

Wranglers announce winners

The Wranglers riding club has announced winners for the April 1 playday.

Barrels
5 and under: first-Brett Barber, second-Megan Bergstrom, third-Kelsie Greenup, fourth-Lacey Davis.

6-7 year olds: first-Joe Papineau, second-Blake Knowles, third-Amy Papineau, fourth-Shad Hisler.

8-10 year olds: first-Brian Knowles, second-Stormy Howard, third-Dawn Boor, fourth-Casey Evans.

11-13 year olds: first-Jossie Evans, second-Tiffany Munkers, third-Jossie Evans, fourth-Rodney Ehrmantraut.

14-18 year olds: first-Jennie Ashbeck, second-Heather Eckman, third-Holly Eckman, fourth-Amy Greenup.

19 and over: first-Angie Hughes, second-Megan Bergstrom, third-Kelsie Greenup, fourth-Lacey Davis.

6-7 year olds: first-Joe Papineau, second-Blake Knowles, third-Amy Papineau, fourth-Matt Bergstrom.

8-10 year olds: first-Casey Evans, second-Dawn Boor, third-Jaylene Papineau, fourth-Brian Knowles.

11-13 year olds: first-Kelsie Evans, second-Tiffany Munkers, third-Laurel Temple, fourth-Jossie Evans.

14-18 year olds: first-Holly Eckman, second-Amy Greenup, third-Donita Sharp, fourth-Jenni Ashbeck.

19 and over: first-Mary Knowles, second-Angie Ashbeck, third-Angie Hughes, fourth-Maureen Crossley.

Hughes, fourth-Maureen Crossley, Figure 8

5 and under: first-Brett Barber, second-Kelsie Greenup, third-Megan Bergstrom, fourth-Lacey Davis.

6-7 year olds: first-Joe Papineau, second-Blake Knowles, third-Amy Papineau, fourth-Shad Hisler.

8-10 year olds: first-Brian Knowles, second-Stormy Howard, third-Dawn Boor, fourth-Casey Evans.

11-13 year olds: first-Jossie Evans, second-Tiffany Munkers, third-Kelsie Evans, fourth-Rodney Ehrmantraut.

14-18 year olds: first-Holly Eckman, second-Jennie Ashbeck, third-Shelly Ashbeck, fourth-Joy Downing.

19 and over: first-Mary Knowles, second-Maureen Crossley, third-Angie Ashbeck, fourth-Lacey Davis.

6-7 year olds: first-Blake Knowles, second-Shad Hisler, third-Joe Papineau, fourth-Amy Papineau.

8-10 year olds: first-Brenda Holtz, second-Angela Munkers, third-Dawn Boor, fourth-Stormy Howard.

11-13 year olds: first-Rodney Ehrmantraut, second-Kelsie Evans, third-Tiffany Munkers, fourth-Jossie Evans.

14-18 year olds: first-Donita Sharp, second-Amy Greenup, third-Joy Downing.

19 and over: first-Susie Hisler, second-Mary Knowles, third-Angie Ashbeck, fourth-Maureen Crossley.

Assume Nothing, Expect Less From early Spring Fishing

It was one of those rare occurrences when we were right on time—our gear was loaded, our thermoses full and Wendell and I each held a hot cup of coffee as we headed for the Powder River Arm of the Snake River's Brownlee Reservoir. We had been hearing all winter that the crappies there were tightly schooled and would, despite frigid water temperatures, smack the jigs of persistent anglers. A phone call the day before to a knowledgeable source had not only confirmed the rumor, but netted some sure-fire tactics and locations to assure our success.

"They're suspending 15 to 20 feet deep," the source had said, "holding in tight bands a couple of feet wide and up to a hundred feet long. As soon as you locate one of those schools with a fish finder you're in business. Check the points and brush piles in the Powder River Arm, or try the face of the dam or the vertical bluffs near Swede's Landing."

That was all it took for me to undo everything I had done to winterize the boat a few months earlier, and by 6 a.m. the following morning we were pulling out of Wendell's driveway, boat in tow, facing a hundred-some-odd-mile drive.

