

Empire State Lake Ontario Promotions

LOC Derby

PO Box 472

Ontario, NY 14519

SPRING 2026 EDITION

Phone 315-333-5213 Fax 315-333-5295 email - locderby@aol.com website - www.loc.org



LOC DERBY NEWS

Win Your Share of \$140,150 Guaranteed CASH in 2026!



Final Day Catch Wins Grand Prize for LoPresti
“It was meant to happen.”

For 32-year-old Amy LoPresti of Rochester, fishing in her first fishing derby ever, it was like a dream come true. Fishing on Sunday morning, Sept. 1, the final day of the Fall Lake Ontario Counties Trout and Salmon Derby, she grabbed ahold of a fishing rod that had a big fish on it while trolling off Point Breeze and the Oak Orchard River.

Twenty minutes later, she was looking at the biggest salmon that she's ever seen, let alone caught – a 33-pound, 3-ounce Chinook that took over the lead for the \$20,000 Grand Prize. She became the winner four hours later when the derby ended at 1 p.m.

It started with a family trip aboard her father-in-law's 10-Meter Trojan named “Maverick” with Capt. Chris LoPresti of Spencerport. Amy's husband Chris LoPresti, Jr. and her three kids Brayden, Rayna, and Brett were all on board as they started fishing. However, the trip almost ended early.

“We had the three kids along (from ages 3 to 9) and I realized that we had forgotten the snacks,” she said at the awards ceremony Labor Day at Riley's Bar and Grill in North Rose. “I panicked. I said to my husband that we will have to go in. That was when I found some packs of sunflower seeds, and it was enough to satisfy their hunger for a bit.” Shortly after that, the rod went off and set the stage for the last-minute heroics.

The fish hit about 8:50 a.m. while they trolled a Hawk's Custom snowflake spoon in 150 feet of water off the pump house. The lucky spoon was 60 feet down on a downrigger. Twenty minutes

Fall Derby Continued on page 6



Keppen Wins Grand Prize with Big King the Final Weekend
“It ain't over till it's over!”

That Yogi Berra quote was most appropriate for this year's Summer Lake Ontario Counties (LOC) Trout and Salmon Derby that ended July 27. In the end, it was Larry Keppen of Marion, NY catching a monster 32-pound, 13-ounce king salmon the final weekend of the derby to win the \$15,000 Grand Prize, along with another \$1,000 for top salmon for the week.

“We were fishing out in front of Braddock Bay in 100 to 120 feet of water, running a 300-foot copper line rigged with a Salmon Candy flasher and a Sweet Pea Live A-Tom-Mik fly when the fish hit at 7:30 a.m.,” said an excited Keppen at the awards ceremony held at Riley's Bar and Grill in North Rose. He was fishing with his father Larry Keppen of Rochester out of their 22-foot Penn Yan named Gone Fishin.

“The water was a bit messed up after high winds on Friday,” continued Keppen. “Some charter friends of mine were heading off-shore to find more stable water, but I told them I was going to check the inside water first. We found 46 degrees down 80-foot and we put our rods out. At 7:30 a.m., the big king hit and ripped out 817-feet of line. We pulled the throttle back and dad cleared the lines because we only had 1,000 feet of line on the reel.” This was the second biggest king Keppen has ever caught. Their first biggest was during the old ESLO days when he weighed in a 33-pound, 6-ounce salmon.

Meanwhile, Bradley Evans of Arlington, Texas had been sitting on pins and needles waiting for the end of the derby. Only July 18, he was fishing with his nephew Justin Evans of Bangor, Pa. on his

Summer Derby Continued on page 7

2026 Derby Dates

Spring - May 1st - 10th Summer - June 27th - July 26th

Fall - August 21st - September 7th

WEIGH-IN &
REGISTRATION OUTLETS

Niagara County

The Wicked Worm
555 Water Street
Youngstown, NY 14174
716-329-4875
thewickedworm.com

Bootleggers Cove
60 O'Connell Island
Wilson, NY 14126
716-751-6466

Wilson Boatyard Marina
57 Harbor
Wilson, NY 14126
716-751-9202

Boat Doctors
& Tackle Barn^*
Lake & Jackson St.
Olcott, NY 14126
716-778-8592
olcottfishing.com

Orleans County

Captain's Cove Resort ^*
14339 Rt. 18
Waterport, NY 14571
585-682-3316

Orleans County Marine
Park
Intersection of Point Breeze
Road and the Parkway
Marine Park Office
North end of park
585-682-3641

Monroe County

Port of Rochester Marina
1000 N. River St
Rochester, NY 14612
585-428-7432

Wayne County

Hughes Marina
5003 East Lake Rd.
Williamson, NY 14589
315-589-2752

Bay Bridge Sport Shop ^*
9555 Ridge Rd.
North Rose, NY 14516
315-587-9508

Davenport & Son
Boat Livery & Marina ^*
Resort Rd
(East End of Bay Bridge)
North Rose, NY 14516
315-587-4434

