Information For The Serious Angler

by John Martinis

February 2014

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#### Fishing Derby's

Everett Steelhead and Salmon Club Blackmouth Derby March 22nd

> Anacortes Salmon Derby March 29-30 Details

Salmon for Soldiers September 13, 2014 Help Needed Contact Dave Davenport 425-870-8478

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Jennings Park Kids Fishing Derby May 2014

Everett Lions Club Derby for the Blind September 2014

This is the time of year to contribute to two great events: 1)The Jennings Park Kids Fishing Derby and 2)The Everett Lions Club Derby for the Blind.

I will match any donation dollar for dollar that you contribute to either event.

The Blind people who are involved in this derby will pull at your heart strings. They are so full of enthusiasm and excitement. Can you only imagine what it is like to be on the water salmon fishing and being blind? Please help. 100% of this money will be given out as cash prizes in either event

Contact John Martinis (425-259-3056) to contribute to either event. Thank you for your help!

#### Puget Sound Chinook Update

The December newsletter addressed fishing new areas and getting out of our comfort zone. I examined Pilot Point and Point No Point. Those of you who followed my advice were richly rewarded from January 16 to the end of the month. I don't want to take the credit for the good fishing; I merely made a good suggestion based on facts of what the Chinook fishing looked like when it closed the last day of November in Area 9. I also rely on all of you to send me pictures, stopping by the store with fishing reports or e-mailing me fishing reports. For that I am very appreciative and I thank you. All the information that is being shared via email and Facebook is helping all of us who enjoy the sport of Chinook fishing. Good luck fishing!

#### Puget Sound February Ideas

I expect the Chinook fishing in Puget Sound to continue to be very good through the month of February. I would not drastically change my fishing tactics too much for the next 30 days. I continue to recommend Pilot Point and Point No Point. However, as time goes on, I think it is time to start looking at Useless Bay. By the end of February, I fully expect the West and East side of Possession Bar to be worth taking a look

As I was writing this column, I received an email from Eric J., who said he really got into the Chinook two days in row at

### Yust Fishina



John's Seminars **Archive Click Here** 

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**New Puget Sound Salmon Seasons** 2013-2014

**New Puget Sound Salmon Seasons** 2013-2014

Area 6:

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:

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...

#### **Area 8-2:**

Nov. 1-Apr. 30 CHINOOK min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily for sharing!

#### Getting out of our comfort zone part two, part one was in the **January Newsletter:**

The West side of Possession Bar was showing signs of life up on top of the bar near the end of January. I did talk to some anglers who got out of their comfort zone and fished as shallow as 60 feet and caught limits of Chinook on the west side of the Bar. Thirty-five years ago, we were all fishing in 60 feet of water on Possession Bar for Chinook. My point is: if 90-120 feet of water is showing no signs of life, take a search on top of the bar and look for signs of baitfish. Most days on the West side of the Bar near the Scatchet Buoy you will find an abundant amount of bait in 60-75 feet of water. Knowing that fact, it is always worth a troll through the located bait while you are trying to locate Chinook. Many of us, including myself, get fixated on trolling in 90-120 feet of water. When we don't locate bait and salmon at those depths we falsely presume that the fishing conditions are not right for that particular day.

The correct trolling speed is 2.5-3.0mph for Chinook while trolling with flashers. Better to be on the side of too fast than too slow.

I recently talked to some anglers who were fishing in the San Juan Islands near Tide Point and Strawberry Island. They were routinely catching limits of Chinook in 60-75 feet of water. This just goes to show that the difference between a good day of fishing and a so-so day of fishing means daring to be different. Look around, it's a hunt; don't assume others know what they are doing. For all you know, they are calling or e-mailing me at the store looking for ideas?

Useless Bay. Eric is one of my most I talked to an angler who recently trusted saltwater reports. Thank you Eric followed my advice and went to Point No Point and tried mooching with herring because he wanted to go back to the most basic way of salmon fishing. Great idea! However, that day it didn't work. He abruptly put on some flashers and spoons and had three Chinook in a matter of minutes. This was the exact same spot he had been fishing for over an hour without a bite. Look at the dynamics of what was going on: there were plenty of salmon, they were on the bite but they were looking for just a little different presentation. It could have been just as easily a day when the fish only wanted herring. This is what makes fishing what it is. Just think of the times when you switch to Coho Killer spoons from Kingfisher spoons or vice versa and it changes your luck in a matter of minutes.

