

Princecraft's NOPWT opens at Mattagami First Nation

A record field of 134 teams that included Canada's famous fishing brothers Bob & Wayne Izumi gathered at Mattagami First Nation to take their shot at the over \$18000.00 in prizes available to the top walleye anglers.

Frigid temperatures greeted the anglers Saturday morning and plenty of winter wear was in evidence.

Things wouldn't change much throughout the day as persistent winds kept anglers bundled up in hopes they would be able to feel the bites when they came.

One team who didn't miss many bites was the duo of JC Cayen & John Vrolyk who brought a major league limit of 16.38 pounds to take the day one lead.

Close behind were 2-time Mattagami champs Dave Stiles & Ron Drapeau who posted 15.96 on the board.

Perennial contenders Danny Hein & Didier Germain held third with just under 15 pounds.

Jeff Shippam & Dan Katic amassed 14.67 to hold 4th and NOPWT veterans Russ Smith & Dean Bliss weighed in 14.63 to sit 5th after day one.

The hall at Mattagami First Nation was packed and busy as anglers told lies and caught up on old friendships and everyone had their time to chat with Bob & Wayne. Things quieted down early as the teams headed back to their various accommodations to get ready for Sunday.

Day two brought a light fog that did not delay the 7am start. A 3 pm weigh-in meant there would be 1 hour less to find the fish.

The big bag of day two would belong to two brothers but not the Izumis.

Luc Dion and Brother Denis hauled in 14.92 to jump from 44th place into the top ten with 21.58. Last years 3rd place team from Elk Lake; Mike Daoust & Mike Free moved up from 12th to take 9th with a two-day total of 22.73 pounds.

Roch Bouchard & Jim Patry added 12.54 to their day one to sit 8th with 23.07.

Former "Cache" champs Brian Millions & Robert Huff would use a 13 pound limit to move from 21st into the 7 spot with 23.33.

Stiles and Drapeau would slip to 6th after a tough day two.

A 9.30 would be enough for Kapuskasing's Big "O" team of Smith & Bliss to hold onto 5th.

Team Princecraft's Hein & Germain lost a spot to finish fourth with 25.52.

Two 13 pound limits would be lucky for Sudbury's Peter Sporer & Roger Godin as their 27.18 total would give them the 3rd place cheque.

Wawa's Jamie Robinson & Terry Bernath would add 14.55 to their total and fall just short of the win with 28.22.

In the end no one could make up the ground as Timmins's JC Cayen & John Vrolyk would back up their day one bag with a solid 12.81 for a whopping total 29.19 pounds and take home the \$10 000.00 First Place Prize.

As things wrapped up at the MFN hall the endless stream of sponsor prizes meant that even those who had some tough fishing still had a great time and left with some loot.

The volunteer team mad a special presentation to recognize Spencer Moyle as a young angler who has returned year after year to compete in this fabulous event since he was able to handle a

rod & reel. Spencer declined to make a speech but he had barely found his chair before his name was called as the winner of yet another sponsor prize.

Still shaking hands and posing for pictures the Izumi brothers were gracious guests and after being presented with gifts from the volunteer team Bob said a few words.

He first expressed surprise at the size of the tournament field and the fine job done by all the volunteers as well as the overall quality of setting and hospitality received by all the anglers.

After the prize presentations the anglers headed for home to get ready for the next NOPWT event in Dubreuilville and the community of Mattagami First Nation settled in for a well-deserved rest.