

## Crowd Cheers BC Fishermen as they Race to “Come Home Safely”



The 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Sardine Fest in Steveston was the backdrop for the 1<sup>st</sup> Fish Safe Immersion Suit Race. With an audience of over 100 eagerly waiting for the competition to begin, Fish Safe Coordinator, Gina Johansen explained what the BC Fishing Industry is doing to improve safety on board and at this event focusing on the dangers of coldwater immersion. She helped the audience to appreciate that the fish they buy at the dock, grocery store or that was prepared by one of the famous chefs at the Fest was caught by local fishermen who traveled many miles by boat and they have to be prepared to deal with the unexpected so that they can “Come Home Safely” to their families.



The immersion or survival suit race promoted the use of and speed necessary to don a suit in case of an emergency at sea. All BC Fishermen are required by WorkSafeBC to carry an immersion suit on board and to regularly complete safety drills that include donning and regular maintenance of the suit. Crewman Casey Boynton

won the fishermen’s heat with a record time of 20 seconds from removal of the suit from its stowage bag to fully zipped up. Other fishermen competing to win a new top of the line Ocean Commander Immersion Suit donated by Mustang Survival, included skippers Glenn Budden, Paul Bevandick and Stuart MacDonald who all recorded times well under the recommended standard 1 minute. Glenn and Paul are also Fish Safe Education Facilitators and advocates for safety on board.



Winner Casey Boynton with a time of 20 seconds and a new Ocean Commander Suit from Mustang presented by Shane DeWitt



The Fish Safe booth also featured the cold water tank where participants were able to test the effects of cold water on the body by dipping their hand into a tank and testing their dexterity after only 30 seconds. A test your knowledge quiz was required to win prizes at the booth while providing an education on both the local sardine fishery and cold water immersion. Fish Safe partners WorkSafeBC, Quinte Marine, Bronco Boys Fishing Ltd. and Mustang Survival were on hand to assist with the days activities and Mustang donated the Ocean Commander Immersion Suit as a first prize to the fastest fisherman.



The public was then invited to challenge the best time set by fishermen to win Fish Safe jacket and fleece. Tony Kollmuss, resident of Steveston won the fastest time for the public with a time of 33 seconds.

Check on line [www.fishsafebc.com](http://www.fishsafebc.com) for more great pics of the event.