

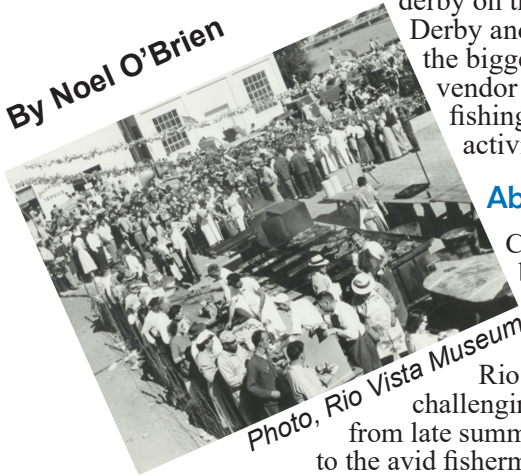
# Annual Rio Vista Bass Derby

## Longest Running Fishing Derby on the West Coast

### Annual Rio Vista Bass Derby & Festival

As the summer comes to a close and the weather begins to cool, the longest running fishing derby on the west coast again comes to Rio Vista, California! The annual Rio Vista Bass Derby and Festival typically runs each year on the second weekend in October. It is the biggest weekend of the year in Rio Vista and there's lots to enjoy... The carnival, vendor booths, classic car show, parade, music, soap box derby, and of course, the fishing derby. Check the website at [www.bassfestival.com](http://www.bassfestival.com) for the latest event and activity details.

By Noel O'Brien



Photo, Rio Vista Museum

### About the Bass Derby

Considered to be a foundation piece for Rio Vista over the years, the Bass Derby brings people together from near and far. Rio Vista, "The Gateway to the Delta" is a perfect location to hold this unique annual event. By the way, the fishing can be pretty outstanding as well!

Rio Vista's strategic location on the California Delta is a perfect setting for this challenging yet rewarding fishing tournament. Striped Bass return in great numbers from late summer to December. This voracious and hard fighting fish gives its own challenge to the avid fisherman who takes up rod and reel in pursuit. The Derby is also host to salmon and sturgeon fishing. The King Salmon run continues to be one of the strongest salmon fisheries runs on the west coast. Sturgeon remains a strong and vital sport fish within the complex waters of San Francisco Bay and the Delta region.

The California Delta is an intricate and multi-leveled ecosystem, which affords our community the opportunity to fish in both salt and fresh water – with a combination of both as the tides and currents ebb and flow throughout the system. Add to that strong winds and inclement weather and the Delta can be a worthy challenge to any sports person who takes it on. To further add to this challenge, the Derby includes all waters connecting to the Delta from the Golden Gate Bridge to Sacramento and Stockton. The major requirement for the participants is to get each species of fish to the weigh master's weigh-in station at the water's edge on Main Street in Rio Vista before 3:00 p.m. on Sunday, the last day of the event. The Derby draws a wide range of fishermen and fisherwomen, from pros through beginners, seniors to children, with competition in various age and skill categories. As the Derby runs, the excitement builds as the fish are brought in and recorded.



Photo, Doris Noriega

For a number of years now, the Derby competition uses a target slot size measurement for the striped bass and sturgeon. The target size is determined at the beginning of the Derby and announced for participants to use as a goal. The approach ensures good sportsmanship as well as future fishing quality. Instead of going for the largest size fish, it is the fish that measures closest to the posted size that wins. This leaves the large ones in the water to breed and the smaller ones to grow. There are three species of fish in this year's Derby: Striped Bass, Sturgeon, and King Salmon. Another change is how the measurements are made for the Striped Bass. The measurement for Striped Bass are from the tip of the nose (mouth closed) to the fork of the tail. Sturgeon have been measured this way for many years; this is a recent change in this Derby for the Striped Bass.

To keep the Derby exciting and fair, kids participate in their own category. Those 15 years and younger participate for Striped Bass or Catfish. It is a great opportunity for families with children to compete and win prizes.

The Derby typically runs from 6:00 a.m. Friday, running continually day and night until the last official weigh in and measurement recording Sunday at 3:00 p.m. at the foot of Main Street in Rio Vista.

Fishermen and fisherwomen can find detailed entry information at [www.bassfestival.com](http://www.bassfestival.com). Buy your tickets at various locations throughout the Bay and Delta area. See a detailed listing of all locations at [www.bassfestival.com](http://www.bassfestival.com). The Rio Vista Chamber of Commerce is the main point of contact for further information at (707) 374-2700.



Photo, Monica Gianinni