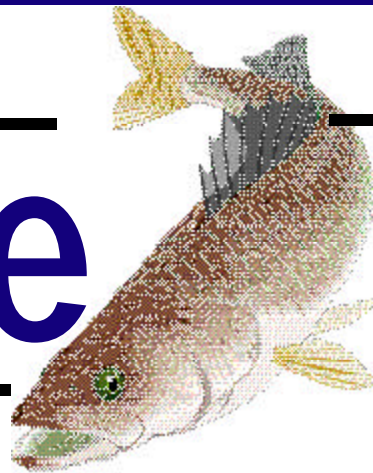


Lake Erie

Walleye



Summer 2002
Vol. 8 No. 2

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The Complete Fishing Scene on Lake Erie

Summer 2002

- The 2002 Walleye Report
- Spinner/Crawler Magic on Lake Erie
- Summer Steelhead on Lake Erie
- Open Water 'Erie Walleyes
- Walleye Night Moves
- Wide Open Walleyes
- Hot Summer Walleyes
- Lake Erie Small Planer Board Basics
- The Eastern Lake Erie Report



Plus

*Walleye News & Fact File
2002 Walleye Tournaments
Charter Fishing Information*

NEW WITH THIS ISSUE!

Dockage For Lake Erie Fishermen
Lodging for Lake Erie Fishermen

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On the Cover

Meaghan Johnson, daughter of Charter Captain Ron Johnson poses with a trophy eye taken while trolling Erie's Central Basin. Big fish, both walleye and steelhead are the ticket during the hot summer months (see page 16)

This summer's issue marks the eighth anniversary of Lake Erie Walleye Magazine. For those of you that recall the very first issue published in the summer of 1995, the magazine has progressed and evolved (hopefully, for the good) over the years. Our readership renewal rate of over 45% is one of the highest in the printing industry. We continue to receive emails and phone messages from folks that are just now finding out about the magazine and wondering why they haven't seen it in the past. Lake Erie Walleye Magazine over the past several years has been a 'best kept' secret among many fishermen.

Well, that's about to change. Beginning with this issue, we've decided to 'flood' the Lake Erie region with over 20,000 copies of the magazine. The magazine will be distributed (FOR FREE) to several hundred outlets (Marinas, Bait & Tackle and Sporting Goods Stores, Lake-side gas stations, mini-marts, etc). Charter Captains will also be distributing the magazine to their customers, all for FREE.

Why are we doing this? Simply, we would like to give more fishermen the opportunity to read and enjoy Lake Erie Walleye Magazine. We will continue to offer subscriptions for those wanting the convenience of having the magazine personally delivered (courtesy of the US Postal Service) to their homes and places of business and for those who want to continue enjoying reading the current and past issues via the special "ONLINE EDITION", available only for paid subscribers at www.walleye.com.

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Lake Erie Walleye

Rick Kubb, Editor/Publisher

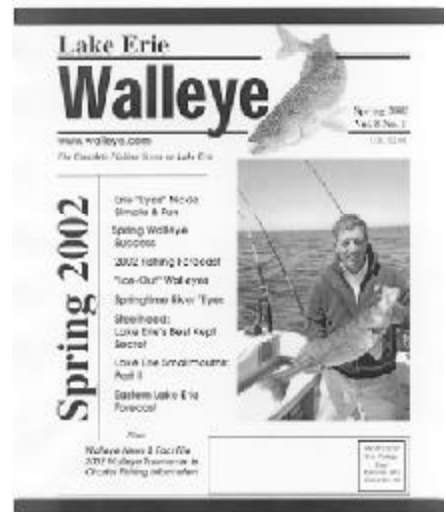
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Walleye News and Fact File

2002 Walleye and Perch Quotas Set

Annual catch quotas for Lake Erie have been increased for 2002 for yellow perch but will remain the same for walleye, the Great Lakes Fishery Commission has announced.

The quotas represent what biologists from lakewide agencies consider the total allowable catch that can be shared while conserving fish stocks.

The walleye catch is set at 3.4 million fish, the same as 2001. Last year the lake states and Ontario, through the GLFC's Lake Erie Committee, agreed to hold the line on walleye catches for at least three years.

That was done to give walleye stocks a chance to recover from several years of poor-to-fair reproduction. The 2001 walleye catch lakewide, including sport and Canadian commercial fishing, was 2.9 million fish, well within the committee recommendation.

Each state and Ontario are allowed shares of the catch, based on surface area within each jurisdiction. Ohio, with 51 percent of the lake, is allowed 1.7 million walleye. Ohio anglers landed 1.2 million walleye in 2001. Ontario's share, 43 percent, comes to 1.4 million walleye, almost all taken commercially. The rest of the catch is shared among Michigan, Pennsylvania and New York.

Walleye sport-angling regulations for Ohio waters remain the same as in 2001 for Lake Erie and tributaries at four fish each day per angler in March and April, and six each day the rest of the year.

"Last year was great and we expect it to be equally good this year," said Gary Isbell about the fishing prospects. Isbell is administrator of fish management and research for the Ohio Division of Wildlife.

The lakewide quota for yellow perch has been boosted to 9.3 million pounds, from 7.1 million pounds in 2001.

"We've been monitoring the yellow perch situation closely, and we believe perch now are showing signs of good recovery," Isbell said.

Perch stocks were depressed for much of the 1990s because of poor year-classes, which led to much more conservative quotas.

Ohio sport anglers will be allowed roughly 2.5 million perch, about 500,000 more than caught in 2001.

Ontario will be allotted 4.8 million pounds of perch, and the other states will share the rest. Perch shares are set on a different formula from walleye, based on surface area and past performance.

The Ohio sport limit for yellow perch remains 30 each day, and commercial netting rules remain in effect.

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LAKE ERIE WATER LEVELS EXPECTED TO BE SLIGHTLY HIGHER THIS YEAR THAN LAST

Overall water levels to remain below average for spring and summer

Hydrologists with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) are cautiously optimistic that Lake Erie water levels will be slightly higher this spring and summer than during the same period in 2001.

As of March 8, Lake Erie water levels are 1 inch below average, but about 4 inches higher than this time last year. Based on this information and other atmospheric indicators, hydrologists say that although the lake will be about 4 inches below its mid-summer average in July, it will be 7 inches above last July's level.

This is good news for boaters who are increasingly dependent on charts and buoys when navigating Lake Erie's relatively shallow reef and harbor areas. It is also good news for nature enthusiasts who are finding resurgent bird and plant life in the lake's shoreline mud flats.

Lake Erie waters began dropping in 1998, falling to below average in 1999 and remaining there ever since. However, the ups and downs of water levels are a normal part of Lake Erie's life cycle, ODNR experts say.

"Lake Erie is a constantly changing body of water," said Dave Cashell, state hydrologist at ODNR. "In mid-1930s, the lake was 31 inches lower than it is today. In the mid-1950s and again in 1986, it was 35 inches higher than today."

Officials first began measuring water levels in the Great Lakes in the mid-1800s. The present system of gauges began operating in 1918. Hydrologists have learned that lake levels fluctuate with the seasons and can vary dramatically over longer periods of time.

Long-term averages have varied more than 6 feet over the period of time records have been kept. Water levels were slightly above long-term averages during the mid-to-late 1800s and generally

below the long-term averages from about 1890 through 1967. From 1968 to 1999, levels were again generally above long-term averages.

The lake also rises and falls about 15 inches with the seasons - losing water in the fall and winter through evaporation and gaining water back during spring snowmelt and summer rains.

About 80 percent of Lake Erie's water flows in from the Upper Great Lakes through the Detroit River. Another 10 percent comes from tributary streams, with the remaining 10 percent coming from precipitation falling directly on the lake's surface. The Detroit River inflow is directly dependent on rain and snow-fall around Lakes Superior, Huron and Michigan. Unusually warm winters and dry summers in the late 1990s brought little precipitation and virtually no ice cover to the Upper Lakes, causing water levels to drop in those bodies of water, and subsequently, in Lake Erie. Last winter's sparse precipitation was insufficient to relieve those conditions.

According to the ODNR Division of Watercraft, most Lake Erie boat launches will be fully operable this spring and summer. Boaters should check for the best launch areas when planning a lake outing. ODNR always advises boaters to use charts when navigating unfamiliar waters. Boaters should be especially cautious around the islands in the western basin and when nearing shore. Navigation charts for Lake Erie are available at marinas, bait shops and other outlets on the north coast.

For more information about Lake Erie water levels, check the ODNR web site at www.ohiodnr.com or call the ODNR Coastal Services Center at 419-626-4296 or toll free at 888-644-6267.

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The 2002 Walleye Report

by
Rick Kubb

For the eighth consecutive year (in each summer issue, from 1995) of Lake Erie Walleye Magazine, we provide a synopsis of the walleye fishery in Lake Erie based on the scientific reports produced by the fisheries management biologists from the states of Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York.

This fisheries summary provides estimated size of the walleye population in Lake Erie, walleye growth and migration, catch rates, and other biological factors related to the walleye fish stocks in Lake Erie.

Walleye quotas for 2002

The Lake Erie Committee of the Great Lakes Fishery Commission has held the line on the total allowable catch (TAC) of walleyes for 2002. The TAC for 2002 has been set at 3.4 million fish, the same as in 2001.

Michigan Waters of Lake Erie

In 2001 anglers harvested an estimated 159,186 walleyes from the Michigan waters of Lake Erie. Of these, a total of 115,289 walleyes were taken by private anglers (72%) and 43,897 fish were taken by charter boat anglers (28%). Walleye fishing peaked in the month of July with 79,885 fish caught (Figure 1). Approximately 50% of the total annual walleye harvest occurred in

the month of July. Overall angler effort in 2001 declined slightly compared to a year ago but remains consistent with angler effort observed since 1993.

Age 2,3, and 4 (1999, 1998, and 1997 year classes) walleyes dominated the walleye harvest, comprising 83% of the catch. Harvested and ages 2, 3, and 4 walleyes averaged 14.0 inches, 16.8 inches and 18.5 inches in total length.

In 2001 a total of 4,210 walleyes were tagged by Ontario, Ohio, Pennsylvania, New York and Michigan biologists at eight Lake Erie sites. A total of 89 tags were recovered by fishermen for a single season reporting rate of 2.1%. This inter-agency tagging study will continue to provide valuable information regarding walleye movements throughout the lake.

Ohio Waters of Lake Erie

In the year 2001 an estimated 1.1 million walleyes (combined private and charter catches) were caught in Ohio waters of Lake Erie. This is slightly higher than the .93 million estimated harvest from the previous year (Figure 2). The 2001 private boat harvest of .9 million walleyes was a 32% increase over the previous year harvest of .68 million fish. Targeted effort for walleyes of 2.5 million angler hours was slightly

higher than the 2.2 million angler hours for 2000.

The 2001 charter boat walleye harvest of .26 was just slightly higher than the .25 million fish from the previous year. The harvest rate for charter anglers was .63 fish per angler hour and was higher than the ten-year average of .55 fish per angler hour.

The majority of the walleye sport harvest was from the 1999 and 1998 year classes. Age 5 and older walleye constituted 30% of the lakewide catch.

Walleye size in Ohio waters averaged 18 inches and 2.1 pounds. The average size for walleyes increased from west to east (Figure 3). In District 1 (western basin) walleyes caught averaged 17.6 inches and just 1.9 pounds. The average age of walleyes caught in District 1 was just under 3.7 years. In District 3 (eastern part of the central basin) walleyes taken were significantly larger and older, averaging 22 inches and 4.1 pounds. The average age walleye in District 3 was 6.4 years, 2.7 years older than walleyes taken in District 1.

Walleye Diet

What were walleyes eating in 2001? In the western basin walleyes fed mainly on shad and alewives. These clupeid species represented 89% of the total

walleye diet in the western basin. The diet differed dramatically in the central basin Ohio waters of Lake Erie.

