

Cool weather can't stop charity anglers

Youth at risk benefit from Fish Winnipeg program

IT turned out to be one of the coldest Aug. 17s on record. Luckily the fishing during the annual Fish Winnipeg Media/Corporate Challenge kept everyone warm.

During the morning session with 12 Winnipeg media outlets, a total of 117 fish were caught and released. The CJOB boat, captained by Dan Thibeault, caught 62 fish using small jigs and light line. Barry Burns and the crew will have bragging rights for a whole year.

In the afternoon, with a cold north wind blowing, the fishing slowed somewhat but the Manitoba Hydro boat captained by Steven Wintemute of *Hooked Magazine* still managed to catch good numbers of fish along with some trophies. Linda Morin landed a 104-centimetre monster to push her team into first place.

Once again, the beneficiaries were Winnipeg youth at risk. According to program manager Martin Miller, this year could be the busiest on record for the Fish Winnipeg program, with close to 650 youths participating.

All these young people get a chance to fish the Red and Assiniboine rivers from shore and at the end of the day go home with a rod and reel. According to Miller, more than 20 master angler channel catfish have been caught over the course of the program by the group.

The City of Winnipeg is a major partner with the Fish Winnipeg program and they have expanded not only their week-long fishing camps but also their Learn to Fish programs. Major sponsors of the event include Steamatic, Manitoba Hydro and Kississing Lake Lodge, along with Pure Fishing and Cabela's.

This year, four lucky young anglers from the Fish Winnipeg program will be heading up north to fish at Kississing Lake Lodge. Donated by lodge owner Curt Enns, these young people will board a Calm Air flight to Flin Flon and fly in by float plane to the lodge, which is situated north of Flin Flon.

Big pike time

WITH cooler temperatures overnight, northern pike have been moving back into shallower bays.

For anglers looking for a chance to catch a trophy pike, try fishing buzz baits over deep cabbage beds. It's usually best to try this technique earlier in the day before the sun gets too high in the sky. Big pike key in on surface forage at this time of the year and a noisy buzz bait (or clacker) will call these fish in from a long way away. In fact, I have seen a big pike move from 10 metres away to hit this surface lure. If the day turns out warm, these pike will usually move back out to the deeper water by the afternoon to escape the warmer water.

This is also a great time of the year to fly-fish for trophy pike. Use medium-size streamer flies on a slow sink line to entice less active fish to bite. Vary your strip speed to see what triggers the fish to bite. As in any other type of fishing, experiment with colour and size to see what is the most effective. If the fish are quite active, a really big streamer is a great option!

Angler's Notes

A special thanks to all the guides who donated their time and equipment to make our 14th annual Fish Winnipeg the best ever. They included Pete Hiebert, Vince D'Anglio, Sid Blum, Phil Boiteau, Bob Kalid, John Brandon, Ed Friedrich, David Warrenchuk, Doug Beddall, Clancy Soloman, Donovan Pearse, Scott Knight, Jan Bass, Rick Thiessen, John Armitage, Craig Ferris, Frank Normand, Steven Wintemute, Jeff Goethals and Dean Gilbert.



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