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Killer Queen

Salmon fishing, Canadian style, like Gramma used to make.

August 19, 2008

Let's play a game. I have a time machine. You may only go back for one week, and you may only use it one time. Where and when do you go?

Do you appear at the NYSE on October 1st, 1983 with a thousand dollars and buy Microsoft stock when it first appears - worth \$12 million today? Do you go to the Skagit around April 15, 1945, with a handful of BC Steel spoons and hook more giant native steelhead than the imagination can stretch? How about the day before you met your wife...and run like hell the other way...just kidding. How about Westport, circa 1955, using only 6" trolling spoons and wooden plugs and hooking more Chinook and coho than you can count or physically play in three days?

Well, kids, you won't need the time machine, at least for the salmon fishing. All you need is a plane ticket to the west side of Queen Charlotte Island, Kano Inlet and a spot on Oak Bay Marine Group's Salmon Seeker.

NW Wild Country host Joel Shangle and myself left Tommy "I'd Rather Someone Pulled Out All My Butt Hairs Out One At A Time With Needle Nose Pliers Rather Than Fly Fish" Nelson alone at the mic while we went north to chase salmon. Sure, we expected to hook a few fish, but never in our wildest skewered thoughts did we anticipate anything like this.

We choppered in, a low cloud cover kept the planes on the ground. Chopper lands, bags are stowed, asses are thrown into Boston Whaler, lucky us, with guide Clay Johnston.

Pimp. You will be able to read more about this trip in detail here on Fish Frontiers soon, along with a complete recap on NW Wild Country Saturday morning, KJR 950, 6 to 8 am.

I will say this: the summer of amazing fishing reached a zenith as Joel and I literally stepped back in time for king salmon angling that only Grampa can relate to. Say this with me: one...hundred...KINGS!!!! Two hundred coho. My God. Doubles on kings, never any beasts but more than too many between 18 and 25 pounds. Most on artificial lures - 6-inch trolling spoons and 5 and 6-inch Tomic plugs - color not important, they ate everything. No glow, no UV, no scent, just put down and put it in gear...WHAM.

I am sore in every point of body, from fingertip to toes.

I could tell stories forever, but here is one to give you all some idea of what Joel and I were subject to.

Saturday afternoon. The ocean is a bit choppy, but still nice. We are on salmon number, oh, 50 on the day. Joel releases a 25-pound king. Lets out 30 feet of line, attaches to the clip, begins to put it down. Immediately, line is torn off the clip before he put the rod in the holder. Another 20-pound king hands Joel his already ragged ass. Released, back in the clip, sent down, again instant strike and king on. Joel yells, "Son of a b\$##@, all I want to do is sit down for TEN SECONDS!!! For God's sake, I haven't stood up straight for twenty minutes! I've been bent over this downrigger for eternity!! I'm gonna piss my pants!! I'm hungry!! Make it stop!!"

Bill laughs. Also hooks fish. Like tuna fishermen on comission. Its Groundhog Day, care of Queen Charlotte's finest. Honest to Allah, I have never salmon fishing like this. Ever.

OK, leave me alone. I'm soaking my hands in hydrogen peroxide. Bowling league starts in two weeks. I must rest.

Metal To The End,
BH



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