



# The Rooster Tails Fishing Club of Northern California, Inc.

Educate ~ Entertain ~ Enhance

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Rooster Tails Fishing Club of Northern California, Inc.  
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## James Netzel—Tightlines Guide Service

- 2018 Low Chinook Fishing Season
- James Netzel—Go-to guide to bring home limits of salmon
- Fishing Season being curtailed to increase spawner escapement

**Adventure Travel & Kokanee Tournament**  
August 8—9  
**Stampede Reservoir**

Due to recent California's drought, poor ocean conditions, and over three consecutive years of low abundance of central valley river-fishing, prospects for a 2018 Chinook salmon fishing season are expected to be low. For the first time, state ocean salmon fishing regulations will "automatically conform" to federal ocean salmon fishing regulations using the new process described in the California Code of Regulations Title 14, section 1.95.

In the past, the California Fish and Wild Commission needed to adopt the April season recommended by the Pacific Fish Management Commission (PFMC). In 2017 adult spawning escapement of Sacramento River fall run Chinooks were only 44,574 adults, well below the conservation goal range of 122,000 to 180,000 fish. This is the second lowest return ever. In 2009, when the fishing industry was shut down, the return was 40,873.

California Department of Fish and Wildlife Environmental Scientist Kandice Morgenstern said fishing seasons are being curtailed in an effort to increase spawner escapement to the Sacramento and Klamath river basins in 2018.

The Rooster Tail Fishing Club is inviting members and non-member guests interested in salmon fishing for Kokanee and land-locked Chinook to attend their May 18<sup>th</sup> special seminar by salmon expert James Netzel, owner of Tightlines Guide Service. James is well recognized by the fishing community as being the go-to guide for the latest techniques, tackle, and rigging to bring home limits of salmon. James will have hands-on tackle display as well as his guide boat for breakfast attendees to see how his downriggers and sonar set-up. Reservations are not required, but breakfast attendees are encouraged to arrive early for best parking and seminar seating. **Continued on page 4**



### Inside this issue:

Kokanee & the Lowdown on Shoepeg Corn	2
Catching Kokanee	3
2018 Jackpot Contest	4
Trolling Tip: Alter Speeds	4

### Calendar of Events

**May 18**  
RT Breakfast  
Speaker—James Netzel  
Kokanee Fishing Tips

**June 15**  
RT Breakfast  
Speaker—Michael Lavoie, Branson Baits

**June 20**  
Charterboat Ocean Fishing for Striped Bass & Halibut

### May 2018

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

## KOKANEE AND THE LOWDOWN ON SHOEPEG CORN BY JEREMY JAHN - AKA THE NORTHWEST'S EXPERT... 'THE KOKANEE KID'



*You will hear all kinds of methods and ideas on how to make up and rig corn when fishing for kokanee. In this article I'm going to share with you how I do it on my boat and believe that by doing it this way, you will see **BIG** improvement in your kokanee fishing results.*

### What kind of corn should I buy when fishing for kokanee?

The only corn I use on my boat is Green Giant White Shoepeg Corn. If you can find it in your local grocery store, I typically like to buy a few cases before the start of the fishing season so I'm not racing around trying to find it when the fishing is hot. If I didn't have this brand of corn with me I simply wouldn't go fishing. It's that important.

### Should I drain the corn?

Before mixing up your scent with the corn you need to drain all the juices from the corn. This is very important because the extra juice will dilute the cure you're about to put on the corn.

### Do you put anything on the corn?

Funny you should ask. The base product that I use in all my corn mixes is Pro-Cure Sweet Corn scent. This will help toughen up the kernels of corn, and help preserve the corn from spoiling. Additionally, there is simply something in this cure that Kokanee simply like. This is a great product and a must have on your corn.

### How do you keep the corn fresh and presentable while fishing?

Keep the corn cold! I mix my corn up the night before and keep it in the refrigerator. I then use a small cooler on my boat with a frozen gel pack to keep the corn from spoiling. As soon as I'm done baiting my hooks the corn goes back in the cooler and out of the sun. Heat and sun will not only break down your corn, but many scents will also break down in the sun.

### Should I save my corn for the next fishing trip?

After my fishing adventure is over so is the corn. You can save your corn up to three or four days if kept cold, but after that I would make a new batch. I am a true believer in the NCS,

"New Can Smell", so when my fishing trip is over so is the corns. Kokanee are picky and corn is the cheapest bait you can buy, trust me, having fresh presentable corn on your hook makes all the difference in the world.

### What kind of scents would you recommend for kokanee fishing?

Pro-Cure makes the best scents on the market and I have been using them on my boat for years with great success. This year they have a new water soluble UV enhanced scent and it has been working very well on my boat. Here are my top scents for kokanee fishing – Anise, Garlic, Tuna, Krill, & Shrimp. This year I have been having my best luck with Pro-Cure Water Soluble Fish Oil Garlic Plus, with Pro-Cure Garlic Slam-Ola Powder, and Pro-Cure Wizard Kokanee Killer Korn Magic.

