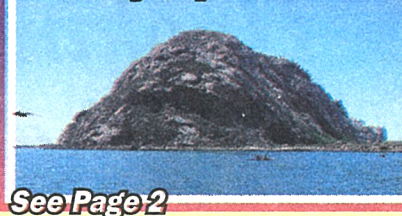




Morro Bay Map Feature



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32 Years
Serving
Sportsmen

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SEE OUR NEW BAJA
ROUNDUP SECTION ON
PAGES 40-41Our
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Jack Naves Wins Kokanee Power Lake Pardee Derby



Fish Sniffer Field Editor Jack Naves took the top spot during the recent Kokanee Power derby at Lake Pardee.

Photo by JACK NAVES, Fish Sniffer Staff.

I still remember my first Kokanee Power derby like it was yesterday. Six years ago, I had just bought my first boat and was still learning how to use downriggers. Somebody convinced me to call Kokanee Power to ask about entering their upcoming Pardee Lake derby.

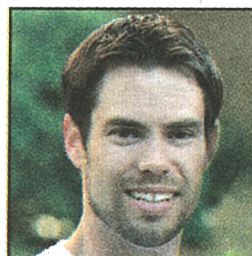
I nervously dialed their phone number and was greeted by Gary Coe, president of Kokanee Power. He explained to me that the derbies are all about having fun and meeting new people. Gary convinced me that the derby would be a great way to meet other kokanee anglers. Since I didn't really know anybody who fished for kokanee, I anxiously signed up for the derby.

My fishing partner Dustin Snyder and I only managed to catch three kokanee that day. As luck would have it, those fish were enough to qualify us for 14th place in the derby. The fire was ignited, and I've been participating in derbies ever since.

A lot of things have changed since that first derby in 2008. I now have a wife and two kids who are learning how to kokanee fish just like I did during my first season. Between the derby circuits and the Fish Sniffer online forums, I've gained an incredible amount of knowledge about the fishery.

The derbies and forums have allowed

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**WHAT'S HOT?
FRESHWATER**
by Jack Naves

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WHAT'S HOT?...FRESH, CONT.

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me to meet some incredibly talented anglers who have shared their tactics for getting finicky kokanee to grab lures. Not only have they made me a better fisherman, but I've made some great new friends along the way. In fact, my family now enjoys summer camping trips with the people I've met through the derby circuits.

According to their website, "Kokanee Power is a non-profit organization of volunteers and members dedicated to the enhancement of California and Oregon Inland Kokanee, Trout & Salmon Fisheries."

They host events including derbies each year to help fund their efforts. Their derbies include lunch, raffles, side pots, and a junior division. They promote a fun and family atmosphere which always makes for a great day, even when the fishing isn't on fire.

Additionally, California Inland Fisheries Foundation, Inc., (or CIFFI for short), is a similar non-profit organization which hosts comparable derbies and other events. Between Kokanee Power and CIFFI, you have opportunities all summer long to have fun and meet new people, all while supporting two great organizations. Supporting these organizations is important because the majority of our kokanee fisheries rely on annual fish plants to sustain their populations.

This year, I fished the Kokanee Power Pardee Lake derby on August 16 with my wife Gina and our two kids Grace and Adam. Lake Pardee is my home lake when it comes to kokanee fishing, and it's also one of my favorites. The facilities feature a spacious ten-lane launching ramp, marina, store, and camp sites. For information, check out their website www.pardeelakerecreation.com or call 209-772-1472.

One of the best things about Pardee Lake is that there are no jet skis or wakeboarding boats allowed. That means that fishing rules, and anglers are allowed to enjoy the lake in peace.

During this year's derby, we enjoyed watching ospreys and bald eagles glide over the lake looking for easy meals. It made for a nice pastime while the kokanee took a break from the action. At Pardee Lake the kokanee don't reach incredible sizes, but what they lack in size they make up for in numbers.

During the late summer, huge schools of kokanee stack

up between Twin Coves and Colombia Gulch. Once you find the right combination of lures, colors, and dodgers, limits can come fairly quickly. It's a great place to get your kids hooked on fishing because the action can be fast and furious.

On July 26, three weeks before the derby, I took a scouting trip to Pardee with my daughter Grace. We found kokanee at 90 feet trolling Apex-style lures and had our limits before 8:00 am. It was such a great bite that we made it back home to Roseville in time for lunch.

During this year's derby, Grace was able to crank some nice-sized kokanee salmon up from depths ranging between 90 and 110 feet. When the derby results were announced, I was elated to learn that her biggest kokanee had landed her in first place in the junior division. Seeing Grace's ear-to-ear smile while she cradled her new trophy made up for the 2:45 am wake up alarm earlier that morning.

While the team prizes were being announced, I had a gut feeling that Gina and I would be amongst the top finishers. First and second place came down to my family and Nathan Lenard's family.

Nathan is a kokanee guru whose family had won the Pardee Lake Kokanee Power derby the previous two years. I've become friends with Nathan over the years, and he has been gracious enough to share a great deal of his fishing knowledge with me. When emcee Al Millan announced that Nathan's team was in second place, I knew that Gina and I had won the derby.

I was extremely grateful to my family for allowing me to drag them out to Ione at five o'clock in the morning. At the same time, I was humble and grateful for all of the tips my new friends in the kokanee community had shared with me over the years. If it wasn't for all of the connections I've made through Kokanee Power, CIFFI, and the Fish Sniffer online forums, I never would have had such an incredible day on the water.

Kokanee Power still has one derby remaining for the 2014 calendar year. If you can make it, enter the Shaver Lake derby on September 6th. You can find information on their website at www.kokaneePower.org. Alternately, check out the CIFFI website at www.ciffi.org to see their upcoming events.

You will find me on the water during next year's derbies trying to figure out what color the kokanee want to bite. This year pink and purple did the trick.

