

Rain, Fog, Four-Foot Waves Dominate 8th Snag & Brag

It could have been a disaster. With steady rain and four-foot waves, not to mention a low turnout, the 8th Annual Snag & Brag Fishing Tournament didn't look promising from day one. Fortunately, none of that deterred participants from having fun.

A few changes were made to this year's tournament. For the first time, it was extended to a two-day tournament and was moved up one weekend so fishermen could participate both in the Snag & Brag and a St. Ignace fishing tournament.

"We thought this would get more boats," said Brian Bailey, general manager of Chippewa Hotel and organizer of the Snag & Brag. "People could just fish one day, or both days. Also, morning and night are the best times for fishing, so this way there are three prime times and a better opportunity to really catch those fish."

Unfortunately, owing to the mix of poor weather, dangerous forecasts, and possibly the change in date, participation in the Snag & Brag dropped off.

"We've got to get more locals involved in this," said Tim "Doc" Dockery, who also helped to organize the event. "We're starting to fade."

For the fishermen (and women) who dared brave the elements, there were plenty of rewards, including some big catches and some even bigger stories.

The team of Carol Ruddle, Gila Grossman, and Beth and Dave Sliwinski returned from last year. After netting three awards and sweeping the cash prizes, the team had their eyes on gold again this year. Saturday, August 20, they netted the largest fish at just over 14 pounds. They had the second largest haul, overall, bringing in 33.25 pounds of fish.



From left, the crew of Louis Bunker, Larry Rickley, Larry Rickley Jr., and Glenn St. Onge captured the two top prizes at this year's Snag & Brag, the Largest Lunker and the Heaviest Haul.

"Our captain is experienced," said Carol Ruddle, referring to Captain Sliwinski. "He tried a little of everything, a little magic. We had to try all angles. We just followed his instructions."

But the efforts of the team weren't quite enough, as, in the end, it was the team of Larry Rickley, Larry Rickley Jr., Glenn St. Onge, and Louie Bunker that brought home both the largest haul and the biggest catch Sunday.

"Today was rougher than heck," said Mr. Rickley Jr. Sunday, August 21. "There were four-foot waves. Yesterday when we went out, it was foggy, rainy, and we couldn't see the other boats. But everything went good."

The team has won top awards for three years, and last year lost out to the Ruddle

team. This year they were back, however, though they claim that there are no secrets to their success.

"We just threw lots of lures. We went through a whole box of them," said Mr. Rickley.

Awards went out this year not just to regular winners, but to several who have not had the best luck in past years. The Slippery Worm award went to the team of Bob Benser, Ken Eisenger, and Bob Pifer of Cadillac.

"This is the most prestigious award of all," said Mr. Eisenger proudly.

The Six Pack award, given to the team with the best fish story, went to Ben Horn, who regaled fellow participants with a tale of danger and disaster.

"We started out in our 14-foot boat yesterday and got soaked," Mr. Horn said. "We

made a cover out of tarp we found, and bungee-corded it down. We couldn't see anything. We had a 20-pound fish, probably the biggest in the tournament, but we lost it when we tried to hook it. Then the motor died with a freighter coming by, and just as we were getting ready to oar, the motor kicked in and we finally made it out."

Mr. Horn added that he was fishing with a diminished team, because he lost several members of his crew to the bars Friday night.

At the awards ceremony following the tournament at Pink Pony, participants were able to taste their fresh catches. A silent auction was also held to benefit the Bernida restoration project.

This was the eighth year of the Snag & Brag.



Tim "Doc" Dockery announced the winners for this year's Snag & Brag at the awards ceremony and fish fry Sunday, August 21.

Purdys Celebrate 37th Anniversary on Island



Nancy and Daniel Purdy of Crest Hill, Illinois, celebrated their 37th wedding anniversary Sunday, August 28, on Mackinac Island. They've been marking the occasion here for the last five years and would have come sooner, but did not know about the Island before then.

"We love Michigan," said Mrs. Purdy. "St. Ignace, Mackinaw City, and the Island are so quaint," she said.

The Purdys have three kids and eight grandchildren, including twins born last year in Illinois while the Purdys were on the Island.

They explore Mackinac from their room at the Chippewa Hotel and take long walks that include stopping at The Beanery for coffee. They also like to watch people by Doud Mercantile and shop. Mrs. Purdy adds a charm to her bracelet each year at Scrimshanders. This year she added the Mackinac Bridge.

At left: Nancy and Daniel Purdy stop along Market Street while on one of the many Island walks that they take during their annual visit.

Bike, Buggy Bridge League Ends Season



Winners of the 32nd annual Mackinac Island Bike and Buggy Bridge League (from left): Buzz Waggoner third place, Kay Berke and Nancy Keogh, second place, and Janis Holle and Amelia Musser, first place.

The Mackinac Island Bike and Buggy Bridge League celebrated its 32nd year at Grand Hotel Tuesday, August 23, with a final bridge session and an annual business meeting luncheon hosted by hotel owners Amelia and R. D. Musser Jr.

First place for the season was Janis Holle and Amelia Musser with 16,700 points. Kay Berke and Nancy Keogh placed second with 15,630 points, and Buzz and Carolyn Waggoner came in third with 15,140 points. The highest single match score was 5,370 points by Kay Berke and Nancy Keogh.

New officers for the 2006

season were elected and include President Susan Bankard, Secretary Kay Berke, Treasurer Janet Stingel, Scorekeeper Wendy Young, Historian Jane Burdett, and Beautification Chair Amelia Musser.

From July through August, the 10-team league plays five matches and the final competition is held during the annual tournament in August.

The bridge league uses its membership dues for beautification projects around the Island.

Anyone interested in joining the Mackinac Island Bike and Buggy Bridge League can call

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