### What kind and color dyes should I use?

Pro-Cure makes a great selection of bait dyes called Bad Azz Color Blast UV Liquid Bait Dye. My top colors are Chartreuse Lime Fluorescent, Magenta Red/Pink and Sunset Orange. Do not over color your corn and if you are going to color it, make sure you also have some natural un-colored corn as well. For example, if the kokanee are looking for pink and your corn is pink it will be lights out fishing, but if they are looking for something else and all you have is pink corn you'll be in big trouble.

### How do you rig your corn? This is a big one!

First off, think of your presentation as an arrow-dynamic-lure trying to cut through the water. Do not overload your hooks with corn, it will simply add dead weight and decrease the action of the lure. Center-up each cornel making sure they are in-line with the lure body. Use one piece of corn per hook running straight back with the small part (cut end) of the kernel facing away from your lure. **Hope this advice helps, good luck!**

## Catching Kokanee: 'They're not like a Rainbow'

Jeremy Jahn says lakes and reservoirs containing Kokanee generally have plenty of the tasty landlocked sockeye salmon for anglers to catch. So, his message to anglers: **Lighten up and share your information.** "If you're having a good day and somebody's having a bad day, make their day by helping them out," said Jahn of Oregon, whose other name is "Kokanee Kid."



Although not a guide, Jahn does sell some Kokanee tackle and gear. He also freely gives out his cell phone number to chat with anyone about Kokanee fishing. Jahn offered his insights from fishing in Oregon at a meeting of Southwest Washington Anglers, a Vancouver sportsmen's group. And while not specific to a certain lake, his suggestions offer plenty of ideas to test locally. Jahn said he believes Kokanee strike tackle because it irritates them, not because they are hungry, although he readily admits a lure without corn on the hook will catch very little. "They're not like a rainbow thinking it is something they want to eat," he said.

Since the goal is to irritate fish, gear that works erratically in the water is great. Certain lures, like hoochies, do not generate their own action and need to be paired with a dodger, Jahn said. Tie the leaders short. "Eight inches is as long as you want to go with a hoochie behind a dodger," he said. "I've fished them as short as 4 inches."

Many lures create their own action. Among them are Shasta Tackle's Wiggle Hoochies, Mack's Wedding Ring spinners, other spinners and Yakima Bait's Spin-N-Glo. Because they create their action, they can be fished behind "lake trolls," which are several spinner blades and a rudder. But, Jahn said, lures such as a spinner also can be fished behind a dodger. "Some say a spinner won't rotate properly behind a dodger," he said. "In my opinion, that's awesome. I want that spinner to kind of flicker, flutter, make some kind of oddball turn and be more of an irritant to that fish."

### Here are several other pieces of advice from Jahn:

**Depth:** Kokanee have a large air bladder and show up well with good electronics. "They are very easy to spot on your

sonar," he said. "If you fish 5 to 10 feet below the school you usually end up picking up bigger kokanee...The bigger ones are usually holding below the school."

**Trolling speed:** For "longlining (without downriggers), he suggested 0.8 to 1.2 miles per hour.

When using downriggers, try from 0.8 to 1.9 miles per hour. "Turns are extremely important when longlining," Jahn said. "It does a couple of things for you. A turn is going to drop gear on one side of the boat. If you're turning your boat toward the right, the gear on the right-hand side is going to drop in the water and it's going to raise the stuff on the left-hand side of the boat. "It's also going to slow down the stuff on the right and speed up the stuff on the left. That causes automatic erratic action."

**Colors:** His top five favorites are silver, gold, pink, orange and chartreuse. "As soon as you find that magic combination, switch out all your rods to it as fast as possible and ride it. That can last 10 minutes or all day. It can last into the next day." Jahn said he does not switch dodger colors as often as lure colors. A gold-silver dodger is a good color to begin with. When using lake trolls, have a 28-inch leader from the end of the troll to the lure.

**Corn:** Jahn, like most kokanee anglers, prefers Green Giant white shoepeg corn. He uses a combination of products to toughen and scent the corn. "I have the fat part of the corn on the hook with the part that was on the cob facing directly back," he said. "It makes the lure work better in the water...."

If you use scent with your corn, it will slowly time-release it into the water instead of it being flushed out." While Jahn contends kokanee strike out of irritation, not hunger, he always tips his lures with corn. "I believe the scent is the irritant on the corn. I'm not quite sure what they think it is, but if you're fishing without corn you're really going to have a hard time catching any."