Our anticipation grew as we wound down the Powder River above Richland. Green grass was everywhere here, which prompted speculation as to what the water temperatures might be; perhaps they would even be warm enough in the afternoon to stir some bass.

Those hopes were shattered, however, when we got our first glimpse of the impoundment from above Hewitt Park. Despite the success reports we'd been hearing, despite the week of sunny weather that had preceded our trip, the arm was frozen—clear across and for as far down as one could see from the boat ramp.

"Good morning." The lady behind the counter at the Richland store was disgustingly cheerful—she obviously knew nothing of our dilemma. "Can I help you?"

"Well, we've come a long way this morning to catch some crappies, but the arm is frozen tight," I said, forcing a smile around my wounded aspirations.

"Really? I didn't think it got that cold last night," she scowled (ah, much better). "Just Tuesday a guy I know took his boat down only a mile or so from the ramp and caught over a hundred of them—nice ones, too."

That's it, lady, rub a little salt in it. She graciously made a quick phone call, learning that Swede's Landing a few miles up river was free of ice and that anglers had been launching boats there.

An hour later we were on the water, all 38 degrees of it, charting the south-facing points and vertical rock bluffs with our sonar unit. Five hours later we were still on the water, still charting points and bluffs and anything else that might hold fish. We had found only one school of fish just off the bottom in about 40 feet of water, and after a lengthy application of artificial jigs we had caught but one—yellow perch.

Having no garden hackle (perch prefer (ugh) worms, especially in cold water,) we continued our search, eyes glued to the sonar screen. But as the shadows from the canyon walls on the Oregon side stretched farther across the water, we realized that this silly circuit box had cheated us out of several hours of fishing. Having noticed earlier a spot with a fairly abrupt dropoff to deep water, we decided to find it again and try for some catfish before heading home.

We anchored in about 55 feet of water, within easy casting range of the 85-foot-deep hole. Wendell quickly began rigging his catfish outfit and I was about to do the same when I noticed the screen of the fish finder. Suspended four of five feet from the bottom was an unusually large school of something, and we had just happened to park right over them.

"Probably more perch, but I got to fine out," I muttered, reaching for my crappie rod. Within minutes I hauled an eight-inch black crappie aboard. The fish were sluggish but we found that by tipping our jigs with a bit of Berkley's Crappie Power Bait and putting the combination right in front of them they could be finessed into tasting it (my fish finder, and Eagle Z-9000 LCG, will easily show a tiny jig dropped directly beneath the boat—even in very deep water—which allowed us to visually lay our lures right on the fish's dinner table.)

The catfish, we soon decided, either weren't around or weren't interested, yet the next couple of hours gave up several black crappies, a white crappie and a 13-inch smallmouth, all from within a few feet of the bottom, straight under the boat.

Just before we gave it up (about a half-hour after dark) a thick, dark line on the finder indicated a fish at about 21 feet. I watched the screen as I reeled my jig upward, then stopped it at the same depth as the new arrival. Something instantly gobbled the diminutive bait and after a brief but fulfilling struggle I grabbed a 3 1/2-pound channel cat by the back of the head. The crappie were on the bottom more than 50 feet deep, but this guy had been, well, suspended.

Chalk it up, I guess, to the inconsistencies of early spring fishing. If we learn but one thing from each trip afield, let it at least be that we have a lot to learn. And if we expect anything at all, it should—always—be the unexpected.



by Mark Baggett

Angling authorities say it's very likely the state bull trout record will again be broken this year at Lake Billy Chinook southwest of Madras, an occurrence that seems to repeat itself annually.

Experts Expect Record Trout from Billy Chinook

It has been just more than a year since Don Yow of La Pine tugged a 23-pound, 2-ounce Billy Chinook bull over the side of his boat to break the Oregon State record and set a new IG-FA line-class world record for that species. Yow was the third angler in 18 months to top the previous state record.

In fact, Yow, who spends many weekends each year fishing for Billy Chinook bull trout, believes the 4,000-acre reservoir could soon best the current all-tackle, world record fish, a 32-pound bull taken in 1949 from Lake Pend Oreille in Idaho.