Cayuga County

Screwy Louie's ^*
596 Main Street Box 28
Fair Haven, NY 13064
315-947-6348

Oswego County

Woody's Tackle
& General Store ^*
7402 NYS Rt. 3
Pulaski, NY 13142
315-298-2378

All Seasons Sports *
3733 State Route 13
Pulaski, NY 13142
315-298-6433

RTB Tackle
1830 Bridie Manor
Oswego, NY 13126
315-529-7129

Jefferson County

Henchen Marina Inc. ^*
13442 Cnty Rt. 123
PO Box 36
Henderson Harbor, NY 13651
888-848-3821

^ Denotes open
before 7am
* Denotes sells
NYS Fishing
Licenses

REGISTRATION
ONLY

Niagara County

Lake Ontario Motel*
3330 Lockport-Olcott Rd.
Newfane, NY 14108
716-778-5004

Niagara Outdoors
223 Witmer Rd.
N. Tonawanda, NY 14120
716-695-5873

Oswego County

Fat Nancy's Tackle Shop
3750 State Route 13
Pulaski, NY 13142
Phone: 315.298.6357
Toll free: 877.801.FISH

Salmon County
Marina Inc.
58 Mexico Pt Drive West
Mexico, NY 13114
315-963-8049

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UNTIL 8PM
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WWW.LOC.ORG
FOR LATEST
UPDATES

LOC FAQ

Signing up for the Derby- There are two ways, online at www.loc.org and at the Weigh-in and Registration outlets listed on page 2. You must register prior to 7AM the day you are fishing and EVERYONE on the boat MUST be registered.

Youths – 10 to 15 years old at time of entry. There is no separate youth division, all entrants compete for the same prizes but the Youth entry is half price. There is an additional youth award (Trophy) for the largest fish entered in each division. Youth winners are not required to attend the Awards Ceremony UNLESS they are Grand Prize, first or second placed division winners. If youths do not attend the awards ceremony, they can pick up their trophy at the weigh station they weighed their fish. Youths under the age of 10 can be on the boat but the number of rods fished can only be fished for the number of registered entrants on the boat.

Weigh In – Weigh in must happen the day the fish is caught, there is NO WEIGH IN THE FOLLOWING DAY. Maximum weigh in station hours are 9am to 8pm but weigh in stations have different closing times and they can vary throughout the week. **Be sure a picture of the fish is taken when it is first placed on the scale.**

When you arrive at the weigh in station, keep your fish in the cooler, please don't drag it through the store. If you see the scale hanging you can place your cooler underneath the scale but do NOT place your fish on the scale until told to do so. Do not place live fish on the scale, it can damage the scale. You must have your LOC Registration/Invoice on your person to present to the weigh master. This includes everyone that was on the boat.

Problems during weigh in - If there is a problem at weigh-in, make sure you **KEEP YOUR FISH**. Cutting up/destroying your fish will result in immediate disqualification. The weigh in station will record the weight and a Derby Representative will check the fish ASAP.

Pictures of your catch – We love great pictures of your catch and we post them on Facebook and our website. The sooner you take pictures the better the fish looks. Please try and hold your fish sideways and a little in front of your body, but not too far out in front, both need to be in focus.

Leaderboard – The leaderboard for the derby is located at <http://loc.org/Leaderboard.html>. The leaderboard is updated in real time so if you don't see your entry after a few hours or if any of your information is incorrect please check with your weigh in station or call the office at 315-333-5213.

Fish Weigh in Form. Please print legibly! Make sure you write down current address, phone number etc. We utilize information from this form to issue checks and incomplete/incorrect information can delay payment.

You won, now what? – Congratulations, if you are Grand Prize, first or second place you and/or your witness and fish MUST be at the awards ceremony.

The 2026 Awards Ceremonies will be held at Rileys Bar & Grill, 9660 Ridge Road, North Rose. On the final day of each derby, fishing ends at 1:00 pm. You need to be at the awards ceremony by 3:00 pm for pictures and interviews. The awards ceremony will commence immediately following.

You will get paid and receive your trophy. Tax information will be secured and you will get photographed and submit your story to the media. We will feed you pizza and wings. It's a good time!

If you aren't required to attend you will receive your check in the mail. If you won \$600 or more you need to submit an IRS form W-9 prior to getting paid. You can download the form at our website at www.loc.org and you can fax it to 315-333-5295, email it to locderby@aol.com or send regular mail to LOC Derby, PO Box 472, Ontario NY 14519. **You MUST submit this W-9 form in the year you win and cash your check prior to December 1st or you forfeit your prize.**

These checks are usually mailed the second week after the close of the event. We need to go around to all the weigh in stations and registration outlets and collect all the registrations and check them, so it takes a little while. After you get your check PLEASE CASH IT. If you don't receive your check within a month from the end of the derby, please call the office at 315-333-5213.

Have fun and good luck in the Derby!