> Let's wrap this up: we addressed two important variables while fishing for Chinook. 1) changing depths while looking for bait and salmon. 2) changing between herring and different size spoons while trying to figure out what will trigger a strike from Chinook.

#### San Juan's Update

Chinook fishing in the San Juan Islands returned to normal fishing towards the last half of January. Previously, the fishing was exceptional with easy limits. Now, the Chinook fishing is more like it normally is where you have to hunt around find to salmon. I am not making a case that the fishing is not very good, because the fishing is still real good. It is just a little bit less than what was.

I believe that Rosario Strait's will provide the best salmon fishing for the next 30 days. I would also highly recommend fishing on the North end of Orcas Island at Parker Reef.



limit 2(combined). Release wild CHINOOK. See Tulalip Bay Closure. Season may close earlier if CHINOOK guideline is attained.

#### Area 9: .

Jan. 16-Apr. 15 CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release wild CHINOOK. Season may close earlier if CHINOOK guideline is attained.

#### Area 10:

Oct. 1-Jan. 31-CHINOOK - min. size 22". Other SALMON species - no min. size. Daily limit 2 (combined). Release wild Chinook.

I really like fishing Thatcher Pass near the end of February. Near the end of February there'll always be the first sign of Fraser River Spring Chinook heading north through Rosario Strait's. Thatcher Pass, Eagle Bluff and Parker Reef are the three best areas to intercept these fish. These fish are like clockwork, you can readily rely on them to show up near the end of February.

Fraser River Chinook traveling through Rosario Strait's in February will average 10-15lbs, with the occasional larger fish. The moment you net one of these salmon, it will be easily recognizable because it will be short, fat and plump. They are a cool looking healthy salmon!

Fraser River Springer's love to bulk up on Needlefish and Candlefish and Rosario Strait's. There are two great imitations that mimic Needlefish and Candlefish: Goldstar Coho Killer Spoons and Goldstar 3.5 Needlefish squid. Coho Killers that I would recommend for this fishery are: White Lightening and Cookies n Cream. 3.5 Needlefish that I would recommend are: NG142R. Before Coho Killer spoons were made, all we fished were the 3.5 needlefish squids.

Any time you catch a Fraser River Chinook in Rosario Strait's, the fish will be gorged with needlefish. Therefore, the above mentioned Needlefish and Spoons provide a good imitation that mimics a salmon's natural food.

Rig your needlefish squids or Coho Killer spoons 42" behind a flasher with 30-40 pound fluorocarbon leader material.

The correct trolling speed is 2.5-3.0mph for Chinook while trolling with flashers. Better to be on the side of too fast than too slow. Be careful not to be trolling backwards when the tide is running hard.

### Tackle Update Update Your Hooks

Coho Killer Spoons use: 9510XXXSS

Mustad 2/0 Hooks

Kingfisher Spoons 3.5 use: 9510XXXS

Mustad 3/0 Hooks

Needlefish 3.5 Squid use: 92553SS

Mustad 3/0 Hooks

Good hooks are the most important thing that you bring fishing with you!

### Lake Sammamish Cutthroat Trout

A recent trip to Lake Sammamish with my friend Les Jacober: We hooked 18 Cutthroat and landed six.

I want to give credit to Jim Brauch who advised me on how and where to fish Lake Sammamish. Expert Advice!

Lake Sammamish Cutthroat Trout have been on my list of fish to catch for many years. For some reason I never got around to it until January of this year. Now, I wished that I had discovered this wonderful winter Cutthroat fishery many years ago. This is almost Washington's version of a Blue Ribbon Cutthroat Lake.

There is easy access to Lake Sammamish via the State Park on the South end of the lake. The State Park has a great boat launch that looks like it has recently been updated. The docks are new looking and the boat launch has a reasonable pitch to it so that you do not have to get into the water launch a boat.

Directions to the Park and Park address: 2000 NW Sammamish State Park, Issaquah, WA 98027. From I-90: Drive east to exit #15, and follow the signs. More Lake Sammamish Information.



