



Fish Tales Newsletter

Sheboygan Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
 PO Box 982, Sheboygan, WI 53082
 920-452-9660

SAGLSF Newsletter June 2003

Lake Michigan Salmon Fishing Best in Decades Wisconsin DNR creel surveys confirm anglers reports

Lake Michigan creel surveys confirm what charter boat captains and sport anglers reported last summer: trout and salmon fishing on the big pond was the best in nearly twenty years!

“The 2002 trout and salmon fishery was absolutely phenomenal—the catch rate for the overall salmon fishery was about 18 fish for every 100 hours of fishing, and that’s the best catch rate over the entire 18 years of data,” says John Kubisiak, Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan fisheries biologist.

“We had a strong near-shore brown trout fishery up and down the lakeshore in April and early May. The wind blew for the last three weeks of May, and when it calmed down, the coho and chinook fishery just took off.”

Kubisiak recently completed compiling and analyzing data from a year’s worth of surveys of anglers fishing Lake Michigan. DNR creel clerks survey anglers at Lake Michigan boat landings, piers and tributary streams to learn how many fish they caught, the size, and the time they devoted to their pursuit.

These trout and salmon statistics tell the tale:

▲ Anglers caught 527,027 fish of all species of trout and salmon, up from 378,798 in 2001. That placed 2002’s catch among the top four in Lake Michigan since 1986.

▲ The overall catch rate for trout and salmon, 17.9 fish, was the highest in more than 18 years; the next highest was 16, with catch rates of nine to 10 more common during slow years.

▲ Charter boat captains averaged 10.5 fish per trip, up from eight during 2001.

▲ Chinook and coho fishing fueled the frenzy: anglers caught 275,454 chinook, the highest total since 1987, and reeled in 102,313 coho, up from 47,474 during 2001.

▲ The chinook harvests during 2001 (191,378) and 2002 (275,454) were the highest since 1987. The coho harvest of 102,313 was also right up there with the better years. Anglers who fish from piers or the shores also benefited from the abundant salmon, with the highest harvests since 1995 for pier and 1988 for shore anglers.

“At times, it was as if the fish were biting no matter what the anglers were doing,” Kubisiak says. Typically, anglers target coho in late spring and early summer, and then the Chinook fishing really gets

going in July, after a good thermal structure sets up and the fish start to follow a pattern.

“In June 2002, the creel clerks would come in with reports of boats fishing everywhere from 40 to 250 ft. of water, using every lure color and variety imaginable, from the surface to 80 feet down, at every port on the lake—and they were all catching Chinook and coho,” he says. “The fish were scattered, but the anglers were still catching good numbers. Once the thermocline was established, it just got better.”

Steelhead and lake trout fisheries were in line with the last few years—the catches were average or a little below normal, which Kubisiak thinks reflects the good salmon fishing rather than a lack of steelhead or lake trout.

Nearshore catches increased in 2001 and 2002, encouraging after a decade of decline in those fisheries. The stream fishery was dominated by an extremely abundant Chinook run; low water flows, which tend to make the Chinook easier to target, aided anglers’ success. The stream harvest of Chinook was the highest of the 18 year period, and is reflected in the high catch rate in the table below.

Number of fish caught per 100 hours of fishing

	Ramp	Pier	Shore	Stream
Coho	6.4	2.3	2.6	4.5
Chinook	15.9	4.5	10.5	30.6
Rainbow	4.5	2.1	1.6	5.3
Brown trout	4.3	5.1	8.9	2.5
Lake trout	3.7	2.9	3.7	n/a
Total	34.8	16.9	27.3	42.9

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President's Note



First I'd like to say that last year was one of the best years of fishing we ever had. I'm told that the early morning bite was the best and one of the hottest combos had to be a red #00 dodger with about a nine inch lead running a green or glow in the dark spoon.

I'm happy to say we had a nice increase in membership this past year too. All that attended our banquet in February had a great time; I hope more members take advantage of attending next year. Our summer outings were well attended, and we did win back the traveling trophy from the Ozaukee Club! Jim Schlegel and Donnie Baumann's idea to have a Swap Meet turned out very well. We will work on improving it for next year.

