

Introduction: For at least the past 10 years Jack Long of Bismarck (Skip Jack on the radio) has analyzed the salmon report coupons sent in by anglers and provided the Great Planers Trout and Salmon Club with tabulated results. Jack is a very dedicated salmon angler and says compiling the results each year is his way to help others be more successful. I don't think any of us fully appreciate the hours of effort Jack puts into this project each year. Once you've read his report, you'll agree that we owe him a hearty thank you.

Thanks Jack,
Lee Klapprodt.

1999 SALMON REPORT RESULTS by Jack Long

A number of years ago the salmon report coupon program was pioneered. The intent of the program was two-fold. It would give salmon anglers a weekly update on salmon activity, fishing depths, "hot" locations and presentations that were working best at the time. The other benefit of the program was an annual summary of the salmon activity. The report coupons are made available at bait and tackle shops and anglers are encouraged to pick them up, complete one for each salmon caught and mail them in. Each week the coupon results are compiled into a report and this report is broadcast Thursday, Friday and Saturday on **KFYR 550 Radio**. 1999 sponsors of the program were **Moritz Sport and Marine**, Bismarck; **KFYR 550 Radio**, Bismarck; **Gibbons Fiberglass & Aluminum Boat Repair**, Bismarck; and **Dakota Tackle**, Bismarck. A special thank you to Gene Werre, an account executive with KFYR, for his continued support of the project.

As an encouragement to anglers to submit coupons, weekly prize packages and two major prizes were given away this year. The major prizes are awarded at mid-season and at the season's end. In each case, the drawing is from all coupons submitted prior to the date of the drawing. The mid-season drawing winners was **Wes Martin** of Carrington. Wes won a **rod and reel combo**. The season end prize was won by **Renee Martin** of Lincoln. Renee won a **Motoguide transom mount trolling motor**. Prizes were donated by **Wade Anderson and Dakota Tackle** of Bismarck. The weekly prize packages winners are selected from those coupons turned in for that week. The packages are a combination of lures and attractors and were donated by **Rhys Davis Ltd.** maker of the **Teaser** and **Anchovy Special** lures, **O'Ki Tackle** maker of the **Big Shooter** flasher, and **Silver Strike Distributing** of Bismarck.

Through the summer 679 report coupons were submitted. The leading lure for the summer was the squid at 207 followed closely by cutbait with 199 and the squish or needlefish at 189. These three lures caught 88% of the salmon reported. Three main colors caught 66% of the fish. They were, in order, pink, blue and white. Pink

and blue staged a close race for first place with pink edging out blue 161 to 160. The flasher was again the leading attractor and the favorite color was blue. It is interesting to note, however, that it is becoming less important to anglers to put a flasher on every line they have in the water. Anglers are finding success in running terminal tackle - bait, spoons and crankbaits - without an attractor. Some are running the attractor directly off the cannonball and then running their lines above the ball with just the terminal tackle. Those with more than one downrigger choose not to put attractors on every rod. These options allow the angler to enjoy the fight of the fish alone without the drag of an attractor and it greatly reduces the chance of a tangle. Some of the anglers who run stackers are only using attractors on one of the rods, usually the deeper line. This allows one to reduce the vertical separation between lines and to get both set-ups in the "fish zone". The salmon weighed a total of 4,137 pounds or about a 6.2 pound average for the season. This was the best season average we have ever experienced since report coupon records have been kept. While there were very few large fish caught, there were also very few of the one and two pound fish reported so the overall average reflected this fact. For the summer, the average lure depth was 81 feet and the lure was fished over an average of 113 feet of water. 238 salmon were picked up between 9am and noon, 159 between noon and 3pm and 137 between 6 and 9am. Five areas produced 85% of the salmon. Deedman's led the way producing 151 fish and was followed by Pochant Bay, Deadman's Bay, and the Tailrace.

April and May started extremely slow in 1998 with only 18 report coupons being filled out and sent in. The Tailrace produced 9 salmon as the leading location. Ten salmon were caught on a crankbait. Green and blue were the favorite lure colors and 6 to 9am or 9am to noon were the best times of the day. The fish averaged 3.2 pounds and were caught 18 feet down in 30 feet of water.

