey responses did not suggest why these changes occurred.

This survey significantly underreports competitive fishing for saltwater species. Only six states, representing about 25% of the coastal states, reported competitive fishing for marine species despite its growing popularity. More than 50 saltwater fishing competitions were held in Texas alone during the summer of 1984, according to one report.

More than one-half of the states responding reported tournament fishing for salmonids. Panfish, esocids (pike, muskie, true pickerel, etc.), carp, and striped bass tournaments were reported by more than one-quarter of the states responding (19, 15, 15, and 12 states respectively). Walleye tournaments were reported by eight states.

While the absolute number of bass tournaments seems to have decreased somewhat since 1978, the number of waters involved in competitive bass fishing appears to have increased significantly from an estimated 731 waters in 1978 to 997 waters in 1983 (See Table 2.). The number of waters involved in the North Central region doubled in that period. Competitive fishing for all other species in 1983 was reported to involve 440 fresh waters.

Despite the current increase in scope of tournament fishing across more waters and involving a wider variety of species, there was no dramatic increase in the number of states with formal tournament management policies. Sixteen states reported such policies in 1978 and 19 states reported such policies in 1983.

Comparisons between states responding in both years revealed that Arizona, Florida, Georgia, New Hampshire, and

Continued on Page Eight . . . /

Table 1. Numbers of black bass tournaments reported

Region	No. of states in region	No. of states responding	No. of states with tournaments	Estimated tournaments/category: 6-30 participants	31-100 participants	Over 100 participants	Total
Northeastern							
1978	10	10	9	680	72	1	753
1983	10	8	8	165	88	32	285
Southern							
1978	15	15	15	7,142	707	137	7,986
1983	15	14	14	2,752	1,501	163	4,416
North Central							
1978	12	12	11	2,019	272	53	2,344
1983	12	12	11	1,380	417	174	1,971
Western							
1978	13	12	9	929	338	19	1,286
1983	13	11	10	625	77	45	747
TOTAL							
1978	50	49	44	10,770	1,389	210	12,369
1983	50	46	43	4,922	2,083	414	7,419

Table 2. Numbers of waters involved in black bass tournaments

Region	No. of waters with tournament activity: 1978	1983
Northeastern	129	151
Southern	339	397
North Central	161	330
Western	102	119
TOTAL	731	997

"Kemo" scores second 1986 win at Oscoda

We again had a super tournament at Oscoda. The weather was perfect, the water flat, and the fish hungry. We also enjoyed a great facility and super hosts. Doug and Jan make a good trip and a good tournament just that much better with their special hospitality.

The club turn-out was bad, only 24 boats, but that was the only sour note of the whole event. The fishing was very good – we averaged 4 fish per boat, and three kings and one steelhead were among the fish weighed in. Mike Zelkowski's "Elvira" put a 14 pound laker on the scales for the Big Fish prize, while "Eagle" and "Kemo" followed with 12-pound, 10 ounce and 12-pound, 8-ounce lakers, respectively.

"Kemo" didn't follow anyone, though, in the tournament. Bob Mitchell and his crew ran away with first place, by a margin of 16 pounds, 14 ounces, or two pounds, seven ounces per fish. Now that's what I call a real 'Honey Hole'!!

"Eagle" was second, for the third year in a row, with "Irene," "Last Dime," and "Sea Hag" rounding out the Top Five.

I'd like to give very special thanks to: Dave Even, who runs the food and beverages program for the tournaments; Kathy Burbary and Bob Mitchell, who do the catch recording and standings calculations; Ed McIntosh, who handles the Big Fish Pool; and Brian Mitchell and friends, who sold t-shirts.

"Eagle" and her skipper would like to thank the skippers and crews of two special boats, "Mad Dog" and "Capt'n Hook."

—**Ted Warrow,** "Eagle"
Boat Tournament Chairman

FIRST PLACE: "KEMO" with Bob Mitchell, Arlene Elliott, Leslie Gilbert and Bob Gilbert.

