

HVL fishing derby offers anglers fun and support for fishery

Contributed by Jim Serventi
Sunday, 22 June 2008

HIDDEN VALLEY LAKE – It would be easy to report that “The Fish” won this year’s Hidden Valley Lake Association Fishing Derby: Only 24 fish were caught compared to 65 last year.

However, at 6 a.m. Saturday, 42 anglers signed up at the marina to take the opportunity to compete for some great fishing prizes, and to contribute to the HVL Lake Committee's continued effort to improve and increase the fishery in Hidden Valley Lake.

In spite of some initial wind, they eventually enjoyed what turned out to be a beautiful day on our Hidden Valley Lake.

Winner of the prize for the Senior Division’s Heaviest Fish with a 2.54-pound Bass was 19-year-old Chris Gracheff, who also caught a second 1.81-pound bass.

The Junior Division winner, with a 1.80-pound bass, was 12-year-old Jesse Armstrong.

Chris won the 50-50 cash pool prize of \$70, and Jesse won a rod, reel, and complete tackle pack valued at about \$60.

The Senior Division’s heaviest stringer of bass was caught by 16-year-old Scott Munk. His five fish weighed in at 7.61 pounds.

The Junior Division winner of this category was Jesse Armstrong. Jesse brought in five bass with a total weight of 6.91 pounds. Both won rods, reels, and tackle packs valued at more than \$50.

Justin White, 9, caught the only trout in the Derby. Justin’s 0.33-pound trout won him the Junior Division Trout Stringer prize of a rod, reel, and tackle pack valued at \$50.

Also catching fish were Jim Munk (five bass), Fernando Carneiro (two bass), Brad Michnevich (two bass), Carter Michnevich (one bass) and Brady Michnevich (one bass).

All anglers received complimentary insulated lunch bags from the HVL Community Services Division.

The oldest angler award was a sassy fishing cap, an Arctic Circle jacket and T-shirt. That prize, once again, went to the venerable, 75-year-old Ron Hughes. The youngest angler award went to the very excited Justin Foell, age 6, who won a SolarBee Cap and youth fishing rig.

The Derby Raffle proved to be a source of big winnings for the anglers, and also for the many volunteers and the approximately 30 guests who were in attendance.

There were more than 45 raffle prizes donated by our generous donors. This year’s prizes also included the fishing awards which were not claimed, and Scott Munk’s prize, which he graciously returned to the fundraising pool.

Also this year there were two special raffle fishing trips: One for halibut, provided by professional sports fishing guide, Mike Martin, and one for bass by professional bass fisherman Chuck Michnevich.

Longtime derby participant, young Katreena Galindo, won the Grand Raffle Prize of a Lakeshore Bait and Tackle Cap, an Arctic Circle jacket, rod, reel and complete tackle pack valued at nearly \$200.

The Special Raffle Halibut Trip was won by Duncan Mac Innes. Kyle Triola came away with the Special Bass Trip prize. Each trip is valued at nearly \$300.

Because of an efficient Live-Well set up at the Little Beach weigh-in site, we were able to preserve and release all, but one, of the bass to the Lake.

As in previous years, anglers and guests enjoyed the nearly-all-you-can-eat grilled hot dogs and Vicki’s chili lunch.

Proceeds from these lunches, the raffles, our generous cash donations and the derby entrance fees totaled \$2,531 – within \$100 of last year’s gross revenues.

More than the dollars, however, the derby was for the fun, the happy prize winners and the good sportsmanship.

Even all those lucky fish were happy ... and are still lurking in the lake to test your skills!

Jim Serventi lives in Hidden Valley Lake, and assisted with putting on this year's event.

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