

Salmon Fishing Out From The Kenosha Harbor

Fishing with Captains Andy Derwinski and Steve Hunt

Two captains, two writers, and a website owner were in a boat.

It sounds like the start of a bad joke, but it was a reality recently when I joined a group of people for some fishing on Lake Michigan

I had received an invite from Captain Andy Derwinski of Jedi Sportfishing Charters and Captain Steve Hunt of Hunters Charters to fish for salmon. Both of these experienced captains run charter businesses out of the Kenosha harbor. I was joined by outdoor writer and publisher Dick Ellis and also by Kent Albrecht, who has owns myhuntingpage.com, a free website where people can post hunting and fishing pictures.



In general, coho salmon are the likely catch this time of year as they are migrating north from the southern parts of the lake. Though the cool weather has caused the bite to be up and down this spring, May and June can offer spectacular coho fishing for those wanting to head out on the big lake. Derwinski said his clients often catch their limit of five fish per person in just a couple hours of fishing.

“I ran 23 trips last May and 22 had clients catch their limits,” he said.

Captains Andy Derwinski (Left) and Steve Hunt holding two nice King Salmon

According to Derwinski, Kenosha is the best fishing harbor on the lake offering excellent fishing close to the harbor.

“This is the best harbor on the lake,” he said. “Kenosha has the highest catch rate on the west side of the lake with an average of over 14 fish caught per charter (outing)”.

Hunt took us out several miles out on the lake where it reaches 120 to 140 feet deep. He and Derwinski began the task of setting out the lines which would cover a spread of water anywhere from the surface down to 50 feet deep.



The setups included the use of downriggers, dipsy divers, planer boards and leadcore line. Each has particular advantages when it comes to presenting lures at the various depths the fish would be holding in. The lure selection for the day would be dodgers, flies and spoons.

The lines were just finished getting set when “Fish On!” was yelled. A fish had already hooked up on the rod and reel with the lead core line. A quick argument ensued amongst us guests about who would take on this first fish; Ellis and I encouraged Albrecht to grab the rod while we readied our cameras. He gratefully obliged.

Captain Andy Derwinski holding a King Salmon Caught by Dick Ellis

It was quickly apparent that this fish was not a coho which, according to Hunt, tend to run about three to six pounds this time of year; this fish was much bigger. Derwinski announced that it was a big chinook (king) salmon that was bending the rod.

Albrecht’s battle with the king lasted for several minutes before it was finally netted and brought into the boat. A few photos were taken of the 15 pound fish and it was put into the cooler.

Over the next couple of hours, we landed several cohos and a nice steelhead trout in addition to the big king. There was also a couple fish that got off before being landed. I will not name the people who lost them, but their first names begin with D and K respectively.

The time between fish was relaxing with everyone sharing hunting and fishing stories; Hunt and Derwinski provided fishing tactics and techniques gleaned from years of fishing Lake Michigan.

About two hours into the fishing, Ellis asked if everyone wanted to head in as he and I had plenty of material and photos for our stories. Both captains shrugged their shoulders and said they were willing to stay out. Albrecht was non-committal, but I ended the argument by stating that I wanted more fish in the cooler. So we kept fishing.

Fortunately for Ellis, we did stay. Shortly after Albrecht and I both landed fish, Ellis took his turn when a fish grabbed a spoon. Right after the fish hit, it started taking line and jumping. Because it kept jumping, the consensus was that Ellis was likely fighting a large steelhead.

After 10 minutes it appeared that Ellis and the fish was in a standoff. The captains determined the fish was wound up in the line. A turn of the boat was in order so that Ellis could gain on the fish.

Once the turn was complete, Derwinski, seeing a tail the size of a pie plate, announced it was another big king. Shortly thereafter the fish, which weighed about 18 pounds, was netted, photographed and put into the cooler with the other fish. Handshakes commenced for the landing of a nice fish.

We ended up with eight fish total in the cooler, five cohos, two kings and a steelhead. I certainly couldn't complain. I ended up with a story and some tasty salmon and trout filets for my grill.

Andy Derwinski of Jedi Sportfishing Charters can be contacted at 414-788-6603. His website is www.jedisportfishing.com. Steve Hunt of Hunters Charters can be reached at 262-914-9100.

If you are looking for a location to post your outdoor photos, visit www.myhuntingpage.com or www.myfishingpage.com.

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