

Fishing Journal

Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

December 2013

**Chinook Seminar
by John Martinis
March 19th
at Bayside Marine
7PM
Free to the Public**

**Everett Steelhead
and Salmon Club
Blackmouth Derby
March 22nd**

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Travel Edition

Cabo! Sun, Fun and Great Fishing

After a great 2013 Puget Sound salmon season, what a better way to close out the year than a trip to the sun and 85 degrees. Warm, sunny, dry weather is always a great get-a-way during the Puget Sound rainy season. Besides the sun, Mexico Baja is still an anglers dream. An angler's dream of the adrenalin rush of the line peeling off a fishing reel with speed and fury and then to crank the line back on to the reel an inch at a time. Fish that heat up the drag and the side plates of any fishing reel. As I write this column at 10,000 feet in the air, I am already contemplating my return. I can still picture Marlin at the end of the fishing line mid-air. I can still picture the many bright yellow and blue Dorado flashing their brilliant colors in the crystal clear water of the Pacific Ocean. This story takes us to Cabo San Lucas the first week in November 2013. Cabo has been a popular fishing destination for Northwest anglers for many years because of its easy access by flights out of Seattle. As soon as you get anywhere near the boarding gates bound for Cabo

out of Seattle you will see anglers with their travel rods and big-game tackle. These saltwater anglers are all dreaming of something big on the other end of the line. Some hope to catch tuna, some want Dorado and others are seeking the thrill of catching their first Marlin. For me, I am happy to catch whatever is in season upon my arrival. It's all fun to me!

When I arrived at the San Jose Del Cabo Airport I was itching to get to a marina at 2pm to see the boats come in with their catch. The first marina I went to was the San Jose Del Cabo Marina. This is a real fisherman's marina with huge covered cleaning station. The cleaning station alone is as big as Bayside Marine. You can only imagine how many fish are cleaned here each day. Upon my arrival, a Skipper approached me and said, "you want to see a big fish senior." I took the bait and followed this guy to the cleaning area. At first I wasn't sure if I was going to get a pitch for a condo sale or a fishing trip. I couldn't believe my eyes when I saw a 305lb Yellow Fin Tuna in a wheelbarrow. That got me pretty excited to go fishing. It was Saturday and my fishing trip was on Tuesday.

The next day I took a cab from San Jose Del Cabo where I was staying to the marina at Cabo San Lucas. It was early afternoon and the charter fleet was coming in. The boats were all flying many of the customary flags that denote the fish that had caught that day. In other words, "Bragging Rights." Most boats caught and released 2-4 Marlin and they all had six or more Dorado onboard. How could I explain to my wife Anne

Just Fishing



New Puget Sound Salmon Seasons 2013

Area 6: July 1-Aug. 15

CHINOOK - min. size 22".

Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release wild CHINOOK, wild COHO, and CHUM.

July 1-Aug. 15 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release CHINOOK, wild COHO, and CHUM.

Aug. 16-Sept. 30 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release CHINOOK, wild COHO, and CHUM.

Oct. 1-Oct. 31 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Only 1 CHINOOK may be retained.

Dec. 1-Apr. 10 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2. Release wild CHINOOK. See Dungeness Bay Fishery and Closure below. Season may close earlier if CHINOOK guideline is attained.

Area 7: July 1-July 31 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Only 1 CHINOOK may be retained. See Southern Rosario Strait/Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca Closure below. See Bellingham Bay

Aug. 1-Sept. 30 CHINOOK -

that our vacation is about to turn into a full-fledged fishing vacation. Could I wait till Tuesday to go fishing? Luckily I waited because a tropical depression rolled through the area for a day accompanied by high winds. I was fishing here once before a couple of days after a hurricane and the fishing was nothing short of incredible. Could history repeat itself?

My fishing day was booked for Tuesday a month in advance. I picked that particular day because it was in the dark of the moon. Tuesday came soon enough. My friends Rick Lapinski and Patrick Hawkin flew in to meet me in Cabo for a day of fishing on Pochos Charter aboard the Bad Market. The Bad Market is a 32' twin engine diesel capable of getting to the fishing grounds well ahead of most of the charter fleet. Needless to say we were excited to get on the water.

Once we were aboard the boat we had to make a stop for fishing licenses and ice. This is where you need some patience because it is organized chaos at the deli where the licenses are sold (should have purchased them online and saved some time). Next stop is to get bait at the entrance of the harbor. Ten baits for \$30. The next time you are purchasing herring for \$5.95/pkg from John's Sporting Goods, please feel that you are getting a bargain. Now we were on our way to the Pacific Ocean.

