

Fight Bait Times

Cathy Shoal and Brad Spotter

Well, the season is upon us. It seems the little buggers are rushing up our rivers but in no hurry to visit Westport.

It was a quiet start, but from the general head nods and “not too bad so far” grunts coming from all local rivers; things have picked up. From the South of the district, the Little Wanganui seems a happy bunch in general; up the front there’s been some real good days and even us slackers in the back are being fed. “I live in hope”; is the quote from one dedicated farm woman on the river... a touch coy, perhaps? When quizzed about the concern of falling whitebait numbers and the possibility of quotas; one seasoned veteran of Little Wanganui’s response was, “I think there are as many as there ever was; there may be an exception for one species that has declined, but I think overall there are as many as there ever were”.

The Blackwater/Granite cartels seem eerily happy with no reported fights or threats of violence thus far and that speaks volumes on its own. Ministry of Fisheries has visited and left two boxes on the river for people using the fishery to record their catch for data collection purposes. “The Judge” has taken on the ambassador role to encourage these masterbaiters to report their catches; but nobody seems to want to abide, which “the Judge” is finding frustrating. “They will close it if they don’t have the data; and I am reporting so if there is a licensing of baiting, I will be first in line for those limited licenses” for working with the Fisheries for once...Wow; what a change of tune!

Karamea River seems to have some happy trawlers also; again up in the front they are grinning. Although a bit of a pain the recent flooding has helped to scour the sides making for better conditions for the fishermen and women. The only words I hear is that they are catching “bits and pieces”; whatever that means. Cryptic, as usual.

Oparara seems to have started in dramatic fashion with the removal/tag and release of Oparara river veteran “Smooth Moves” beloved dingy. Happening before the season had even got underway! Some suspect it could have been the recently ousted farm workers from a nearby farm who helped themselves to some property belonging to that farm. Our masterbaiter “Smooth Moves” thinks they may have absconded with his boat also. Was it theft; or was it cut free? No one will know till the boat appears.

In other whitebait related talk, it is being whispered that they will be closing one or two rivers here no matter what, although no official word on this we will endeavour to bring you this information the minute it comes to light. Fightbait Times has also seen the Fisheries wagon showing their presence in this area this past week. Stay calm, if we are all playing by the rules then we have nothing to worry about and if you cannot play by the rules you don’t belong on the river!

The ORIGINAL Whitebaiters Ball!

Anyone and everyone welcome!

Little Wanganui’s biggest fundraising event.

Come and enjoy some fresh whitebait!

Come have a dance, tell some lies, enjoy our infamous supper!

Rugby semi-finals will be airing next door at Little Wanganui Pub

Enjoy BOTH events in the same spot!

Make a weekend of it, book a cabin at the pub!

Assuming the All Blacks will be in the semis, supper will be served earlier!

Plenty of nibbles throughout the night!.

CASH BAR

Prizes for best dressed, best dance, best whitebait patty

Don’t drink and drive...transport will be available

A Tale from From Yesteryear October 2018

This is as bad as the worst season of recent times, says the Judge. It was 2011 that we had a real shit season. This year’s numbers are as bad as that year at this time.

Let’s hope it improves or there will be permits to buy and limits on catches soon.

Do we lie, or tell the truth?

Whitebaiting - Good for your sex life and other reasons to whitebait:

By Dr Bradley Spotter

+ Burns calories

+ Increases agility and balance

+ Upgrades your vocabulary

+ Yearly socialising done!

‘She’s got more moves than a bucket of whitebait’