

2000 Lake Erie Walleye Tournaments

April 1. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Catawba Island State Park. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

April 19-20. Professional Walleye Trail (PWT) Lake Erie Tournament. Port Clinton, OH. Contact PWT Headquarters at: (218) 829-0620.

April 29-30. North American Walleye Anglers (NAWA) Open "Team Challenge". Monroe, MI. Field limit of 200 boats. Entry Fee: \$150/boat. Contact K.J. Beam of Sportsman's Quest at (800) 224-4990.

May 20. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Huron River Boat Basin, Huron, OH. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

June 10-11. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Lorain - Hotwaters, Lorain, OH. Two person teams. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603

June 10th North Coast Charter Boat Association. Fairport Harbor, OH. Pro Division \$400/boat (8 rods max) Amateur Division \$150/boat (8 rods max). 80% payback, first five positions. Contact Bernie Roell: (440) 257-9544.

June 10-18 Southtowns Walleye Association of Western New York. Several Western New York weigh stations. Contact Tom Marks: (716) 947-9350.

June 16-18 444 Walleye International Fishing Tourn. Port Colborne & District Conservation Club. Marina H, H Knoll Park in Port Colborne, Ontario. Entry Fee: \$130/team (US) Contact Mike Shatkosky (905) 834-4314 or Mike Hili (905) 835-1891 Email: pcdcc@inter-pc.com www.thefishingspot/pcdcc

June 17. The '99 West Cleveland Open. Rocky River Metro Parks Ramp, Cleveland, OH. Contact: Chris Songer; (440) 835-2892 Email: cmsms@aol.com. Entry Fee: \$100-\$124 per boat, 1-4 man teams.

July 8-9. New York Walleye Association. Ameri-Can Walleye Classic. Chadwick Bay Marina, Dunkirk, NY. \$150/team (3 man teams). Limit 150 teams. Contact Jim Dolly (716) 695-8199.

July 21-23. Walleye Challenge. Port Colborne, Ontario \$375/3-4 person team (US). 100 team limit . Contact Dave Malloy (905) 834-9218.

July 29. Fairport Harbor Rod & Reel Association. Fairport Harbor, OH \$25.00/person. (8 rod limit) 90% Payout. Contact Chuck Fievet: (440) 352-2160.

August 12. United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Geneva State Park. Geneva, OH. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

August 26-27 United States Fishing Association (USFA) Lake Erie Circuit. Two day Championship. Fairport Harbor, OH. Contact USFA at (972) 713-6207 or Walleye Wise Promotions at (330) 537-8603.

Ask the Captain

Lake Erie Charter Captains Answer Reader's Angling Questions

Q: I've heard that trophy walleyes can be taken in the early spring, before spawning begins. What are the best lures to use and can you name a few "hot spots" where I might find these big fish?

Captain George Jumper Jr. responds:

I have found that the really big walleyes (females) come into staging areas just outside the actual spawning areas real early. Depending on water temperature, they could come in middle of March to middle of April. A fisherman has to watch the ice on the Lake and the water temperature to guess when. That and a little luck will get you on the fish. The best areas I have found are out in front of the Maumee River, the big females lay on both sides of the shipping channel and I have taken some big ones down in the deeper water of the channel itself. Turtle Creek and the Toussaint River have also provided me with big fish and lots of males. I have taken big fish in all three places. I took two 10 pounders in April 99 out in front of Turtle Creek about half way between A-Can and the Creek. My best Lures have been Jig Heads with either green or chartreuse skirts, tipped with a minnow. I also use a ice jigging Rapala in the two to three inch size. One other one that has taken a lot of fish for me is the Sonar. Any of these baits on a given day will catch a lot of walleyes.

Captain Walt Ermansons responds:

Some of the biggest Walleyes of the season get caught late March and early April in the Western basin of Lake Erie where these big fish gather to spawn. Vertical jigging in 20 to 30 ft. of water in proven areas accounts for a lot of big fish each year. Favorite lures include blade baits which flutter and vibrate when jigged like a yo-yo on the bottom. Also any heavy jigging spoon which can reach the bottom. Some of

the better ones include Swedish Pimples and Castmasters. Tipping these spoons with lake shiners works best.

The best known areas are just off of Marblehead lighthouse, the deep water just east of Green Island south to Catawba State Park and any of the deep water drop offs surrounding the reefs such as Round or Niagara reef.

Captain Gary Hopp responds:

Spawning normally begins as the ice clears from the lake. Good catches of the smaller males can be caught throughout the spawning season with a mixture of the larger females being common. Under the right weather systems and water conditions, the large (normally spawned out) females will feed heavily. In 1999, one of the best early spring days was April 2nd. All large fish were caught and limits were being taken in just a few hours!