OSCODA TOURNAMENT RESULTS (6/28/86)

	BOAT/SKIPPER	CATCH (By species & weight of individual fish)	PTS.
1)	KEMO (Bob Mitchell)	L12.8, L9.9, L9.6, L8.6, L8.4, L8.4, L7.8, L7.7	151.04
2)	EAGLE (Ted Warrow)	L12.10, L8.0, L6.4, L6.1, L5.9, L5.8, L5.6, L5.0	134.06
3)	IRENE (Vince Dermyer)	L8.12, L6.14, L6.11, L6.10, L6.6, L6.3, L5.13, L5.11	133.00
4)	LAST DIME (Bob Ksionzek)	L7.8, L7.0, L6.12, L6.11, L6.7, L6.5, L6.2, L5.6	132.03
5)	SEA HAG (Blaise Pewinski)	L7.11, L7.0, L6.12, L6.10, L6.1, L5.9, L5.6, L4.14	129.15
6)	OUTLAW (Greg Clifford)	L10.4, L7.1, L6.12, K5.9, L5.8, L4.12, L4.7, L4.6	128.11
7)	HEADSTRONG (Paul Dedenbach)	L7.15, L7.4, L7.1, L5.6, L3.9, L3.7, L3.6	108.00
8)	SWEET LORRAINE (Ed McIntosh)	L7.3, L5.12, L5.5, L5.2, K4.8, L4.7, L3.0	105.05
9)	ELVIRA (Mike Zelkowski)	L14.0, L8.5, L5.11, L3.15, L2.14	84.13
10)	REEL THING (Gene Muczinski)	L7.5, L6.15, L6.9, L5.2, L1.15	77.14

	BOAT/SKIPPER	PTS.
11)	MISERY III (Al Schultz)	76.08
12)	OLD SQUAW (Bill Fletcher)	66.00
13)	MAD DOG (Dennis Wittbrodt)	63.08
14)	ALICE'S ANGLER (Les Jump)	59.03
15)	TEACHER'S PET (Dave Even)	50.15
16)	SKYBIRD (Bob Jester)	43.00
17)	FORMULATOR (Larry Gaiownik)	41.15

	BOAT/SKIPPER	PTS.
18)	ARTESIAN (John Nehil)	33.01
19)	CAPT'N HOOK (Doug Karakas)	19.01
20)	SHAMROCK (Bob Fitchpatrick)	13.11
21)	DIAMOND GIRL (Gene Burbary)	12.12
22)	LISA KAY (John Blanchard)	
22)	BLACK FIN (Bill Dega)	
22)	FISH-A-HOLIC (Steve Froias)	

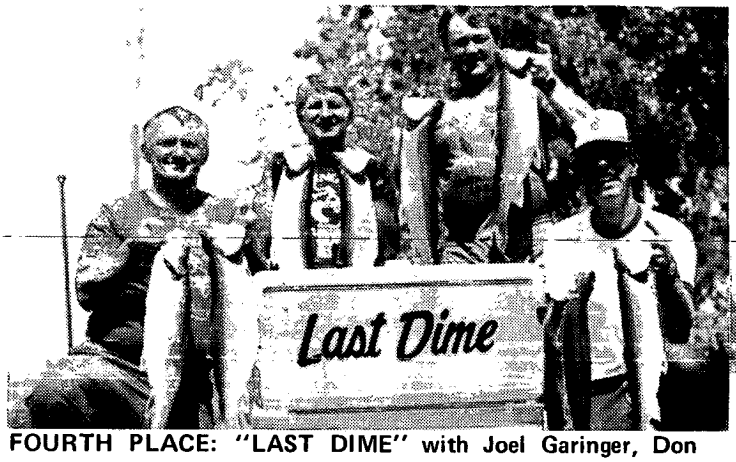
NOTES– a) Key for species: K = King L = Laker
b) Numbers to left of Point (.) designate pounds, numbers to right of point (.) designate ounces of weight
c) Scoring is based on ten points per fish (maximum of eight fish) and one point per pound and ounce of weight

