



It gets harder and harder to come up with some expression that describes the year that was. Bigger and better, record breaking, phenomenal, unbelievable, all have been used in the past. I think they all apply to this year and even more, so I think I'll use superlative as the phrase this year. The 2009 SWT season was superlative.

Ok enough with the wording and let's get right down to the 2009 season that was. The Year started out strong with great numbers at the first tournament in both entry's and members. Fishing was tuff but our reigning Angler of the Year, Tom Johnston and partner Shane Hastings went from boundary to boundary each day and claimed the win. Not a bad start for Tommy J to repeat.

The next tournament we held a "Media Day" on the Thursday before the tournament and it turned out to be a great success. We had coverage in all three venues, TV, Radio, and Newsprint. Although the fishing was really slow, all had a great experience and had nothing but great things to say about the SWT. The tournament itself wasn't any easier as a record amount of teams had a zero for at least one of the two days. New SWT member Heather Yanko and husband Dave put together two strong days and came out victorious.

Speaking of new SWT members, I must mention that we have grown by leaps and bounds each year and it has a lot to do with our "New Member" cash prize sponsored by Delvin & Linda Kushniryk of Canadian Oakworks Ltd. This prize was the idea of Delvin and Linda to get new members to join and boy were they on the mark.

Moving on to Sask Landing where they continued the trend of increase in entries. Great weather and great fishing and great tournament organization are the main factors of this ever growing in popularity tournament. On a side note Mike & Marc Coupland had just completed back to back tournament wins at Riverhurst and Duncairn and were sitting in first spot after day one. Would we see a triple header in wins, well it was real close as Ray Lamy and Dennis Blais came out on top with a weight over 50 pounds. But two wins and a 2nd place finish out of three tournaments is a feat we may never see again and the Couplands were hoping to carry their hot streak into the Fort.

The Fort tournament was a mixed bag for most anglers with good weights coming out both days. Home lake favorites, Bryan & Lois Schlosser had two great days with Lois catching some huge fish. Bryan of course netted them with pleasure but took the ribbing in good spirits. They would take home the Cup and qualify for the next weekend Championship Challenge.

So the Table was set for the final tournament of the season. Rowans would decide all categories and may the best anglers win. Some huge weights came out on day one but the leading anglers left the door open for others to catch them. Shane Belter who was vying for the coveted Angler of the Year was in third place after day one and all but locked up the Angler prize. All he would need is a small weight on day two and the crown should be his. Well he not only came in with a huge weight day two, but won the tournament and Angler of the Year all at the same time.

Mike & Mark Coupland closed off an incredible year and won the Team of the year after their closest rivals couldn't catch them after day one.

Mixed team was a battle to the finish between Doug & Reina Foord and Darren & Viki Zeller. The Zellers had a strong showing at Rowans and sneaked by the Foords to claim the title.

But perhaps the high light of the night was when the SWT membership chose Fred & Evelyn Paslawski as the Sportsman of the year. After the standing ovation a very grateful Freddy & Evelyn thanked everyone. It was quite moving.

The Championship Challenge was a battle right to the end but when all the smoke cleared Greg Earis won the championship and was presented the Lund boat, Mercury outboard and ShoreLand'r trailer by Ryan Sproule of Lund boats. I have mentioned this before but it stands worthy of saying again. Lund Boats along with Mercury and ShoreLand'r have been a huge supporter of the SWT for as long as I can remember. They also support many other tournaments across Canada and the US and I ask you, what other company do you know of that puts as much time effort and money into our sport. We can't say enough about what Lund does for fishing and we are deeply appreciative of what they do. We are lucky, and honored to be associated with such a great company in our sport. \

So that was the 2009 season in a nutshell. Of course there are many more stories to be told but for now we will leave them till later. I hope you all enjoyed the 2009 SWT season and I can only imagine how great the 2010 season will be but for now... What a year.

Rob Furutani
SWT President