The best area to fish is the extensive reef system North of the Port Clinton/ Davis Bessie power plant area. Also, many large fish are taken North and Northwest of Kelley's Island.

Q: What's the best technique for catching small mouth bass off of the western basin reefs? Which live and artificial baits do you recommend?

Captain Gary Hopp responds:

Live bait is always a favorite way to "catch" fish. Smallmouth prefer softshell crayfish, spottail shiners and a shad-like minnow we call bass minnows. Use a slip sinker setup with a #2 or #4 hook. You can anchor on spots and bottom fish or drift fish your bait over the spots. If you like to use artificials, scented tube jigs are probably the preferred bait, followed by twister tail jigs and crank baits. Fly rod fisherman are

having good success using sinking lines and smaller flies with large eyes.

The hot spots are many. Almost any point, drop off or reef holds fish. The area has many old wrecks that also have resident schools. All around Pelee Island, Canada is a favorite area of the charter captain. In Ohio, fish the Islands themselves, Kelly Shoal and West reef.

Q: *What length leader is best to use off of Dipsy Diver's? If I'm marking fish near the bottom in 50' of water, how much line should I let out to get my lure to that depth?*

Captain Doug Stein responds:

The best way to attack these fish is to use Fireline on the 3 setting run 90-110 back. To find fish this shallow, would be in the spring. I would be more likely to use a 8ft flouorocarbon leader at 14# test. The most productive is to use planer boards with 3oz. of weght 150 ft back with stick baits or worm harnesses in the copper color.

Captain Ermansons responds:

On our charter boat in the summer we use a 17lb. test mono leader, about 6 to 8 ft. behind the Dipsy. As far as getting to the bottom in 50 ft., there is a lot of variables such as trolling speed, Dipsy setting and type and test of the line you're using. We use on our boat 30 lb. test non stretch lines such as Berkley Gorilla braid or Cabela's Ripcord. Speeds most of the time are somewhere from 1.8 to 2.2 mph. Using a 2 1/2 setting, 125 to 150 ft. will get you down close.

Captain Eric Walline responds:

The depth that a Dipsy Diver runs is related to several factors including boat speed, line diameter, type of line (wire, mono, braided, etc.), the setting on the diver and water temperature. A ball park rule of thumb is that a diver with a ring will run about 1/3 of the depth of the line that is out. For example, 75 feet of line = approximately 25 feet of depth. However, the ratio of running depth to line out is not constant due to the increase in drag that occurs when additional line is let out and also because of the denser water present

in deeper water. In situations where you want to be near the bottom to make a precise presentation, it is often desirable to let the Dipsy out until it lightly scrubs the bottom and then bring in some line to put the bait somewhat above the fish that have been marked on the graph. Another diver tactic is to periodically let out more line until a productive depth is found. Then use your line counter reel to replicate your presentation. The amount of leader behind the Dipsy usually approximates the length of the rod so that it is possible to bring the fish into the net. However, there are ways to rig a Dipsy where the leader length could be any distance you might choose. In this set-up, the diver is rigged so it will slide back down the line when released by the strike of the fish. Commercially made "slide divers" are also now available. Many people are uncomfortable with Dipsys because they aren't sure where they are running. The best advice I can give is to experiment until you are comfortable using them. They catch a lot of fish. 1-888-601-5800

Thank you Captains for responding to our reader's questions

Captain Walt Ermansons
Trophy Charters
(440) 293-7249 trophy@trophycharters.com

Captain George Jumper Jr.
Rising Sun Charters
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Capt. Gary Hopp
Trophy Hunter Charter Services Inc.
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Captain Doug Stein
Doug's Charter Fishing
&716) 774-0077 stein1877@aol.com

Captain Eric Walline
Gold Coast Charters
(734) 429-0126 info@fishgoldcoast.com

Lake Erie Walleye Charter Service Directory

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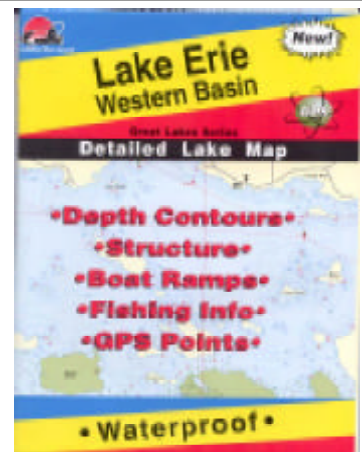
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