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French Meadows Map Feature



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SEE OUR NEW BAJA
ROUNDUP SECTION ON
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Our
35th
Year

"The Magazine for West Coast Sportsmen!"

Shasta Fall Trout Derby – Tough Bite But Very Large Trout!

The 17th Annual Shasta Lake Fall Trout derby took place on the weekend of October 14 and 15. The lake was in fantastic shape, only about 45 feet down and clear and beautiful.

John Brassfield and I arrived at Sugarloaf Cottages and were greeted by Bruce Wicks and Al Fiske of Foresthill. We barbecued steaks and had cocktails and cigars overlooking the beautiful Sacramento River arm of Shasta Lake. Dave Barsi of Oak Run, his daughter Alicia and Mark Kalinowski of Concord would complete our group in the morning.

We launched the Rogue Jet 21 Coastal on Friday and pre-fished with very little luck and were a little worried on what to do Saturday. The lake was in the midst of the fall turnover, and the trout were spread out all over the

lake and the water column.

The weather on Saturday didn't help the fishing, with 15 to 25 mph north winds blowing the lake into a froth!

John and I started in Dry Fork right at 7 am and immediately had a double hookup!! This was an indication of our day ahead – 2 nice fat bass! We fished for about 2 hours in Dry Fork and caught 18 more bass before we decided to try somewhere else.

It was not to be our day – we emptied our tackle boxes trying to find something that would catch a trout. For the first time ever fishing these derbies – we came back to the dock empty handed!! No trout for 9 hours of hard fishing! We must have caught 30 bass all the way down to 100 feet deep -- too bad it wasn't a bass derby!! At the weigh in, we found that out of the



GONE FISHING
by
Paul Kneeland



Fish Sniffer publisher Paul Kneeland holds up 4 trout that were caught on the final day of the Shasta Fall Derby on Ex-Cel and Speedy Shiner spoons.

Photo by JOHN BRASSFIELD, Trucksmart.

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Stripers and Sturgeon and Salmon, Oh My!

Last year, I was able to pull off the improbable trifecta of catching all three targeted species in the Rio Vista Bass Derby. Stripers, sturgeon, and salmon all in one weekend.

This year's derby featured inconsistent

fishing. My fishing partner Jason Carlisle and I were only able to land two of the three species. We didn't win any prizes in the derby, but we did come away with some fish stories and photos to last a lifetime.



Jason Carlisle holds up a beautiful 21 pound striper for a quick photo before releasing it. It was a great fish, but well over the derby's 31.5 inch target length.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

On the first of three days of fishing the derby, we started out soaking bait for stripers on the Sacramento River near the town of Collinsville. At daybreak, the incoming tide was starting to trickle upstream, just fast enough to keep the anchored boat straight. Jason cast his rod, and it immediately got slammed by a five pound striper.

Although a five pounder is great eating size, we wanted a fish as close as possible to 31.5 inches, the derby target length. The angler with the striper closest to target without going over wins first prize. So back to the water it went, along with another five pounder Jason caught on his next cast.

We thought we were onto the striper

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WHAT'S HOT
by
Jack Naves

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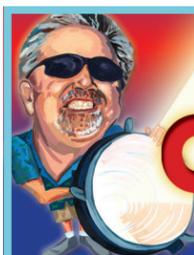
Cal Kellogg - Fished the Middle Fork of the American River for trout on October 26. For casting spinners he used a 6'6" Cousins FSP 652 fiberglass rod. A 7'6" Cousins SSP 750 graphite rod was used for fishing worms and Atlas salmon eggs. Both rods were teamed with Abu Garcia Cardinal SX 30 spinning reels spooled with 8 lb. moss green Trilene. Using these rigs Cal landed and released several wild rainbows and a single German brown.



Paul Kneeland - fished the Fall Shasta Lake Trout & Salmon derby with John Brassfield of Trucksmart in the Fish Sniffer 21' Rogue Jet Coastal. He caught rainbows to 2 1/2 pounds, using a Daiwa DXS 8' light action IM-7 graphite trigger stick rigged with the new Daiwa Lexa 100 Line counter reel loaded with 8 lb test Yozuri Topknot line. They trolled rainbow pattern Speedy Shiners on the surface at 2.5 mph.



Dan Bacher - fished for rainbow trout at Spicer Reservoir. He used a Berkley Ugly Stick GX2 6' 6" medium action spinning rod, teamed up with a Shakespeare GX235 spinning reel filled with 6 lb. test P-Line CX Premium Fluorocarbon Coated Line. He tossed out 1/8 oz. Yakima Bait Rooster Tails in Brown Trout, Fire Tiger and Rainbow color patterns and 1/8 oz. gold and black Panther Martins.