OSCODA TEAM TOURNAMENT RESULTS (6/29/86)

	BOATS/SKIPPERS	PTS.		
1)	KEMO (Bob Mitchell)	148.01		
	TEACHER'S PET (Dave Even)	34.04	TOTAL	182.05
2)	OUTLAW (Greg Clifford)	106.07		
	MISERY III (Al Schultz)	56.11	TOTAL	163.02
3)	CAPT'N HOOK (Doug Karakas)	80.10		
	HEADSTRONG (Paul Dedenbach)	13.00	TOTAL	93.10

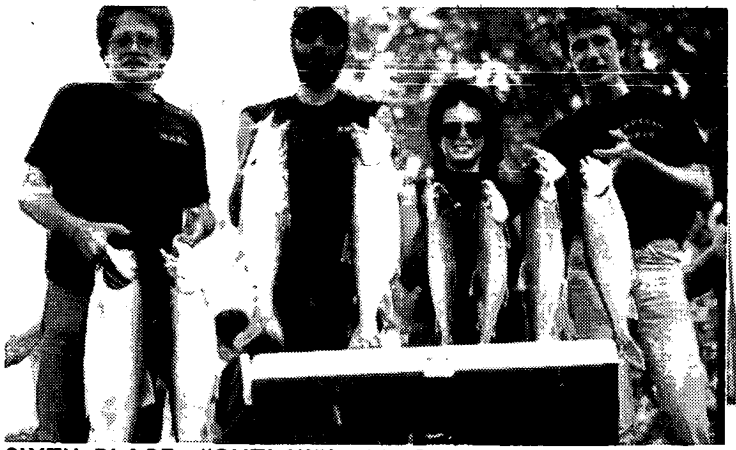
SECOND PLACE: "EAGLE" with Jason Green, Brian Mitchell, Todd Mitchell, Stu Willson, Chuck Huxford and Ted Warrow.

THIRD PLACE: "IRENE" with Vince Dermyer, Dan Oliver, Bill Honn and Sherm Mosher.



FOURTH PLACE: "LAST DIME" with Joel Garinger, Don Jakubiak, Bob Bouchey and Bob Ksionzek.

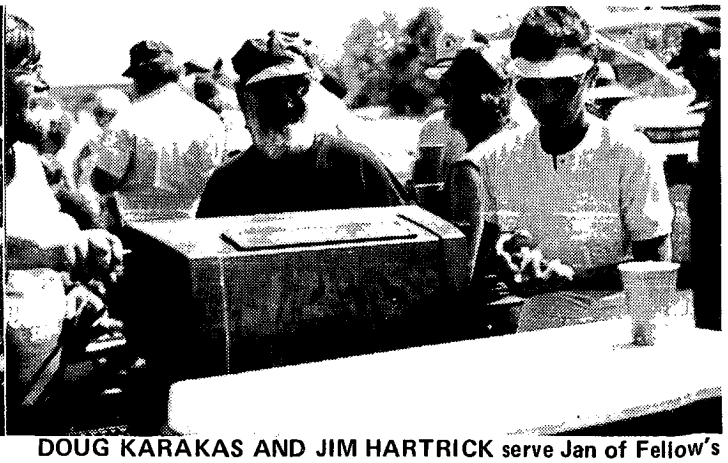
FIFTH PLACE: "SEA HAG" with George Pewinski, Blaise Pewinski, Bob Saber, Bernie Clinke and Phil Eickoldt.



SIXTH PLACE: "OUTLAW" with Greg Clifford, Ed Yankoski II, Cynde Clifford and Mark Clifford.

SEVENTH PLACE: "HEADSTRONG" with Paul Dedenbach, Julie Goode and Cliff Quinlan.

EIGHTH PLACE: "SWEET LORRAINE" with John Chwalibog, Jerry Temple, Bob Fitzgerald and Ed McIntosh.



DOUG KARAKAS AND JIM HARTRICK serve Jan of Fellow's Marina some hot dogs and pop at the tourney weigh-in.