Rules and Regulations

EACH PARTICIPANT IN THE DERBY:

1. May enter fish caught in the U.S. and Canadian waters of Lake Ontario by hook and line and retrieved and brought to net by rod and reel in a legal manner as designated by New York State DEC or Province of Ontario MNR. Derby waters are limited to those where lake regulations are in effect. Niagara River boundaries are the Lewiston-Queenston Bridge for shore anglers and Devils Hole for boat Anglers. Tributary and special regulation waters are excluded.
2. Must officially register by 7:00 A.M. **prior to fishing** and be in possession of proof of registration at all times and present it to any official Derby personnel upon request.
3. **Anyone 10 through 15 at the time of registration will be registered as a youth. Minimum age for entry into any LOC Derby is 10. Anyone 16 or older must register as an adult. All registrants compete for the same divisional prizes.**
4. Agrees to abide by the LOC Official Rules and Regulations and agrees that failure to comply with any of the rules will result in automatic disqualification, forfeiture of all prizes, recognition as a prize winner and the right to enter any future LOC Derby. LOC Derby reserves the right to deny participation in a LOC Derby to anyone.
5. Anyone disqualified in another Lake Ontario fishing Derby or tournament will be ineligible for any prize consideration in any LOC Derby.
6. Agrees that all persons aboard the same boat (private or charter) must be registered in the Derby, including captain and mate. In the event that there are any persons on board the boat who are not registered (whether they are fishing or not), all fish caught during that particular outing may not be offered or considered for any prizes. A supporting affidavit may be required by all registered contestants aboard the same boat, affirming the integrity of the catch and also that no unregistered person was aboard the boat. **EXCEPTION: Youths under the age of 10 are allowed on the boat or charter as observers only! Numbers of rods and fish limits are based solely on the number of registered participants.**
7. Must be fishing with at least (1) other LOC Derby registered participant (minimum of two (2) persons per boat). In the case of stream, pier, shore fishing, etc. the witness must be in the immediate company of the person who caught the fish. When entering their fish, must be accompanied by their witness who signs an affidavit which corroborates the method, time and location of the catch, which will not be official until signed by the Weigh Master. The minimum age of a witness is 10 years old.
8. Official weigh-in will not take place until the entrant and their accompanying witnesses present their official registration to the Weigh Master in charge.
9. Agrees that each contestant who offers a prize winning fish and all registered affirming witnesses will be subject to a polygraph (lie detector) or voice stress test if so specified by the Derby Rules Committee. And further agrees that failure to pass the test will result in disqualification. Disqualification will result if an entrant refuses a polygraph or is determined to be unfit for a polygraph due to drug or alcohol consumption. The official LOC polygraphist shall make this determination.
10. Agrees that the Weigh Master must weigh in all fish entered in the LOC Derby at an official LOC Weigh Station on the day caught. Derby hours vary by station, but must fall between 9:00 am and 8:00 pm. **CHECK YOUR STATION FOR HOURS.**

2026 Spring Derby May 1st-10th.
2026 Summer Derby June 27th - July 26th
2026 Fall Derby August 21st - September 7th.
All Derbies end at 1:00pm on the final day of the derby.
11. Must enter the fish whole, not gaffed, gutted or snagged and winners will be determined by the weight of the fish only. Any fish containing any foreign materials (including but not limited to water, ice, and weights) will disqualify that fish from consideration for any prize. Black salmon will not be eligible for entry in this Derby. Fish will be examined for gill net marks, bleached or slimy gills, hook and/or gaff marks, fin rot or fungus, freezer burn, clouded eyes, unresponsive flesh – any of which can disqualify the fish.
12. Agrees that the Weigh Master prior to weighing will remove all bait fish or ice visible in the mouth of any fish.
13. Agrees that fish weight is determined by full ounce only. No fractions of an ounce will be recorded. Partial ounce weights will be rounded down in all instances.
14. Agrees to submit, if required by a Derby official, their fish for microscopic tissue examination, internal examination, entering the cavity through an incision or through the use of a probe and not limited to temperature probes.
15. Agrees that LOC entrant who enters the prize winning fish will be the sole recipient of cash or merchandise awards. Dividing of prizes will be handled by entrant, NOT the LOC Derby Committee.
16. Agrees that all trout must weigh a minimum of ten (10) pounds and salmon must weigh a minimum of twenty (20) pounds for entry in the Spring and Summer Derbies. Lake Trout must be at least 30 inches long. Only initial measurement by Weigh Master is valid due to imminent shrinkage. For the Fall Derby trout must weigh a minimum of ten (10) pounds and Salmon twenty-five (25) pounds. **YOU MUST KEEP YOUR FISH UNTIL IT DROPS BELOW 4TH PLACE IN ANY DIVISION.**
17. Agrees that all fish in contention, as determined by the sole discretion of Derby officials, are property of the Derby until released by a Derby official. All weighed fish must be gill punched by the Weigh master. **It is the sole responsibility of the entrant to retain any fish submitted for prize consideration until the Derby results are declared official.**
18. A Registered Angler is entitled to only one division cash prize per Derby. No participant may win more than one of the division prizes, although contestants may enter more than one fish. If the succeeding fish is larger, the smaller of the fish with least weight will be withdrawn. You can win multiple daily/weekly prizes. Only Salmon are eligible for the Grand Prize.
19. Agrees to submit all disputes to a designated Derby official within eight hours after the fish is entered, and agrees that all disputes will be submitted to the Derby Rules Committee, whose decision will be final. The Derby Rules Committee shall consist of Derby Organizers.
20. Agrees that the decision of the judges will be final and not reviewable in any form. In the event of a tie, the person who enters the first fish according to the date and time recorded on the fish entry form will be the winner. The second or subsequent fish, entered at the same weight, will assume the next lowest division position, and so on until all positions are filled. If two or more fish of identical weight should be entered on the same date and time, a toss of the coin will determine the winner and the loser will assume the next lower position in the division.
21. Agrees that award recipients are responsible for payment of all taxes on prizes \$600 and more. **Refusal to submit proper Social Security information will result in disqualification. You must submit a W-9 form AND CASH YOUR CHECK by December 1st in the calendar year you caught your fish. Failure to do so will result in forfeiture of any prize money**
22. Agrees that the LOC Derby Employees and their families may enter and fish in the Derby, but **are not eligible for prizes.**
23. Agrees to hold the Derby officials, sponsors, their agents, servants and/or employees, harmless from any liability of any nature and kind for injuries and/or damages suffered by the entrant during the period that the Derby is held.
24. Agrees to use good judgment in regard to existing and projected weather conditions. Listen to and heed the warnings of the U.S. Coast Guard and local weather reports, before and during each day's fishing and, not to place in jeopardy themselves or others on the boat during the Derby. To have personal flotation devices aboard and to operate under Coast Guard regulations.
25. Agrees that steelhead and rainbow trout are considered the same species in the Derby for purposes of awarding prizes. Chinook, Coho & Atlantic are all considered salmon. Grand Prize money will be awarded for the largest Salmon in each event.
26. Agrees that all **Grand Prize, First and Second** place division winners and witnesses must attend the Awards Ceremony and bring their fish whole to the ceremony. Failure to attend will result in forfeiture of all prizes, including daily or weekly. All awards ceremonies will take place the final day of each respective derby at Rileys Bar & Grill, 9660 Ridge Road, North Rose. You must arrive by 3 pm.
27. Must possess a valid New York State or Canadian fishing license unless exempted by law.



