

Clubs NZ Review

We were excited to be holding this contest again, as it was cancelled last year due to the Covid lockdown, and we were looking forward to seeing all of our old friends again, and some new ones.

We actually had members here from 10 different clubs: Whangaroa Sport Fishing Club, Kamo Club, South Taranaki Club, Northland Club, Ngunguru Sports & Recreation Club, Oamaru Club, Papanui Club, Tokoroa Cosmopolitan Club, Otorohanga Club and Taupo Cosmopolitan Club, so it was nice to see some new clubs and faces. We met the immediate past President of Clubs NZ; Brian Ferguson, the current President; Terry Ray, and CEO; Larry Graham, who all fished on Square Bear as a Clubs NZ team. Kamo Club came well manned again, with 7 teams, we had 4 teams, Northland and Ngunguru had 3 teams each, and South Taranaki and Oamaru had a team each, but the single team clubs were not too disadvantaged as the Taranaki team were with a local boat and skipper - Scott Williams on SpongeBob, and Oamaru chartered our President Terry Lay and Christina!

It was such a shame after waiting so long for this contest, that the weather was so awful; it wasn't cold but it was really windy, and wet, and there were reports of 4m swells on the first day, so needless to say, every boat stayed in the harbour, by the harbour entrance, or hugged the coast tightly, and so catch of the day was kahawai. There were lots and lots and lots of them, with the odd snapper, but Simon Wech on Rough & Ready, fishing for Kamo, managed to also tag and release a kingfish which he later thought he should have weighed in, as it was the only one caught, and a small mako shark, which was also the only shark tagged and released. The heaviest kahawai by the end of day 1 was a respectable 2.82kg caught on braid by Dianne Sullivan aboard Wilson, fishing for Kamo. With 2 sets of prizes to be won for the smaller species, one set for mono and one set for braid, there was plenty to fish for and one of the Kamo Guys – Graham Forbes, fishing on My Workmate, put in the extra effort to fish on 4kg mono, landing kahawai and snapper.

Day 2 was marginally better fishing conditions but most still stayed in and around the harbour, but catching the bait first was not easy, as I think kingfish perhaps were the target for the day, but we saw none. We did see more kahawai and a few more snapper. SpongeBob rescued a dinghy which had drifted away towards the oyster farm behind Red Island and returned it to Totara North, then went on to find a good spot for his anglers where they caught loads of fish and gave the South Taranaki Club a good chance for the trophies.

At prize-giving we had loads of lucky draws for other fish species in the contest that just could not be fished for, which always goes down well with everyone anyway. There were plenty of winners for the kahawai section though, with Peter McNabb on Slainte winning first prize in the mono section, with a fish of 2.96kg, but Graham Forbes got the prize for most IGFA points with a fish of 2.6kg on 4kg line. The top catch in the braid section went to Dianne Sullivan for her 2.82kg fish. There were some winners in the snapper section, with the heaviest fish on mono caught by Scott Williams on SpongeBob, of 6.24kg, and the heaviest on braid, of 4.22kg caught by Kevin Clark on SpongeBob, but again the IGFA points prize went to Graham, with a fish of 3.06kg on 4kg line. Kevin also had the average weight snapper with his fish of 4.22kg being closest to the average weight of 3.74kg. Simon Wech won the prize for the first tag & released shark, and won Kamo Club the prize for the club with most tag & released shark. Dianne Sullivan was surprised to receive the prize for the lady angler with the heaviest fish, for her kahawai of 2.82kg and we gave the prize for the skipper with the most meritorious catch to Scott, for rescuing and returning the dinghy. After allocating points to the 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners, we calculated who had won the national and Northern Region trophies, and it turned out for them to have been won by Kamo Club with 380 points. South Taranaki came close behind with 250 points, and Northland Club were 3rd with 160 points.

Despite the weather the contest was enjoyed by everyone, and it was so nice to see everyone after a year off due to virus. We were very lucky to have some excellent sponsors for this contest, who were Kilwell Sports, Burnsco, Dave Donald on Square Bear, ourselves, and of course Clubs NZ. We are looking forward to our next contest in a year's time.