Central basin walleyes fed mainly on shiners and rainbow smelt (Figure 4). Walleyes also fed on round gobies in the central basin. The amount of round gobies found in the stomachs of walleyes has been fairly consistent over the past four years averaging around 6%.

Walleye Tagging/Migrations

A total of 2,318 walleye were tagged in the Ohio waters of Lake Erie and its tributaries during 2001. The locations of the tagging included:

Sandusky Bay (1,035 tagged)
Maumee River (825 tagged),
Maumee Bay (434 tagged)
Grand River (24 tagged).

Approximately 42,000 walleye have been tagged since the tagging program began in 1986.

In 2001 a total of 110 walleye tags were returned by anglers with 60 of the tags being from fish tagged in 2001.

Tag and recapture studies of walleye in Ohio waters over the years have indicated that these fish migrate extensively throughout the lake. In 2001 fish tagged from the Sandusky Bay, Sandusky River and Cedar Point areas were recaptured at numerous points east of the tagging site including the far eastern end of Lake Erie (Figure 5).

Pennsylvania Waters of Lake Erie

The walleye population in Pennsylvania waters continues to be well structured with older fish (average age approximately 8 years) and a strong 1994 year class contributing to the fishery.

In 2001 the estimated number of walleyes caught was 62,041 (harvest of 52,690), a 27% decrease from the previous year and nearly a 40% decrease from the average of the past 6 years.

In 2001, targeted walleye angling effort totaled 241,246 hours, a 1% decrease from the previous year.

The majority of walleyes (70%) were taken in July (Figure 6). Many fewer fish were caught in August and September during 2001.

The average size of walleyes caught in Pennsylvania waters in 2001 was 23 inches. This was a decrease in size of about 1 inch from the previous year. Walleye age ranged from 3 to 14 years with fish from the 1998 year class (3 years old) contributing the greatest proportion of the total catch (17%). Fish 7 years and older made up 62% of the catch.

New York Waters of Lake Erie

In 2001 the estimated walleye harvest was 14,669 fish, down significantly from the estimated 28,594 fish from the previous year (Figure 7). The 2001 walleye harvest was the second lowest in the past 14 years. Angler effort targeted at walleyes totaled 163,144 angler hours and was the

lowest annual angler effort in the past 14 years.

The 2001 walleye sport fishery was centered in offshore waters between Silver Creek and Sturgeon Point. Areas west of Dunkirk, New York, produced a markedly lower harvest of walleyes.

The overall targeted walleye catch rate during the 2001 fishing season was .09 fish per hour which ranks walleye fishing quality very low compared to previous years.

The average total length of walleyes in 2001 was 24 inches.

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Figure 1. The 2001 seasonal and month-by-month comparison of walleye catches from the Michigan waters of Lake Erie.

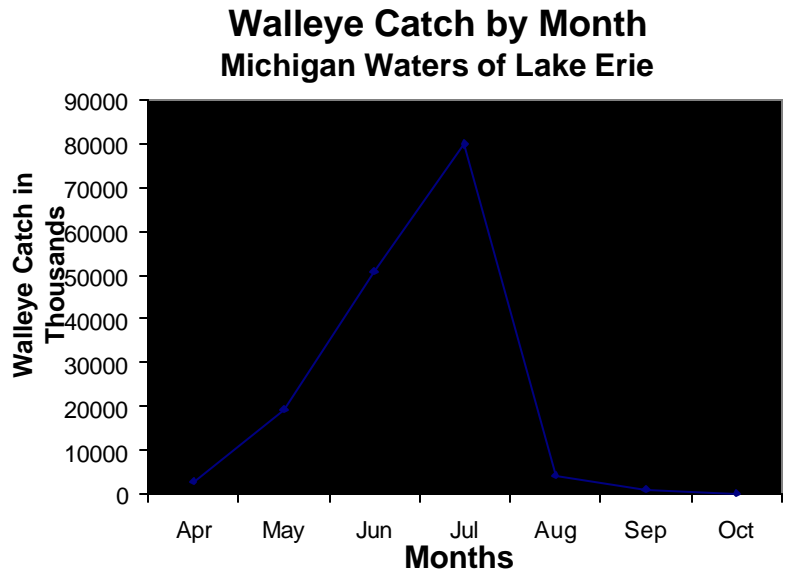


Figure 2. Ten year comparison of walleye annual harvests from the Ohio waters of Lake Erie.

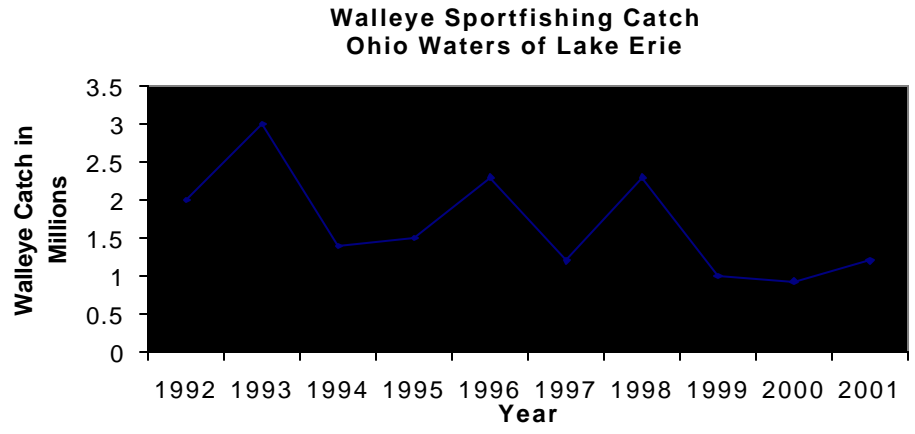
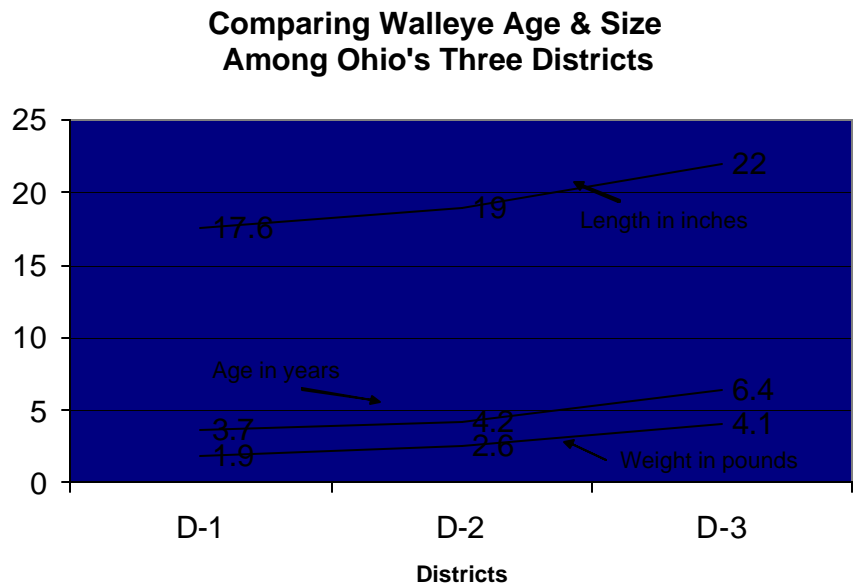


Figure 3. Comparison of walleye age and size among Ohio's District 1 (western basin), District 2 (west-central basin) and District 3 (central basin). See figure 4 for a graphical depiction of these three districts



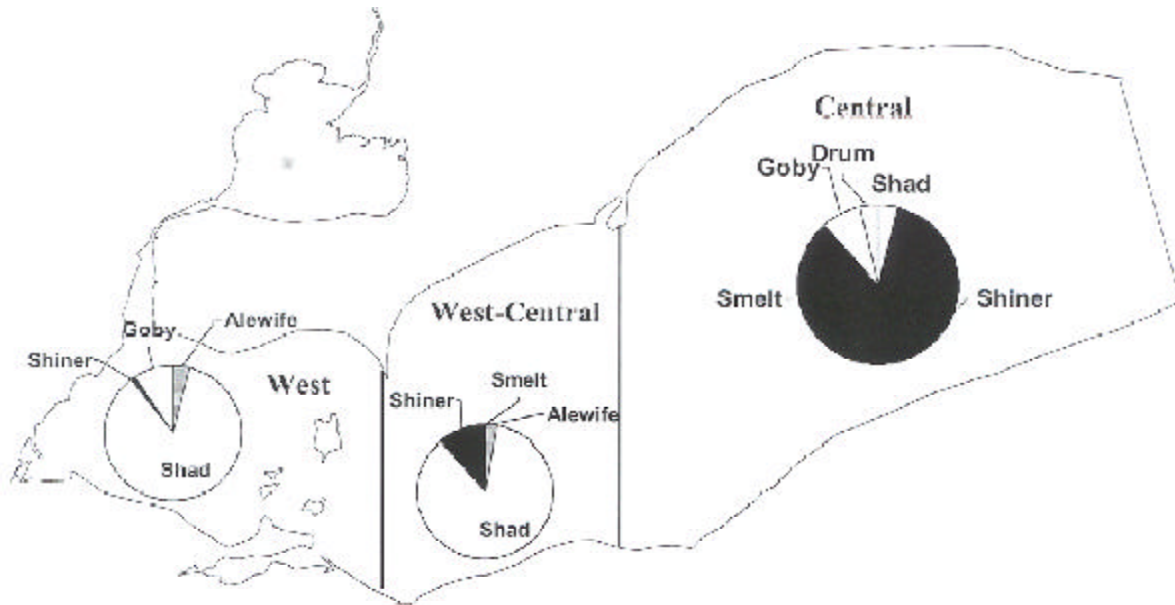


Figure 4. Comparison of diets of year 1 and older walleye sampled in 2001 from the Ohio Districts 1 (West), District 2 (West-Central) and District 3 (Central)



Figure 5. Distribution of the location of walleyes that were tagged in Spring 2001 in the Sandusky Bay and surrounding area and later re-captured by fishermen during the 2001 fishing season. The distribution indicates that walleye range the entire length of the lake during the fishing season.