#### Fishing Charter Service San Juan's

Angler Choice/Derek Floyd Captain Derek Floyd welcomes you to enjoy your next saltwater fishing trip. From the most seasoned saltwater angler to the first time fisherman Anglers Choice Charters has the skill and pride to make your San Juan Island fishing trip one to remember! 360-637-4354

### Fishing Charter Service Puget Sound AllStar Charter/ Gary Krein

While fishing Seattle area you'll enjoy calm water fishing on Puget Sound with spectacular views of Mount Rainer, Mount Baker, The Cascade Range and the Olympic Mountains. 1-800-214-1595-(425) 252-4188

### Fishing Charter Service Neah Bay Excel Charter/Tom Burlingame

Come up to Neah Bay and take an offseason Bottom fishing trip on the "Cabazon". Catching has been great! Last Sunday we caught 6 limits of Black Rockfish, 10 Greenling, and 2 Cabezon and were back and cleaned up in time to see the second half of the Seahawk game. We also enjoyed seeing several Grey Whales and Bald Eagles. . 360-805-1729 or 360-374-2225

When I first arrived at Lake Sammamish for the first time. I felt that the lake was large and intimidating. Not so! The Cutthroat are fairly well dispersed throughout the lake. These fish move around as you would expect and you can find them in a couple different places. One of the most popular places to fish is near the weather buoy in the center of the lake. You can find this buoy by heading north out of the boat launch, when you reach mid-lake you will see the buoy on your left. This buoy is easy to recognize because it is in the dead center of the lake. You will also recognize this spot because there will be a flock of seagulls near the buoy. These seagulls feed on the very prolific insect hatch that occurs almost daily.

The other place to fish: is ¾ of the way towards the North end of the lake. There is a distinct point on the western side of the lake were the lake takes a turn to the left. I recently fished this area but more towards the Eastern shoreline. You'll notice that the depth of the Lake is fairly uniform.

The depth of the lake will average 64-78 feet almost everywhere you go. I wish I could recommend a particular depth, but the depth really does not vary that much.

Here is the easy part: most days the Cutthroat are feeding near the surface. We trolled with a downrigger set at 5 feet of depth. That's right, the downrigger ball and release are in plain sight just beneath the surface. Because the fish are at such a shallow depth, there is one crucial fishing tip that I will give you that is important: you must let your line out at least 200 feet out behind the boat. The reason you do this is because the boat scares the fish as you are trolling. By the time you troll 200 feet the fish come back into the area they were feeding. Sounds kind of different, but it works. With 200 feet the fishing line out, you have to watch the rod tip very closely. The 8lb line has so much stretch at 200 feet that it can mask a strike or a hook-up.

Another good tip: do not come equipped with a spinning reel. It is difficult to let out 200 feet of line with a spinning reel without getting severe line twist. I used a Lamiglas Kokanee Rod with a small bait cast real loaded with 8 pound test. This outfit was the perfect tool for the job.

There are three different rigs that are effective for Lake Sammamish Cutthroat: 1) 4/0 dodger with a black Goldstar 1.5-2.0 squid 12 inches behind the dodger. Tie the squid leader with a #4 Gamakatsu hook on 8lb fluorocarbon leader material. The current regulation requires one single barbless hook. We put a tinsel skirt inside the squid to give it some flash. We also put two Grubs on the hook (Grubs is PC for Maggot). We purchased the grubs at a pet store. 2) 4/0 dodger with a Luhr Jensen Perch Needlefish spoon 12 inches behind the Tie the spoon on with 8lb fluorocarbon leader material. Make sure you crimp the barb on the hook and put two grubs on the hook. 3) Use a Luhr Jensen Perch Needlefish spoon by itself with two grubs on the hook. You can troll the spoon with a ½ ounce mooching sinker with 6 feet of leader. This is a good alternative to using a downrigger.

The correct speed trolling for Lake Sammamish Cutthroat is between 1.2 and 1.7mph.

### Lobster Boat Sighted in Puget Sound

By George Morris

I think this experience could be called many things, e.g., A New Englander moves to Seattle or trading in your



outriggers for downriggers, or why is the mainland on the starboard side of the boat when the compass is at N, how come it is 9PM and its not dark, etc.

The more important question is why did a medicare card carrying New Englander and his wife Jeanie, leave Cape Cod, a ton of friends, a perfectly good house and boat, and a passion for all things "East of Chatham", and make this move. My roots are deep as I was born and raised in Stamford Connecticut, and owned a home in the Cape for over 20 years. The answer is grandkids in Seattle. Two then and now a 3rd, ages 6, 4, and 2, Isabella, Miles and Clara. I have learned in the last few years that Grandkids are among the most powerful forces in the world.