June saw a slight increase with 66 salmon report coupons turned in. The Tailrace was the only place to be with 64 of the 66 fish being caught there. The crankbait was the best producer with 61 salmon being caught on it. To work, the lure had to be chartreuse or green in color and fishing was again best between 6am and noon. If you ran your lure at an average depth of 12 feet over 23 feet of water, fish caught would average 5.4 pounds.

July also registered a small increase with 44 coupons being turned in. Surprisingly Hazen Bay was the best place to catch a salmon. This is the first time that Hazen Bay has been a leading spot for salmon in the history of this report. Most of the salmon reported caught were picked up by walleye anglers. You salmon anglers may want to get in on this action and explore the Hazen Bay area this spring and summer. The squish led the charge with 12 salmon.

Blue became the color of the month with 13 fish. The best time of the day was between 9am and noon when 19 fish were caught. A blue flasher was the preferred attractor. The average salmon weighed 5.9 pounds and was caught 49 feet down over 69 feet of water.

August, as in past years, saw a definite change in angling success. In all, 455 coupons were submitted in August. Deadman's Bay accounted for 129 of the salmon caught in August, followed by Pochant Bay (102), Government Bay (95) and the Riverdale Bluffs with (77). The prime time of the day to fish was 9am to noon (171), followed by noon to 3pm (110), and 6am to 9am (98). Three main lure presentations were key to August fishing. A squid led the way with 155, followed by cutbait, a close second, at 152 and a squish or needlefish at 131. Lure color was spread out primarily between five choices. Those top five were: blue (98), pink (98), white (97), rainbow (63), and green at (42). As usual, a blue flasher (131) led the way. The average fish size increased to 6.1 pounds and the average depths were 95 over 132 feet.

During September good fishing continued with 142 report coupons being sent in. The face of the dam with 41 fish was the leading producer. Squids caught 47 salmon and were followed closely by the squish or needlefish (42) and cutbait (40). Pink at 57 remained the favorite color of the salmon, followed by blue (41). From 9am until noon 37 salmon were netted while 3 to 6pm accounted for 32 salmon and noon to 3pm (31). As usual, the blue flasher (55) led the attractor charge. The average September salmon weighed 6.4 pounds. The September salmon were caught at an average lure depth of 59 over 87 feet of water.

As a quick review of the season, in May a 3.8 pound salmon could be caught from the Tailrace on a green crankbait. If you were fishing between 6 and 9am and fishing 20 feet down in 28 feet of water, you were in the right place at the right time.

June was time to switch to livebait. Fish the Tailrace between 9am and noon and fish 24 feet down in 34 feet of water, you just might hook a 6.6 pound salmon.

As we moved into July, you should fish the Hazen Bay area. Keep a squish handy, but make sure it is blue and trailing a blue flasher. Do your fishing between 9am and noon and stay in 49 feet water with your lure down 69 feet. Following all these directions should land you a 5.9 pound salmon.

In August you could catch that 6.1 pound salmon in front of Deadman's Bay between 9am and noon. You had to be using a pink or blue squid behind a blue flasher. Finally fish that squid 95 feet down over 132 feet of water.

As we moved into September, the face of the dam became the hot place to be. Fishing there between 9am and noon with a pink squid and a blue flasher would get you a 6.4 pound salmon. By the way, that salmon came at 59 feet over 87 feet of water.

As data is compared going back to 1989 for the months of August and September, the prime salmon fishing months for many anglers, it is encouraging to look at some of last year's numbers. In 1989 the average size fish reported for the year was 6.0 pounds. 1990 saw this dip slightly to 5.8 pounds and then during the period 1991-1998 the average weights were 4.3, 4.5, 4.6, 4.4, 5.3, 6.0, 5.6 and 6.0 pounds. 1999 saw the average weight return to the period high of 6.2 pounds. As mentioned earlier, while there were no large, 10 pound plus, salmon reported caught on the Lake, there also were very few small fish caught. Hence, the high average weight. The number of salmon caught during August and September continues it's rebound. 1989 saw 448 salmon caught during those two months while 607 were caught in 1990, 520 in 1991, 334 in 1992, 341 in 1993, 305 in 1994, 596 in 1995, 943 in 1996, 631 in 1997, 614 in 1998 and 597 in 1999. Seeing increases in both numbers of fish caught and the size of fish is encouraging.