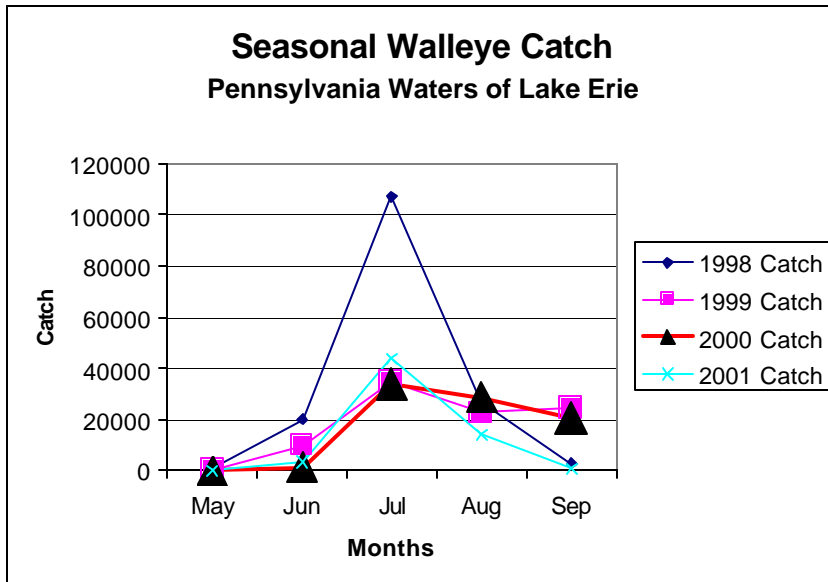


Figure 6. Seasonal comparison of walleye harvest in Pennsylvania waters of Lake Erie for years 1998 to 2001

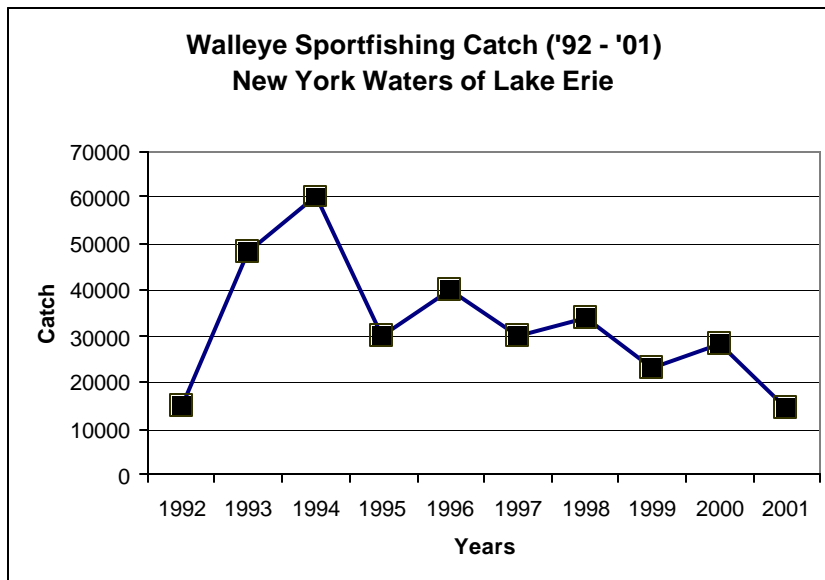


Figure 7. Ten year comparison of walleye sportfishing catch in New York waters of Lake Erie.

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Lake Erie Artificial Reefs
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Side-Scan Sonar Data
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Lorain

Polish Fisherman's Club Reef

41 28 .076 N

82 12 .758 W

The Mountain Reef

41 28 .150 N

82 12 .750 W

Lakewood

Cuyahoga County

Commissioners Reef

41 30 .175 N

81 47 .266 W

1984 Experimental Reef Site "A"

41 30 .271 N

81 47 .533 W

1984 Experimental Reef Site "B"

41 30 .256 N

81 47 .041 W

Cleveland Stadium Artificial Reefs

Edgewater

Cleveland Stadium Reef West #1

(north)

41 30 .148 N

81 45 .575 W

Cleveland Stadium Reef West #2

(south)

41 29 .970 N

81 45 .416 W

Euclid

Cleveland Stadium Reef East

(Euclid)

41 35 .933 N

81 33 .804 W

Spinner/Crawler Magic on Erie

Spinner/crawler rigs are the go-to choice for many experienced Lake Erie walleye anglers.

by
Michael Veine

Known as harnesses, spinners or just plain meat rigs, spinner/crawler combos are a top choice among Lake Erie's walleye fishing armada. These rigs are as varied as the anglers that using them with

not forget the main ingredient either, a juicy night crawler. Versatile rigs, spinners can be trolled, drifted or cast to walleyes with deadly effectiveness. Sure, plenty of walleyes are taken with other methods, but when the going

Michigan. When I got back, I had one afternoon to figure out the bite before taking some customers out the next day.

My partner and I searched around at cruising speeds monitoring the



**Spinner/Crawler rigs tend to catch the bigger walleyes in any given area.
Photo taken by Michael Veine.**

thousands of homemade and commercial styles used. Most rigs consist of single or multiple spinners with some beads and/or rig floats strung onto a leader with hooks at the business end. Let's

gets tough, savvy anglers get out their spinner/crawler rigs.

Last summer I took a week off from charter fishing to work on my hunting property in Upper

graph. It took us a couple hours, but we finally managed to locate a promising school of walleyes away from the packs of boats. We started out trolling with crankbaits for a while, but we only



This fat walleye was taken on a Pa's rig. Photo taken by Michael Veine.

managed a few small-eyes to show for our efforts. There was a heavy Mayfly hatch emerging and most of the fish that we marked were tight to bottom. Despite putting the cranks right in their faces, they still showed little interest.

To tell the truth, I hate fishing with night crawlers. They are smelly, slimy and messy, but when walleyes are finicky they are oftentimes a necessary evil.

I broke out some spinner/crawler rigs and sent four of them overboard behind bottom bouncers. It was very calm, almost like glass, so I deployed my bow mounted, Min Kota, autopilot, electric motor for the ultimate in stealth and slow motion delivery. Two of the offerings were presented behind Church Tackle, TX-12, inline boards while the other two were just stuck in holders and run right behind the boat.

It only took a minute to latch onto

our first walleye and by the time we worked our way into the middle of the school we couldn't even keep the lines in the water. We had downgraded to just two handheld lines and in no time limited out on feisty 1-4 pounders. For the next week, we caught quick, limit catches every day on meat. It almost didn't seem fair; it was so easy.

The Rigs

Capt. Rocco Papandrea owns and operates Rock-N-Roll Charters (219-262-3370) out of Port Clinton. Papandrea is also well respected as a pro angler in the PWT circuit. Papandrea, a crawler-fishing expert says, "Spinner rigs are a key ingredient to consistent walleye success on Lake Erie and elsewhere."

Like this author, Rocco Papandrea's favors homemade spinner crawler rigs, but Rocco does recommend K&E Tackle's (www.stopperlures.com) har-

nesses, as they are very close in composition to what he makes himself. Where big walleyes are present, Papandrea likes larger rigs for suspended crawler trolling. His leaders are made from 17-lbs. test Trilene-XT, measuring 3-4' in length and he ties a ball bearing swivel to the end. He normally uses 6mm beads and strings on 2-3 ahead of a quick-change clevis, followed by 6-7 in front of the hooks. Red beads are his favorite. He ties on a single hook on the front and a treble hook as a stinger. For blades, he relies mostly on silver and gold in both hammered and plain finishes. For suspended walleyes, Papandrea uses #8 Colorado blades and polishes them with a jewelry polishing cloth before each use. If smaller fish are the target, then he downsizes his blades, beads and hook sizes accordingly.

For bottom fishing, Papandrea uses the same type of rig, but opts for a single, 2/0, bait holder hook. He uses piano wire instead of monofilament saying, "I use a short, six-inch length of wire leader material to make the rig impervious to damage caused from walleye teeth, bottom debris and zebra mussels. I use monofilament line to lengthen the lead off the bottom bouncer and adjust the length based on the bottom composition and the mood of the fish. If it's real snaggy or the fish are aggressive, then the lead is made very short."

Papandrea prefers #5, Colorado blades on his bottom rigs. He always uses whole night crawlers and runs the hook up through the worm's mouth letting the tail dangle freely. He says, "I've done lots of experimenting with



A crawler harness is tough to beat when the walleyes are finicky. Photo taken by Michael Veine.

different bottom rigs and found that the single 2/0 hook setup catches more fish.”

This author is extremely picky about spinner crawler rigs. I assemble all of my own rigs using only the best, premium quality components. A few years ago, I started using fluorocarbon leader material on my spinners and have found Berkley Vanish in 12-lbs.-test ideal. The stuff is tough, nearly invisible underwater and it also has very little memory, so it doesn't kink and coil like other leader materials. My leaders are always 4' in length and a loop knot is tied on the end. White, quick-change clevises are standard equipment. I never put beads in front of the clevis, as they tend to put pressure on the clevis reducing the spinning action of the blade at slow speed.

For a suspended fishing rig, I string on 7 or 8, 6mm beads preferring the 28 sided, plastic

beads that I have only found in craft stores. My hooks are #4, Eagle Claw, Laser Sharp, short shank trebles. The front hook is attached with a snell knot. The stinger is about 8" behind the front hook and is attached with a half-blood knot.

Most of my blades are ordered from the Cabela's Tackle Craft catalog. I use #6, Colorado blades exclusively for suspended rigs. My overall favorite pattern is chartreuse beads with either a plain chartreuse or chartreuse splash blade. I also like purple beads with a red splash blade or red beads with a hammered silver or red splash blade.

I try to find the biggest crawlers available for my suspended walleye rigs. The crawler is hooked crossways through the nose on the front treble hook. The stinger is stuck through the worm about 2/3 down its flank.

My bottom bouncing rigs start out with the same 4' leader length, but the lead is often shortened depending on the bottom composition and the mood of the fish. After sliding on a quick change clevis, two 6mm beads are strung on followed by a 3/4" rig float from Cabela's, then two more beads are added. The rig float adds bulk and a little flotation, which prevents snagging. For hooks, I rely on #4, Eagle Claw Bait Holders, which I sharpen to a sticky point with a stone. I snell on the front hook and attach the rear hook 5" down with a half-blood knot. The crawler is strung onto the front hook and the stinger is applied about half way down the worm leaving plenty of tail for action. I often inject the crawler with air under the collar and in the tail.

My blades for bottom bouncing are #3, Colorados. Favorite colors are chartreuse beads, float and blade or orange beads, chartreuse float and yellow orange splash blade. I also like pink beads and float with a silver blade, red beads, red float and silver blades or gold beads, chartreuse float, gold blade.

Suspended Presentations

Rocco Papandrea and I agree that our overall favorite trolled, suspended crawler presentation involves using a Pa's Lures. A very popular bait on Saginaw Bay, Pa's also work wonders on Erie's walleyes.

Pa's Lures are like a cross between a sinker and a crankbait. A piece of lead is molded onto a wire shaft like a weight forward spinner. The painted weight has a crankbait style diving lip and the



Tournament anglers often rely on spinner/crawler rigs when the chips are down. Photo taken by Michael Veine.

lure has a few beads and spinner blades for attraction. The diving lip allows the Pa's to maintain depth better than a weight forward spinner, snap weight or sinker. Pa's are readily available at every bait shop around Saginaw Bay, but I've yet to see one anywhere around Lake Erie. A search on the Internet found them for sale at www.walleyecentral.com/paslures.htm.

I use 3/4-oz. deep diver Pa's exclusively and match the color of the PA's to the bead color of my harness. Out of the package, I make a quick modification to the Pa's lures replacing the supplied single hook with a ball-bearing snap swivel to which I attach my crawler harness. A 1-2' harness lead length seems to work best behind Pa's. I try to keep my trolling speed at 1-1.5 mph and vary the setback to target specific depths. For accurate presentations, the book Precision Trolling

(800-353-6958) has running depth information for Pa's lures. I usually run a spread of Pa's behind inline boards.

Pa's can also be used as a casting lure. Using the supplied single hook, string on a chunk of a crawler and cast it out, let it sink a few seconds and then retrieve it.

When fishing snaggy waters or shallow spots, I prefer using a simple, rubber-core sinker or snap weights to take the rig to the desired depth. Last summer I had a great day catching walleyes on crawlers by letting out 100' of line, attaching a snap weight and then letting out just two feet of line and putting on a board. The fish were in shallow water and just under the surface.

Targeting Bottom Walleyes

Bottom bouncers are perhaps the best way to take walleyes with sand rubbing their bellies. I've had my best luck with standard, Plain Jane, unpainted bouncers. Bottom bouncers can be used as an effective drifting presentation, but they really shine when slowly trolled.

One of the biggest mistakes anglers make is not using a heavy enough bottom bouncer. I rarely use lighter than two-ounce bouncers and typically use three or four ounces. Walleyes are attracted to the silt that the bouncers kicks up, but the key is to let out just enough line so the wire tip skips on the bottom without dragging. For bottom bouncing I rely on Fireline. The no stretch feature of Fireline communicates every tic and bump to the rod tip so the angler can adjust the setback or re-bait after a perch attack. I usually stick my rods in the holders and run the bouncers right behind the boat, however I sometimes run a couple on diminutive, TX-12 inline boards and watch them like a hawk. I usually try to keep my speed under one mph when pulling crawlers across the bottom but sometimes it pays to experiment with speed.

