

150 Pound Halibut Takes Home Weekly Prize in Halibut Derby

VALDEZ – Two visitors from Utah took the weekly 1st and 2nd place prizes in week number eight of the Valdez Halibut Derby. Linda Hall-Smith of Huntsville, Utah reeled in a 150.0 pounder aboard the *Orion* to win prizes valued at \$135 and Max Hohman of Huntsville took second place weekly with a 134.6 pounder. Hall-Smith and Hohman happily accepted their prizes, but it could easily have been an angler from Hawaii winning the weekly prize.

Derby clerk Bonnie Woods said Paula Earl from Kona went fishing on a private boat with her husband Jim and their friend Roger Butler from Paxson. They didn't have a derby ticket, but wanted to know what Earl's 78 inch halibut weighed. Woods graciously agreed to weigh in the fish and it tipped the scales at 196.7 pounds. Catching big fish is nothing new to Paula. Her husband proudly told Woods that she had pulled in a 908 pound marlin in Kona. While Earl has the distinction of catching a large halibut, without a derby ticket she takes home no prizes, just a freezer full of halibut.

Derek Nahinu's 262.3 pound halibut is still leading in the Valdez Halibut Derby. The North Pole angler caught his fish aboard the *North Country* July 7th. Steven Fitch of Fairbanks is currently in 2nd place in the overall standings with the 220.5 pound flat fish he caught June 19th aboard *Lady Luck* and George Thul of Tucson, Arizona is hanging onto 3rd place with the 216.1 pounder he caught aboard the *North Country* June 29th.

Anglers have been catching pink salmon off the city docks as well as in Allison Point. While Dave Cobb of the Valdez Fisheries Development Association said Valdez doesn't have as many pink salmon as the record-breaking year last year, the Alaska Department of Fish and Game reports that the pink salmon coming in from the Eastern Sound are larger-than-average. Anglers have been catching their limit of pinks in little as 2 hours directly from the shore and King salmon are still coming into port as well. Large lingcod have been hanging from the hooks and according to Brain Marston of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, lingcod angling has been better on outside waters. Seal Rock was a very productive area for lingcod last week.

Derby tickets for both the salmon and halibut derbies are \$10 each and are good for one day of fishing in the derby. A season ticket for either species is \$50. Participants of the derby will also get their names put into a drawing for a truck from Seekins Ford. For more information on the Valdez Halibut Derby or upcoming silver salmon and women's derby, go to www.valdezfishderbies.com.

HALIBUT DERBY – OVERALL LEADERS – WEEK #8

| | Name /address | | Weight (lbs.) | Date | Charter |
|-----|---------------|----------------|---------------|------|---------------|
| 1st | Derek Nahinu | North Pole, AK | 262.3 | 7/7 | North Country |
| 2nd | Steven Fitch | Fairbanks, AK | 220.5 | 6/19 | Lady Luck |
| 3rd | George Thul | Tucson, AZ | 216.1 | 6/29 | North Country |

HALIBUT DERBY- WEEKLY WINNERS – WEEK #8

| | | | | | |
|-----|------------------|----------------|-------|------|-------|
| 1st | Linda Hall-Smith | Huntsville, UT | 150 | 7/11 | Orion |
| 2nd | Max Hohman | Huntsville, UT | 134.6 | 7/11 | Orion |