



SPRING HAS SPRUNG AT CEEPEECE

Fish on 2006!!!!

With the onset of spring only a day away it was time to dust off the downriggers, take advantage of the longer day, the sun for a change and the draw of the herring.

I felt a rush of anticipation as I watched Roger screw the downrigger into place, knowing that this officially signaled the beginning of another fishing year. We plucked the rods from the closet where they had safely weathered the battering winter winds and storms and set off. The water was calm as we headed towards Rosa Island. We were disappointed not to see the usual telltale signs of the spawning herring, little gull excitement and no sea lion activity on the way; however our hopes were raised when our arrival at Rosa was announced by a large raft of sea lions sitting on the rocks. The bay at Rosa was occupied by several commercial boats so we decided to troll past Centre Island toward Garden Point.

Roger set the downriggers and the rods. He set the starboard side at 80 feet with a Tomic plug and the port side at 85 feet with a watermelon coyote spoon.

I can't even begin to describe the absolute joy of being on the water again, basking in the warm mid-day sun. I fell quickly back into my role as "rod watcher" while Roger cleaned up the tackle boxes inside. We expressed how wonderful and new the air felt as we were both fishing as non-smokers, having smoked our last cigarettes New Years Day.

After trolling for about an hour or so, we spotted a group of sea otters rafting at Garden Point straight ahead. With not even a whisper of interest up to now Roger decided to exchange the coyote spoon for a hoochie behind the flasher. "It sure would be nice to get a four or five pound spring for dinner" he said.

I had just grabbed my camera and was in the midst of taking a picture of the sea otters ahead,

when suddenly I caught rod movement out of the corner of my eye.

Quickly hollering "we have action!" I hurried to put the camera down as Roger grabbed the rod. "Get the other rod up" he exclaimed, "this is a big one and I don't want to lose it."

All the things he had taught me last year ran through my mind as I took the other rod out of the holder and started to reel in the line, undid the clip, secured the hook and safely secured the rod out of the way.

Roger went to pass his rod over to me, "Here, you reel it in" he offered. But for any of you who know Roger and have actually had the pleasure of seeing him play a fish there is such beauty and joy in observing such a skilled and experienced angler, I gladly refused and watched the show. What a reward I was given as a beautiful silver tail broke out of

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Fish on cont'd.....

the water. This big fish was not going to come in willingly. The sun sparkled like diamonds off the glistening body as the fight played out.

As Roger brought the fish to the boat it was clear to see we had a "real nice fish".

I grabbed the net and with Roger yelling out directions, obviously worried my lack of netting experience might cost us the catch, his hand over mine we swung the net under the fish and on board.

What a beautiful fish it was. The pinks and mauves of this magnificent, highly sought after winter spring, (still by a day) were mesmerizing as she lay defeated at our feet.

I silently gave thanks for her sacrifice as Roger said "We have our fish, let's call it a day" and we headed back to the Lodge.

As the boat cut through the waves on the way back I felt grateful for the fish, the sun, the promise of spring and the renewed sense of energy that I had from our first fishing trip of 2006!!!

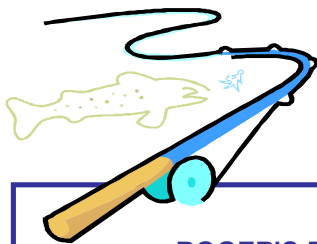


Roger - March 19, 2006 Garden Point

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ROGER'S REEL TIP

Spring is always a great time to clean tarnished fishing equipment and most importantly to put new line on your reels. There is nothing worse than having the first fish of the season snapping last years worn and sunburnt line.

WEB SITES OF INTEREST

Canadian Tide Tables:

http://weatheroffice.ec.gc.ca/marine/region_03_e.html

Marine Services On-line:

<http://www.marineservices.gc.ca/en/Con01.asp?Div=Rec&Info=Mar>