There’s No Stopping the Tyee Train!

By Deepwater Don

Here’s the latest news friends, and it is fin-tastic! Tyees, tyees and more tyees, with the top mark of the season being set in in the last 48 hours with a 45-pound-catch-and-release by Bryan MacFadden somewhere out on the west side under the guiding of Brent Gallacher. In addition to holding down the season record-high chinook salmon for The Club, Brian also stands atop the leaderboard for the second annual Father’s Day Derby which wraps up today at The Clubhouse.
The top fish of the season – 45 lbs caught and released by Bryan MacFadden and Brent Gallacher.

Logan and Les Stroud with a 32 lb released tyee guided by Simon Bernier.

It’s a stellar start to the season, with no signs of slowing down. At the risk of sounding like a broken record, I must again emphasize my personal belief that the summer solstice season (June) is an ideal time to fish Haida Gwaii, when the days are long and the early mornings can be bright and spectacular. More importantly, the fish don’t waste any time making their way each spring to the rich emerald waters off Langara Island, so we shouldn’t either.
A glimpse of June in Port Louis. The summer solstice is near.

Whales are in abundance on Langara and Graham Island.

Here is some numerical evidence. Over 30 tyees have been recorded so far by guests of The Clubhouse, North Island Lodge and The Outpost, the majority of which have been released to go make more big fish. Not only that but everybody is catching fish from the mid-teens to mid-twenties along with a handful that are coming in just under the 30-pound tyee mark.

Guide Christian and Joerg releasing this beautiful fish back into the ocean.

North Island Lodge guest Tracey Branser with a “tryee” – 29.5-lbs guided by Macgregor Johnston.
With that, let’s have a look at the other names and highlights for the past week, which included another sold-out Beef, Barbeque & Bourbon special event trip. While not dining on some of the most tempting fare known to humankind, a whole lot of guests caught a whole lot of chinook salmon, with long-time Club friend Chris Spafford leading the troops on the trip with a 32-pound fish guided once again by Mr. Gallacher. Don Parsons and Debbie Salter, guided respectively by Pete and Jona, tied for second place among The Clubhouse congregation during this trip with identical 31’s, while Sean Nolan rounded out the new Tyee Club members with a released 30 guided by Bud Stafford.

Relaxing nights on the back deck.

A taste of the 2019 Beef, Barbeque & Bourbon event.
Pizza is better served on The Clubhouse back deck.

The weekend crowd at The Clubhouse experienced more of the same, with fish that are gradually getting bigger across the board and showing up in many more places, save for Lacey which has been slow for chinook but producing well for turkey-sized halibut up to 55 pounds in nearby waters. Top fish went to Scott Johnston with a 32-pound release guided by Nathan Vogstad, a 30 released by Dimitrios Tziortzis and a twin 30 by Gary Osborne both in Brent’s boat.

Scott Johnston with his 29-lb catch guided by Nathan Vogstad!

Fantastic numbers have also been reported by North Island Lodge, led most recently by Justin Allen with a 40-pound catch-and-release guided by Morgan Johnston, followed by George Peck with a 36 lb tyee by the wily veteran, D.J. Shinduke. Stan Weismiller had his hands full boating and then releasing a 34-pound version with rookie sensation Macgregor Johnston. Richard Vine did serious business with a top fish of 32 pounds with guide Doug Laden, as did Merl Lindstrom with a 32 caught in Boulder Bay with D.J.
Guide Morgan Johnston releasing a beautiful 40-lb tyee caught by Justin Allen.

Stan Weismiller and guide Macgregor Johnston with a 34-lb release!

I should perhaps note that, for the most part, guests who opt for guided boats have fared better than those who go it alone. That’s not surprising, given the expertise of The Club’s guide crew and their knowledge of every rock and contour. That said, self-guiders are bound to fare well if they are patient and also heed advice generously provided by Screamer, who in his [last report recommended tacking offshore of Andrews Point at about 80 feet to find ample chinook salmon. He also noted that the coho are starting to show up in greater numbers and recommends running rods at around 40 feet off Andrews to produce best results.}
Guide Screamer and guest Sean Nolan getting ready to release Sean’s tyee.

Last thing on The Clubhouse, do you remember the name Rodney Bennett? He is up with his son Jordan right now taking in the Father’s Day Derby. The last time he was at The Clubhouse was in 1997 when he made history of sorts by catching a 104-pound Opah, a species common off southern California and Baja but unheard of in the north Pacific. Rodney also landed a 43-pound tyee that trip which, in combination with the opah, earned him a reputation as the luckiest angler in the history of The West Coast Fishing Club. (Read his story here.) This trip proved to be another great success for Rodney, reeling in a very nice 30 lb tyee – another lifelong memory to add to the list.

We can’t forget about The Outpost, which has also gotten off to an extremely productive start with three tyees being caught in the first two days of season. Ron Wratschko angled a 30-pound tyee while Todd Kralik landed a 31. And lastly, a beautiful 33-pound release was recorded for guest, Eric Metzler. Mike Westover couldn’t help but jump in on the action for a double header with fishing partner Eric Metzler, which resulted in a couple of very nice take-home chinook. If you haven’t already, head over to Outpost Lodge Manager, Jordan Knight’s first report of the season for the full update.

Guide Hanes Svub and Eric Metzler with the first Outpost tyee of the season! 33-lbs caught and released.
A successful double header for Mike Westover and Eric Metzler.

That's it for this week. I'll check in next week with more exciting news from all three lodges. Until then, please stay safe and well friends.

Tight Lines!

Deepwater Don