

Fight Bait Times

Cathy Shoal and Brad Spotter

Well, the halfway point of the season has been and gone and despite all the threats and whispers of restrictions being imposed it would seem that the fish are without a doubt still here with most of the Master Baiters reporting an average or better season thus far.

As is often seen on local rivers it was a slow start to the season however its picked up mid stride and now we have been hearing reports of "black shoals" off all 4 rivers.

Little Wanganui River is said to be very average this year, folks up the front are on the money with the people at the back left to wait till late in the tide to see any action. Although one very seasoned baiter told *The Times* of the river being "far too civilised to fight." a lie of course. There have been reports of one arrogant baiter who insists on blasting their music for all to hear despite the repeated abuse and profanities hurled at them from all over the river. The tone of the language and the atmosphere on the river has forced some long time baiters to leave downhearted and that truly is a shame.

The Granite and Blackwater seem to be the most congenial bunch this year. The peace probably reflects there being plenty to catch and clean so no time for fisty cuffs. One older fellow gleefully recounted a 30.5 pound catch on Granite creek in the first week of October; the Blackwater had reports of 60 to 80 lb catches up the front that same day. The old gent reports that "the whitebait are doing what they're supposed to do - there is nothing wrong with our fishery". The lying never ceases...

Karamea: not much according to sources. Is that a lie? one long time source declaring "I lied my guts out tonight at the pub. I don't even believe myself during whitebait season"! Gotta to keep em guessing. Information was relayed that there was a 100lb total so far for one master.

Oparara is the usual quiet self; as we watch it change once again with more eroding happening at the mouth. the jury is still out on the impact that has had on the fishing. Did Smooth Moves ever found his stolen dinghy??

Westport reports average or below average catches. Perhaps we should close the bluff! There is a bit of yelling going on occasionally down at the big wall and the net theft with somebody even willing to cut chains to remove other nets from the river bank.

Whisper update: reports just in of a 100lb catch at the Orowaiti bridge. Sounds like the rough season may be on the up or they are liars!

Further south with the real commercials in Westland they quietly say it's been an average; which means it's a good season for em! Just in; they are catching! See you at the Ball!

Sunday 25 October from 6pm The ORIGINAL Whitebaiters Ball!

Anyone and everyone welcome!

Little Wanganui's biggest fundraising event.

Come and enjoy some fresh whitebait!

Awesome Spot Prizes!

Ray Douglas/ The Arafats

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

7826 752

CASH BAR

Trophy for best Whitebait patty!

Bring your cooked patties into the hall by 6PM!

Best fancy dress, best dance, best whitebait storyteller!

Don't drink and drive...transport available

\$25/single \$45/couple under 13 yrs free

cash only

The BASTARD rules of whitebaiting

- 1 No bastard shall fish my spot
- 2 No bastard shall fish within yelling or throwing distance of my spot
- 3 No bastard shall touch my gear, even when I've left it lying all over the track and they have to step over it.
- 4 No bastard shall have music playing or cell phones ringing.
- 5 No bastard shall walk up and down the river bank loudly talking into their bastard cell phones.
- 6 No bastard shall catch more than me in any day/season.
- 7 No bastard shall lie to me about what they caught, or expect an honest answer from me.
- 8 No bastard shall tell bigger lies than me at the pub about how much they caught, apart from the bastard who reckoned he caught a crayfish in his whitebait net, that bastard is brilliant.
- 9 No bastard shall yell at or abuse DOC or IRD officers, they can't help being bastards.
- 10 No bastard can possibly enjoy a day fishing more than this bastard!



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