FISH AGENCY ATTITUDES MIXED ON TOURNEY FISHING

. . . /Continued from Page Five

Oregon reported having a formal tournament policy in 1978 but not in 1983. Alabama, Alaska, Colorado, Connecticut, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New York, and North Dakota apparently developed policies in that interval.

Various forms of regulations are applied to competitive fishing by states. One-half of the states responding (23) apply general regulations only; 14 states—the same number as reported in 1978—have specific permit requirements for tournaments; and six states have particular regulations such as restricted use of public property. Three states did not respond to this question.

Respondents were asked to indicate specific positive and negative impacts that fishing tournaments have had on waters in their states. Responses from both the 1978 and 1983 surveys are summarized in Table 3. No large increases in cited negative factors were noted, although in 1983, ten states evenly distributed across the regions, indicated that tournament fishing had concentrated excessive angling pressure. Only five states reported this problem in 1978. Concerns about safety increased from six reports in 1978 to ten reports in 1983, with three of the new citations occurring in the North Central region. Conflicts with other anglers were seen as important by one-half of the respondents in 1983, or approximately the same proportion as reported in 1978.

On the other hand, there was a dramatic increase in the number of states reporting that competitive fishing had resulted in positive press coverage for fishing in general. The number increased from only ten states in 1978 to 26 states in 1983 with similar increases occurring in all regions. There was also a sizeable increase in the number of states where local economies were said to have been boosted by tournament fisheries. The number rose from 16 states in 1978 to 25 states in 1983, again evenly distributed across the regions.

Agency posture towards staff participation in tournaments is also changing. In 1983, many more states—15 as compared to one in 1978—indicated that their staff routinely serve as tournament officials. Typically, states occasionally observe tournaments, occasionally collect data, and 37% of states responding permit their staff to serve as tournament officials.

In the 1978 and 1983 surveys, a summary question was included regarding agency opinion of overall impacts of tournament fishing. There was a 20% decrease in the proportion of states reporting that no significant impact had occurred on waters in their states due to tournament fishing, and a corresponding increase (23%) in those reporting no formal official opinion (See Table 5.).

One additional question, which was not included in the 1978 survey, asked the states to identify particular policy issues or research needs related to tournament fishing. Twenty states did not report particular topics of concern. Fewest concerns were noted by the North Central region, the area in which growth in tournament fishing was the most dramatic. At least 20% of those responding identified continuing questions about each of the following: survival and delayed mortality, handling and release methods, and social impacts and conflicts associated with competitive fishing. No geographic patterns of concern were apparent.

Table 3. States reporting the listed impacts as attributable to competitive fishing in 1978 (N = 49) and 1983 (N = 46)

	1978 Total	1983 Total
No biological problems have occurred	31	29
No social problems have occurred	8	11
Bass over-harvest from tournaments	1	0
Detrimental impact on reproduction	1	1
Stimulated desirable use of fishery resource	14	11
Concentrated excessive angling pressure during tournaments	5	10
Stimulated access development	5	6
Resulted in access restrictions	3	6
Conflicts with other anglers	21	23
Conflicts with local citizens	9	10
Negative press for fishing in general	3	4
Positive press for fishing in general	10	26
Negative press for agency programs	1	1
Positive press for agency programs	14	12
Boosted local economy on tournament waters	16	25
Damaged local economy on tournament waters	1	1
Stimulated safe boating practices	10	6
Created a safety hazard	6	10

SUMMARY

As reported by state fisheries management representatives, competitive fishing for black bass continues to represent the bulk of freshwater tournament fishing in the United States at a ratio of about ten to one between competitive bass fishing and tournament fishing for other species. The number of waters impacted by competitive fishing for black bass increased to about 20 per state on the average; competitive pursuit of other species involved about ten waters per state. Management agency perceptions of the impacts of competitive fishing have not changed dramatically between 1978 and 1983 with the exception that more states identified positive media coverage for fishing in general and the number of states reporting problems of concentrated fishing effort doubled from five to ten in the same period.

