

KHP REEL DEAL
"TAK'EN IT TO THE LIMIT"
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By: Tom Spencer

Earlier this year I wrote an article on the KHP/REEL DEAL youth fishing club. The 2008 state season is now over for them and I feel like this club represented the Kansas State Troopers Association and the Kansas Highway Patrol organization in fine fashion.

The members helped out at the Wichita River Festival, Sports Boat and Travel Show with "Make A Wish", Exploration Place with the ARC, Sedgwick County Zoo's Cruisin in the Jungle with the ARC and the Derby Community Coalition Summer Fest 2008 just to name a few. They did several fishing clinics at area locations including the school districts and the three high schoolers were featured in July on channel 12's sports web site in a story about competitive fishing.

Brande Branine was also featured this year in the Wichita Eagle newspaper after winning the state championship. Brande Branine was the point's leader after the three Kansas State Tournaments and is the Kansas Bass Federation Youth State Champion for 2008. She fished the Divisional at Yankton South Dakota where she placed fifth.

Cale Renollet finished second in the state this year and Joe Orsi was not far behind. There is no doubt that Jared, Abe, Andy and Kenny will have some big shoes to step into when the time comes. This is a small fishing club so to have all three high school anglers from the same club finish so high in state competition is not only unusual, its almost unheard of especially when they are members of a new club and other clubs have up to 40 members for support.

As the Senior Advisor and I should say "rookie" Senior Advisor for this club, it has been an honor to be associated with its youth members. I have had the opportunity to watch the oldest (high school) members of this club grow into young adults in such a short time. I have watched and been there to see them drive cars, attend prom, fish in extreme weather, fish when not feeling well, choke down energy drinks (smile), make decisions, mentor young children and help with anything I have asked of them. They have donated countless hours to events described above and helped make a difference in the quality of life of others, mainly the younger children in their communities and ours.

I feel as though I have known them for most of their lives, not just this short year. They have reminded me of my own children, Rachel and Matthew on more than one occasion, and it has left me teary-eyed, smiling and super proud, mostly, all at the same time. I know that for our three oldest members (Joe, Cale and Brande) college is close and their parents will soon be cutting a few strings, not all, but a few. I know that as a Senior Advisor, I'm not sure who got the most out of this year. I do know I wouldn't have traded the times spent with these fine young men and women for all the gold in the world.

I have always loved the Eagles they are one of my favorite rock bands. For Joe, Cale, Brande, Jared, Abe, Andy and Kenny, they truly "Take It To The Limit" with KHP REEL DEAL. Job well done....I can't wait for 2009!!