I hope to see you all on the lake this year. Brian Hoffmann plans to pick a nice day, he will let us all know ahead of time what day, and then fly over and take pictures of our boats. He would like me to fly with him to take pictures, but I'm not much on flying. Do we have any other photographers out there who would like to do that?

Finally, at our May generally membership meeting, the club once again voted to remain neutral on any issues concerning commercial fishermen.

Lyle E. Peschke (President)

DNR Skills Workshop Offered to Students

Our club membership voted and approved to send two students to the 2003 annual DNR Skills Workshop at a cost of \$510. Every year we sponsor students with an interest in pursuing careers in natural resources. Club members Brian Hoffman and Elaine Wunsch organize and interview area students. If you know of any high school students who might be interested in this outdoor workshop opportunity, you are encouraged to contact the club for an application. Each year the students provide us with an update of their summer experiences.

SAGLSF Donates Mounted Fish

The SAGLSF donated a mounted Rainbow Trout to be displayed at the Harbor Center Marina for use in tourism promotion. The club received the fish from member Richard Schulz to be used for that purpose. The mounted fish and plaque were presented to Christian Marx at the Marina (see photo).



Picture from left to right, marina manager Chris Marx, club president Lyle Peschke, member Richard Schulz, member Bob Dumovich, and club vice president Jim Schlegel.

Donation to Sheriff Department Boat

Our club made a donation of \$689 to be used for the purchase of installing a radar unit on the Sheriff Department boat. Now the area Coast Guard and sheriff's boat are equipped with radar for any search and rescue needs. Our club received a thank you letter for the donation.

Board of Directors

The following are the 2003 Board of Directors and contact numbers

President

Lyle Peschke
920-452-9660
LEPeschke@aol.com

Alternate Secretary

Ken Mueller
920-457-3824
kmwildcat@bytehead.com

Board Member

Russ Kleinert

Vice President

James Schlegel
920-918-2628
schled@nconnect.net

Membership Secretary

(sharing position)
Jeff & Grace Brown
920-458-4406
thewharf@excel.net

Newsletter

Dave Dortman
920-207-1648
ddortman@yahoo.com

Treasurer

Larry Freitag
920-458-4117
lfreitag@excel.net

Board Member

Don Baumann
920-457-4995

Secretary

Jennifer Cihak
920-452-9660

Board Member

Scott Wunsch
920-457-7358
fishhead@excel.net

Sheboygan Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen

PO Box 982
Sheboygan, WI 53082
920-452-9660

Board of Directors Meetings

Our monthly B.O.D. meetings are always held the second Tuesday of the month at the Sheboygan Outboard Club. Members are always welcome and encouraged to attend. If interested in joining the board or sponsoring one of the many activities, please contact a current board member. Requirements for joining the boards are club membership for at least one year and a genuine desire to protect this resource for future generations. Sign up now and participate.

Treasures Report

Our books are always open for inspection at the monthly meetings for all club member to review. Larry Freitag, our treasurer, announces our clubs balances at each monthly meeting.

Children Under 13 Must Wear Life Jacket

The United States Coast Guard's Life Jacket Rule went into effect December 23, 2002. In support of the ongoing efforts of the states and Coast Guard to improve boating safety, the Coast Guard is requiring that all children under 13 years of age wear Coast Guard approved life jackets, while aboard recreational vessels underway, except when the children are below decks or in an enclosed cabin.

Penalties for a boat operator who fails to have all children under the age of 13 wear a life jacket are similar to those for failing to have life jackets on board. Penalties may be assessed up to a maximum of \$1,100 for each violation.