Regarding policy or research needs, 20% of the resource managers who responded to the survey have questions about survival and delayed mortality and appropriate handling and release methods. This suggests that review of available information on these topics, followed by communication of synoptic findings, and additional research in targeted areas would be appropriate. Fifteen percent of the states responding suggested need for additional policy and research investigations of social impacts and conflicts. Again, synoptic overviews and targeted research might assist these management organizations.

Table 4. Overall assessment of tournament fishing

	Northeastern		Southern		North Central		Western		TOTAL	
	1978	1983	1978	1983	1978	1983	1978	1983	1978	1983
No significant effect	5	3	11	4	5	5	4	1	25	17
Overall positive effect	3	1	3	4	5	4	1	2	12	11
Overall negative effect	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	3	1	1
No official opinion	1	3	1	6	1	3	3	4	6	17

—Michael W. Duttweiler

NOTE: Mr. Duttweiler is Great Lakes program co-ordinator with the New York Sea Grant Extension Program. Duttweiler's specialities include public education programming in fisheries and evaluation of natural resource educational programs. This article originally appeared last fall in a professional journal.

HAMILTON DEFENDS CHAPTER INTEGRITY

. . . /Continued from Page Four

Steelheaders as if its practices represent all Michigan chapters (I even stated I could not speak for the other chapters, and emphasized the Detroit chapter affairs), his other comments show that he has not seen the decade of Detroit Area chapter river tournaments I have. In that time, I have never seen a river left a "mess" after one of our tournaments. In the past, we have supplied garbage bags and awarded a prize to the angler who brings in the most trash from the river during a tournament. I have *never* seen nor heard of any steelheader in a Detroit chapter tournament attempting to snag or keep foul-hooked fish.

Mr. Calhoun states that in a Rifle River tournament he saw one entrant snag 13 browns. In all of its history the Detroit Area chapter has never participated in a tournament on the Rifle River. If I had seen someone snag 13 browns, not only would I have tried to stop it and reported it to tournament officials, I would have alerted the Conservation Officers and filed a court complaint. I successfully did just that during a Detroit Area surf tournament.

A difference in opinion and perception . . . it must be. I have never seen any harm done to Michigan's environment or fishery as a result of the Detroit Area chapter's river tournaments.

—Steve Hamilton, Director
Detroit Area Steelheaders
Grosse Pointe Woods, Michigan

♦ ♦ ♦

NOTE: The following letter was printed in **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** July 1986.

STEELHEAD TOURNAMENT ACTIVITIES

Editor:

Having read a recent editorial in the January 1986 issue of **Salmon Trout Steelheader,** I felt compelled to reply to some comments made by the author of that article.

To refresh your readers' memories, a Mr. George Calhoun spoke to the controversial issue of whether sportsmen's clubs should hold organized river tournaments to fish for steelhead and other anadromous fish species. I doubt if I would be able to sway many regarding their beliefs surrounding this issue. My main concern, however, is to refute comments made by George Calhoun regarding the Michigan Steelhead and Salmon Fishermen's Association (M.S.S.F.A.) and, more particularly, the Metro-West Chapter of that organization.

I have vested interests in the comments made in that I am the president of the Metro-West Chapter of the M.S.S.F.A. Having run a computer check of our past records of membership, dating back to the inception of our chapter, I find we have no record of George Calhoun of Detroit ever having been a local chapter member. Secondly, having consulted with past river tournament chairmen and river fishermen, to the best of my knowledge we have never held a river tournament on the Rifle River.

We have over 300 members in our local chapter and it is impossible to police the fishing methods used or creel limits taken by our members as they fish at large on a river or stream. However, our tournaments are well-organized and sanction Department of Natural Resources (D.N.R.) rules. We will not keep any steelhead less than 18 inches in length. We do return any foul-hooked fish and we do police our river tournament participants.

