

FISH

R.P.
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► From Page 1

and a steady stream of anglers parked their cars and walked more than two miles uphill to reach the lake.

The Highway Patrol had a roadblock at the foot of the hill that leads to the reservoir above the Lompico area, and only 230 cars were allowed in at a time. By 5:30 a.m. today, drivers were being turned away.

Ron Joseph, an orthopedic surgeon from Saratoga, arrived shortly after 8 a.m. and wasn't too happy about having to hike up the hill. Joseph and a couple of friends took the day off, intrigued by the idea that the lake hadn't been fished in so long.

"It's a whole lot better than being at work," Joseph said as he looked for a spot along the bank.

Steve Gentile, who owns Zack's Cafe in Boulder Creek, wasn't getting any bites, but said he had seen a couple of people with some bass.

Gentile and several friends didn't go away empty-handed, though, even if they didn't catch any fish.

"We're entrepreneurs," said Gentile, showing a T-shirt with the Loch Lomond crest, saying "April 1992. Catch us if you can."

Gentile and his friends had 280 shirts made, and expected to sell them all by this weekend. They go for \$10 per.

It wasn't a school holiday, but

there were plenty of children playing hooky.

Duane Marsh, who lives in Lompico within walking distance of the lake, said he promised his son Tally that he'd take him to opening day when the lake closed five years ago because of the declining water level.

Today, father and son were on the lake, with a third Marsh, Shane, 5, who was more interested in eating potato chips than fishing.

Lompico residents have complained about traffic heading up their mountain roads to Loch Lomond, and they were able to persuade Santa Cruz city officials to impose a ban on drinking. The city owns the reservoir, which is used as a water supply.

"It's not that bad," Duane Marsh said of the traffic, adding that he'd rather have fishing and traffic than no fishing and no traffic.

The lake's 39 rental boats were quickly snapped up, and 60 or 70 private boats were on the lake by 8 a.m.

Head Ranger Walt Cacace said some people were turned away who had legitimately been first in line last night at a church parking lot several miles from the lake. Those people were later escorted in, Cacace said.

Loch Lomond was stocked with 5,000 trout, and there are reportedly some large bass. Anglers are urged to catch and release, especially large bass, but there is no requirement.