

The Striper Swiper Cod Fishing Trip

By Van Christie

It was a cold, cloudy, windy day in May. Just perfect for a fishing trip. 13 Junior MSBA members and 16 Adults boarded the Mary Elizabeth out of Plymouth Harbor at 2 PM. Captain Tim Brady at the helm took the kids past the Mayflower and Plymouth Rock on the way out and explained a bit of history in the meantime. About 45 minutes later we were in 4-5 foot seas with howling wind. Who could ask for more?

The captain decided to head for an area that would be a bit calmer to fish. On the way to that spot, some "eagle eyed" juniors spotted a whale surfacing. It only surfaced one more time before disappearing for good, but at least some of the kids got to see it. Once we got to the new spot, the captain rang a bell and everyone dropped their lines. The action was slow, but we stayed for a while and got a couple of undersized cod. The captain rang the bell again, off to a new spot! At this location the kids started to get more hits. We boated a sea robin, several mackerel, some more small cod (all released unharmed) and even a couple of Sand Sharks.

Still not satisfied with the fishing action, the captain rang the bell again. At his last spot we started catching fish right away. Some more small cod, but a couple of keeper cod were caught too. Then it happened; people were yelling, a rod was bent way over and one of the parents was fighting a BIG fish. After a few minutes, the mate saw what it was and told all the kids to stand back as he boated this fish. It was a huge Wolf fish and it was not happy! The Wolf fish is one of the meanest, ugliest fish in the ocean, its as black as coal with teeth as big as a dog's. He captain started to smack it with his fish bat, but that only made it mad. Finally after a few good whacks, the big fish was stunned enough to be put in the fish box and the excitement was over.

It was getting late and the trip was almost over, the juniors re-baited their hooks trying frantically to catch a big one before the day was over. No more big ones were caught, but that's the way it goes. What I like to say is "Just being with friends and having a good time is the best part of fishing, and if you catch something that's a bonus." Well the captain rang the bell for the last time and it was time to head back to the dock. The mate sharpened his knife and started to fillet the fish we caught. That seemed to be a very interesting event for the juniors. They gathered around the mate and watched him cut the fish. Fish guts, scales, slimy fish muck was all over the place, and a bunch of seagulls were following the boat. Apparently that is another cool part about fishing (WHO KNEW!) The captain announced that he would even let all the kids drive the boat on the way in. They lined up according to age and brought the boat all the way into the harbor.

We took lots of pictures of the kids and their catch, and I think all in all they had a good time even though the weather was pretty bad, and the fish did not cooperate very much. I know I had a good time watching these kids fish and laugh. They are all good sportsmen/women and did not complain at all during the day. I'm sure they will only get better at fishing. Practice makes perfect!

The striper swipers meetings are over for now, but we will start up again in the fall. We are thinking of another shore fishing day to start off the season. Until then, don't forget about the Annual MSBA outing in July. There will be lots of food and activities, plus a junior's casting contest. We hope to see you there.

But even if you can't make it we hope you all have a great summer, and we want to hear those fish stories next fall at the first meeting.