Brian Klice from Cuba, NY and his 24 lb 8 oz Spring Derby Winning King Salmon,

Klice Wins Spring Derby by One Ounce
By Bill Hiltz, Jr.

Klice, from Cuba, NY, was asked by Capt. Craig Hajecki and Justin Botting to go derby fishing aboard the Yankee Troller, a 36-foot Tiara that they use for chartering on Lake Ontario. On May 9, they were derby fishing out of Wilson. At the same time, they were doing some reconnaissance for the Big Boys Tournament on May 10 out of Wilson. One of the reasons they asked Klice to come with them is because he seems to carry a lucky horseshoe whenever he goes hunting or fishing.

It was 10:30 a.m. and they were trolling three miles from the New York/Canada border over 350 feet of water. The trio was running a deep rigger with a white spin doctor and a homemade light green fly that Botting made when a king salmon hit. Klice was on the rod and almost immediately another rod fired, and Botting was on it like a cat.

“It was like bedlam on the back of the boat trying to fight two king salmon at the same time,” said an excited Klice at the awards ceremony on May 11 at Riley’s Bar and Grill in North Rose. Ten minutes later, Klice had the first fish in, and it tipped the scales around 24-1/2 pounds. They hoped that the fish would hold up because the current leader was 24 pounds, 7 ounces. Then again, it was lucky Brian!

When they threw it on the scale at the Wilson Boatyard, the scale nudged just over the 24-pound, 8-ounce mark, giving them the new lead in the derby. It held up until it ended on Mother’s Day and the group collected a check for \$15,500! Oh yeah, did we mention it was Brian’s first derby ever?

The fish that was one ounce back at 24 pounds, 7 ounces was caught by Diane Nieves of Lake Milton, Ohio. She caught it on the second day of the derby while fishing with her husband John Gaston of Lake Milton, OH and Charles Bunea of Green, Ohio.

“We were fishing out of Wilson on the Niagara Bar in 50 feet of water,” said Nieves. “We were trolling aboard the Reel Prince, a 22-foot Grady White. Using a diver on a No. 3 setting about 95 clicks back, the fish hit a green and white Northern King spoon at 6:05 a.m.”

Fifteen minutes later, Nieves had her first salmon while fishing in her first fishing derby. There was plenty of luck to go around. She won \$2,500 for her first-place salmon.

Second place salmon was reeled in by Matt Dunn of Newfane while fishing aboard his 27-foot Tiara named “Streaker.” He was fishing with Doug Parker, Sr. of Lockport and Marty Polovick of Lockport on the Niagara Bar on May 4.

“We were in 120 feet of water, and we had a diver back 150 on a No. 1 setting,” recounted Dunn. “The lure was a USA Moon-

shine Carbon-14 spoon. It took me 15 minutes to bring the fish into the boat.”

Dunn and Polovick are no strangers to the winner’s circle, and they fished together for a couple grand prize catches, including a tie for the grand prize in 2014. However, the first fish weighed in is the tie breaker and they were second place overall. They also won the Grand Prize in 2016 for the spring derby.

The trio earned \$2,500 for their salmon - \$1,000 for second place, \$500 for big fish of the day, and \$1,000 for the biggest fish caught by a Lake Ontario Trout and Salmon Association member.

In the very competitive Lake Trout Division, James English of Mexico, NY set the pace with a 22-pound, 12-ounce fork-tail he caught opening weekend of the derby with friends Richard “Scott” Trump of Pulaski and Charles Trump of Sackets Harbor. They were fishing out of Charlie’s 25-foot Chaparral Spirit named “Ramblin’ Rose.”

