

The tournament winners and losers...

The Yankee Homecoming Fishing Tournament was held Wednesday the 21st through Friday the 24th. We had some really nice stripers caught but (alas) only 17 registered for the tournament. After paying for the t-shirts, Yankee Homecoming made all of \$67 profit to go towards the fireworks fund. I learned a few lessons: (1) Next time, run it on a weekend. (2) Do a sun dance before the tournament to inspire better weather. (3) Don't rely on the bait and tackle stores to "talk it up." The word needs to get out, independently, to the marinas etc.

Let's give a loud "hoorah" to the winners. Mike Whitmyer was the grand prizewinner – he won some cash, a free charter, and a televised fishing trip with Charlie Moore. Mike caught his 35.5 lb. monster just outside the mouth of the river using chunk herring. Pat Mitchell had a 30.9 lb. striper, winning a free charter and some cash. Finally, Bill Lee caught a 25 lb. striper off of a dock using live eels as bait.

The striped bass season is very much in force now. Martha Moulton of Surfland said "lots and lots of small fish." Martha said you could have some fun with the schoolies fishing Storm Shad lures or lead-headed jigs. Bigger fish, she said, were caught trolling tubes and worms, live-lining mackerel, or by fishing live eels at night. Martha reported small bluefish on Joppa Flats, the oceanfront, or in P.I. Sound. Did you hear about the carp caught on Joppa Flats? What a wacky season!

Rene Vigneault of Bridge Bait and Tackle in Salisbury said the striper fishing was still "excellent" upriver, downriver, and at Joppa. Rene has weighed in a few big ones – in the 20s. Rene said that the biggest stripers were at the mouth of the river; he mentioned, in passing that bluefish were out a Breaking Rocks.

Let's welcome Tim Roland-Anderson of Tim's Bait and Tackle in Salisbury to the column! Tim told me about many school stripers with a few large bass in-between. He said that the mackerel were being chased by hungry bluefish, but were still around. Flounder, he said, were being caught once in a while in the surf. For stripers, Tim suggested fishing clams or herring in the surf and mackerel at the river mouth for the big ones.

And the big pollock are beginning their summer run offshore...

Ryan Charos of Captain's Parties said "lots of haddock and some large pollock." Both bait and jigs are working now, yielding pollock in the teens and cod in the 20-25 lb. range. Yeah, there are a few dogfish, but it's not too bad. The striper boat has been hitting the school stripers with an occasional keeper and the half-day boat is seeing the beginning of a bluefish run. Please call 1-800-427-1333 for reservations.

Captain Rick LaPierre wrote of his trip on the 22nd: "Continued success on the haddock over the last couple of days. Yesterday there was also a large number of big pollock caught, but today was almost straight haddock, and a lot of them. The cod have been few and far between for the last few days, maybe a result of the herring boats dragging all of the bait from the ledge." You may call 1-888-234-3531 for Yellow Bird reservations.

As always, I thank Kay and Martha Moulton, Rene Vigneault, Tim Roland-Anderson, and the local sport-fishing captains for their forecasts and news. If you have your own stories, please call me, John Altson, at 978-499-9972 with your news, recipes, and stories. Better yet; send them by e-mail to jaltson@comcast.net. I'd love to hear from you. This column is available, along with other good fishing reports, on www.surfcaster.com.

Have a great weekend!