

New Pending Virginia State Record Striped Bass 73lbs

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23 January 2008

I got the phone call from the Virginia Beach Fishing Center Wednesday afternoon, and I knew something was up. They wanted me to go down the Fishing Center to help verify and report on the new Pending State Record Striped Bass. I grabbed my camera, and I was on my way.

By the time I arrived, most of the mayhem was done, but the fish-and oh what a fish it was- was still lying on the ice. It was massive! I met with the crew, the owner of the boat, and the angler.

The recreational trip began out of Rudee Inlet Wednesday morning, where the Country Girl Captained by Pat Foster, embarked on a striper-catching mission off the coast of Virginia Beach with dozens of other boats to keep them company. After catching a few stripers ranging up to about 35 pounds, they ventured off the mouth of the Chesapeake Bay near the 4A buoy in pursuit of working birds and bait. When the monster fish hit the red and white Stretch 30, angler Fred Barnes of Chesapeake was ready. Fred described the notorious 10-minute battle of a lifetime as "not much." In fact, he guessed the fish to be about a 40-pounder. He was surprised when he finally spotted the fish, and realized it was much, much bigger! The crew, which included boat owner, Kenny Finck, are a very proud bunch, and rightly so. This fish is only 5.5 pounds shy of the 78lb 8oz IGFA World Record caught off New Jersey in 1982. Fred, the angler, is no stranger to big striped bass. He also won the World Championship Striped Bass Tournament in 2005 with a 58lb 13 oz rockfish he pulled from the surf! Fred is trying to decide if he wants it mounted. I vote yes! The fish measured 52-inches long, and 31.5-inches in girth. I put him in touch with Dave Saunders, so I hope he will.

The fish is huge! It is very proportional, and solid...a gorgeous specimen. It is hard to judge how big it is by looking at it with the crew, so I stepped into the picture between the crew, and now you can see how big it is!

IMG_2986-Adrian (mate), Pat Foster (Captain), Fred Barnes (Angler), Kenny Finck (boat owner)-
Photo By Dr. Julie Ball

Julie