It has been three years now. Our passion for our family brought Jeanie and me here, and I arrived with my passion of boating and fishing. So the obvious question is from a boating and fishing perspective, how do the two places compare and to what extent did my New England experience prepare me for what I found here? I miss New England but I do love it here.

Another obvious question is why would I write this article and risk offending my friends on both coasts by opining on such a delicate subject. I won't try to answer that.

The first thing for a boater here that says "things are different" is the boats themselves. Lots of sailboats, lots of cruising boats, lots of old boats, a smaller percentage of open boats, and lots of trailerable boats. There are good reasons for all of this. There are many things driving design elements, e.g., protection from the weather, year round boating, easy access to service,

high mechanical expertise of many owners, wonderful protected cruising opportunities and other.

Puget Sound, the Straits of Juan de Fuca, the San Juan Islands are even more a cruising grounds than they are a recreational fishing grounds. More of the same extends into Canada. The Hood Canal is the western arm of Puget Sound. It is a large body of water itself and is the longest natural fjord, in the United States. Much of the 1000 mile voyage to Alaska is in somewhat protected water. In Seattle we are over 100 miles from the Pacific Ocean. We are always in sight of land. Really rough seas, are not a regular thing, and the areas where that occurs can often be avoided. We are always close to safe harbor and generally have cell phone contact 90% of the time. There are many, many ports of call. Most of them small cozy little places that are not overrun. The Waggoner Cruising Guide is the bible for this. Those are the things that contribute to the popularity of sailboats and cruising boats. Also you can make an older boat work, because you can take short trips, be close to home and still enjoy many ports of call. Plus because of the long, large and deep boating history here, many boat owners have the necessary skills to service a boat.

The water is colder here, as it really never goes above 55 degrees, so survival suits are a good idea for every boater. We have a 10 to 12 foot tide so current is a big factor especially as it rushes through the many small passages at 4 to 8 knots. There is lots of commercial traffic, including tugs pulling barges and you often near a busy shipping lane. Mountains border the water, so timber in the water is common and a regular hazard to navigation. These are all important differences and go into the general

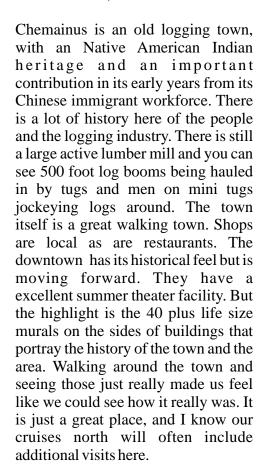
category of things a "prudent boater" needs to be prepared for.

But the big difference is the weather and there is a plus and a minus associated with that.

Yes, I did say there are not a lot of open boats. The summer is short and cooler. But once the good weather settles in July, August and September, it is beautiful. Sometimes that period starts a little earlier and runs a little latter. There are no "dog days" in the summer. We have an hour and a half more daylight than back East in the summer. But here is the key thing. The summer is short, but boat is in the water 12 months of the year. It doesn't get that cold or windy in the winter. It gets gray, and we get showers, but even in December and January I will find a sunny, windless 40 degree day, which is perfect if you have cover on the boat and a heater, to go out and drop some crab pots, and fish for a little winter Chinook, or go to a nearby harbor for lunch and a walk down a small town Main Street. In the Cape I average 200 hours a year on my boat, here I am averaging 400 hours. The difference is I am fishing and cruising and doing it 12 months of the year. For example the cruising last July included a one week trip in the San Juan Islands which included a two night stop in Victoria, British Columbia, and in September a week in Canada, working our way past the 49th parallel and Ladysmith British Columbia. In addition there were many day trips to local destinations.

It is hard to say what was the highlight of the cruising experience. I would have to pick our September 2012 stay in Chemainus British Columbia, with Ida and Tom Fiala from West Yarmouth Ma. Maybe our 8 day cruise in the Gulf Islands with our friends the Joy's and the Kissingers

from Chatham, Ma.