On one trip last year the walleyes were deep and just wouldn't take a slow moving crawler, so we trolled with Hot'n'Tots down deep and caught some fish, but they were only coming sporadically.

See Spinner/Crawler, page 36

Summer Steelhead on Lake Erie

by
Jeff Frischkorn

Not for the first time, the National Weather Service missed the marine forecast. Instead of the called-for 2- to 4-foot waves - themselves ratcheting upward from the previous evening's call of just 1- to 2-foot waves - the rocking and rolling of the boat stemmed from seas that boiled at 3 to 5 feet.

At least the prediction made by charter captains Marv DeGreen and Ron Johnson was neatly tucked away within the truth. They said they would find Lake Erie steelhead for a troupe of Ohio Division of Wildlife officials.

By golly, they were right on the money, too. During the course of a wind- and wave-tossed morning one or more wildlife division official would catapult to the stern of Johnson's boat, Thumper. There, he (or she) would wrestle with a steelhead

whose mood matched the lake's surly waters.

And though some of the steelhead won their match, 19 of them

stayed behind to rest within the confines of Johnson's well-used iced-down cooler. All to the amazement of the assembled wildlife division fisheries biologists and public information specialists.

The Central Basin, these officials noted, is Lake Erie's unexplored country. "If only we could get the people back in Columbus to quit talking only about the Western Basin. We never, ever, anticipated a steelhead fisheries like this on Lake Erie. This is nice. Real nice," said Mike Costello, the wildlife division's chief Lake Erie fisheries biologist. Costello was joined by fellow wildlife division fisheries biologist John Navarro, who is the agency's fish hatchery point man.

This oversight responsibility includes keeping an administrative eye on the state's Castalia Cold Water Fish Hatchery. It is this hatchery from



Thumper charter first mate, Meaghan Johnson and Ohio Division of Wildlife fisheries biologist Mike Costello pose with a Lake Erie Steelhead. A species more and more Central Basin fishermen are catching during the summer.

which nearly all of the state's steelhead first see the light of a concrete raceway.

Along with Costello and Navarro was Melissa Hathaway, the agency's Lake Erie public relations specialist and its new Wild Ohio! magazine editor. Skip Trask, video cameraman for the agency's Wild Ohio! television program rounded out the agency's squad.

Making sure that each wildlife division official had the opportunity to play tag with a steelhead were Johnson and DeGreen, who served as Johnson's port deck hand. At Johnson's starboard side was his daughter, Meaghan. The younger Johnson recently graduated from Bowling Green State University with a degree in Marine Biology.

The trio of fishing experts reaped the wild seas laying a course that carried Johnson's vessel across a swath of steelhead-rich waters. This location was situated about 19 nautical miles northwest of the Grand Rivers mouth in water 74 to 76 feet deep.

"This is deeper than where we would go if we were after wall-eye, but we don't run in nearly as many sheepshead or white perch out here," Johnson said. "We've been doing so well our clients are more than pleased. The thing is, there are very few other fishermen out here looking for steelhead."

The pleasure has been all the charter captains as they've watched their customers reel in boat limits of steelhead trout along with a few walleye. An occa-

sional king salmon dresses up the place with a couple of coho salmon usually added to the totals as well, DeGreen said.

Meaghan Johnson and DeGreen readied the tackle, loaded braided fishing lines with small directional divers for use on planer boards, or else cabled large Dipsy Divers to outfits specially made for such equipment.

The planer board lines were then sent 100 feet back from the planer's tether lines while the smaller directional divers were mechanically adjusted to run 40 feet deep.

A pair of downriggers also were hitched up and added to their respective anchoring weights. To each line went a Stinger spoon. All



First Mate, Meaghan Johnson, and Captain Ron Johnson of Thumper Charters display two typical steelhead taken while trolling Lake Erie's Central Basin. Fisheries biologists anticipate another good season this summer for steelhead.

of these spoons were hammered from copper, but each was finished in a different color pattern. “ ‘Confusion’ has been an especially hot color,” Johnson said.

Hardly had Meaghan set out a pair of lines before the first steelhead was giving a fishing rod a case of the fits. When one steelhead would trip an outfit, another trout would soon follow on another rig.

The wildlife division officials took turns, rotating among themselves the opportunity to reel in a fish. Some of the trout were lost before they were netted, the trout using the bounce from the heavy seas as leverage to pull free from the lure’s set of treble hooks. A trout that made an exit did not raise an alarm with either DeGreen or Johnson. Another steelhead was cruising nearby, lying in wait. “Steelhead have saved many a charter trip,” DeGreen said.

It was tough fishing conditions, however, and a few of the officials were taking on the greenish color of the wind-whipped Lake Erie. Yet no one was complaining and all of the anglers returned home with plastic sacks of fresh steelhead fillets.

Along with a new-found awe for the might of the Central Basin’s unheralded deep-water steelhead fisheries. “Even when I talk of Lake Erie fishing, all I mention are walleye, smallmouth bass and yellow perch. What Ron and Marv have shown us is that there is this other kid on the block,” Hathaway said. For information about fishing with Johnson,

contact him at (440) 487-0002 and for DeGreen, contact him at (216) 970-1246.

Water Temperature Keys Central Basin Fishing Success

Stand along a lakefront bluff from Cleveland to Ashtabula during April or May and all you’ll see is water. No boats. No anglers. No personal watercraft to disturb the tranquility. Then again, you won’t find the best of fishing either.

“Part of that is related to water temperature. The lake’s Western Basin warms up much quicker then it does over here in the Central Basin. Obviously the fish are more active when the water temperature is in the low to mid 50s then when they are in the 40s,” said Kevin Kayle, manager of the Ohio Division of Wildlife’s Fairport Harbor Fisheries Research Station.

Agreeing that water temperature is the focal point for the Central Basin’s fisheries is Ron Johnson, a Painesville charter captain who operates his Thumper Charter service from the Grand River. “We need 53 to 55 degree water before the fish show up. When that happens the walleye start to move in, the shad and other baitfish have left the rivers for the lake where they’ll be eaten by the walleye and steelhead,” Johnson said.

Once May hits full stride the fishing greatly improves and begins overtaking the Western

Basin’s fisheries in June, both Kayle and Johnson said.

“Generally the first walleye to show up are in 55 to 60 feet of water. But if the shad are in tight to shore, so are the walleye,” Johnson said.

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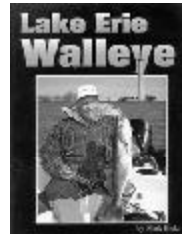
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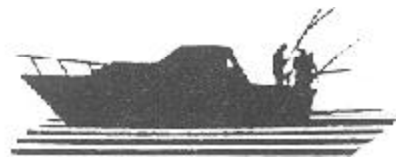
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Open Water 'Erie Walleyes

by
Captain Phil Cadez

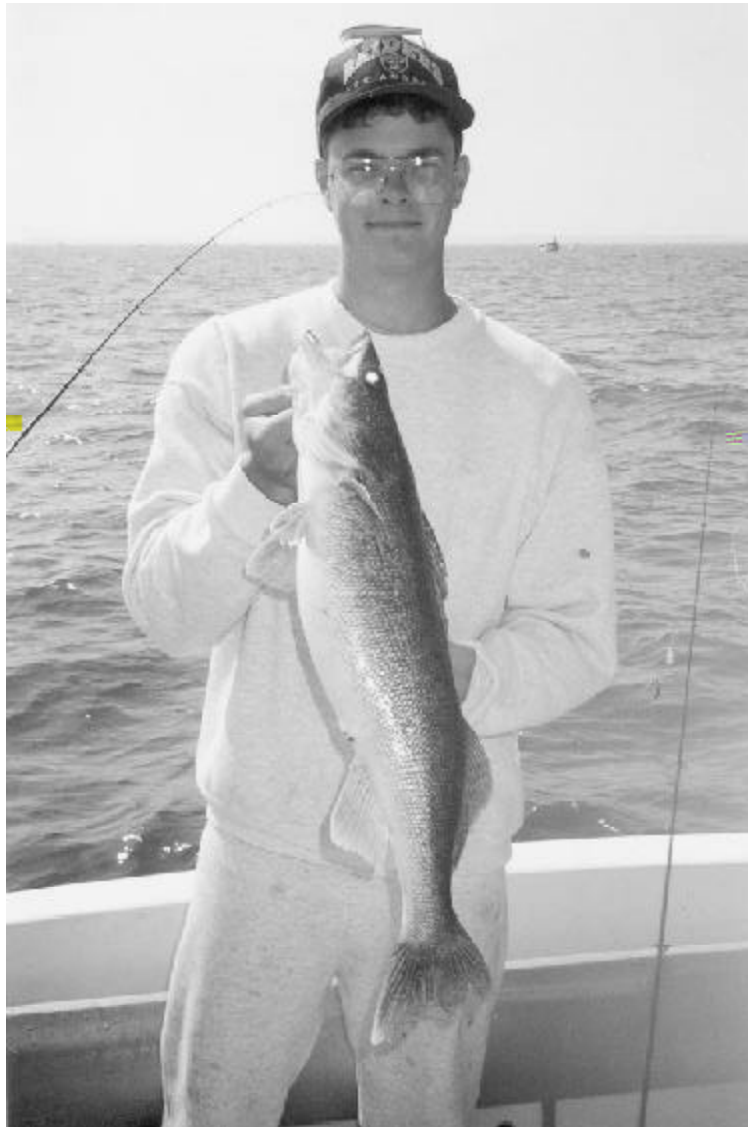
Walleyes are not a territorial fish like the smallmouth bass. They roam in schools or small packs searching for food.

They're a game fish – a predator. They'll see anything that looks eatable to them. They normally cruise the rocky bottoms searching for food but as the water warms up and the vast amount of boats chase them they will tend to seek open water. By open water we mean north of the reef areas. An area we refer to as the flats. You can go from West Sister to the Bass Islands and north of Niagara Reef to Middle Sister and the clay bottom will stay a constant 32 to 34 feet.

With the zebra mussels inundating all of the rocky bottoms of Lake Erie, we have noticed the cleanest water that's possible on such a large body of water.

Snorkelers and scuba divers have enjoyed this clean water searching the various wrecks that dot the Western Basin. The only thing

clean water does for fishing is make it tougher. Walleye usually will not surface in bright sunlight to feed. They will spook easily in clean water.



**An eight pounder walleye taken last July.
Photo by Capt. Paul LaCourse.**

There is really no set pattern that walleye move in after leaving the reefs. The only tools we have in locating these illusive fish are updated fish locators and marine radio. With such a vast area covering many square miles you might check with local bait shops that sometimes post "hot spots" for fishing. This will give you a place to start. Also observe charter boats that tend to pack up in a area. However, do not get too close to them or spook their fish – remember it's their livelihood. Give them a reasonable amount of room. Never drive up their drift at over a slow trolling speed.

After you've located a possible starting area observe your fish locator. If you're in 30 foot of water try zooming in on the bottom 10 feet.



A ten pound 'hog' caught last June on a Weapon. Photo by Paul LaCourse.

Walleyes can be at any depth but starting at the bottom is the best place to start looking. If you locate a small pocket of fish go up wind and drift over that spot. If successful, mark it with your loran or GPS. You can also mark your "hot spot" with a marker with a line and 50 ft. of line and weight.

If the water is moderate to lightly choppy you might start off with a "walleye casting weapon" with a ¾ oz egg sinker. Cast as far as you can across the drift letting it settle to the bottom. As you feel the slack in the line start the lure and move it in a "walleye sweep" or constant slow retrieve. A "walleye sweep" is a pull slow to keep tension on the lure then reel the slack in faster so that the line stays taut.

