

## Island Sports

# Kids net fish and prizes at reservoir fishing derby

By Adrienne Downing

The biggest fish of the day at the Jamestown Striper Club's annual fishing derby on Saturday did not make its appearance until the derby was officially over and the awards were being presented to the winners.

The 5-pound fish would not have won an award for its captor even if it had made its appearance earlier in the day because it was caught by Matt Zilon, who was just fishing for fun, but it did draw cheers from the crowd.

The largest official fish of the day, a 3-pound, 15-ounce small-mouth bass, was hauled in by Madeline Zeek for the win in the Older Division.

Zeek, daughter of fisherman Greg Zeek, said that her dad doesn't offer her pointers, but he does get involved after the catch. "He pretty much lets me do what I want, but he usually kills himself when he is trying to net the fish," she said.

She had caught several large fish during the day, but catching the winning fish was especially notable for her.

"I got really excited when we caught that one because I had seen the fish before it bit the hook and then I watched it get on the line," Zeek said. "I actually thought it would weigh a little more than it did because it looked so big."

As would be expected from the daughter of a fisherman, she is no stranger to the derby.



The winners of the three divisions in the Jamestown Striper Club fishing derby proudly show off their hardware.

Photo by Adrienne Downing

"I have been fishing in the derby since I was old enough to enter and I have won a few first place and a few second place trophies," she said.

Salt water is where she does most of her fishing, although she does fish in fresh water during trout season and for the fishing derby each year.

Battling for second and third place in the Older Division were twins Nicholas and Alessandro Baccari. Both departed from the conventional fish-from-the-shore mentality and climbed down into the tall grass searching for the prize fish.

In the end, it was Nicholas who took home second place with a 3-pound, 1-ounce bass, and Alessan-

dro a close third with a 2-pound, 10-ounce catch.

Cameron Zweir landed a 1-pound, 5-ounce fish in a close race for third place in the Middle Division. Dimitri Varrecchone just edged Zweir with a 1-pound, 6-ounce catch for second place.

Allison Hartley, as did all of the participants, had to throw back her 1-pound, 10-ounce fish, but she did get to take home the biggest fish trophy for first place in the Middle Division.

Allie Sabourin had the early lead in the 44-person Young Division, but she took home third place after Timmy Fay managed to get his hook on a larger fish for second place.

Julia Littlefield capped off an all-female first place sweep with her 3-pound, 2-ounce catch.

Derby newcomers and veterans alike came early to the reservoir on North Main Road to make the most of the only day each year where fishing is permitted at the site.

Some were hoping for the big prize, while others were just looking to have an enjoyable time.

"The best thing about fishing is that you can sit and relax, and it is so peaceful. You can not catch a thing and still have a great time," Cathy DeVellis said, adding, "The kids are having a blast. They aren't worried about what they are catching, it is all about the experience for them."

Nick Hanson, who was participating in his sixth derby, said he just liked to come out and catch a few fish. His dad, Al, said he was not that relaxed about his first derby, however.

"We live right across the street, so Nick always thought of this as his reservoir. When we brought him out here for his first derby, he looked around and saw all those people out there and was a little upset that they were fishing in "his" pond," he said.

By mid-morning the younger Hanson was close to his goal of seven fish for the day, but said he would stick it out for the length of the derby because he was having such a good time.

Aubrey Campbell was casting her line at her first derby after be-

ing invited by her friend Allison Baldwin.

"I have only been fishing once before with my dad and I even had to borrow a fishing rod from Allison's father," she said. "It is fun, but I really don't like putting the worm on the hook."

Baldwin said the best thing about the experience for her was feeling the tug on the line when she hooks the fish.

Striper Club president Bill Levin likes to hear all of the positive reactions, because, he says, the event is about getting people interested in fishing.

"The great thing about fishing is that anyone can do it and you don't need a million dollars worth of gear to be good at it," he said.

Levin noted that he was particularly impressed with the family aspect of the day and seeing how many families participate together.

"It is wonderful to see how many moms, especially, and grandparents are out here," Levin said. "I look down the shoreline and see a father and son sitting on a blanket and fishing together, and that makes it all worth it to me."

He pointed out that the event has been going on since 1965 and is made possible, in part, because of the generosity of the town.

"We have to have a special permit from the town to use this site and they have always been more

"Fishing" continued on page 16

## A Family Farm.

The Dutra Farm, comprising 100 acres, sits on one of the island's highest and most visible locations. The land is, for the most part, open fields and pasture and is dedicated to a dairy farming operation run by Joe and Jesse Dutra, who are continuing a tradition started by Joe's grandparents in 1917 and continued by Joe's by parents until 1972 when Joe took over. The Dutra Farm is a proud member of the Rhody Fresh dairy co-op.

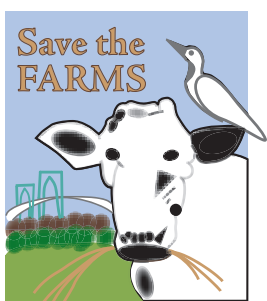
One way you can support the Dutra Farm by buying Rhode Fresh milk at McQuades supermarket in town.

You can also help protect the Dutra Farm, along with the Neale and Ceppi Farms, by donating generously to our Save The Farm Challenge.

For more information, please contact Quentin Anthony at 847-1008, Craig Amerigan at 423-3537, Mike Swistak at 294-3304 or Arthur Milot at 423-1858, or visit our website at [www.conanicutlandtrust.org](http://www.conanicutlandtrust.org)



For 90 years Holsteins have grazed at the Dutra Farm.



## Save the Farms Challenge

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