**Table fare:** Kokanee are great eating and need to be on ice after the catch. "Keep your kokanee cold," he said. "Kokanee are a very fragile fish. If you squeeze them too hard you can actually get marks in the meat. If you keep them outside of ice the bones will separate from the fillets. It's a sockeye salmon, one of the best fish around if you take care of it."

## James Netzel – continued

The California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) released in 2016 their allotment of 634,430 Kokanee into 13 regional lakes and reservoirs. Rooster Tail breakfast attendees can expect excellent fishing opportunities in these waters in 2018, when these fish reach a catchable size. Popular local Kokanee waters include Stampede Reservoir Boca Reservoir, Bullards Bar Reservoir, Don Pedro, Pardee Lake, Union Valley Reservoir, Lake Berryessa, New Melones, and Lake Tahoe.



Happy Tightlines Guide Service clients with limits of Stampede Lake Kokanee salmon.

### Trolling Tip: Alter Speeds by Danny Coyne, Mack's Lure Pro Staff

Most anglers are aware that paying attention to trolling speeds is critical in achieving a successful day of fishing. If we troll too slow, some of the gear we use won't work correctly. And if we troll too fast, our gear can actually repel fish rather than attract them. There are numerous factors to take into consideration when selecting your trolling speeds, such as the lure you're using, the species of fish you're targeting and the time of year, to name a few. The one trolling technique that remains consistent when targeting predator fish, such as rainbow and lake trout, is not to troll the same speed for the entire time in which you're fishing. We hear and read all the time that precise trolling speeds can be ideal, however this doesn't mean that you only troll that one speed consistently.

## Jackpot Contest

JACKPOT CONTEST							
2018	2017	LENGTH	WEIGHT	WATER	DATE	ANGLER	
		Kokanee	17 1/2"	2lbs. 7oz	WHISKEY TOWN	8-5	BEV MIERKEY
		Landlocked Salmon	21"	3lb. 4oz	DON PEDRO	4-28	SHAWN CONLAN
		River or Ocean King Salmon	39"	22lb 6oz	SACTO RIVER	10-11	SHAWN CONLAN
		Striped Bass	34 1/4"		FEATHER RIVER	4-25	TOM HYDE
		Rainbow Trout	24 1/2"	5.43	DON PEDRO R.	3-15	B. MIERKEY
		Brown Trout	22 1/2"	5.4	SHASTA LAKE	3-27	C. MIERKEY
		Steelhead	27 1/2"	9lb 7oz	AMERICAN RIVER	1-17	PETER ZITTER
		Lake Trout (Mackinaw)	23 1/2"		DONNER LAKE	6-23	SHAWN CONLAN
		Large Mouth Bass	14"		CAMANACHE LAKE	2-13	SHAWN CONLAN
		Small Mouth Bass	19 1/2"	4lb 3oz	BERRYESSA	2-15	RIK COX
		Catfish	28 1/2"		CLEARLAKE	11-18	MEL EWING
		Shad	19 1/4"		AMERICAN RIVER	6-23	GREG HICKS
		Croppie	16 1/4"		CAMANACHE	3-9	JOHN HESS
		Surgeon	34"		SACTO DELTA	11-18	MEL TAKAHASHI

2017 entries in red – 2018 entries in black

RAINBOW TROUT, **Bev Mierkey**, 24 1/2", 5.43 lbs., Don Pedro, 3/15/18

BROWN TROUT, **Chuck Mierkey**, 22 1/2", 5.4", Shasta Lake, 3/27/18

STEELHEAD, **Peter Zittere**, 27 1/2", 9 lbs. 7 oz., American River, 1/17/18

LARGE MOUTH BASS, **Shawn Conlan**, 14", Camanche Lake, 2/3/18

SMALL MOUTH BASS, **Rik Cox**, 19 1/2", 4.25 lbs., Lake Berryessa, 2/15/18

Predator fish like to chase their prey! When a bait fish is trying to escape a predator, it doesn't swim exactly at one rate, but rather they make quick bursts through the water. Think of casting a spoon or a crankbait and how we retrieve it. We don't just keep reeling the lure in at one speed – we jerk the line, speed our retrieve up and down to create more action to the lure. The same idea applies to trolling.

Many anglers experience very good results when using planer boards and there's a reason why – when the planer board surges in and out of the water with the waves, it transfers erratic burst like action to the lure, which encourages a striking reaction from the trout. Introduce this trolling technique regardless if you are long lining or fishing off a downrigger. Find a consistent speed that is making your lures work the most effectively. Then, every couple of minutes, adjust your throttle to mimic a bait fish bursting through the water trying to escape from a predator. When practicing this method, be sure to select lures that mimic a bait fish, such as plugs, spoons, Wiggle Hoochies™ and a variety of bucktail flies. I can guarantee you that this will increase your hook up ratio and put more fish in your net.