“We were fishing out of Henderson Harbor in 150 feet of water on the bottom using Scotty riggers with a watermelon spin-n-glow and cowbells,” said English. “The fish hit at 7 a.m. and it took me 25 minutes to bring it in. We had to keep kicking the boat’s engine in and out of gear to get the fish to the boat. The fish is a personal best for me.” The laker earned a check for \$1,450.

That same opening weekend, Charlie Trump reeled in a 17-pound, 8-ounce laker to place 10th and Richard Trump weighed in a 17-pound, 5-ounce laker to place 11th.

Second place lake trout went to Michael Germond of Micanopy, Florida with a 19-pound, 8-ounce fish he caught in Henderson Harbor aboard the Salmon Hunter the final weekend of the derby.

Fourth place was Anthony Fritz of Webster with an 18-pound, 11-ounce laker he caught fishing with his father Eric and his grandfather Bob Fritz of Macedon. What’s important about Anthony’s catch is that he was the Youth Award winner at 11 years old. His siblings Nina and Lyla are previous Youth Award winners.

“We were fishing out of Irondequoit Bay in 160 feet of water, and it was a little rough out there,” said Anthony. “We were fishing out of our 24-foot Osprey boat named ‘Fly and Fish’ using a blue and white spin-n-glow behind blue and silver Hammerhead cowbells on the bottom with the downrigger.” It took him 10 minutes to bring it in and it was a personal best lake trout for him.

After catching the fish, Grandpa Bob insisted that they go right in to weigh it. Anthony is glad they did because the catch bettered fifth place by just one ounce. “The fish was still alive when we put it on the scale at the Port of Rochester.”

The Brown Trout Division was a different story. For the 10-day derby, only two legal fish were weighed in. First place was a 12-pound, 1-ounce brown trout hauled in by Ed Dobrowolski of Milford, New Jersey. He was fishing with Jay Thatcher of Milford, NJ aboard the Lip Ripper – a 30-foot Penn Yan skippered by Capt. Kenny Krott of Lancaster, PA. He charts his boat out of Oswego.

They were running a Golden Bass Smithwick Rogue stickbait 180 feet back behind an Otter board over 18-20 feet of water when the brown trout hit at 7 a.m. It took Ed 15 minutes to bring his personal best brown to the boat to pick up his first derby win. They were fishing off Tommy’s Point.

Second place in the Brown Trout category was a 10-pound, 7-ounce fish reeled in by Gordon Walker of Ulster, Pennsylvania. He was fishing with Duane Shoemaker of Wysox, Pa. and Dale Griffith of Towanda, Pa. aboard a 21-foot Penn Yan named “Reel Nutzzz.”

“We were fishing about a half-mile west of Sodus in 6 feet of water, focusing on the mud line along the shore,” said Walker. “We had a black Moonshine spoon 125 feet back behind the boat. It was rougher than heck out there and I didn’t think the fish was that big ... until it was at the back of the boat! Then everyone got excited.”

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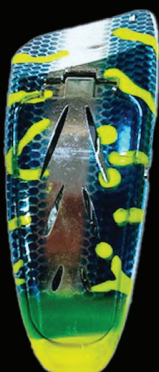
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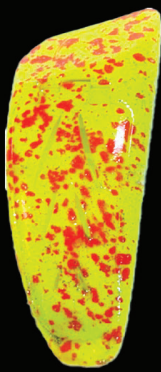
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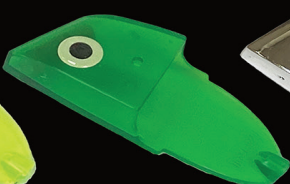
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Pro-Troll President Dick Pool Receives Salmon Lifetime Achievement Award

Presented January 18, 2025



This record 75 lb. chinook was caught near Ketchikan, Alaska

In recognition of this prestigious award to Dick Pool:

For more than 50 years, Dick Pool has been an advocate and supporter of salmon and the salmon industry across North America. His lifetime defense and protection of salmon “tells the rest of the story” about Dick and his lifelong commitment to this salmon industry cause. Dick’s patents and contributions of the Pro-Troll EChip, ProChip finned “360 flashers” and lighted flashers to the salmon tackle market are “second to none”.

“I honor and thank the past and current leaders of these continuing salmon survival activities.” - Dick Pool



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later, the big fish was at the back of the boat in the net.
“We need a new roof and siding on our home,” said LoPresti. “Winning the derby comes at a great time.”

The most disappointed angler in the derby was 75-year-old Roy Hunsberger of Mexico, NY. Heading into the final day of action, he was sitting on top of the leaderboard with a 31-pound, 6-ounce king salmon ready to accept the Grand Prize on Monday. He fell just a few hours short of ultimate victory, but he still managed to get a check for \$6,000 to win the Salmon Division.

Hunsberger was fishing with his friend Pete Paduch of Mexico, NY aboard his 26-foot Miami Steiger named “Fishin’ Frenzy” that Paduch used to charter fish out of. They were trolling on August 21 out of Oswego in over 600 feet of water, having a good day of action, when they decided to make one more pass before heading in. “We were trolling a Salmon Candy spoon on a free-floating slider on the rigger,” said Hunsberger. “The rigger was set at 45-foot and the big salmon hit the Steelie Candy mini on the slider, so it was down 22-23 feet. It took me 40 minutes to bring the fish to the back of the boat.” It was their 25th fish of the day.