For more information, visit the U.S. Coast Guard Boating Safety website at www.uscgboating.org

SAGLSF Fisherman's Swap Meet

The first annual SAGLSF Swap Meet was held on Saturday, March 29th, at South High School. It was a huge success! Club member Don Bauman organized the event and collected raffle prizes. The South High cafeteria was packed with people as soon as the doors opened and all available tables were rented. Most of the merchandise displays were happy with the turnout and also happy with the sales. Raffle Prizes were donated by Dick Scheffelbein, 1/2 day walleye trip; Sea Dog Charters, evening fishing charter; Wharf, rod and reel. John Vertaic of American Family Insurance donated an ad in the *Sheboygan Press*. After expenses our club benefited almost \$1400 to be used for conservation projects.

Congratulations Jim Schlegel

Area charter captain James Schlegel (long-time member and Vice President of SAGLSF) of Sea Dog Sportfishing Charters set a state record for the number of guided trips per season. According to the 2002 DNR charter harvest report, club member Schlegel personally guided 242 trips for the year, a new all time high. Captain Dan Fox of Port Washington held the previous record with 236 trips back in

1997. Sheboygan charter bookings were up 8 percent and their catch was up a whopping 38 percent from the prior season.

Membership Dues

Annual club membership dues are due in May. Larry Freitag, club treasurer, has sent out renewal forms in the mail to all current members. Please turn in your dues on time so Larry can keep the club

records up-to-date. There is also a membership form enclosed in this newsletter, pass it along to anyone interested in our fishery.

Lake Michigan Forecast for 2003

John Kubisiak, Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan fisheries biologist, and Bill Horns, DNR's Great Lakes specialist, are cautious about predicting what 2003 will bring. For starters, the fantastic chinook fishing during the last two years was fueled mainly by the extremely good survival and growth of the 1999-year class. Most of those fish have finished their life cycle, and the fish stocked in subsequent years have produced only average-sized year classes. Those year classes will provide the fishery for 2003, and while catches of chinook should still be good for 2003, Kubisiak says, "we won't see the phenomenal catches of 2001 and 2002."

"During any year, the success of the fishery depends on factors, including the amount of natural reproduction by salmon and the availability of alewife, the main prey for chinook, that are subject to the whims of nature," Horns says.

"We're very happy about the quality

of fishing in recent years, especially in 2002, but we realize that it is not totally within our control."

One reason Horns believes the chinook fishing has been so strong in recent years is that Wisconsin and the other Great Lakes states took steps to assure a sustained supply of alewives. They reduced stocking of chinook by 27 percent, from 6 million to 4.4 million fish in 1999.

"Even with that action, we're still trying to monitor the alewife population and are continuing to review the question of how many predator fish, especially chinook, can be sustained by the available

#1 Dipsy Diver Depth Chart

The amount of line needed to reach a desired depth is shown under each base plate setting.

Left side of box shows depth without "O" Ring.

Right side of box shows depth with "O" Ring.

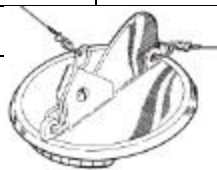
Base Plate Setting

Desired Depth	Base Plate Setting			
	0	1	2	3
10	16/14	20/17	24/20	30/24
15	21/18	25/22	30/25	35/28
20	31/27	35/30	41/34	50/40
25	39/34	46/40	55/46	67/53
30	50/43	58/50	69/57	84/67
35	63/55	73/63	88/73	106/85
40	74/64	88/76	105/87	129/103
45	89/77	104/90	144/102	150/120
50	106/92	123/107	147/122	178/142
60	138/120	168/140		
70	175/150			

Amount of "line out," in feet, in order to reach desired trolling depth.

Depth chart readings based on troll speed of 2.5 to 3.0 MPH using 20-lb. mono. Trolling depth achieved will increase or decrease by 10% for each one MPH faster or slower. Line diameter and lure or attractor drag can also affect depth reached. The Dipsy Diver will reach greater depths when used with wire line or line that has a smaller diameter, such as "Spider Wire", "Fire Line", etc.

Source: eFishingBooks.com



SAGLSF CALENDAR 2003

The club is involved in a number of activities this year. The following is a list of events and the club volunteer members who are responsible. Mark your calendars now and plan to participate.