As most diehard river fishermen will tell you, one is lucky to even come away from a tournament with an elusive steelhead or two. Most of our tournaments are fished by less than 25 members on an average. It is not uncommon for the total number of fish caught to be less than a dozen. Again, I do not want to get into the merits of whether tournaments are good or bad; but I do want to address the integrity of our organization and our general philosophy of operation. The M.S.S.F.A. has been instrumental in securing many of the fish plants for our Great Lakes, rivers, and streams. The M.S.S.F.A. has worked closely with the D.N.R. in preserving and enhancing our sports fishery. Furthermore, our organization has gone on record opposing the snagging of fish.

All of the alleged accusations by a Mr. George Calhoun are contrary to our basic cause of educating the public sector and maintaining our fishery. If Mr. Calhoun did see fishermen violating, I strongly doubt that it was one of our local members or a member of the M.S.S.F.A. I hope Mr. Calhoun took the time to notify the D.N.R. through its R.A.P. (Report All Poaching) hot line to report the incident. Furthermore, it did not happen at a sanctioned tournament of our local chapter. We have never held a tournament on the Rifle River. Rarely do we hold chapter tournaments on the east side of the state. It is unfortunate that George Calhoun saw fit to condemn the integrity of our state organization, let alone our local chapter.

—Glenn R. Ming, President
Metro-West Chapter, M.S.S.F.A.
Livonia, Michigan

Skipper of the Year

The "Skipper of the Year" race for 1986 is beginning to take shape. "Kemo" and "Outlaw" share the top spot currently . . . but stand by, gentlemen — the next 12 boats have clean shots at first place!! The top 25 boats are listed below. GOOD LUCK TO ALL!!!

(Standings shown are through the Oscoda Tournament)

Place	Skipper	Boat	BH	LE	HB	OS	Total
1)	BOB MITCHELL	KEMO	4	1	7	1	2
2)	GREG CLIFFORD	OUTLAW	1	18	1	6	2
3)	DOUG KARAKAS	CAPT'N HOOK	31	2	5	19	7
4)	DICK SHIRK	LIL SCRATCH	75	4	4	75	8
5)	DAVE EVEN	TEACHER'S PET	6	3	13	15	9
6)	ED McINTOSH	SWEET LORRAINE	20	13	2	8	10
6)	TED WARROW	EAGLE	14	8	21	2	10
8)	CHUCK WOOD	PREDATOR	3	9	9	75	12
9)	BILL MURRAY	SEA HUNTER	11	5	8	75	13
9)	LES JUMP	ALICE'S ANGLER	10	14	3	14	13
11)	BOB KSIONZEK	LAST DIME	29	75	10	4	14
11)	BLAISE PEWINSKI	SEA HAG	9	75	75	5	14
13)	GENE MUCZINSKI	REEL THING	7	12	28	10	17
13)	DICK McENDARFFER	SEA HAWK	2	15	75	75	17
15)	BOB JESTER	SKY BIRD	24	6	14	16	20
15)	DON ANTON	HAPPY BARE	5	75	15	75	20
17)	VINCE DERMYER	IRENE	28	18	19	3	21
18)	STEVE FROIAS	FISH-A-HOLIC	8	18	17	22	25
19)	AL SCHULTZ	MISERY III	17	18	24	11	28
19)	GENE BURBARY	DIAMOND GIRL	40	10	18	21	28
19)	PAUL DEDENBACH	HEADSTRONG	21	75	75	7	28
19)	BILL FLETCHER	OLD SQUAW	75	16	75	12	28
23)	DENIS HARPER	LADY'S CHOICE	32	18	11	75	29
24)	BILL ROZEK	SLIPPERY	12	18	75	75	30
25)	DENNIS WITTBRODT	MAD DOG	75	18	27	13	31

NOTES— a) Worst two scores are dropped, five best scores count toward determining the "Skipper of the Year"
b) A score of 75 is assigned when a boat did not compete in a particular tournament

LARGEST TOURNAMENT FISH CAUGHT TO DATE — 1986

Species	Weight	Boat	Skipper
KING	18 POUNDS, 6 OUNCES	KEMO	BOB MITCHELL
COHO	6 POUNDS, 3 OUNCES	FOXY I	DOUG TOUCHETTE
STEELHEAD	13 POUNDS, 6 OUNCES	FALCON	JOE BRYKALSKI
LAKE TROUT	14 POUNDS	ELVIRA	MIKE ZELKOWSKI

Please..