"Walleye weapons" can be purchased at Ohio local bait shops or you can make your own. They are really only a 20 lb leader about 16 to 24 inches in length. It has a small hook at the end preceded by

colored beads and a small spinner. It's attached at the other end with a 1 inch double loop where the egg sinker is slipped on. This prevents the egg sinker from sliding up and down the leader. After placing this egg sinker through the double loop attach a swivel to the end of your line.

Hook sizes that work best are a #4 or 6 because you only use ½ nightcrawler. Hook the ½ nightcrawler leaving only about 1 inch dragging which looks like a small tail. You don't need big gaudy beads or extra spinners. Most of my beads are approx 3/16 diameter. I like using a #3 spinner either Indiana or Colorado style. Colors of the beads will range from chartreuse, red, yellow, white, green, pink, silver, and especially gold. Most popular spinner colors are gold silver, white, chartreuse, perch (fire tiger) or multi-colored.

Open faced spinning reels with 8 or 10 lb line is the most widely used. If you feel any tap or bump

on the line see the hook sharply and quickly lift your rod up and keep tension on the fish. Never horse the fish and never pump and reel as you would when ocean or salmon fishing. Slower is better and set your drag because the fish usually always dives near the boat. If you have the rod tip up and the drag set properly you should never loose a fish near the boat.

While casting you might want to let out a drag line with a drifting rig fished near the bottom. The dragging rig is made the same as the casting rig but is longer, approx. 24". And the beads and spinner will also be larger. Beads will vary up to ¼ inch in diameter and the spinner can be a #4 or 5 Colorado or Indiana style. One other difference on these dragging rigs are that most of these have tandem hooks at the end of the line. This enables you to double hook a nightcrawler trailer. You can use a 1 oz egg sinker or use a bottom bouncer off 1 to 3 ounces. A bottom bouncer is an "L" shaped wire with a lead weight through it about 16 inches in height. This keeps the lure off the bottom at least a foot.

On cloudy choppy dates you might want to fish high, near the surface. Feeding walleye will chase their prey wherever they have to. This high fishing usually works when by yourself, not bothered by boat traffic. Clean water does make it tougher to have successful days on this big lake but patience and the ability to adapt to new techniques will insure a successful day of angling on America's Greatest Walleye Lake.

See Open Water, page 36

Walleye Night Moves

by
Mark Martin

Every evening, when light gives way to night, walleyes make movements like clockwork, shifting their position from deep to shallow, with a spell spent in between. They start out over and around structure, slip onto the edges, then slide atop the flats. That's why, when the fish are in motion with nothing more than short stopovers, you had better be, too.

Knowing how to pattern the fish and their nocturnal progressions, along with the timing of their movements, will keep you on walleyes when other anglers are sitting on spots that shut down hours ago. But more than your location must change. You need to follow the fish from different levels in the water column with offerings that are better suited to low light and are most

appropriate for the shallows and their edges. Add to the mix the

right gear and boat rigging, and you'll be prepared to stay with the walleyes long after dark.



Walleyes are primarily nocturnal feeders and the action after dusk can really heat up.

Night Moves

Starting in evening, everyone's most popular fishing time, walleyes will still be in daytime mode. They'll be on or adjacent to main-lake structure such as underwater islands and reefs close to deep water. Sometimes the fish will be right on the bottom at 10, 12 or 15 feet, but other times they'll suspend nearby at the same depths over 50 to 80 feet of water.

The most effective way to locate them is by pulling a spinner and night crawler behind a Northland Rock-Runner bottom bouncer. For the blades, check out Northland's holographic models, which I've found produce better than painted blades under almost all conditions.



Trophy Walleyes are often taken after the sun goes down.

If the water's clear and lacks obstructions, you can get away with a six- or seven-foot leader. If it's darker and snaggy, shorten up to maybe two feet. You can also add rattle beads for added attraction. For the suspended fish, switch to trolling planer boards with drop weights of 1/2 or 3/4 ounce run 30 to 80 feet behind the boards, depending on how deep the fish are. You'll have to experiment with line length until you hit the right depths.

As soon as twilight arrives, be ready to abandon the earlier areas. Now I begin to search shoreline-adjointing structure near deep water. Try points, reefs, drop-offs and weed beds. The fish won't show up all at once, but they'll begin showing up gradually. More of them will be there as it gets darker and darker. At this time, I focus on eight to 15 feet of water<staging areas before the walleyes move shallow. It seems as if the walleyes are getting their bearings. You can often see the

fish on a locator, but you won't want to run over them with the gas outboard and go back to fish them in the shallow water. They'll be gone. But you can scout them out and return later.

Here I go after them primarily with crankbaits. Crawler harnesses still work and can often be excellent, but too often I have to fight off other kinds of fish, including sheepshead and bullheads. (Harnesses can keep up with cranks but seldom outproduce them.) That's why I prefer the cranks on spinning tackle with 6- or 8-pound FireLine. My favorites are Rapala Husky Jerks in both the shallow and deep-diving versions. To them I add a piece of WTP tape for added visibility. I also paint a thin strip with glow paint around the head and tail to help the walleyes zero in on the bait. Quite often I add scent as well, something like Berkley walleye scent.

To work them, I cast out, crank the lures down, stop, sweep the

bait, stop and repeat. That's about all there is to it. At times you'll want to vary the length of the pauses, letting the bait rest for 10, 15, even 30 seconds. Experiment till you find what the fish want. Know that a strike will often be nothing but a "tick." If you feel it, be sure to set the hook.

Beyond twilight, walleyes will move shallower yet, into three to six feet of water. The most productive all-around depth range, though, is five to 10 feet. The same areas apply; just move shallower. Again I like to cast Husky Jerks but will often switch to trolling to cover water. To move the bait slowly, I put my Motor Guide 107-pound-thrust trolling motor on low speed, just fast enough to make the bait wobble. But here I switch to a No. 13 Original Rapala with a split shot for weight ahead of it. Again, a strike won't be more than a "tick."

For that reason, I like to troll the Rapalas on 20-pound FireLine for its lack of stretch and extreme sensitivity. A solid baitcasting rod like the 7-foot, 10-inch Berkley Lightning Rod allows you to pick up line and better set hooks.

Now that you have the right stuff and the knowledge of the walleye's whereabouts, you'll be ready to find fish with confidence and comfort. When you're out there, looking for fish during the evening-to-night transition, don't let the fish come to you, keep searching so you can keep up with the fish's movements.

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Wide Open Walleyes

by
Rick Olson

It's happening all around us, and there is nothing we can do to stop it. Rather than trying to stop it, one would be far better off accepting it and reacting accordingly. But before you react you have to believe and believing requires a good dose of open mindedness, and letting go of some of the old ideas about traditional walleye location.

What many anglers have a hard time accepting is the fact is that walleyes will often suspend far off the bottom, relating to nothing but their next meal. Just about anywhere you find walleyes there's a chance that a good portion of them will sprout wings and lift up and off the bottom, where they now enter the "suspension zone".

From natural lakes to the Great Lakes, and even reser-

voirs, walleyes will often suspend when the conditions are right. On some bodies of water walleyes

may be riding high one day and belly to the bottom the next. On others, like Erie, it's unusual to find them any other way than suspended, especially during the summer months.

Suspension is triggered by a high riding food source, like shiners, shad, alewives, ciscoes, and even perch. As seasonal temperatures continue to increase and mid lake temperatures begin to pop up, things start to happen that get the whole process going. Those warmer temps can spur plankton productivity as well as trigger insect hatches, all of which will attract the aforementioned baitfish, which in turn will pull in ol' marble eyes like a magnet. Wherever a solid bait source is found, you can bet the walleyes won't be far behind, even it means leaving classic structure like rock humps and quick drop offs in the dust.



The author with a trophy taken on a trolling run.

Once you've accepted the fact that it can happen, the next step is determining what to do about it.

Methods for rounding up suspended walleyes can vary, but the most efficient presentation is trolling with either crankbaits or spinners.

Some anglers have experienced success by using floating jig heads tipped with live bait and using extra long leaders, like twenty feet or more. It's a method that approaches walleyes from the bottom up, and can be effective when dealing with small groups of walleyes confined to small areas. While possibly effective, this method loses its appeal when dealing with walleyes that are suspended way off the bottom, or when you have acres and acres of water to cover and only so much time to get it done. In that case it would make more sense to opt for a faster more efficient approach, and is where trolling crankbaits and spinners come in.

Crankbaits in particular allow for a quick trolling pace and includes speeds up to three mph or more, which allows anglers to cover the maximum amount of water in the course of a day.

Selecting a crankbait starts by picking one that you have faith in, and feel confident that if you run it past a walleye with an appetite that it will be accepted. It also includes selecting a bait that will run at a particular depth, especially if you're graphing most of the fish in a narrow band. There are several books and charts that are readily available, like Precision Trolling, that give specifics of particular baits which can help

greatly with determining running depth.

Confidence baits that lend themselves well to tackling suspended walleyes include Shad Raps, RS Shad Raps, Down Deep Husky Jerks and Storm Deep Thundersticks. There are certainly more but this line up will handle just about any situation you may be faced with and gives you the luxury of knowing that what you have to offer has been proven effective on walleyes throughout the entire country.

Spinners can also provide for a quick trolling pace, especially if you employ blades designed to perform at warp speed. Willow leaf blades are on top of the speed blade pile, while deep cupped Colorado's would be on the bottom. Colorado spinner rigs can't take the pressure of a high speed run and will spin out, resulting in a twisted up mess, and of course no fish.

The problem spinners present is; Just how in the world do you get one to run at a particular depth? Spinners by themselves are shallow running and will need some sort of weight to achieve any kind of depth. There are several ways to get the job done but experience has proven that the easiest method includes the use of an in-line weight and an eight or nine foot leader.

The in-line weight keeps the whole process simple, and simple is good. To vary depth, you can either vary the size of the weight your using or vary the amount of line you let out.

The ability to determine exact running depth comes with practice, but getting close can be as easy as finding out how much line it takes to get your rig to the bottom and adjusting from there.

For example; If it takes one hundred feet of line to get your bait to the bottom in forty feet of water, at your given speed, it will take about fifty feet to get it to run at twenty feet, and so on and so on. The thing is, you hardly ever have to have your bait running at an exact depth to be productive as you will probably never find all of the walleyes holding at the exact same depth at the same time.

Another consideration is the fact that suspended walleyes can be extremely spooky and a pair of trolling boards may be in order. In-line boards are relatively inexpensive and easy to use, and will help get your baits out and away from the boat, where you're more likely to encounter active fish. Another advantage to using trolling boards is the ability to increase the amount of the coverage area by spreading out your baits, and allowing you to take a wider swath.

It's easy to be confused with the whole suspended phenomenon but don't let it bother you.

The thing to do is relax, as it's not and exact science, and you don't have to be perfect to be successful. However, to be successful you do have to give it some time, and it could easily turn out to be time well spent.

Hot Summer Walleyes

by
Norb Wallock

The good ol' summer time can be one of your best bets for catching numbers of big walleyes and it can also be one of the worst, depending on how you react to the season's changing conditions. To be successful, anglers will have to give up on what had been productive just a few short weeks ago and get with a program more in tune with a walleye's present needs.

When a hot summer sun starts bearing down water temps can push into the lukewarm range, and early season patterns can quickly dry up. When it happens many anglers make the mistake of believing that the walleyes are simply not feeding, but nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, walleyes will feed even more heavily at this time of the year, and it's when they make their biggest growth gains.

One of the reasons

anglers can find the going during the summer months a little tough is because they haven't made the necessary adjustments required to

stay with a fish that's on the move. Walleyes make a living by taking advantage of their opportunities, and in many cases those opportunities are no where near where they were at the beginning of the season.