As in the past, thank you to all who took the time to fill out and send in the coupons.

The following tables summarize several years of salmon report coupon data analysis.

MOST PRODUCTIVE FISHING AREAS BY MONTH

DC = Douglas Creek PB = Pochant Bay
 DF = Face of the Dam SB = Scoria Bay
 RB = Riverdale Bluffs DB = Deadman's Bay
 ST = Steinke's Bay GB = Government Bay
 GA = Garrison Bay DT = DeTrobriand Bay
 TR = Tailrace HB = Hazen Bay

(There was no data available for 1989)

YEAR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT
1990	DC	DF	DF	PB	DB
1991	DC	DF	DF	DB	PB
1992	DF	DF	RB	DB	SB
1993	DC	DF	DF	DF	SB
1994	DF	DF	DF	DF	DF
1995	SB & ST	DF	DF & RB	GB	RB
1996	GA	DF	RB	DB	GB
1997	DT	DF	DF	DB	DF
1998	TR	TR	DF	PB	DB
1999	TR	TR	HB	DB	DF

NUMBER OF FISH CAUGHT
AND
AVERAGE FISH WEIGHT
AUGUST & SEPTEMBER

YEAR	AUGUST	SEPTEMBER	TOTAL	WEIGHT
1989	290	158	448	6
1990	397	210	607	5.8
1991	380	140	520	4.3
1992	293	41	334	4.5
1993	276	65	341	4.6
1994	221	84	305	4.4
1995	332	264	596	5.3
1996	669	274	943	6
1997	431	200	631	5.6
1998	442	172	614	6
1999	455	142	597	6.2

AVERAGE FISH SIZE BY MONTH
(POUNDS)

YEAR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT
1989	4.4	4.4	5.2	6.4	7.1
1990	4.6	4	5.4	6.9	6.3
1991	3.2	3.8	3.3	5.1	4.7
1992	3.7	3.7	4	4.9	5.2
1993	2.2	2.2	3.8	5.7	5.5
1994	2.3	2.7	3.6	4.6	5.1
1995	2.3	4.1	3.1	5.3	6.3
1996	3.5	3.9	4.7	6	5.9
1997	3.8	4.1	4.2	5.5	5.9
1998	3.2	5.4	4.4	6.1	5.8
1999	3.8	6.6	5.9	6.1	6.4

TERMINAL TACKLE BY MONTH

YEAR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT
1989	CRANK	CRANK	SQUID	SQUID	SQUID
1990	CRANK	SQUISH	SQUID	SQUID	SQUID
1991	CRANK	SQUISH	SQUISH	CUTBAIT	SQUID
1992	CRANK	CRANK	SQUISH	CUTBAIT	SPOON
1993	SPOON	SPOON	CRANK	SQUISH	CRANK
1994	CRANK	CRANK	CRANK	SQUID	SQUID
1995	SPOON	SQUISH	SQUISH	SQUID	SQUID
1996	CRANK	CRANK	SQUID	SQUID	SQUID
1997	CRANK	SPOON	SQUISH	SQUID	SQUID
1998	CRANK	CRANK	SQUISH	SQUISH	CUTBAIT
1999	CRANK	LIVEBAIT	SQUISH	SQUID	SQUID

AVERAGE LURE DEPTH BY MONTH (FEET)

YEAR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT
1989	25	25	37	79	37
1990	10	32	61	87	78
1991	12	40	67	86	83
1992	25	25	63	86	14
1993	13	17	22	81	25
1994	13	12	45	78	43
1995	6	34	73	80	82
1996	10	25	45	80	72
1997	12	22	55	92	64
1998	18	12	48	74	79
1999	20	24	49	95	59

AVERAGE WATER DEPTH FISHED BY MONTH
(FEET)

YEAR	MAY	JUNE	JULY	AUGUST	SEPT
1989	47	47	61	113	60
1990	34	53	91	120	104
1991	36	71	96	119	111
1992	54	54	97	120	27
1993	38	48	44	105	45
1994	30	28	63	110	69
1995	21	62	118	123	114
1996	37	58	91	123	96
1997	39	47	71	138	103
1998	30	23	73	105	103
1999	28	34	69	132	87