There were some shenanigans that the duo had to deal with, too. The big fish jumped out of the water five times. It tangled in the dippy diver. It dove several times next to the boat. When they netted it and brought it into the boat, they knew it was better than 30 pounds.

Second place in the Salmon Division was Jason Ivino of Saugerties, NY with a 29-pound, 12-ounce king salmon he caught on August 23. It was a personal best for Ivino. He was fishing with Oswego residents Capt. Paul Powers (No Dilemma Sportfishing), Mike Batter, and Rick Drosin aboard Drosin’s 31-foot Penn Yan named “Road Show.”

“We almost ran out of line on the reel,” said Ivino at the awards ceremony. “The fish hit a Jack’s Pretty Girl flasher with an A-Tom-Mik shredded glow hammer fly that was behind a 250-foot copper line over 750 feet of water off Fair Haven. It really took off on me!” It took him 30 minutes to bring the fish in.

For the special Lake Ontario Trout and Salmon Association prize for the largest salmon caught by a member, Robert Schneider of Haydenville, Mass. weighed in a 26-pound, 1-ounce salmon at the Boat Doctors in Olcott to claim the \$500 prize. Top Youth catch was a 28-pound, 3-ounce salmon reeled in by 10-year-old Phillip George of Locke while fishing out of Fair Haven.

Top fish in the Steelhead Division was a 17-pound, 10-ounce lunger that was reeled in by Capt. Nate Stephenson of Wilson while fishing out of his home port on August 23 with Ron Read of Sanborn.

“We were fishing 18 miles out, straight north of Wilson, and the bottom depth was actually getting shallower,” Stephenson recounted at the awards ceremony. He operates Triple J Charters out of Wilson. “We were just south of the Canadian border using a No. 4 Chinook Diver back 200 feet on a wire set-up. It was down 60-foot on my Smart Troll probe. The fish hit a Moonshine Magnum Raspberry Carbon 14 spoon at 9:30 a.m. and it jumped 10 times before it came to the boat 20 minutes later.”

It wasn’t easy to net either. Read had to scoop it up twice, after it jumped out of the net the first time. You could say it jumped 11 times overall. It was a personal best steelhead for Stephenson, the largest caught in the LOC derby in nearly a decade. Second place steelhead was caught by Richard “Rick” Angelone of Cleveland, Ohio, a personal-best 16-pound fish he reeled in off Olcott on August 19.

“We were fishing a little east of Olcott in 425 feet of water, running a Hulk magnum Moonshine spoon 99 feet down on the rigger,” said Angelone, who was fishing with Kevin Lukehart of Cleveland and Mark Frasse of Barberton, Ohio aboard Frasse’s 19-foot, 6-inch Starcraft named “Night Stalker” he won in the 2023 Fall Brawl on Lake Erie.

“We ended up with three fish on at once at one point,” said Angelone, fishing in his first derby on Lake Ontario. “Two of them were salmon so after fighting the smaller fish I thought was a salmon, I put it in the rod holder while we fought the two kings. Both were under 25 pounds so after I netted one of the salmon, I grabbed the rod in the holder to see if the fish was there. It was! It didn’t take very long before we realized it was a big steelhead! We were lucky for sure.” The hook came out as they netted the fish at the back of the boat.

First place brown trout was a 15-pound, 3-ounce fish hauled in by Bill Weber of Palmyra while fishing out of Hughes Marina in Williamson. He was fishing with Jim Nealon of North Rose out of his

own 23-foot Crestliner named “Bladerunner.”
“We were fishing in 50 feet of water on August 17, running a Dreamweaver Green Gator spoon near the bottom with a downrigger,” said Weber. “The rod went off around 9 a.m. and we knew it was a good fish because it stayed down the entire time. We had a few panic moments like when the fish decided to dart to the other side of the motor when we were getting ready to net it.”
The fishing duo had paid their dues through the years. While they had placed in the money a few times previously, they had never won a division before. Their time had come.

Second place brown trout was Marcy Littlejohn of Lacona with a 14-pound, 13-ounce fish she reeled in while fishing off the Salmon River. She was fishing in her first derby ever, and it was a personal best brown trout. She was fishing with her husband Ron Littlejohn III, her father-in-law Ron Littlejohn, Jr. of Altmar, and Marzie Littlejohn of Troy. It was the final family fishing trip on the 28-foot “Double Trouble” Baha boat that Ron, Jr. chartered out of. He recently sold the boat and is retiring from charter fishing.

“We were in 73 feet of water, trolling a Stinger F/N green magnum spoon behind a diver 100 feet back on a No. 3 setting when the fish hit around 8 a.m.,” said Littlejohn. “It only took me about 10 minutes to bring it in.” It was a great family memory for the end of a charter fishing era.

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All 2026 Awards Ceremonies will be held at Riley’s Bar & Grill, 9660 Ridge Road, North Rose. Grand Prize, First and Second place division winners must arrive with their fish by 3:00pm on the last day of the Derby.

Summer Derby Continued from Page 1

21-foot Penn Yan boat named Finding Nemo. They decided to fish out of Henderson Harbor.

At 1 p.m., they had a Dirty Goose meat rig and a Bullfrog paddle down 90 feet on the rigger over 110 feet of water when the rod went off.