First on our agenda was to catch Dorado. We traveled forty-five minutes up the Pacific Coast to an area they call the "Light House". The ride to the fishing grounds was interesting because we were only three swells from the beach at any one time. I expected to be going four to five miles offshore to fish. We arrived at the Light House and the ocean was merciless rough and unsettled. I could still stand up but not without a tight grip

onto anything solid. The crew put out three trolling rigs and two baits. We troll for no more than a couple of minutes and a 25lb Dorado crashes one of the trolling rigs. Rick takes the rods while Patrick and I chide him for cutting into our fishing time. These fish are tough and they are fast. The fish flips out of the water, lighting up his brilliant yellow and blue colors. This is what we came here for! The first fish in the boat was in minutes can be either a measure of the sheer quantity of the fish or just a stroke of luck. I was thinking of all the flags on the boats a few days earlier. Is this our day? The next couple of Dorado hit the baits. They turned out only to be bait robbers. Not good when the first fish comes aboard so quickly. Hmmmmm?

We are all baited up again and all the rods are out and working again. A rod blasts off and Partick takes the rod. Another rod goes off, a Dorado double on, pretty cool. A third rod goes off. Rick, Patrick and I all have rod belts on and have Dorado going in three different directions. Pure pandemonium on deck. The skipper and deck hands are speaking Spanish at Mach 5. I wish I knew what they were saying, because there was an extreme level of excitement in the air.

The first Dorado comes aboard, then the second and finally the third Dorado completes the triple header. There was some fist pumping going on aboard the Bad Market.

In less than an hour we boated eight Dorado and only one fish was less than 20lbs. These were quality Dorado. After fast and furious fishing the deckhand asks, "Senor', do you want to catch a Marlin?" "Sure we'll go catch a Marlin." So, we headed offshore in search of a Marlin.

When we got off shore maybe five miles,

Just Fishing



min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Only 1 CHINOOK may be retained. Release wild COHO, and CHUM. See Southern Rosario Strait/ Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca. See Bellingham Bay Closure and Fishery, Samish Bay Closure, Lummi Reservation and Bay Closure, and Yellow and Low Islands Preserve

Oct. 1-Oct. 31 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Only 1 CHINOOK may be retained. Release wild COHO. See Bellingham Bay Closure and Fishery, Samish Bay Closure, Lummi Reservation and Bay Closure, and Yellow and Low Islands Preserve.

Dec. 1-Apr. 30 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release wild Chinok. See Bellingham Bay Closure and Fishery, and Yellow and Low Islands Preserve on

Area 8-1: Aug. 1-Sept. 30 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release CHINOOK.

Oct. 1-Oct. 31 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release CHINOOK.

Oct. 1-Oct. 31 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release CHINOOK.

Area 8-2: Aug. 1-Sept. 30 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release CHINOOK. See Tulalip Terminal Area

boats were hooked up with Marlin on both sides of us. The skipper revs the boat (always a good sign) and the deckhand baits-up a live fish for bait. The skipper wheels the boat around, slows the boat and the deck hand casts the bait to a Marlin that we can see on the surface. No takers here. We repeat this same routine three more times, no takers. Very unusual. Stripe Marlin are usually a cinch to catch when you cast a live bait to them. "Are we going back to the marina without a Marlin today."

Feeling a sense of frustration the Skipper wants to try drifting live bait for Marlin. We put out three live baits for Marlin. A Marlin starts trailing one of the baits but the fish is very wary. The Skippers orders us to reel the baits closer to the boat. Now, three Marlin are trailing our baits. My heart is pounding. Patrick gets a hook-up. The line is peeling off the Shimano TLD 30 two speed. The other two Marlin are still behind the baits. They now break off and disappear while we have to maneuver the boat for Patricks' Marlin. No double or triple header for this round.

This is Patricks' first Marlin and he is enjoying every minute of it. I coach Patrick, "press the line with your thumbs against the foregrip and only pump the rod six inches at a time." Patrick is now putting 20lbs of pressure to the Marlin. Not many fish can sustain 20lbs of pressure for a long period of time. Neither can a human without the help of a fighting chair. For bigger fish (500lbs +) you must be strapped in or the fish will win every time. Stripe Marlin Average 80-125lbs.

Patrick brings the Marlin to the boat; the skipper grabs the 150lb monofilament leader. The fish is not done with us yet. This 100lb plus fish thrashes as the Skippers barely hangs on to the mono

leader. The marlin is no match for the large leader. The Skippers releases the fish and the fish takes off so fast as to say, "fooled you guys."

We go back to trolling while keeping a lookout for Marlin sunning themselves on the surface. Just like the Dorado fishing, everything seemed to happen all at once. We only went a short distance, the Skipper revved the motors up to get alongside a Marlin that he spotted as the deckhand pitched a live bait in front of the Marlin. This was Marlin looking for action as much as we were. We were ready to tear it up and the fish was willing and ready to do the same. The Marlin swung around like a hungry lion pouncing on a small animal. It was game-on and my turn in the fighting chair.