Spotlight on Conservation

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WHAT'S HOT

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Mother Lode, but the bite turned off, and we struggled for the rest of the day. We tried sturgeon fishing for a while, but the jumping sturgeon only taunted us. No bites appeared on any of our rods, no matter how hard we stared.

After switching back to striper fishing, I landed an eight pounder that was 26.5 inches in length. I knew it was too short to win anything, but I kept it for tacos since we didn't have any fish in the box, and we were about to leave anyway.

We were packing up to leave at sunset, and the outgoing tide was just about slack. My rod got hit...and then nothing. I kept an eye on it. A few seconds later it got hit again, and bent down to the water. "Fish on!" I relayed,

and Jason got the net ready.

The fish swam out to the side of the boat, then went straight down, peeling line in the process. I muscled it up, but it kept making runs any time I made progress. I kept saying, "Taking line, taking line" to let Jason know the seriousness of the situation.

"It towed us sideways" Jason remarked. I looked and noticed that in the waning tide, the fish had pulled the anchored boat in a semi-circle from our original position. My heart was racing. Was this the derby winning fish?

After about a five minute battle, the hook pulled free, and I was left to wonder about the one that got away. After a bitter ending to the day, we planned to change gears and fish for salmon

on the following morning.

To say that we had a non-stellar day of salmon fishing on the second day of the derby would be an understatement. The result of trolling in the Sacramento Area all day? One four pound salmon landed by Jason. Despite another slow day of fishing, the beauty of the Rio Vista Bass Derby is that it gives you three days to fish. There's always a chance for some last-minute glory.

On the third and final day of fishing, Jason and I decided to go back to the Collinsville area to hopefully redeem ourselves by striper fishing. I do a lot of game planning around the tides before any trip to the delta.

The previous trip had shown me that the fish were on a really tide-dependent bite. The hour before and after the slack tide was the only time we had any success hooking keepers. Therefore, I knew that we really had to make the morning tide change count.

We started soaking bait, and right away we had stripers coming to the boat. Jason's rod was on fire once again, and he released three striped bass on consecutive casts. On his next cast, the same rod pegged down to the water, and he had his fourth striper of the morning hooked up.

This fish ran out to

the starboard side of the boat, so I cleared my rods and grabbed the net. After making some nice runs, Jason eased the fish to the surface and we got a glimpse of it through the murky waters.

"Nice one" I said, and we both started thinking it could be the golden 31.5 inch for the derby. After the fish made one last blistering run, I was finally able to net it. Once we had the fish in the boat, we got some perspective on the size.

"Upper teens" I remarked, thinking the fish could be 17, 18, 19 pounds or more. The tape measure read 36 inches to the fork in the tail, and 37.5 inches to the tip of the tail. Too big for the derby target length, but a trophy fish none the less.

I didn't want to weigh the fish suspended by the lower jaw, since this is not supposed to be good for their survival. Instead, we used a length to weight chart we found on the web. It said the average weight for a 37 inch striper is 20.7 pounds, so we estimated its weight at 21 pounds.

After some quick photos, we revived and released the large



Fish Sniffer field editor Jack Naves reported inconsistent action during the 2017 Rio Vista Bass Derby, but that didn't stop him and his partner Jason Carlisle from landing several stripers up to 21 pounds.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

Repeat Winner In Rio Vista Bass Derby

Andy Doudna of Oakley won first place in the adult striped bass division of the Rio Vista Bass Derby for the second year in a row, winning \$1500.

He landed a 31.46-inch striped bass, just under the 31.5-inch target length chosen for the derby. He was bait fishing when he hooked the fish at the tournament running from October 13-15.

Teresa Lewis of Lodi came in second at 31.19 inches. Mike Parker of Antioch placed third with 31.18 inches.

According to Barry Canevaro of Fish Hooker Sportfishing the action was "pretty good," in spite of windy weather.

The target sturgeon length was 55 inches. Curtis Jones of Stockton won first place in the sturgeon competition, winning \$500 for catching a fish measuring 53.81 inches. He used ghost shrimp off Decker Island.

Brad Jones of Stockton placed second with 53.81 inches, while Hugh Marchand of Lodi finished third with 51.65 inches.

Max Jeffries of Meadow Vista took first place in the salmon division with a 28 lb. king. Mark Cole of Rio Vista placed second with 23.8 lbs. and Curtis Jones of Stockton placed third with 22.2 lbs.

Eleven-year-old Chase Hand won the striper division of the Kids Derby by landing a fish exactly the target length, 24 inches.

healthy fish. The rest of the fish we landed that day were all in the four to eight pound range. After catching nine keepers, we got off the water at noon with four in the box, but no fish to enter into the derby.

Although Jason and I didn't come away with any derby victories, the experience of chasing three species of large gamefish in the California Delta was rewarding in its own right. The 'one that got away' story will keep me busy until next year's derby.

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