Awesome August…

By Deepwater Don

I really don’t like the word awesome. It’s been overused and abused to the point that we now need a new adjective to describe things that are truly gob-smacking. The Grand Canyon or Taj Mahal for example. But until somebody comes up with one, I have no choice. So, here goes.

The fishing…the fishing…is…(I’m not kidding, I really hate this)…the fishing is AWWWESOMMME!!!

Specifically, there appears to be no letting up whatsoever in the incredible fishing that has been the norm this season. And the weather this past week has also been, oh what the heck….awwessommmme!!!
A gorgeous morning at The Outpost.

Not quite as many tyees were recorded as in previous weeks, but the overall numbers of good-sized chinook and coho salmon once again point to 2019 being one of the best seasons in many a year.

North Island Lodge manager Todd McIntyre pulled a guide shift over the last few days and provided another encouraging report, especially for those of you lucky ducks counting sleeps to departure day. Todd says the coho are continuing to pile up in huge numbers off Langara Rocks and are now close to monster proportions. Clubhouse head guide Mike Tonnesen (Screamer) guided a 17-pound version last week, and if you’ve ever done business with a coho of this size you’ll know why this is significant news. They are incredibly fast swimmers that can change direction like a punt-returner and tend to do a lot of their acrobatics above the water line.

And the chinook fishing? Well, consider that just a couple of days ago one of the North Island boats reported boating one on a halibut rod! Todd estimated he was cutting 25-30 herring a shift. The chinook are pretty much everywhere now, including the Gunia-Boulder areas. As always, the bites are less frequent along that shore but the results are often worth the wait, and this week was no exception with lots of twenty-somethings reported. Of course, Coho, McPherson and Andrews are reliable as ever.
Guide Andrew with Will Brown and a beautiful 33lb tyee release!

Halibut? Yup, lots of them in the turkey-sized range (25-50 pounds) off the west side of Lacey Rock and Thrumb. Just wait for a slack tide, throttle up and go get the groceries.

Biggest fish of the trip for the North Island congregation was a 26 for Jim Landes, along with a right-on-the-nose legal-sized halibut for Troy Henning that tipped the scales at 52 pounds. Here’s the punch line – Troy hooked it on salmon gear between Boulder and Gunia! I bet it took some time to coax that slab into the net. I should add here that guide Bryce Belyea and North Island Lodge sous chef Alan Patridge went out on an evening staff charter a couple nights ago and caught and released Alan’s first tyee, an even 30. Congratulations chef!

North Island Lodge sous chef, Alan Patridge with his first-ever tyee, which was soon released with the help of guide Bryce Belyea.

A beautiful morning captured by North Island Lodge guide, Bryce Belyea.

Top chinook of late at The Clubhouse are a pair of tyees, a 34 for Martin Smith and a 30 for Mark Zivot,
both released in the classy manner of conservation for which guests of The Club are increasingly renowned. The names of those who have released oversized halibut are too numerous to mention, but a trio of Clubhouse anglers deserve a nod for their work ethic. These would be Jeffrey Barash, Matthew Hart and Mitchell Hart, each of whom muscled up small grand pianos of approximately 130 pounds each.

Mark Zivot with his tyee release, guided by Mike Tonnesen aka “Screamer."

On the subject of catch-and-release and other fishing news, I encourage you to have a look at Screamer’s most recent report, which includes some insight into minimizing mortality rates and the importance of preserving the upper end of the gene pool. I will let Screamer tell the story but he has been around long enough to have observed and maybe even taken part in some tagging studies that indicated very high survival rates.

Woops, I forgot to mention that in addition to perfect fishing conditions, the wildlife viewing, humpbacks in particular, has been even more incredible than usual. Even if you haven’t ever seen a humpback breach, you can easily imagine what an exhilarating experience this would be. In fact, it’s downright awesome, and if you come up with a better word for it than that, please do let me know. Thanks to Laurie Wilford and Bob Chapple for capturing this incredible display of wildlife!
A special wildlife moment for Clubhouse guests. Thanks to guide Mike Tonnessen (Screamer) for the photo!

And before I wrap up, a quick update from Port Louis. Jordan Knight checked in to say that the weather has remained consistent for Outpost guests, fishing has been the best within sight of the lodge and in the past week they’ve welcomed many return guests who are thrilled to be back! Below are a few snapshots from the week.

Long-time guest, Debbie Boudreau with a perfect take-home chinook.
Guide Braden James and guest with a chinook in the bag.

The rugged landscape of Graham Island, photographed by Jordan Knight.

Until next week friends, stay safe and well.

Tight Lines!

Deepwater Don
A few spots remain if you would like to join us for the fantastic fishing this season! Call us today at 1-888-432-6666 or click here to fill out an online inquiry.