This Marlin was a jumper. This fish was taking line out and jumping in the opposite direction. This fish was launched out of a cannon. With every jump, the fish was lighting up in the most brilliant electric blue colors. By this time the ocean had gotten two stages meaner than it was in the morning.

I was pumping the fishing rod with short fast strokes in order to recover all the line that the Marlin had peeled off of the fishing reel. The spool of line was only half of what it was when this tug of war got started. I had to force myself not to take the long deep strokes on the fishing rod like we do while salmon fishing. That only gives a Marlin a chance to turn its head and to peel more line off of the reel. Peeling more line off the reel was not an option. I already had too much line to recover. Reel short and fast, no resting. Don't let the fish rest for a second. Tired arms, reel more, pinch the line hard against the foregrip. Reel hard when going down an ocean swell. Hold the line extremely tight going up the

Just Fishing



Fishery.

Oct. 1-Oct. 31 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release CHINOOK. See Tulalip Bay Closure.

Nov. 1-Apr. 30 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2(combined). Release wild CHINOOK. See Tulalip Bay Closure. Season may close earlier if CHINOOK guideline is attained.

May 31-Sept. 2 Open Fridays through Noon Mondays ONLY. CLOSED JUNE 15. CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK.

Sept. 7-Sept. 22 Open Saturdays and Sundays only . CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK.

Area 9: July 1-July 15 No min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release CHINOOK and CHUM.

July 16-Aug. 31 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release wild CHINOOK and CHUM. Season may close earlier if CHINOOK guideline is attained. CLOSED south of a line from Foulweather Bluff to Olele Point, except lawful to fish from shore contained within the boundary of Salsbury Point Park; daily limit 2 (combined) plus 2 additional PINK. Release

swell.

The Skipper was now backing down hard on the fish. Water was coming over the transom of the boat and giving me full dunkers. I am completely soaked from top to bottom but I have to keep my focus. Reel hard, 20lbs of pull at all times.

Finally, we get the Marlin on the Port side and close enough to grab the mono leader. The Marlin is lighting up and flashing the coolest colors that only Mother Nature could create. The Skipper estimates the Marlin to be 125lbs. A good size Stripe Marlin.

Rick, Patrick and I do some more fist-pumping. What a great day of fishing: Eight Dorado and two Marlin.

I have fished with Pocho Charters many times over the past ten years. I have always been happy with the Skippers, deckHands and the quality of the tackle including the rods and reels. The fishing trips have always been outstanding. They know where the fish are all the time. Their skippers have won many of the big money tournaments. If you go with Pocho's you are fishing with a first class operation. The first thing that you will notice when you get on one of their boats, it is super clean! The crew speaks good enough English so you don't have to speak what little Spanish that you might know. When they say that the boat is leaving at 6:15AM, be ready because the boat leaves on time every time.

Contact Pocho Charter by email
Pocho Charter web site

If you are planning on fishing on the Baja here are some suggestions. Alaska Air has direct flights. Many of you have airline miles on Alaska, use them for fishing and sun. I prefer staying in San

Jose Del Cabo. San Jose is 20 miles from Cabo San Lucas. You can get their by hotel shuttle or cab. In November Anne and I stayed at the Solaris hotel. The Solaris is an all-inclusive hotel. You pay one price and it covers almost everything. In fact, after an eight night stay, we checked out and owed the motel not a penny more than the original price that we booked online. The service was very good, the room was cleaned daily. The food was very good. If you left hungry from the Solaris, it was only your fault. There was food and beverages available all day and into the evening. Everything at this motel was clean and efficient. It's not the Hilton, but very nice and an exceptional value considering all the food and beverages are included in the price.

Area 9 Closes

November 30

Area 7 Opens December 1

Area 9 closes for salmon November 30, and then reopens January 16.

There is still some good options for salmon fishing, especially with Area 7 opening for salmon.

In Puget Sound: [Jeff Head](#) (Area 10) will remain open until January 31. This is one of the best areas to fish for winter Chinook.

In the North Sound: Areas 8-2 and Area 8-1 remain open until the end of April. I would concentrate my salmon fishing in the [Elger Bay](#) area.

Area 7 (San Juans) should give up some nice teen size Chinook at [Parker Reef](#), [Lopez Flats](#) and [Reef Point](#).

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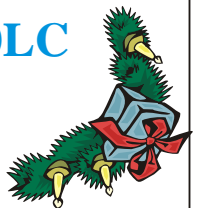
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