As spring slides into summer there is a shallow to deep migration that occurs on most bodies of water. The migration doesn't happen overnight, and not all of the walleyes in a system make the move to deep structure. Instead, the process more likely begins with a few scattered groups of fish showing up on deeper haunts like sunken humps, underwater points, and even flats, followed by a slow and steady migration that eventually results in fishable numbers of walleyes. As more and more walleyes make the deeper move, concentrations of



In the heat of the Summer months walleyes can be found and caught with the right techniques.



The author went deep for this summer walleye.

fish begin to build up creating a terrific opportunity for anglers in the know.

Knowing it can happen is the easy part, while capitalizing on it takes a little more effort. To get the most out of a good summer pattern you have to be prepared to give up on what you think you know, and let the fish do the talking.

One of the most appealing aspects of locating walleyes holding on deep structure is the fact that they show up readily on good electronics. A high quality graph like the Raymarine L750, can help quickly narrow down your search. The L750's high level of definition and white line feature can help you locate walleyes that are holding belly bottom, which is a common occurrence.

The key to the whole process is keeping your lines in the boat, and relying totally on your electronics

to divulge the whereabouts of deep running walleyes. It takes a little self control, but you can save a ton of valuable time if you do the investigative work up front. The fact is you'll never ever catch them where they're not, and if you're not marking, you're not on 'em.

Another terrific time saving device is a Global Positioning System like the Raymarine 425, which utilizes the new W.A.S.S. system. The 425 provides an

incredible level of accuracy (within three meters), which can literally get you back to an exact spot time after time. The 425 has a plot chart that shows where you've been, and where you are going, which can keep you from retracing unproductive paths. It can also get you back to areas that have showed some promise. As you cruise potential hangouts you can place icons on the screen where you have marked schools of fish, allowing you to return to the exact spot after your investigative work is done. Once you've marked enough fish in a particular area it's time to get down to business and try to put a couple in the boat.

Good summer presentations involve an element of speed, like trolling crankbaits or spinners. With an increase in water temperature a walleye's metabolism increases accordingly. A quicker moving bait appeals to that bump in metabolism and will

often get snapped up while a slower offering gets completely ignored.

A top pick for working unfamiliar waters would have to be a spinner and live bait combination behind a heavy bottom bouncer. Bottom bouncers run relatively snag free which can be a big plus when working an uneven bottom with plenty of potential hang-ups. They also allow you to keep your bait running close to the bottom without actually dragging it, and helps to keep your offering at 'eye level.

There are exceptions to the deep summer patterns, and these include dark or stained bodies of water where visibility is extremely limited. There may still be a shallow to deep migration but it may occur on a much smaller scale. The thing is the fish are still there, and some of them can still be caught, and it might as well be by you.

Visit our Web Site at:
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Lake Erie Small Planer Board Basics

by
Mark Hicks

Before the Zebra Mussel invasion, boats could often troll right over walleyes in the murky western basin and not spook them. Now that countless mussels filter the water and drastically increase its clarity, walleyes are proving less tolerant and more elusive.

Clear water has long challenged anglers in Lake Erie's central and eastern basins, and the problem grows more acute as the zebra's bring about increasingly transparent conditions. Fishing deeper isn't always the solution, because walleyes commonly suspend less than 35 feet deep, even when the bottom plunges to 80 feet or more.

Walleyes that suspend near the surface in clear water tend to scoot away from a boat passing overhead and escape the lures trailing behind it. Your depth finder may mark few fish, yet there could be scads of them swimming out of your path. One of the most effective methods for getting a lure out to boat-shy walleyes consists of trolling with small planer boards that connect directly to your lines.

In-line boards typically measure-

less than 10 inches in length. Their small profile doesn't intimidate walleyes, and their beveled noses propel them and the lines and lures they carry away from the boat.

SMALL BOARD BASICS



Clockwise from top: Off Shore Side-Planer; Rapala; Hot 'N Tot; Bomber 24A; Deep Jr. Thunderstick; Ripstick; Rattlin Rogue.

Setting out a small planer board presents a simple chore. With the boat moving ahead at trolling speed, let a lure out behind the boat as far as you deem necessary.

Next, engage the reel, grasp the line above the rod tip and place the

rod in a holder. Connect the board to the line using whatever attachments come with the unit, usually two pinch-type line releases, or a line release followed by a wire guide. Be aware that some boards come designated for the right or left side of the boat, and they are not interchangeable.

After attaching the board, pull the rod from the holder, drop the board into the water and feed line as it swims out a distance of roughly 50 to 100 feet. The board's bright color, typically yellow or orange, makes it easier to spot.

Then, engage the reel and place the rod back into its holder. The rod should rest in an upright position. This helps hold the line to the board out of the water and improves strike detection. Keep an eye on the board and the rod tip to determine when a walleye has taken the bait. The key indicator is when the board slides backward.

REFINED SMALL BOARD TACTICS

As with any fishing technique, skill and knowledge determine the level of success with small boards. Trolling them randomly produces inconsistent catches. Refined presentations, such as those used by noted professional walleye

angler Gary Parsons of Chilton, Wisconsin, are deadly.

Walleye anglers nationwide concede that Parsons is the master when it comes to small boards. He has elevated the technique to almost an art form, and deserves much of the credit along with his close friend Keith Kavajecz, for introducing this tactic to Lake Erie.

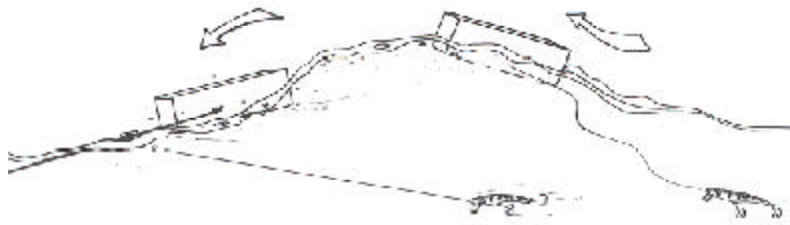
“What Keith and I did on Lake Erie,” says Parsons, “was help popularize slow-down trolling techniques for post-spawn, deep-water females. Lake Erie had never been exposed to that approach before.”

Over the past several years, Parsons and Kavajecz have fished many walleye tournaments on Lake Erie. They have aptly demonstrated that slow trolling with small boards produces excellent catches in the western and central basins, spring through fall. Their methods should work equally well in the eastern basin.

THE PLANER BOARD

In-line planer boards have been around for quite some time, but many of them don't work well with the slow-trolling methods intended for walleyes. Parsons has designed popular boards for several manufacturers and knows which features bring about a superior performance.

“I've been part of the evolution of walleye boards,” claims Parsons. “When I mention small boards, most people automatically think of the ones designed for salmon trolling at high speeds. They don't



A lure stalls when a small board climbs a wave and darts ahead when the board slides down.

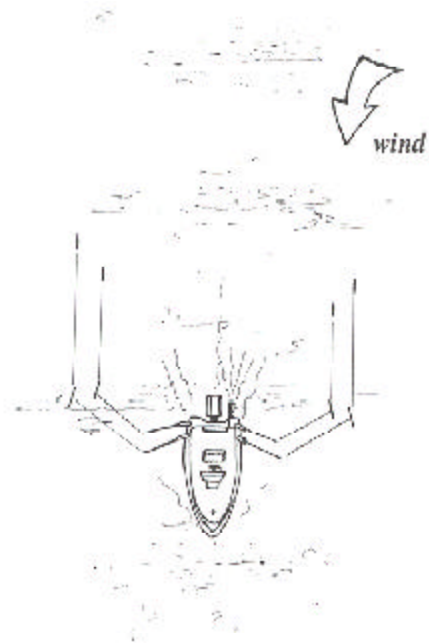
work worth a darn for walleyes. says.

“We troll so slowly that our boards need to be ballasted so they stay upright. Salmon boards, which are not ballasted, tend to fall over at low speeds.”

These days, Parsons tows the ballasted (bottom weighted) Off Shore Side-Planer. In addition to its balance, the Off Shore model features two snap release connectors. They quickly attach and detach from the line and also help the board track true.

When fishing with a partner, Parsons frequently pulls four boards. He says he can take the motor out of gear to land a big walleye, and the remaining three boards hold their positions and stay upright.

“There's no flipping over and no tangling of lines. They just track right out there as you drift,” he



Gary Parsons always trolls boards with the wind.

LURE SPEED

In April, Parsons scores well on

heavy, post spawn walleyes in the western basin trolling at a .8 to 1.2 m.p.h. A 9.9 to 15 h.p. auxiliary outboard on the transom of his Tracker walleye boat lets him maneuver at crawl speeds.

Considering that walleyes tend to be lethargic in the cold water of early spring, the slow pace seems appropriate. As the water warms above 50 degrees, most Lake Erie anglers increase their trolling speeds. Not Parsons. He stubbornly sticks to his inchmeal pace, even when the water climbs to 70 degrees.

The only time Parsons trolls faster is when Erie's walleyes get on a strong spoon bite during the heat of the summer and on into the fall. Spoons require a faster speed to achieve an effective action.

"Day in and day out," says Parsons, "the most effective troll is a slow troll. I firmly believe that the majority of the time-other than in the heat of the summer-the fish are triggered much more by a change of speed than they are buy speed alone."

LURE ACTION

Envision a crankbait swimming steadily through Lake Erie's crystalline water. Even at a depth of 30 feet, enough sunlight filters down to reflect off the lure's bright sides. At some point, the flashing rhythm grabs a walleye's attention. The heavy fish abruptly whirls about, closes on the lure and then tailgates inches behind it for several seconds. Eventually, the walleye loses interest and turns away.

Now reconstruct the same

scenario. But just before the walleye turns away, give the lure a sudden stop-go-action. The erratic movement triggers the walleye's strike reflex and the fish nabs the bait. It is this sudden change in action that Parsons strives to impart when trolling.

"Small boards are the absolute best way to do that," stresses Parsons. "When the board races down a wave and stops, it passes that action directly to your lure. And that speed change is a lot more dramatic when you troll at a slow speed. The tow line on a big ski board absorbs some of the shock, so the action is not near as dramatic as with a small board."

To determine just how much action the fish prefer, Parsons may start out running flat lines along with his board lines. The boards, dancing up and down the waves, generate the most energetic lure response. One or two other rods in holders pull flat lines and provide more subtle actions. The remaining flat line rod lays across the bottom of the boat with about a foot of its tip sticking out. It sustains the most subdued lure motion.

"That gives you three different stop-and-go presentations at the same time," says Parsons. "There are times when the rod on the floor catches all the fish, times when the flat lines in the holders are better, and times when the boards-especially on calm days-just cream everything."

TROLL WITH THE WIND

One rule that Parsons sets in stone is: "Always troll with the wind." This maneuver simplifies boat

control and spurs small boards up and down waves with the liveliest action. A flat, calm day makes for poor trolling, because there are no waves to bring the lures to life.

On blustery days, Parsons may pop his kicker outboard in and out of gear to slow the boat. Under extreme conditions, the wind propels the boat and the motor is used only for steering.

The moment Parsons hooks a good walleye; he marks the spot by entering a waypoint in his GPS. After landing the fish, he may continue trolling in the same direction another 500 yards. If no other strikes ensue, he quickly pulls in all the rods, circles around and upwind of the waypoint, and makes another pass through the same area. He continues making passes until he stops catching fish. "If there's one big walleye there," he says, "you can usually milk three or four more big ones out of that same area. Some schools are tight. You just can't continue trolling for 2 or 3 miles after you catch a fish before turning around."

TACKLE

Parsons and Kavajecz designed a 7-foot graphite trolling rod-part of the Team Daiwa series-that works well with small boards. The medium-heavy rod withstands the resistance caused by a board, plus its trailing weight and lure, without bowing too deeply.

"I don't know that graphite is extremely important," says Parsons, "but the rod's got to be stiff enough that it doesn't bend over to the point where you can't read it."