Sheboygan's Big Fish Board 2003

January 1, 2003, to December 31, 2003

Jim Schlegel

Register at the Wharf

Club Fishing Contest

May 26, 2003, to September 1, 2003

Ed Kalmerton

Sign up board at The Wharf

Coho Derby

August 9 & 10

Sponsored by the Wharf

Big Brothers Outing

July 12, 2003

John Vertacic

Volunteers with boats will be needed, sign up at the Wharf. Held at the Outboard Club, lunch provided. Sponsored by Martin Pontiac.

Ozaukee / Sheboygan Inter-Club Fishing Contest

July 13, 2003

Port Washington

Chairman Needed!

Powder Puff Derby

July 16, 2003

Sponsored by the Wharf

Family Contest

July 19, 2003

Paul Voss and Jim Gruber

SAGLSF Swap Meet

March 27, 2004

Don Bauman

forage fish population," Horns says. "That continues to be the central fisheries management question on Lake Michigan."

The other key question involving fishing prospects on Lake Michigan revolves around the ability of the state hatchery system to continue stocking Lake Michigan at current levels. Lake Michigan's trout and salmon fishery is sustained largely by stocking because natural reproduction is limited.

Wild Rose State Fish Hatchery, the century-old facility that produces more than one quarter of the trout and salmon stocked in Lake Michigan, is aging and its failing water systems and outdated facilities are struggling to keep pace with current production demands. The failure last year of an artesian well that supplied the hatchery required chinook production to be shifted to other state hatcheries. The Natural Resources Board has approved a feasibility plan that calls for a \$22.5 million renovation of the facility, one of the state's most cost efficient

because of its central location and ample groundwater supply.

Kubisiak's creel survey charts are available online, on the DNR's Lake Michigan fisheries page. Go to www.fishingwisconsin.org, then scroll down the left-hand side to the heading "Fisheries Program," and then go to "Lake Michigan" and look under "Management Reports."

Annual Club Awards Banquet

This year's awards banquet was held February 8, 2003, at Klemmes Wagon Wheel, located in Howards Grove. It was attended by about 60 guests. This year's Grand Prize Winner was Larry Freitag, who went home with a brand new hand held GPS. We had a number of donated door prizes and all those who attended received a prize. Congratulations to all of this years contest winners and long-time members.



Larry Freitag's 1st place at banquet



All members receiving awards at banquet

Coho Derby Rebirth August 9th and 10th

The fishing community collectively held its breath when the Rotary Club decided to drop its annual sponsorship of the Sheboygan Coho Derby. What would become of our beloved fishing tournament? True, we no longer had a Super Tournament; the prizes seemed to dwindle each year and generally the event looked more like Lakefest than a fishing competition. But still, the Sheboygan Coho Derby is an institution, a tradition that just couldn't be put out to sea.

Well, thankfully, we didn't have to wonder long. In short order, Jeff and Grace Brown of the Wharf announced that not only would the Coho Derby not pull up its lines for the last time but the derby would also be restored to its former glory.

Rallying the Riverfront Merchants behind the cause, the Wharf will be bringing back some familiar items, like the Super Derby and returning the event to its rightful month, August, as well as introducing a few new twists, like a location change from the lake-front to the riverfront. And perhaps the biggest news of all—already churning the rumor mills in ports all across the Great Lakes—this year's tournament will feature over \$16,000 in prizes.

The regular tournament is being run more-or-less the same, except there will be no pier or junior division and everyone on a boat competing in the derby must have a ticket. People can, of course, fish the pier and juniors are more than welcome to participate, but everyone will compete in the same regular tournament. What does the prize structure look like? Well, take a gander at these numbers:

Regular Tournament Tickets \$20 Grand Prize \$2500

Randomly selected from the first place winners in each of the 5 categories: King Salmon, Coho Salmon, Brown Trout, Lake Trout, Steelheads.

