

The Winners of the America's Peace King Cup Fishing Tournament

Kensaku Takahashi

May 12, 2018



The Peace King Cup Fishing Tournament, held to celebrate the 58th Anniversary of True Parent's Holy Blessing, concluded joyfully at an awards ceremony and lunch on May 12, 2018, at Clifton Family Church in New Jersey.

This year, 110 participants competed for the top prize of \$3,000 and a trophy worthy of an Olympic sized fish. The winner was New Jersey resident John Hessel, who caught a 41.5" striped bass which tipped the scales at almost 27 lbs.

The Peace King Cup tournament has served as a cornerstone of remembering our True Parents anniversary by highlighting one of their favorite past times -- fishing on the Hudson River and adjoining waterways. True Father first started catching striped bass in the late 1980's. The tournament itself was initiated in April, 2000, with over 200 participants aboard 20 Good Go boats, crowding the Hudson River from Tarrytown to Haverstraw Bay.

Sometimes, participants resorted to half day shifts onboard to accommodate the high number of participants who came from as far away as Japan and Korea. Due to the high participation, it was decided to extend the tournament to a week-long event starting in 2010.

Striper fishing can be a challenge, and it certainly was this year when cooler weather conditions extended well into May. Lower than usual water temperatures seemed to have an impact. 26 striped bass over 28" were caught throughout the week. "I thought about the perseverance of brothers and sisters as we waited many hours to catch a fish," said Dr. Ki Hoon Kim, Regional Chairman of Family Federation North America, when asked about his experience at this year's tournament.

Tournament winner John Hessell dedicated his success to his older brother, a man who loved the ocean and who passed away the day after John's winning catch. Younger Unificationists were well represented on the leader board, with 12 year-old Adam Beaudoin landing two fish! His largest, at 37.25" was good for a third place win.

Elissa McMahon, took 4th place with a 37" striper, proving she has what it takes to compete. In fact, it was her second time placing in the top five in the last few years.

Manuel Liba was the captain of the boat that caught the tournament winner for the second consecutive year. Manuel works regularly captaining a commuter ferry which carries Manhattan workers across the Hudson each day. He takes a week off from work every year to captain a Good Go.

After prizes were distributed at the awards luncheon, a special announcement was made to honor Mr. Kensaku Takahashi, Director of Ocean Church since 2005, who is retiring this month. He received a tribute from the PKC boat captains who presented him with a special gift -- a painting of Mr. Takahashi fishing on Lake Mead with his most important passenger, True Father, painted by Wabe.

The new captain taking responsibility at the helm of Ocean Church is Branch Gaardner, who also serves as Director of the Kodiak Ocean Challenge program with his wife Naria.

The Winners

1st place: John Hessell 41.5 inches 26.85 pounds

2nd place: Miguel Consoro 38.1/4 inches 24.66 pounds

3rd place: Adam Beaudoin 37.1/4 inches 19.46 pounds

4th place: Elissa McMahon 37 inches 17.81 pounds

5th place: Jin Hyung Eu 35.5 inches 15.38 pounds

