

# Goal!



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald  
McNary's Gustavo Villalvazo nets the game-winning shot in a contest with Ridgeview High School Tuesday, Sept. 1. Miguel Bravo set up the shot with a corner kick. McNary won 5-1 in the first varsity contest on the school's new artificial turf.

# WILSON,

continued from Page A8

Facilities have changed but chunky rainbows are still there in good numbers. A diet of aquatic insects produce fat, pink-meated rainbows that bring anglers back year after year.

Like in fishing, sometimes in writing you have to have some luck.

In planning for a couple of articles on fishing Diamond Lake, I make the necessary phone calls to set up interviews with local experts for the articles.

My wife and I make the 200-mile drive to get there. Both guys are no-shows.

We are pretty disappointed. All those miles, and expected resources not there.

What the heck. We're here for the night, let's enjoy the beautiful view and dinner in the dining room.

As we walk across the coffee shop, we see two guys communicating in American Sign Language. Here are two guys I watched graduate from the Oregon School for the Deaf 30 plus years ago. I haven't seen them in years.

They are there to fish a tournament with members of the Fishing Club for the Deaf.

Don Burks, now of Vancouver, Wash., has fished Diamond Lake for years. His family would even come up here ice fishing. "I grew up fishing this lake," he said, with a grin, and big wink. "I caught seven today. He only got one." Both agree it had been a slow day.

"I don't remember when I started coming up here," Mike Morton, of Springfield adds. "I come several times a year."

They are pre-fishing for the tournament coming up in two days. "I want to have a honey-hole located," Morton explains with a wide grin, flashing through a mass of red beard. "I won it last year on the last day, with an 18½-inch. Won it the year before, too."

Just like that, I have a couple of experts on catching the famous rainbows of Diamond Lake.

Back home, more "luck" comes my way. I make a dumb, \$1,000 mistake backing out of



Larry Jackson with a nice Diamond Lake rainbow trout. Submitted

the driveway. I take my car to the body shop for repair, start talking fishing with one of the owners, Larry Jackson, of Keizer. Guess what, he has fished Diamond Lake for years. Lady Luck has smiled. I now have access to fishing information I need to do my work.

Jackson, of Keizer, grew up fishing Diamond Lake. "I think I was eight years old when we started fishing there," he explains. "We would sleep in tents and rent boats."

When Jackson had sons of his own, he wanted them to enjoy fishing Diamond Lake as he had done. In 1989 he started going back.

"This year was our 18<sup>th</sup> year in a row," he adds, with a big grin. "Actually, one of my boys made the trip a couple of months before he was born."

The Blackbird 5,000 Tournament is the big event of the year at the lake. One year, more than 1,000 boats entered. From photos in the lodge, looks like you could walk across the lake on boats. Jackson and the boys fished the tournament one year. One of the boys placed 18<sup>th</sup> with an 18-inch.

"In the early days we caught most of our fish trolling," he explains. "We had our best luck with little brass lures. Most of the time we used Triple Teasers. If brass didn't produce, we would switch to blue."

"I like to use miniature marshmallows. They float nicely off the bottom," Jackson explains. "You have to have your bait off the bottom. That's why Power Bait is so successful. I like to use night-crawlers too."

Today, the annual Jackson trek to Diamond Lake is July 4<sup>th</sup>. It's a family affair: grandpa, kids and grandkids. "I don't fish much any more," Jackson explains. "I like to do the cooking. My specialty is the ribs."

Morton and Burks prefer floating bait off the bottom also. Over the years they have learned a number of "honey holes" that produce for them.

Today, the majority of boaters anchor up and bait fish. Berkley Power Bait is the number one seller at the marina.

Proper anchoring is important in bait fishing off the bottom. The boat has to be stationary to feel the subtle bite of trout. To keep your sinker in place, two anchors must be deployed to keep the boat from swinging in the wind.

A daily limit is eight, of which one can be 20 inches or more. By June of this year several four pounders had been checked in at the marina. The Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife Department says there are 250,000 rainbows in the lake.

Last season produced one trout heavier than 12 pounds and "lots of 4 and 5 pounders."

The season opens the fourth Saturday in April and closes Oct. 31. There is no longer ice fishing on the lake.

Diamond Lake is a natural body of water in the heart of the Southern Cascades. It lies near the junction of Oregon Hwy 138 and Hwy 230.

Drivers from Keizer to Diamond Lake have three beautiful routes through the Cascades. Highway 22 to Bend, then south on Hwy 97 to 138. I-5 south to Eugene, then 58 across to 97 to 138. Or, south on I-5 to Roseburg then 138, following the North Fork of the Umpqua River, one of the most beautiful drives in Oregon.

How about this for a great fishing trip? Catch an early morning limit of eight chunky rainbows, then, Drive seven miles to visit Crater Lake, one of the most scenic national parks in the country.

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