So my take on the cruising comparison is this part of the world is tops. We have a very large, well-protected inshore area, with many interesting destinations ranging from State Parks and camping grounds, to gunk hole anchoring spots to five star resorts, with a 12 month season. Any downside you ask? It is a 12 month season, but it is not the Caribbean.

My take on the fishing will get me in trouble with my new friends here in the Pacific Northwest. Here goes, "this is not the fishery that New England and more specifically Cape Cod is". Oh "my God" am I in trouble here in Seattle. Now having said that the first point to be made is "what do I know?". I arrived here three years ago an experienced boater and fisherman, but with zero local knowledge. So I am no "sharpie" in these parts. Also

the further north and west you go from Seattle the better it gets, as you move away from the industrial centers, and into areas where the fishing pressure has been less. If you work your way to Alaska it is quite spectacular. If you go offshore it is better. But in Puget Sound, within 50 miles of Seattle it is interesting, but not robust. Salmon of course is the main target; there is a 6 week halibut season and a 6 week lingcod season, several months of crabbing and the last 2 year's 2 day shrimping seasons. There are a lot of regulations, e.g., barbless hooks, 9 areas with different rules at different times in the US portion of these inland waterways, 5 types of salmon, several with wild and hatchery versions. Its a little mind boggling. You can tell a hatchery fish because the small fin called the adipose fin, which trails the dorsal fin on its back, has been removed. How they do that, before they release these small fish from the hatcheries, I do not know. All of these regulations vary by area, month, week and even day. There is certainly no blue fin tuna. But pretty much most of the year you can fish for something somewhere. The salmon fishing is pretty much all done on the troll with downriggers. Yes, the seals are just as big a problem here as in the East. In Puget Sound there is no shark population, so the number one predator for the seals is not here. Yes we do have to deal with dogfish. If you trailer a boat you can really take advantage of the differences, because not only can you move around the Sound, you can take advantage of the many lakes and rivers. You can trailer your boat to where the fish are, in any of the 9 areas where the regulations at a given time permit you to fish for a given type of fish. If you like to wade or float the options are even broader. If you like to charter, fishing the Pacific and Alaska offers even more options.



There have been a lot of fishing highlights for me in a short period of time. One would have to be when Tom caught a beautiful 15 pound wild King/Chinook salmon near Ladysmith by the 49th parallel. Our fishing success on the trip had been minimal, as we learned the area and dealt with a very off peak bite. It was our last day and we decided to just use our own instincts and find a place that felt "fishy". After a visit and lunch in Ladysmith and cruising back to Chemainus for the night we found some bait on the sounder, then we found some birds and then we found some seals. So we said this is our best and last shot. We worked the area, the wives where patient and cheering us on, but after about an hour plus Tom said "maybe it just isn't going to happen". I said "let's give it 15 more minutes, the area ahead looked real good when we passed over it before and drop the gear down another 30 feet". Well the fishing karma came through and bam. What a fish!

I have to cite another highlight because it is very illustrative of one of the main themes of the article.

On November 15th 2012, we head out with air temperatures of 45 degrees, no wind, calm seas and the buse heater on. My crew was Joe, Rod and myself. We go about 6 miles and drop 6 crab pots in. I have 2 and Joe and Rod each have 2. We are in it for the crab plus the \$5 we each put up for biggest Dungeness crab and most crab. We let those pots soak for about 4 hours each of us having put our own "secret ingredients" in the bait baskets. Who said fishermen are competitive? We get the rods out and troll for winter salmon. These are hatchery Chinook/kings that don't leave the area in the winter because they lack the migratory instincts. They have to



be 22 inches to keep. We caught about 20 small ones, 2 wild ones that were 22 inches but you cannot keep because they are not hatchery and a 21 inch hatchery that went back and a 22 inch hatchery that is dinner. Then we go back and pull our pots. The crab have to be male, cannot be recently molted and have to be of a certain size. We get about 20 crab and 3 keepers. Rod gets 2 keepers so he wins for most, I get one keeper and it is the largest and Joe gets to pay us each \$5. By the end of the season my guess is we will have just kept passing the same \$5 back and forth in all 3 directions.

Now I have to answer the question. Which gets my vote for fishing? It's a tough call but I am a boat fisherman, and when I compare boat fishing in the Cape to boat fishing here, from a marina not a trailer, the Cape gets my vote. If your capabilities are broader and include trailering and hiking, as well as chartering then this area would win that argument here.

