

“Tournament Fever”

I chose this title because it often describes how one feels once they fish their first tournament; “feverish” Do I have the fever? Do a lot of the guys who fish tournaments have “that” fever? Yes and for most if not all of the reasons listed below.

If you are like me or even a little bit like me, you get an awesome rush of excitement when the boats are all starting to fire and the tournament is about to start. Call it a rush, or a high or nervousness, heck call it what you want but you guys who know what I am talking about know that feeling. That is just one of the reasons, here are a few more.

Different: Tournaments are a whole lot different than just heading out with your friends or taking a charter group out for the day. There is a big difference and that difference is usually defined by excitement. There is a whole lot of excitement in the air leading up to that first bite and even more excitement after your first legal tournament fish hits the deck.

Competition: The “C” word makes us all a little better and it does not matter if it’s in the work place, shooting hoops in the driveway with the neighbor kid or on the water fishing head on against your peers. The “C” word helps us to improve, look at our mistakes and gives us that desire to improve from year to year.

Longing: If you have a competitive bone in your skeletal system you will long for that walk to the stage. We call that stage the “Winners Circle”. And once you have tasted it, boy does it taste good and you are ready for more.

Ego: I have not met a group of individuals that have any more Ego than fishermen, but I don’t hunt either? It does not matter what lake you are on either. I have fished several great lakes and have shared a beverage with many a captain over the years and one thing I have learned that there are several of “The Best” fishermen everywhere. “The Best” is usually defined by “a” Captain but there are numerous Best fishermen out there. Tournaments allow the Ego a chance to get bigger and/or prove who “The Best” is for that one year period, with little argument.

Fun: Well, tournaments are flat out fun events. It is a time and place to gather and meet new people and see old friends. It is a time to laugh, talk and throw a lot of jabs. Often, friendships are made at these events and these friendships will last a lifetime. When I return year after year to fish an event, I have the opportunity to rekindle those friendships and become closer to those individuals. How many opportunities do you have to be around so many anglers with so much in common than at the Captains meeting, weigh-ins or award ceremony?

Improvement: Tournaments allow ourselves to systematically see ourselves improve each year just by looking at the standings. These numbers do not tell the entire story always but usually they do. Each year anglers are hopeful to see themselves move up in the standings from year to year. It is satisfying when an improvement is made and also provides a goal to that fishing team.

Winners Circle: To make it in the top 10 or to win a tournament is exciting and will provide a moment that will never be forgotten. The winners circle is often the motivation that makes teams want to improve, be innovative and look for that all important “edge” on tournament day. Some of the best known fishing tactics were developed and deployed on “tournament day” for the sake of making it to the circle.

Family: This is often a good time to involve family members in the event. Family teams can make a great fishing team and this time is well spent when you involve members of your family. Even if members do not participate in the fishing, they can assist the tournament committee by volunteering their time in some manner or participating in the weigh-in or award ceremony.

So, if you have had a strange feeling inside just before or after a fishing tournament, you are now diagnosed with “that” fever. Tournament Fever!

See you on the stage.

By: Captain Pete Alex
“Team Vision Quest V”