







Since last month many of our CRB club members have been busy with the fun of taking the “next step” in tournaments beyond club level and the results have been just short of fantastic. First, Ed Chin and Randy Decker took a trip to the May TBF Divisional at CJ Strike Reservoir. We asked Zip to put together his accountability of this trip for all to enjoy.

Then this past weekend on the Willamette, Nick Chin, put together an early strong winning limit (over 12lbs) to qualify him to participate in the Junior World Championship, representing Oregon for TBF, in Georgia for his 3<sup>rd</sup> consecutive year.

Tristan Decker, Zip’s son, is off to Wyoming with his dad to fish the BASS Western Regional. Randy will have a report at the June CRB meeting for us to enjoy.



Nick with part of his winning weight.

## TBF Western Divisional CJ Strike Reservoir May 9<sup>th</sup> to 11<sup>th</sup>

Not a typical report, but I'll share with the group a specific experience at this tournament. 60 entries- 12 teams from five Northwest states. I qualified as a non-boat and I drew a top angler from Idaho Jason Hickey. We shook hands and all he said was we would fish reaction and plastics. After two quick stops in coves at first light we drove to an offshore location in the Bruneau Pool. There were a few boats in the area already. Jason began to cast a jerkbait and it didn't take long for a 2lb. Then a few minutes later a huge boil where his bait was running and I netted the first 4lb smallmouth. Minutes later he gets another strike and it's over 3lbs. Minutes after that another 4lb beast! I've caught a rat, and now I've got my box of jerkbaits out on the back deck.

I "twitched" a Pointer in clown color (this what he called the technique, although the bait was subsurface and it actually was a fast retrieve with pauses designed to make the bait action as erratic as possible). I make a cast and begin to "twitch" and finally! My rod loads up. It was a huge relief for me to finally shout: NET! The fish is coming in just fine, but it's not well hooked. Not well enough- at the side of the boat in front of the net the fish turns and comes off. Utter disappointment. I simply could not catch Jason's fish. I had to come up with my own solution.

By now it's 9am, and I'm down 18lbs to zero. The flat was 4ft deep with intermittent flat rock and sand, and there were occasional beds now visible and there were fish. Jason set down the jerkbait. I tied on a 3/8oz football head jig with a Creature Bait. He spots a 4lb on a bed- breathtaking. He begins to work it with a jig. She's showing signs of interest. I fan cast my jig and retrieve it steady praying I'll drag through a similar bed. I get bit and I swing in a 2lb. Jason continues to work the bed fish. I see other fish swimming around- solid 2 somethings! Soon Jason gets his bed fish to bite and I'm netting a smallmouth pushing 5lbs. Outrageous! But the boats nearby seem uninterested.

I'm looking for beds from the back as Jason cruises the flat on the trolling motor. He stops at another 4lb. I catch a 2lb on the jig. He will not let me cast to the bed. He gets her to go and now he's culling 3's. Though it's in the rules, I'm not allowed to use the front. I keep dragging until I have a limit of 2's. He pulls another 4lb off a bed and again he declined to let me try for it. After pulling another 4lb he finally gives me the front but there are no more 4s. I know my time is limited so I pass up 3s that don't seem interested on the first pitch. I'm using a bright colored 4" Senko I can see. I stop to work the agitated fish and I put a couple 3s in my well. These feel like hollow victories by comparison, and then we leave. It's only 1pm. He says he has to save the spot for two more days. Jason leads the 1<sup>st</sup> day with 20lbs. I weigh-in just under 12lbs. A nasty cold front blows in the next day and the wind is whipping. Jason loses the tournament. Different boaters for the next two days and I fall to 26<sup>th</sup>.