“My rods retain a moderate bow, so I don’t always have to scan the water and pick out the board. A lot of times, I can glance at my rod tips and know I have a fish on, especially with the big walleyes in Lake Erie. They just double a rod over.”

Parsons relies on Daiwa S627LC line counter trolling reels to put lines out at specific distances and perfectly duplicate productive settings. He fills the spools with 10-pound Trireme XT.

KEY SETUPS FOR SMALL BOARDS

During a two-week period in late March and early April, Capt. Al Lesh of Warren, Michigan, has a field day trolling small boards in the western basin. Lesh concentrates on shorelines east and west of the Maumee River and loads up on big, post-spawn females in shallow water.

“I troll only about 50 yards off-shore,” says Lesh. “I run small planer boards right up near the bank in 5 feet of water. I’ve seen walleyes up to 14 pounds come out of that skinny water.”

Subtle-action minnow lures swim about 100 feet behind Lesh’s boards on 10-pound test monofilament. The shallow running Bomber 15A and No. 13 Rapala. Lesh’s favorite lures in this situation, wobble freely above the bottom.

The big walleyes soon vacate the shallows and join hordes of other post-spawn females in deeper, western basin waters. Trolling for

these fish with small boards throughout April and into early May presents a prime opportunity for catching limits of heavy fish. At this time, Parsons scours the western basin with his LCG, searching for walleyes out to depths of 40 feet.

“The depth varies so much from year to year,” says Parsons, “that you have to let your graph dictate what you should be trying. You find a location that’s holding fish and note how deep they are. Sometimes they suspend only 10 feet down.

“You put together potential setups that target the approximate depth zones where you’re marking fish. You don’t know if any of those fish are walleyes until you catch the first one. If you get a second bite and a third bite, you can start putting together patterns. Tournament fishermen call them programs.”

SPRING PROGRAMS

Shallow running minnow lures, such as Storm’s ThunderStick, and Jr. ThunderStick, Smithwick’s Rattlin’ Rogue, and No. II and No. 13 floating Rapalas, comprise the basis for Parsons’s early spring programs on Lake Erie. He first establishes the most productive trolling depth. After that, he refines lure speed, lure action and lure color.

The old trick of making “S” curves helps determine whether the fish want a faster or slower trolling speed. When a boat turns, the outside boards speed up, while the inside boards slow down. If strikes come consistently from the

faster or slower side, Parsons adjusts his speed accordingly.

When Parsons first came to Lake Erie nearly a decade ago, lead core line furnished his primary means for getting minnow lures deep. Today he favors the simplicity and flexibility of Snap Weights. The essentials of lead core trolling and the Snap Weight System are covered in Chapter 8 of “Lake Erie Walleye”, on basic trolling.

“If it’s calm,” says Parsons, “I put out nothing but boards. If it’s rough, the boat doesn’t bother the walleyes as much, so I put out flat lines and boards. In the latter case, the boards mainly spread the lines to cover more water.”

Once he settles the boat down to an appropriate trolling speed, Parsons lets out minnow baits with Snap Weights that pull the lures down to the level he wishes to cover. He uses weights from 1/2 ounce to 8 ounces. A small board, however, can only carry a weight up to 3 ounces, which is enough to pull a minnow lure down into the 40- to 50-foot range on a long lead.

After letting the lure back 50 to 100 feet behind the boat-sometimes only 30 feet in murky water-Parsons snaps a weight to the line. He then lets out an additional 20 to 10 feet, depending on the depth he is trying to achieve. At this point, a rod intended for flat line trolling is placed in a holder. Otherwise, a small board is first attached to the line and allowed to swim out away from the boat. When a walleye nails a lure on a board line, both the board and the snap weight must be removed as

the fish is reeled in.

Though Parsons counts on slender minnow lures in the spring, many other anglers also catch walleyes pulling spinner rigs with small boards. As the water warms and walleyes become more active, Parsons makes extensive use of spinner rigs and wobbling crankbaits, such as Rapala's Shad Rap, Storm's diving Jr. ThunderStick and Hot'N' Tot, and deep diving Bomber Long As.

These lures have performed well for him in both the western and central basins. When starting the day, Parsons commonly trolls a wide variety of lures and lets the walleyes tell him which they prefer.

"I've fished the central basin," he says, "in water out to 80 feet deep. Surprisingly, you get a thermocline that sets up out there anywhere from 35 to 50- some feet deep. The majority of the biting fish are going to be at thermocline level or above, and that's well within the range of small boards."

LANDING WALLEYES

When you notice that a walleye has been hooked, fetch the rod and steadily crank in the board. The boat should continue running at trolling speed. Avoid setting the hook. Doing so may give the walleye enough slack line to escape.

Stop reeling when the board reaches the boat and remove it from the line while maintaining rod pressure on the walleye. Two anglers working in harmony easily perform this task. From this point

on, land the walleye as you normally would.

TANDEM BOARDS

When running two boards off the same side of the boat, space them far enough apart to avoid tangles. A good combination is 50 feet out for the inside board and 100 feet out for the outside board. If the boards tow lures that run at different depths, match the shallower running lure to the outside board.

After hooking a walleye on an outside board, the inside board must be adjusted to prevent the lines from tangling while reeling in the fish. This requires team work.

One angler holds the outside rod that has the walleye, while another angler quickly feeds line to the inside board. When the inside board drops back well behind the outside board, bring the walleye inside and under the line connected to the outside board.

Another option consists of winding up the inside board and placing it on the opposite side of the boat until the walleye is landed on the outside board.

This article has been re-printed from chapter 10 of "Lake Erie Walleye", a book authored by Mark Hicks. This book and its companion, "Lake Erie Smallmouth" are available via Big River Press (see ad on page 19).

Try This Walleye Recipe

Walleye Florentine

21 oz Frozen spinach, cooked per
2 lb Walleye fillets
1 1/2 c Court bouillon
3 tb Butter
2 tb Flour
1/3 c Cream
1/2 c Grated Swiss cheese
Salt and pepper to taste
2 tb Grated Parmesan cheese

Instructions

HEAT THE OVEN TO 350F. Make the spinach according to package directions, and drain in a colander, pressing with the back of a spoon to extract as much liquid as possible. Place the fish fillets in a baking dish, and bring the court bouillon to a simmer on the stove. Pour the liquid into the baking dish, cover with a sheet of buttered wax paper, buttered side down, and bake for 5 to 7 minutes. Drain the cooking liquid, and reserve. Melt the butter in a saucepan over low heat. Add the flour and cook, stirring constantly, for 3 minutes. Whisk in the reserved cooking liquid, and bring to a boil. Add the cream and cheese to the sauce, and stir until smooth and bubbly. Season with salt and pepper to taste. Preheat an oven broiler. Stir half the sauce into the spinach, and arrange the spinach on an ovenproof serving platter. Arrange the fish on top of the spinach, and then top each fillet with some of the sauce. Sprinkle the Parmesan on top of the sauce, and place under the broiler for 1 to 2 minutes, or until lightly browned. If assembled a day in advance, refrigerate covered. Then, rather than boiling, heat dish in a 350F oven until hot, about 15 minutes.

Serves 6

The Eastern Lake Erie Fishery Report

by
Joe Fischer

The best fishing news this year, to many old time veteran Eastern Lake Erie fishermen, has been the continued return of the yellow perch which is considered by many to be the best eating of all fresh water fish. It was common to see many clusters of boats still-fishing for these fish years ago but the amount of perch fishermen dwindled as the perch population in the eastern basin of Lake Erie dropped precipitously in the last 5-10 years. In 2001 however, due to an excellent 1998 spawning year, the perch fishing rebounded with reports of catches of 20-50 perch from 8-12" throughout the season. A lot of fishermen were also reporting by-catches of perch while walleye fishing. The eastern basin Canadian commercial fishermen also reported excellent perch fishing. One veteran commercial fishermen felt that the perch fishing was the best he had seen in 30 years! Last year's rebound of the yellow perch fishing caught many veteran Eastern Lake Erie fishermen by surprise but this year "the word is out" on their return and a lot of fishermen have made these delectable little morsels their prime target.

The clear water appears to have driven the perch into deeper water than in the past with perch schools sometimes being found in water deeper than 70 feet. On an outing in late spring my fishing partner and I boated 30 perch in the 10" range in water that was 65 feet deep off the Cattaraugus Creek in

southern Erie County. These fish were finicky biters as the only bait they would hit was a lively Lake Erie minnow. We also had to re-anchor 5 times before we located this tight little school of fish in much deeper water than we started the day in.

Don Einhouse, senior biologist at the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) Fisheries station located in Dunkirk New York, stated at a recent eastern Lake Erie seminar "perch fishing in 2002 should be at least as good as the banner year of 2001". Don went on to recommend that perch fishermen try deeper water (50-70 feet) as DEC trawling surveys found more perch schools in deep water. This is probably due to the very clear water in the eastern basin. To get to water in excess of 70 feet in the Eastern basin I would recommend launching out of the Cattaraugus or Sturgeon Point and heading to the southwest. This quick rebound of a fishery that was previously thought to be in trouble was very good news for many Eastern Lake Erie fishermen. If you are interested in trying perch fishing in this area I would suggest light line, good Lake Erie minnows, a sensitive fish finder and patience as you might have to spend some time in locating the fish. Another suggestion would be to look for the boats, chances are if you spot 5 - 10 boats fishing close together their probably into a school of perch! The good news concerning

walleyes is that it appears that an experimental NYSDEC 5- year stream-stocking program of walleye fingerlings at the Cattaraugus Creek might be working! Early season DEC stream shocking checks for spawning walleyes has a good population of spawning walleyes in a stream that had virtually no spawning run less than 10 years ago! Genetic tests are now being run to verify that the fingerlings stocked did imprint and are the fish that are presently spawning in the Cattaraugus Creek. If a positive I.D. is made, other stream stocking programs at the eastern end of Lake Erie will probably start in the near future. Stream spawning survival is far superior to shoal spawning in the open lake where a single early season storm can wipe out a walleye-spawning year. Many people feel that one of the reasons that the western basin has a good population of walleye is due to excellent structure and a heavy annual stream walleye spawning run in the famous Maumee and other rivers. This program hopefully would go a long way in enhancing the local population of walleye in the eastern basin and mitigate some of the poor spawning years experienced on the offshore shoals. I will have a lot more on this subject in future articles.

The annual nighttime nearshore walleye fishing was good at the traditional "hotspots" off Hamburg town park near Buffalo and Van Buren point located approximately

5 miles south of Dunkirk. Both of these spots have extensive shoals where the walleye feed late at night. "The walleye fishing was typical with catches of 3-6 fish after a long night of trolling" stated Dave Goodberry, a veteran nighttime walleye fishermen who has trolled for walleyes after dark for over 25 years. Dave went on to say that most of the walleyes he caught were in the wee hours of the morning when most boating traffic over the shallow shoals had subsided. Most of the fish caught this year were mates ranging from 17-24". This was probably due to the relatively mild winter, which produced an earlier, spawning run. Female walleyes are known to immediately leave the spawning sites for the open waters of the lake whereas the males tend to stay around the shoreline for a period of time. The lures of choice were No. 13 Rapalas slowed trolled ISO- 200ft. behind the boat. The preferred colors were firetiger, black-silver, chartreuse and fluorescent orange. Junior Thundersticks also worked well on occasion. Dave also recommended a 3-foot leader of almost invisible line such as "Vanish" to counteract the extreme clarity of the water. This type of walleye fishing is truly small boat fishing as it takes place on the shallow near shore shoals where larger boats dare not venture. Small boats also enjoy a degree of safety as they can fish close to shore and can get off the lake quickly if one of Lake Erie's early season storms arise.

