

Press Release – January 13th, 2006

Jaycees Move Extravaganza to Round Lake

Anglers who have been anxiously awaiting the news won't have to wait any longer. Organizers for the world's largest ice fishing contest announce the Brainerd Jaycees \$150,000 Ice Fishing Extravaganza will take place as scheduled on Saturday, January 21, 2006, on Round Lake. The Jaycees have moved the contest to the nearby lake where conditions are better suited to host the contest, which typically attracts more than 10,000 anglers.

With safety as the number one concern, the change of lakes is just one of organizer's contingency plans, and local officials, as well as Round Lake Association members, have been consulted. Additional plans include limiting weight on the ice, enlarging the contest boundaries, and making site layout modifications.

According to Jaycee organizer, Mary Devine, "We're not trying to kid anybody, we still need $\frac{3}{4}$ to an inch more ice, but we feel good about the projected temperatures and are proceeding as planned."

"Of course," Devine continues, "there is still a chance we'll have to postpone to February 4th. Our tasks would be the same if we did postpone, but there are many other variables involved, so we'd like to give the planned date every chance we can to make it work. We'll keep monitoring the ice and make a final call on Wednesday, January 18th. The Extravaganza won't take place if it can't be safe."

Round Lake was chosen as the alternate site due to similarities in traffic layout and access. As part of the Gull Chain, the same fish species are present and anglers should look forward to the chance to visit the weigh-in tent where contest officials will be working with the DNR and Walleye Alliance members to release as many fish as possible. One new tournament restriction that anglers will have to follow includes the DNR mandated release of Northern Pike under 30 inches, which is in effect on Round Lake.

"Nobody will be allowed to weigh-in, or keep a pike under the legal minimum," says Mark Spitzack, Head Weigh-in Official. "We don't see that as a problem. Round Lake is a good fishery and there are a lot of fish to be caught. We might even see a few more crappies and sunfish this year, which will make it more fun for the kids."

Well over \$150,000 in cash and prizes will be up for grabs when the anglers hit the ice. Everyone will have an equal chance to win a new Ford truck, \$10,000 cash, a Polaris ATV, or any of the other big prizes the Extravaganza has become famous for. The largest 150 fish of the day will earn a prize.

Kicking off the weekend is the Extravaganza Premiere Party at Grand View Lodge where anglers will have the opportunity to talk ice fishing and meet with baseball legend, Kent Hrbek, as well as industry sponsors and ice fishing pro's. A hearty appetizer buffet, beer tasting, and prizes will add to the festivities.

“The Premiere Party is a great way to start the weekend fun,” says Devine. “Everyone has ice fishing on the brain and here we’ll have the biggest names in the industry to help develop winning strategies and get everyone geared up for the contest.”

Also getting geared up are the more than 350 volunteers who play various roles in the Extravaganza. Many of them represent their non-profit charities who will share in the contest proceeds. Confidence Learning Center, an outdoor education and recreation facility for persons with disabilities, will receive 70% of this year’s funds. Participant and volunteer efforts combined to raise more than \$167,000 for charity last year.

Tickets are still on sale at Brainerd-area retailers or at the contest web site. They will also be available on the ice the day of the contest. Premiere Party tickets are available at Cash Wise Liquor in Brainerd or Baxter. Eager anglers are being asked to keep an eye on the Extravaganza website, www.icefishing.org, for updates and announcements throughout the week.