Experienced sportfishermen often make strange discoveries while cleaning their catches! They find that the fish have gobbled all kinds of manmade objects that have fallen into the water. Key rings, false teeth, bottle tops, paper and plastic objects are just a few.

Many things that boaters casually toss overboard can be lethal to fish. Especially items which resemble familiar foods: filter tips from cigarettes can look tempting like grubs; crumpled bits of foil from candy wrappers become attention-getting reflectors of light as they flutter down through the water; wads of chewing gum look like fish eggs or other morsels.

Often a hungry fish will swallow any such item tossed overboard. As most of these objects are indigestible, they can harm or even kill a fish.

Also, as part of the sportfishing scene, it's a fact that litter from unconcerned boaters often helps to ruin the fishing grounds.

As the above examples so clearly show, littering by some pleasure boaters does happen, and it has all kinds of consequences. Be a boater who cares.

...Don't Litter!

Alaskan Hatcheries Visited

Michigan Department of Natural Resources (D.N.R.) Fisheries Division Hatcheries Operations Manager Harry Westers toured hatchery facilities in Alaska last November, during a ten-day information exchange with biologists of the Alaska Fish and Game Department. Westers spent the first three days of his visit in meetings with personnel of the Regional Office at Anchorage and the Fort Richardson Hatchery, where the state of Alaska rears coho and chinook salmon, steelhead and rainbow trout, and maintains rainbow trout broodstock.

Alaska and Michigan fisheries biologists will continue to share information on the application of pure oxygen in fish culture, water quality monitoring at hatcheries, and Alaska's proposed selective fish breeding program, according to Westers.

At Clear, Alaska, a seven-hour drive from Anchorage, where the temperature often reaches 30 degrees below zero, Westers visited the hatchery which produces chinook salmon, Arctic grayling and sheefish (broodstock). The Clear Hatchery is located on a U.S. Air Force radar base, which uses the available high-quality groundwater to cool base electronic systems. The heated water is then made available to the hatchery, Westers reports. Some 150,000 grayling may be available to Michigan from the Clear Hatchery next spring, he says.

Westers provided recommendations to Clear Hatchery officials for replacement of their degassing system, based upon the Michigan D.N.R.'s hatchery experiences.

Westers also visited the Sikusuilag Springs Hatchery, located some 50 miles north of the Arctic Circle and north of Katzebue on the Noatak River. The hatchery, which required special construction techniques to be built on permafrost, is a pilot plant with capability of producing four million chum salmon smolts.

Any fisheries technologists interested in learning more about Westers' findings in Alaska are invited to write to:

Department of Natural Resources
Fisheries Division
P.O. Box 30028
Lansing, Michigan 48909.