In each category, prizes awarded as follows:

- 1st Place \$1,000**
- 2nd Place \$500**
- 3rd Place ½ Day Charter**
- 4th Place \$200**
- 5th Place \$100**

(courtesy of Sea Dog, High Voltage, HiTech, Dead Reckon, Time Out)

The other big addition this year, besides location and date change, is the re-introduction of the Super Tournament. But, hold on to your downrigger balls, this isn't the same old "only a charter boat has a chance in @\$#!* of winning the thing" fishing event. The new and improved Super Tournament has a few built in twists that make entering a whole lot more attractive to medium and even smaller sized boats. Specifically—

This is a 2-day Super Tournament, fished from 5AM till 1PM each day, that will combine both days' catches to obtain a total weight for each registered boat. So far, sounds typical, right? Well, this is also now a 3-man tournament. In other words, 9 lines / baits, 5 fish per person per day. And, here's the fun starts, even though you can catch

a three man limit, you can only register a maximum of 10 fish per boat per day, only 4 of which may be lake trout. Again, you can only register 10 fish per day per boat, and only 4 of them can be Lakers! How's that for kicking it up a notch?

Derby officials will inspect all boats registered for the Super Tournament each morning prior to fishing. No unregistered fish may be on board the boat. Boats must be inspected at the Wharf dock. All hatches and coolers must be opened at the time of inspection and participants must show a valid Wisconsin Fishing License with GL trout stamp and derby tickets for each person on board when requested by derby officials. Participants are encouraged to have their boat inspected as soon as possible to avoid delays.

Inspections will start at 4:30 AM both days. When registering fish you must register by boat at the Wharf.

There will be a captains meeting Friday, August 8, at 6 PM. At least one member from each team must attend; there will be a 10-pound weight deduction for any team without someone attending. And if that isn't enough incentive, each boat can pick up their "Surprise Package" at this meeting. And, oh yes, the purse for the Super Tournament is also pretty attractive:

Super Tournament Tickets \$100

- 1st Place \$3,000**
- 2nd Place \$1,000**
- 3rd Place \$750**
- 4th Place* \$500**

*Drawn from remaining boats registering fish

Stop by the Wharf, or call them at 920-458-4406, for more details. Brochures for the derby will be available in June.

Water Temperature Preferences of Salmon and Trout

	Peek Feeding Temperature	Active Temperature
Coho Salmon	54°	52°-58°
Chinook Salmon	54°	52°-58°
Lake Trout	50°	44°-55°
Rainbow Trout	58°	50°-68°
Brown Trout	60°	50°-70°

Coho – prefer 50°-55° degrees in upper water

Chinook – prefer the same temperature range as Coho, but in deeper water

Lake Trout – tend to be deeper, if not right on the bottom because of the cooler temperatures they prefer

Rainbows and Browns – high 50°s, generally near the surface. *Source: eFishingBooks.com*



John Vertacic presents awards at the Big Brothers & Sisters Outing

Fish'en Fly Over

As many of you know, the club has been batting around ideas to have more "fun"—an awfully tall order when you consider we measure everything against fishing. But, long-time member Brian Hoffman may have actually come up with a way, well, after you limit out that is. At the May meeting Brian offered to do a "fly over" on a nice day of fishing to take pictures of club member's boats, in action, on the water.

For those of you who don't know, besides being a retired schoolteacher, local politician, long-time SAGLSF member, charter boat captain and all around good guy, Brian Hoffman is also an avid pilot. As such, he has generously offered to pick a day this summer, when the winds are calm and the sky is blue, and have any club member who wishes motor out to a pre-determined location past the low-fly zone on Lake Michigan, set out their gear and have and have Brian "buzz" them at approximately 500 feet while snapping pictures. Unbelievable! And going even one step further with his generosity, Brian will give one copy of each boat photographed to the captain of that boat and also donate another for the club photo album. Remarkable, many thanks, Brain.

Non-members can have a picture of their boat taken for \$30. Or, if you take a look at the membership form included in this newsletter, you'll notice that an individual membership is only \$20 or \$30 for the entire family. So if you join, you can get a complementary picture of your boat as well as a year's membership in SAGLSF. What a deal!