So what have I done and how have I done?

I decided I needed to bring some of New England with me when we moved here. The water is deep here, we get some chop, we boat year round and I wanted to fish and explore my new area. I decided a Downeast Maine lobster boat was the way to go. So I engaged the fine folks at the Atlantic Boat Company in Brooklyn Maine to build a Duffy 35. The "Holy Moly" arrived in mid-August 2011. It is the perfect boat for here, given my goals. Really a fine boat in all weather, enough speed to explore, warm and dry, good for people and good for fishing and crabbing. We have day cruised it, weekend cruised it, week cruised, fished it, crabbed it

and shrimped it. When people in the Seattle area first saw it and I told them that it is a "Downeast Maine lobster boat" they would say, "well you know there are no lobsters here, for your lobster boat", and laugh at their joke. I got tired of that and started to respond "how do you know there are no lobsters if no one here has a lobster boat". That got me really quizzical looks and at least served to end the conversation. But I have gotten a lot of compliments. When I pass people at 22 knots in a 2 foot chop, I definitely get noticed.

Its been two seasons and a half. I think we did way better than average for rookies on salmon and lingcod. We did not get our first halibut. We shrimped opening day of shrimp season and limited out. We have growing success on crab and had an incredible winter 2013 season. We cruised north of the 49 parallel. We visited, Gig Harbor, Port Townsend, Orcas Island, Lummi Island, Roche Harbor, Friday Harbor, Pender Island, Sidney, Brentwood Harbor, Cowichan, Ganges, Chemainus, Ladysmith, Lopez Island and others. We have lots of those plans coming together for the coming months.

So what is the bottom line on my comparison of the Pacific Northwest and New England for boaters? I really have to say they are both great places. For what I personally like to do on the water, I give New England the award for fishing, 5 stars versus 4, and the Pacific Northwest the nod for cruising 5 stars versus 3. If on fishing, "you do it all in the Pacific Northwest then it's a 5 star also. I give the highest marks to both places for the people in the boating and fishing communities. People like Joe, Gus, Tom, Buzz and Art have share long lifetimes of experience here with me. In fact those 5 guys are all "lifers" here and average

70 years of age. That is a lot of knowledge and experience. John's Sporting goods has been a key resource. Also Ted's Bait and Tackle, boat show seminars, the PSA and others have been very helpful. It was only because of those people in New England that I became a pretty competent boater and fisherman in that part of the world, and I am coming up the learning curve here thanks to generosity of knowledge sharing and friendship in the boating and fishing communities here.

I always believed it is fun to be on the learning curve. It helps keep you young

#### John's Sporting Goods Facebook

I know most of you are following Johns Sporting Goods on Facebook. This is where many of you and myself are passing along almost daily fishing reports from throughout the area. If you are an avid angler and want to keep your finger on the pulse of valuable and up-to-date fishing information, John's Sporting Goods Facebook is where that information is passed along. If you have resistance to Facebook, please sign up if nothing more than just to get daily fishing information. This very well could be the difference between a good day of fishing in a nice day on the water.

#### On Thursday, I have "Big Fish Thursday". If you send your pictures to:

<u>customerservice@johnssportinggoo</u> <u>ds.com</u>,

You have a chance of winning free merchandise from John's Sporting Goods.

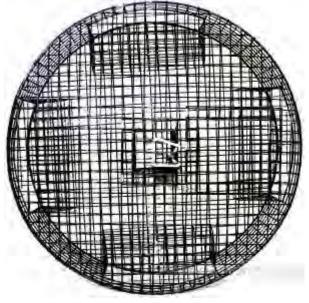
On Friday, I have "Deal of the Day". "Deal of the Day", is always a deep discount on your favorite fishing tackle and shellfish supplies from John's Sporting Goods.

## Special Purchase

Tackle For The Serious Angler

#### Shrimp Pot Sale February 1-28

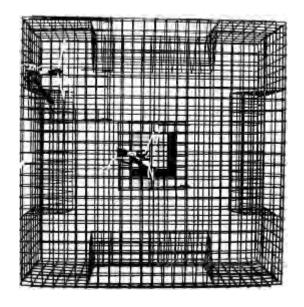
Shrimp Pot Rigging Video: Click Here



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John's Sporting Goods Facebook

Thursday: Big Fish Day

Friday: Deal of the Day

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