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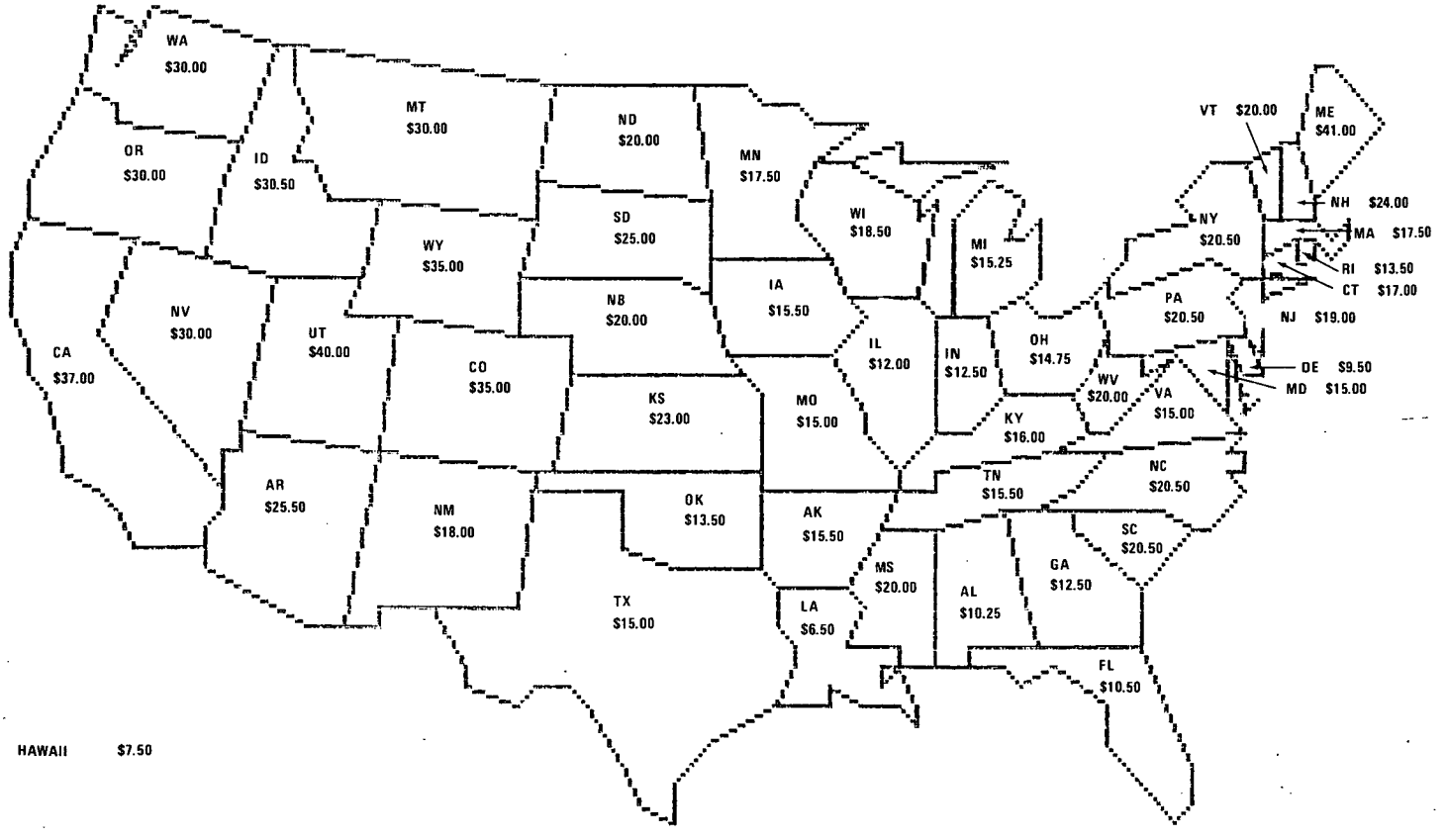

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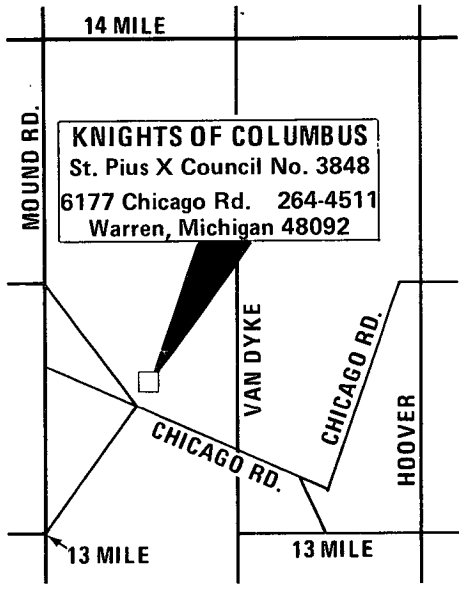

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