

Baumgartner and McConnell place 1st in catfish tourney

Written by Holyoke Enterprise

A team from Holyoke took home the top prize in the annual Southwest Ike's Catfish Tourney held Saturday, April 7 at Enders Lake in Enders, Neb.

Houston McConnell and Reid Baumgartner had no trouble placing first as they hauled in 23 pounds, 2 ounces of catfish, 11 pounds more than the second-place team.

The effort netted the Holyoke team the first place cash prize of \$790.

Placing second was a team from Champion, Neb., Charlie and Brandon Beard, who pulled in 12 pounds, 2 ounces and the second-place prize of \$470.

In third were Tom Zishovsky of Breckenridge and Mark Balderston of Fairplay, who caught an even 12 pounds of catfish. They took home \$315.

The McConnell/Baumgartner team also had the biggest individual catfish caught in the contest at 12 pounds, 3 ounces, so they also took home the "big fish" pot, said contest coordinator Tom Elder of Imperial, Neb.

The first-, second- and third-place prize money is determined by the number of entries, which Elder said was the best turnout they've had.

Twenty-one two-person teams competed from Nebraska, Colorado and Kansas.

Rules of the contest include counting only channel catfish with a 14-inch minimum size, and a five-fish limit per team. Fishing is allowed from a boat or the bank. Only legal, commercial or natural bait is allowed. Use of cell phones or wireless devices to convey fishing information is not allowed.

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Elder said Ike's will hold the annual contest in 2013 on the first Saturday in April.

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