Details are still being worked out, so make certain you head over to the Wharf to sign up and find out how everything will be coordinated.

Club Elections

Club elections were held at the monthly May general membership meeting. Re-elected and holding the same positions are: Lyle Peschke, President; James Schlegel, Vice President; Larry Freitag, Treasurer; Don Baumann, Board Member; and Russ Kleinert, Board Member. Jennifer Cihak was re-elected to the board and also elected as Secretary, congratulations. Also please welcome a few new and a few returning faces to the 2003 SAGLSF Board: Ken Mueller, Board Member and Alternate Secretary; Scott Wunsch, Board Member; and

finally, Jeff and Grace Brown will be sharing a position as Membership Secretary. **Congratulations to all!**

See page 2 of the newsletter for a complete listing as well as contact information.

Riverfront Parking Update

Our club has met with city officials numerous times this year to address a variety of issues that have a negative impact on the boating and fishing community along the boardwalk. At our last meeting May 20, 2003, it was decided to remove the 2-hour restricted parking stalls located next to the visitor both. This will free up additional parking for boat owners in that area. The city, however, would still not allow boaters to park overnight, or allow parking in restricted stalls even when shops are closed for business. Our club is pursuing changes by an ordinance change through local aldermen. We will keep everyone updated with the progress.

No July & August Meetings

As a reminder, there will be no monthly meeting during the months of July and August. The board will continue to meet every second Tuesday of the month. **Have a great summer fishing.**

Free Boat Safety Checks

The safety checks, conducted by the Coast Guard Auxiliary Members, include navigation lights, horn, fire extinguisher, flotation devices, visual distress signals, proper ventilation and whether the boat carried copies of state and federal navigation rules. Members also advise boaters of current safety rules, such as a new requirement that all passengers under 13 wear a flotation device while the boat is in motion.

The auxiliary volunteers conduct monthly safety checks in the spring and summer months at the lakefront, but also make "house calls." Call the Coast Guard at (920) 452-0346 for information.

FOR SALE

➤ 4 Cannon manual downriggers with swivel bases and telescoping booms. \$75 each. Call 920-918-2628

➤ 3 Okuma line counter reels. \$20 each. Call 920-918-2628



Ed Kalmerton giving out trophies for juniors

SAGLSF MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Sheboygan Area Great Lakes Sport Fishermen
P.O. Box 982
Sheboygan, WI 53082



Annual Dues

- Family - (husband, wife, two or more children)----- \$30.00
- Husband & Wife----- \$25.00
- Individual----- \$20.00
- 65 or Older (Individual or Husband & Wife)----- \$15.00
- Junior----- \$5.00
- New Member (Initiation Fee)----- \$5.00

Member Name _____ Spouse's Name _____

Family's Name _____ Family's Name _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Occupation _____ Radio FM/CB _____ Call Letters _____

Boat Name _____ E-mail _____

Unless otherwise noted, the SAGLSF general membership meetings are always held the third Tuesday of the month starting at 7:00 PM at the Sheboygan Outboard Club. Meetings are every month of the year except the months of July and August. The public and guests are always welcome and encouraged to attend these meetings. The board of directors meets every second Tuesday of the month all year round at the same time and location. Any member of the SAGLSF is welcome to attend a board meeting. Any comments and concerns are welcome. For the latest newsletter and membership information, send a self addressed letter to the address above.

Our clubs purpose is as follows:

- 1.) To unite individuals interested in sport fishing in the Great Lakes.
- 2.) To promote educational programs in sport fishing and water safety.
- 3.) To exchange fishing information.
- 4.) To advance the quality of Great Lakes fishing and to assure pure fishing water, specifically in the Sheboygan area.

Join Today! Call 920-452-9660

Fish Tales Newsletter

CONTAINS DATED MATERIAL



**PO Box 982
Sheboygan, WI 53082**

**ADDRESS
CORRECTION
REQUESTED**