“We really didn’t think it was a big fish,” said Evans, who was fishing in his first derby, reeling in his first fish on the lake. “It didn’t act like a big fish, and it came right to the boat. It wasn’t until we saw it in the net that we realized how big this fish was.” It weighed in at 32 pounds, 4 ounces and they believed they had a winner. Fate was cruel to them.

Second place salmon was a 29-pound, 12-ounce salmon that was also caught the last Saturday of the derby – reeled in by Gerald Bielicki, Jr. of Corfu, NY. He was fishing with his father Gerald, Sr. of Akron and Joe Yuhnke of Tonawanda aboard their 20-foot Grady White named Bad Habit.

The trio also competed in the Lake Ontario Trout and Salmon Association’s club tournaments as the Mutiny team and, of course, they were fishing in the LOC Derby, too. For this big salmon, they were fishing off Wilson in 170 feet of water, using a Warrior yellow-tail spoon behind 10 colors of lead core line.

“The salmon hit around 8:30 a.m. in the morning,” said Bielicki. “Dad was driving the boat in an S-pattern, and we didn’t agree with what he was doing ... until the big fish hit! The fish was angry and at one point wrapped around a dipsy and a downrigger cable. It took me 20 minutes to bring it in.”

The lucky salmon was big enough to give them the win in the LOTSA Saturday contest and helped them win the 323 competition (three biggest fish over two days). In addition, they were the biggest fish caught by a LOTSA member in LOC to win an extra check for \$750.

In the competitive Brown Trout Division, Amanda Kimble of Clinton, Maine was the eventual winner with a 16-pound, 8-ounce fish she caught on July 17 – fishing in her first derby ever. She was fishing with her husband Sam Kimble and father Peter Doyon of Sidney, Maine on board the Fish Fin-Addict, a 37-foot Trojan International Express run by Capt. Ron Molinari and his wife Amy. They were fishing outside of Sodus Bay.

“We were using a Northeast Troller green glow alewife spoon made by Christian Carlson of Thorndike, Maine,’ said Kimble at the awards ceremony. “He runs Northeast Troller and Taxidermy and is mounting the fish for me. Anyway, we were running his spoon on a diver set back 122 feet on a No. 3 setting over 60 feet of water when the fish hit at 9:13 a.m. It took me over a half hour to bring the fish to the back of the boat.”

Her father was an early leader in the derby with a 14-pound, 9-ounce brown trout he caught June 29. He finished in 9th place, also fishing with Capt. Ron. It led them to a new favorite saying for Lake Ontario fishing – “In Ron We Trust.”

Second place brown trout was reeled in Doug Angold of Rochester, a 16-pound, 4-ounce fish he caught on July 9 while fishing with his brother Fred, also of Rochester. The dynamic fishing duo were trolling out of their 16-foot Smokercraft named “Stelhedr 2” and they must pick the days they will be on the water. They were fishing out of Sandy Creek west of Rochester.

“We were using a silver and chartreuse Pirate spoon that I doctored up in 50 to 60 feet of water behind 7 colors of lead core line,” said Angold. “The fish hit around 10 a.m. and it took me about 10 minutes to bring it in.” His brother also finished in 16th place with a 13-pound, 13-ounce brown trout. They are out there every year and last year they both placed in the money, too.

First place Rainbow/Steelhead Trout was weighed in by Michael Lewis of Canastota with a 13-pound, 13-ounce silver bullet he caught pre-fishing for the Sodus/Wayne County Pro-Am Tournament on July 18. He was fishing with Cody Lewis of Palermo, Michael Lewis, Sr. of Central Square, and Tina Lewis of Central Square aboard their 28-foot Penn Yan named Double Treble.

“We were fishing in 300 to 400 feet of water using a 350-foot copper line with an A-Tom-Mik chrome and green meat head clean behind a green Pro Troll flasher when the fish hit at 9 a.m.,” said Lewis. “It took me about 5 minutes to bring it in and it’s the biggest steelhead that I have ever caught.”

Second place steelhead was hauled in by Robert Schindler of Chardon, Ohio and he made the list with a 13-pound, 9-ounce Olcott fish. He was fishing with John Cocco, Mark Slatery, and Father Walt Jenne, all from Ohio, and they were chartering with Capt. Craig Heit-

zenrater with Cranks Charters.

“It was rough out there and it was good we were in a 31-foot Tiara (Cranks),” said Schindler, only his second time fishing Lake Ontario. “Right after we caught the fish, we went right in to weigh it. However, we couldn’t get back out.” It was a personal best steelhead for Schindler, caught on a “Cranks Special” spoon that had a lot of orange in it.

In the Lake Trout Division, Jan Chybinski of Mexico, NY set the pace with a 25-pound, 1-ounce fish they caught out of Henderson Harbor. He was fishing Charlie “Pete” Henkel of Florida aboard their custom-made 24-foot Stanley boat.

“We were fishing between the trench and the shipping channel in 170 feet of water, trolling a Dardevle spoon in red and white down 165 feet on the rigger,” said Chybinski. “It took me about 20 minutes to reel it in. We’re just a couple of older guys playing around.” They caught the fish on July 6 at 7:30 a.m.

For the Youth Award, Lyla Fritz of Webster did it again and won her second youth trophy with an 18-pound, 8-ounce lake trout. She finished in 8th place overall, her highest ranking in a derby. She was fishing with her father Eric and grandfather Bob aboard their 24-foot Osprey named Fly-N-Fish.