The offshore walleye fishing in late May through July was spotty with good fishing one day only to find out that your GPS waypoints didn't produce fish the next day. The lures, which worked the most

consistently, were worm harnesses of different colors with Ronesky and Reef Runner plugs also effective on some days. The walleyes caught were of high quality with many in the 8-10 lb. range! Brief moments of success followed by long periods of boredom where you have to continue to change location and lures seems to best describe the sporadic early summer offshore walleye fishing in eastern Lake Erie in 2002. Some good charter captains instruct their first mates to change lures every half-hour if they are marking fish and no strikes occur. Sometimes lures that do not work early in the day produce strikes later, so don't be afraid to try lures several times during the day, especially if the lure has been successful in the past. Most of the veteran fishermen are now using some of the new generation of lines like "Berkley's Fireline". These lines have virtually no stretch and have a small diameter, which allows a fisherman to run his lures deeper without adding weight. Wire line and Dipsy divers still remain staples on most charter boats. The success of the upcoming late summer walleye fishing will, as always, depend heavily on an influx of Lake Erie western basin walleye. Last year was the first time in recent memory when this annual migration from west to east didn't occur. If you are considering a trip up to western New York consider giving this world class fishery a try. More up to date information on walleye fishing can be found at www.Buffalocvb or the fishing information line at 716-844-1111 ext.4142. If you would like one of the new up to date Buffalo and Erie County Fishing Guides call 716-858-6926.

Try This Walleye Recipe

Walleye in Cream Sauce

4 tablespoons butter
1 onion, peeled and chopped
2 pounds walleye fillets
salt
freshly ground black pepper
1 bay leaf
1/2 cup dry white wine
1/2 cup fish stock
1 cup heavy cream
2 tablespoons chopped parsley
2 tablespoons chopped fresh dill
pinch of ground nutmeg
juice of 1/2 lemon

Melt the butter in a large frying pan and add the onion. Saute for 3-4 minutes and add the fish fillets. Season with salt and pepper and add the bay leaf, white wine and stock. Cover and simmer for 20 minutes. Remove the fish carefully to a serving platter and keep warm. Reduce the poaching liquid in the pan by half. Add the cream, parsley, and dill and reduce by half again. Season with the nutmeg and lemon juice and pour the sauce over the fish.

Hint: Be careful not to overcook the fish. Also, cookfish with the skin side up.

This recipe goes well with rice or noodles.

**Catch
Lake Erie Walleye
on the Internet
at:
WWW.WALLEYE.COM**

From Spinner/Crawler, page 15

Just for kicks, I sent out a couple spinner/crawler rigs behind bottombouncers. I used four-ounce bouncers and kept the trolling speed at 2.0 mph. It didn't take long before we started taking walleyes regularly on the bottom bouncers that were running right behind the boat. That fast trolling, multi-pronged technique paid off with limit catches on several charters last year and we seemed to take the biggest fish on the crawlers.

Storage

The best storage method that I've found for spinner/crawler rigs is to buy one of those noodle floats that kids use as pool toys. I cut them into foot long sections and also cut a shallow slit around the tube every couple inches. The leader with the loop knot is wedged into the slit and then wrapped around the tube with the hooks burred into the foam to keep the rig in place. The tubes can then be stored in a bag or boat compartment. Send questions to veinmr@aol.com.

From Open Water, page 21

For information call 1 800 BUCK-EYE. Tell them the area you'll be traveling to and you'll get all the help you need. We feel this will be an excellent year to visit our lake. Plan ahead for charters or lodging because it gets very bush in the summer. You can also e-mail me at capt.phil@cadez-charters.com for information. GOOD FISHIN!

From Editor, page 2

There are some more changes in store for the magazine. Starting with this issue we include two new sections; **“Dockage for Lake Erie Fishermen”** and **“Lodging for Lake Erie Fishermen”**. Previously, this information was readily available on our web site at walleye.com but we decided to list a limited number of Marinas and Lodgings in the print magazine. These listings will be limited to those folks that are “Fishermen Friendly” to the nth degree!

Finally, we welcome Rick Olson and Norb Wallock to Lake Erie Walleye Magazine. Rick and Norb, both proven walleye tournament fishing professionals will be sharing their knowledge of walleye fishing on ‘big water’ to our readership. Welcome aboard Rick and Norb!

This past spring fishing was fantastic at times, when the weather cooperated. Included in this great fishing was the record breaking performance of the Professional Walleye Trail contestants this past April on Erie's western basin waters. The three hundred fishermen landed a total of 1,794 walleyes weighing approximately 7 tons. The winner, Pro Tommy Skarlis set a new record of 3 days, 15 walleyes and 138.28 pounds. Pro, Ted Takasaki broke the single day record of six fish, 50.40 pounds. There were 346 walleyes that exceeded 10 pounds. The previous record was 35 fish in excess of 10 pounds.

The tournament did generate some controversy with the large numbers of large female walleyes

taken during the spawning season. The INTERNET chat sites and discussion boards were riddled with views on this from all sides. What do I think? The image of 1,794 fish and 7 tons of mostly large female walleyes taken out of Lake Erie during the spawning season is disturbing. However, from a biological perspective, the number of walleyes taken during this tournament in terms of its future impact on the Lake Erie walleye population was in fact minimal.

Could the tournament have been held later in the spring, after the spawn? Certainly. I'm sure good arguments could be made to host a tournament at many different times of the year. Here is an idea, that I'm sure is not original. Why not harvest the eggs from the females taken during large tournaments held during the spawn season and contribute them to Fish Hatcheries! Sure, there are logistical concerns here, but it could work.

Tight lines this summer!!

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*Fishing Reports
Charter & Lodging Info
Lake & Weather Conditions
... and more*

2002 Lake Erie Walleye Tournaments

April 7. World Walleye Association: Ohio Team Challenge. Catawba, OH. \$150/2 person team. Contact Dave Kidd at (330) 537-8603 or email: oh@worldwalleye.com

April 17-19. In-Fisherman Professional Walleye Trail. Port Clinton, OH \$1075/pros, \$575/Amat. Contact PWT Headquarters at: (218) 829-0620 or visit www.in-fisherman.com

May 5. World Walleye Association: Ohio Team Challenge. Huron, OH. \$150/2 person team. Contact Dave Kidd at (330) 537-8603 email: oh@worldwalleye.com

June 8. North Coast Charter Boat Association. Fairport Harbor/Grand River, OH. Walleye Tournament \$400/boat (8 rods max) Steelhead Tournament \$50/boat (8 rods max). 80% payback, first five positions. Contact Steve Jager: (216) 531-2754 or Bernie Roell: (440) 257-9544 or email: alurecharters@cs.com.

June 29. Fairport Harbor Rod & Reel Association. Fairport Harbor, OH \$80.00/boat. (4 man teams, 8 rod limit) 90% Payout. Contact Jason Glatz: (440) 548-4102

June 29 – July 7 Southtowns Walleye Association of Western New York. Several Western New York weigh stations. Contact Tom Marks: (716) 947-9350

July 6. Chagrin River Salmon Association. 1st Annual Walleye/Steelhead Fishing Tournament. Willoughby, OH. \$150/three man team. (440) 942-4730 or email epav198@aol.com.

July 14. World Walleye Association. Bolles Harbor, MI \$150/team. Phone (920) 924-2100

July 21. World Walleye Association: Ohio Team Challenge. Geneva OH. \$150/team. Contact Dave Kidd at (330) 537-8603 email: oh@worldwalleye.com

July 9-10. New York Walleye Association. Ameri-Can Walleye Classic. Chadwick Bay Marina, Dunkirk, NY. \$175/team (2-4 man teams). Limit 150 teams. Contact Jim Borucki (716) 897-1522 or George Boice (716) 874-2522

June 29-30. The Walleye Classic. Port Colborne, Ontario \$400/3-4 person team (US). 100 team limit . Contact Dave Malloy (905) 834-9218.

August 10. 444 Walleye International Fishing Tourn. Port Colborne & District Conservation Club. Marina H, H Knoll Park in Port Colborne, Ontario. Entry Fee: \$130/team (US), \$180 (CAN) Contact Mike Shatkosky (905) 834-4314 or Mike Hili (905) 835-1891 Email: shatkosk@computan.on.ca www.thefishingspot.com/pcdc

August 3. 12th Annual Lake Erie Walleye Tournament. ARU Marina, Ashtabula, OH. \$140/boat Contact Chuck Baker (330) 392-1591 ext. 223 or Nick Frangos (330) 759-0746. fishbanger001@netscape.net

August 10. Western Reserve Walleye Association Open Event. ARU Club, Ashtabula, OH. \$100/2 person team. Contact Jim Breedlove (330) 530-3909 or visit www.thewrwa.com.

August 24-25. World Walleye Association: Ohio Team Challenge Championship. Fairport Harbor, OH \$150/team. Contact Dave Kidd at (330) 537-8603 email: oh@worldwalleye.com

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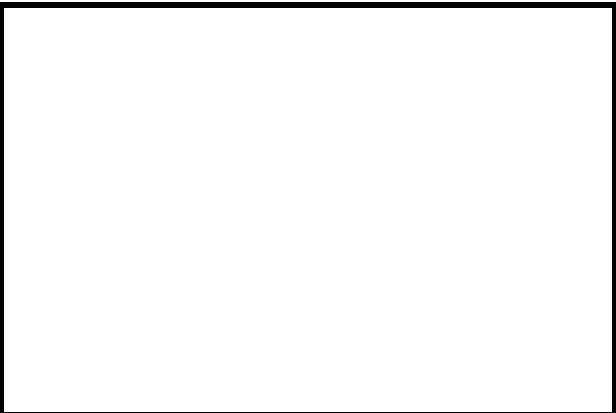
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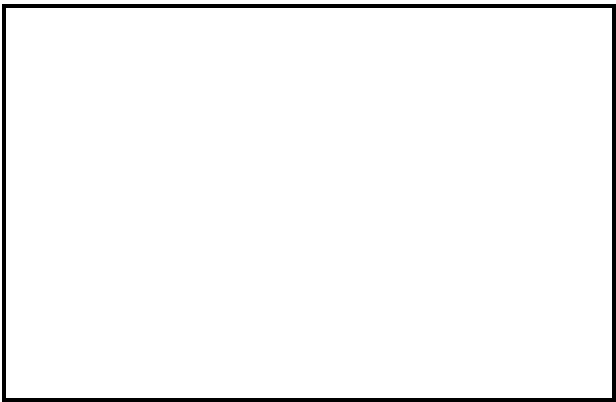
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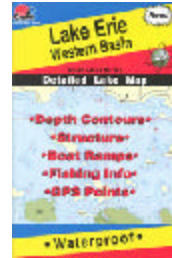
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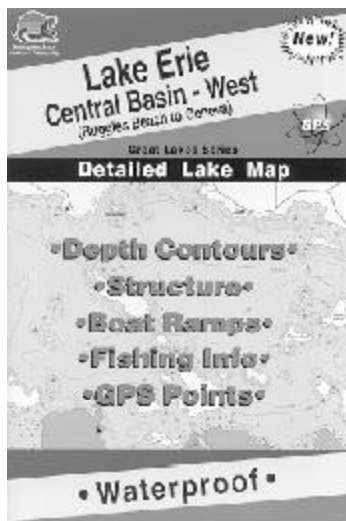
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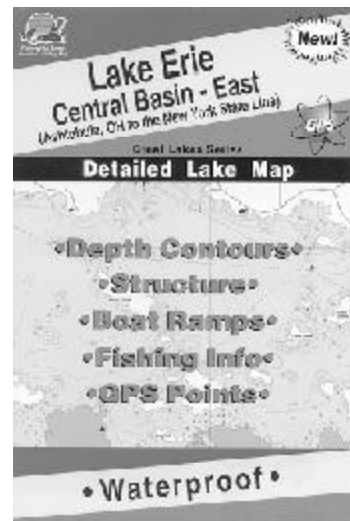
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