

View 'Salmon Olympics' from a variety of locations

By GORDON CHARLES
Record-Eagle outdoor editor

One of autumn's most thrilling sights is the jumping of a chinook or coho salmon. And even if you don't happen to be a sport fisherman with one of these silvery warriors on the end of your line, you can still share in the excitement.

This is the time of year when the brilliant battles are beginning to leave Lake Michigan and other big waters to enter their spawning streams. They perform their duties, then die there, as is commonplace with all such Pacific salmon.

During the past few decades, these exciting imports from the West Coast have become so popular that everything possible is being done to guarantee their welfare. From the very beginning, it has been necessary for the Department of Natural Resources to capture enough salmon in the streams to obtain eggs.

The eggs are then used to continue production in a number of state hatcheries, which in turn are the sources for stocking the little fish in the Great Lakes.

In order to make such egg-taking easier, the DNR has constructed a number of weirs where the migrating adult salmon can be captured. Small

dams have been placed in some places and the salmon try to get past them in order to reach their spawning grounds.

Before entering the planned trapping sites, many of the big chinook and coho salmon try to jump the dams, a usually futile effort. While doing so, however, they put on a spectacular show of muscular silver, leaping from the water, time and again, as they try to scale the dam. When they finally discover that won't work, they end up inside the egg-taking area.

There are a number of spots to observe these Salmon Olympics. Right in Traverse City, the Boardman River has a heavy salmon run every fall and some can be seen approaching the weir where the river runs under the Front Street Bridge. The Leland River also has a dam at Fiahtown that is popular with salmon-watchers.

The highest leapers, though, tend to gather at the Platte River Hatchery just east of Honor. A dam there blocks the huge run of coho salmon that try to leap the structure. They try, time after time, but finally give up and swim on into the hatchery maze of pools.

The weir on the Little Manistee River near Stronach is where the much larger chinook salmon show up each autumn. They, too, find their progress blocked and leap repeatedly as



Olympic jumpers they're not, but when salmon head upstream, they put on a spectacular show of muscular silver, leaping from the water time and again at the DNR egg-taking weirs.

they finally enter the hatchery traps. If you don't know the area, ask for directions.

You can also find salmon trying to jump their way upstream at Tippy Dam on the Big Manis-

tee River, not too far from the Little Manistee weir. If you get to Ludington, check out the dam at Hamlin Lake in Ludington State Park. It, too, has a heavy autumn run of big salmon.

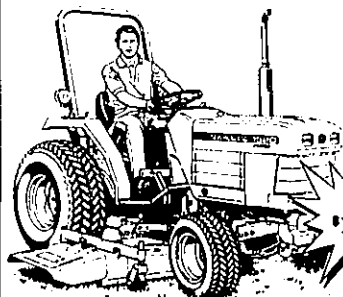
These piscatorial athletes seem to enjoy the challenge of high-jumping. So will you when you take the time to watch them on a colorful autumn day in northern Michigan.

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Autumn one of best fishing seasons

By GORDON CHARLES
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Too many northern Michigan anglers pack away their tackle and turn all of their attention to hunting come autumn. But that can be a serious mistake.

Fall can offer some of the finest fishing found during any season. Coho and chinook salmon come in near stream mouths, figuring on spawning soon in the upper reaches. Most such rivers remain open even past the traditional closing of

the regular trout season Sept. 30. In these waters, a skilled fisherman can tempt a salmon into striking or encounter a hungry steelhead or brown trout.

Inland lakes are virtually deserted in the fall, but the explorer who puts in a boat can find northern pike, muskellunge, walleye, largemouth and smallmouth bass, perch, bluegills and other panfish.

Although some Lake Michigan waters close to lake trout fishing in September, inland lakes with lakere remain open all year.

Most inland lakes also remain open for the other trout species, although brook trout in streams are taboo after September.

Michigan daily limits are generous. For salmon and trout, a mixed catch of five is allowed as long as it contains no more than three of the same species. An exception is lake trout, with only two per day.

If it's bass, walleyes and northern pike you're after, that daily limit is also five for a mixed stringer. Bass have to be at least 14 inches; walleyes, 15; and pike 24 inches.

There are no size limits on Boardman Lake or Lake Dubonnet (Mud Lake) near Interlochen, where there are so many northern pike that size limits have been removed. The five-fish limit still is in force, though.

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