“We were fishing off Irondequoit Bay in 120 feet of water with a Gambler rig and Hammerhead cowbells on the bottom with a downrigger,” she said at the awards ceremony. The fishing Fritz’s had three lake trout that placed in the Top 20 on the boat. Her sister and brother have also won youth awards in previous derbies.

Making Plans for next year?
LOC 2027 Derby Dates
May 7th -May 16th
July 3 - August 1
August 20th - Sept 6th

Atlantic Salmon	24 lb 15 oz	Mike Dandino	Lake Ontario
Brown Trout	33 lb 2 oz	Tony Brown	Lake Ontario
Chinook Salmon	47 lb 13 oz	Kurtis Killian	Salmon River
Coho Salmon	33 lb 7 oz	Stephen Sheets	Lake Ontario
Carp	50 lb 6 oz	Charles Primeau	Tomhannock Res.
Lake Trout	41 lb 8 oz	Jesse Wykstra	Lake Erie
Rainbow Trout	31 lb 3 oz	Robert Wilson	Lake Ontario
Walleye	18 lb 2 oz	Brian Hartman	St. Lawrence



Bill Weber of Palmyra, NY won 1st Place in the Brown Trout Division in the Fall Derby with this 15 lb 3 oz beauty weighed in at Hughes Marina in Pultneyville.



\$140,150 Cash Payout!



LOC
Spring Derby
May 1 – May 10, 2026
\$39,400 Cash

\$15,000
Grand Prize
For the largest Salmon

Three Divisions
Salmon, Lake Trout
& Brown Trout

**Cash Prizes for
Salmon Division**
First Place \$2000
Second Place \$1000
Third Place \$750
Fourth Place \$500
Fifth Place \$400
Sixth Thru
10th Place \$200
11th Thru 15th \$150
16th thru 20th \$100

\$1000 cash award from LOTSA for
the largest valid LOC
salmon. Both entrant and witness
must be LOTSA members.

**Cash Prizes for
Lake and Brown
Divisions**
First Place \$1000
Second Place \$600
Third Place \$400
Fourth Place \$300
Fifth Place \$200
Sixth Thru
10th Place \$150
11th thru 20th \$100

\$1000 IN DAILY AWARDS!
\$500 for the largest salmon and \$250 a
day for Lake and Brown starting May 1st
and running through May 9th. There is
no daily award for May 10th. If no fish is
entered that meets the Derby minimums,
that amount will carry over until it is won.

LOC
Summer Derby
June 27 – July 26, 2026
\$43,000 Cash

\$15,000
Grand Prize
For the largest Salmon

Four Divisions
Salmon, Lake Trout,
Brown Trout,
Rainbow/Steelhead

**Cash Prizes for
each Division**
First Place \$1000
Second Place \$600
Third Place \$400
Fourth Place \$300
Fifth Place \$200
Sixth Thru
10th Place \$150
11th Thru 20th \$100

\$1000 cash award from LOTSA
for the largest valid LOC
salmon. Both entrant and witness
must be LOTSA members.

**\$2500 Weekly Prizes
\$10,000 Total in Weekly
Cash!**
\$1000 for the largest Salmon and
\$500 each for Lake, Brown &
Rainbow.

WEEKLY DATES
6/27-7/4, 7/5-7/11, 7/12-7/18, 7/19-7/26

**Youth entries and Youth
Awards**

To clear up any confusion some
may have, young fishermen that are at least
10 years old and have not reached their
16th birthday, register for a half price rate.
Single Derby passes are \$20 instead of \$40
for a adult pass and \$10 versus \$20 for a
single day pass. Youths are eligible for all
division prizes PLUS a trophy for enter-
ing the largest fish in each division.

LOC
Fall Derby
Aug 21st - Sept 7, 2026
\$57,750 Cash

\$20,000
Grand Prize
For the largest Salmon

Three Divisions
Salmon, Brown Trout,
Rainbow/Steelhead

**Cash Prizes for
Salmon Division**
First Place \$3000
Second Place \$1500
Third Place \$1000
Fourth Place \$750
Fifth Place \$600
Sixth Thru
10th Place \$300
11th Thru 15th \$200
16th thru 20th \$100

\$1000 from LOTSA for the largest
salmon. \$500 for 8/21-8/29 and \$500
for 8/30-9/7. Both entrant and
witness must be LOTSA members.

**Cash Prizes for
Brown and
Rainbow/Steelhead
Divisions**
First Place \$1500
Second Place \$750
Third Place \$500
Fourth Place \$400
Fifth Place \$300
Sixth Thru
10th Place \$200
11th thru 20th \$100

\$1000 IN DAILY AWARDS!
**\$16,000 total
In Daily Cash!**

\$500 for the largest salmon, \$250 a day for
Steelhead and Brown starting Aug 21st
and running through Sept 6th.. There is
no daily award for Sept 7th. If no fish is
entered that meets the Derby minimums,
that amount will carry over until it is won.

Save \$10 on a Season Pass
for all three events Adult \$110 - Youth \$50
Single Derby Adult Entry Fee \$40 - Youth \$20
One Day Adult Pass \$20 - Youth \$10