

Merland Park Held its 3rd Annual **Ice Fishing Derby** on January 27 – 29, 2012. We had over 40 guests attend and participate. It was a huge success again this year with \$800 in proceeds going to the **Picton Kiwanis Club**. The derby consisted of two nights' accommodation; Friday night steak dinner and Saturday night fish fry along with Texas Hold'Em both nights. There was over \$5000 in Prizes that were generously donated by sponsors and handed out to derby winners.



Events on the ice included the **Shirt Off/Fish On** competition where participants had to remove their shirts and race to see who would catch the first fish. Our first place winner was Sean James who took home a Certificate for a 4 Day Stay at Merland Park, for four people, with boat rentals. For coming in second place, Neil Cathcart won a \$350 Guided Goose Hunt for two with Expert Mathieu Godard.



In the afternoon, the **Closest to the Flag Golf Competition** was held and participants braved the blowing winds and falling snow and golfed on the Bay. The winner was Scott Jarvis who won a Golf Prize Pack.



The most famed event, and back by popular demand, was the **Fear Factor Challenge**. Participants had to bite a worm in half, bait their hook with the one half and then race to catch a fish. Once a fish was on the line they had to race back to swallow a minnow! The Fear Factor Champ was Alex Cervenak. Alex has been to the Derby every year and this year we were all the more grateful to have him with us. Alex was in a devastating motorcycle accident in the summer where he literally clung to life for a period of time. He has made an incredible and miraculous recovery and was determined to make it back to Merland Park for the Derby this year. With the help and support of his wife, Maria, he not only made it but won the biggest prize – the \$600 gas auger generously donated by Picton Canadian Tire!



Fear Factor winners also included Mike Bellefeuille, from Last Minute Hunting and Fishing.com who bigheartedly donates a great prize to the derby every year and who came in a close second and took home a gift bag of tools given to the derby by Castle Building Centre in Picton. And finally Doug Cathcart, who was the only one to actually chew the minnow, came in third and won a \$550 Salmon Fishing Charter with expert guide Ivan Rousseau.



The action on the Bay was awesome. We had guys chasing after their ice huts, a fox looking for spare bait, ATV's cruising and lots of ice huts filled with avid ice fishermen trying to catch the biggest fish of the day! The spectators gathered on the ice to cheer them on. Everyone enjoyed hot coffee and Timbits provided by Tim Horton's in Picton. Our winner for biggest fish caught on Friday was John Chmielak who won a smoker donated by Last Minute Hunting and Fishing.com. 1st place for Biggest Fish overall went to Steve Wickens who won a fish finder provided by Belleville Sport & Lawn. 2nd Place went to Al Fraser who took home a fish fryer donated by Bass Pro Shops and 3rd place went to Mark Cotton who won a fishing supply gift basket contributed by Picton Home Hardware.



We had a great group of guys and gals come out for the derby again this year! The weekend was filled with excitement, terrific food, great outdoor fun and camaraderie and we were left with lasting memories of another successful ice fishing derby! A special shout out and big thank you to all our sponsors and to the staff at Merland Park who work tirelessly to make sure this event goes off without a hitch. Lastly, to our families who not only cook the dinners, bake the desserts and help serve our guests but who join us in making Merland Park a family oriented resort that welcomes our visitors with open arms!