"It's just a matter of time," he says. He'll get little argument from Madras-based, Portland General Electric biologist Don Ratliff, recognized as Oregon's leading "bull-trout guru."

"It's probably swimming around in there now—there are probably several of them," Ratliff said. "It just stands to reason, because we are lower in latitude, which means the sun is higher in the sky, and we are also lower in elevation than those places in Montana and Idaho, so we have a better food source."

Ratliff, who said the fishery for trophy bulls improved dramatically after regulations passed in 1982 restricting angling on the Metolius River (the major spawning area which feeds the reservoir) to "catch-and-release" only, tells of reports of bull trout weighing in excess of 40 pounds caught in a fish trap and released during the time Pelton Dam was being constructed.

"In fact, I saw a picture of a fish caught (and released) in the Metolius just a few years ago by Paul Petersen, that was 42 inches long," the biologist said. "That fish would have been larger than the world record. He was just a monster fish."

Ratliff credits the reservoir's ability to produce trophy-sized bulls with its unparalleled food supply (kokanee), which accounts for an amazingly fast growth rate among the large char.

"You just can't believe it—six-tenths of an inch per month, year-round (approximately six inches-plus per year.) The one thing that's happening is, we do have more people fishing, so more of these 10- to 12-pound fish are being caught—those are the ones that are only a year away from being 20 pounds."

Ratliff says he is pushing for regulations that would limit anglers to only one bull trout per day, thus insuring a trophy fishery for the future. Regulations now allow anglers to keep five trout of any species per day, with only one over 20 inches.

Both Yow and Ratliff say April is a prime time for catching big bulls, and name the Metolius arm of the reservoir as the most productive area. Yow advises newcomers to try trolling with large, jointed rapalas near the head of Metolius arm.

"People who don't know much about it can catch some nice fish up there, and they can catch them trolling because it's only 15 to 20 feet deep up through there.

"But we don't troll," Yow continued. "It's too boring for me. I fish them just like I do bass; I just work the banks."

Yow said he likes to position his boat in 20 feet of water and cast deep-diving, black and silver or other kokanee-colored crankbaits (he uses a rapala fat rap) to the shoreline, then work it all the way back to the boat.

"The kokanee are just now coming alive in there and that's what they (bull trout) come in and feed on," Yow said. "They just come in and gorge themselves in a big feeding frenzy."

In addition to a regular angling license, anglers planning to fish the Metolius arm of Billy Chinook must also purchase a Warm Springs Tribal license at \$2 per day or \$12 annually.

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WCCC men kick off golf season

Sunday April 1, the Willow Creek Country Club men had their annual kick-off breakfast, hosted by Ed Hiemstra, Howard Bryant and Earl Fishburn.

Winners of 18-hole play were: low gross-first Don Lott; second-John Edmondson; third-Dave Green; fourth-Earl Fishburn; fifth-John McCabe and sixth-Randy Lott.

Low net: first-Mike Doherty; second-Terry Smith; third-(a three way tie) Dave Allstott, Darrell Wilson and Ray Reid; sixth-Dave Gunderson.

Long drive: Don Lott, K.P.: Frank Bailey.

Least putts: Ed Hiemstra. "Breakfast was excellent and we all enjoyed a great day," said a club spokesperson.

Singspiration at All Saints

All Saints Episcopal Church will host Singspiration Sunday, April 8 at 7 p.m. at the church. The South Morrow County Choir will also sing several numbers under the direction of Bob Isted.

Easter Weekend At All Saints Episcopal Church
Everyone Welcome
Friday Good Friday Service
7:00 p.m.
Rev. John Wallace
Saturday Easter Vigil Service
7:30 p.m.
Bishop Rustin Kimsey

- Service of Light
- Scripture Readings
- Holy Baptism and Renewal of Baptism
- All Night Vigil 8:30 p.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Someone will be (at watch) throughout the night. Everyone is welcomed and encouraged to join in. Come anytime and stay as long as you'd like.

Sunday Easter Service Eucharist
10:30 a.m.
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