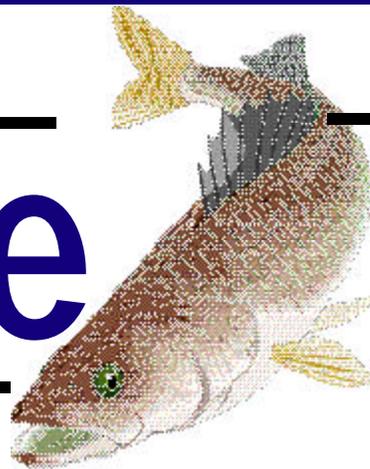


Lake Erie

Walleye



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Fall 2003

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- Fall Trophy Walleyes
- Dog Gone Walleyes
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- The Eastern Lake Erie Report
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Bruce "DOC" Samson
2002 Wal-Mart RCL Walleye
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For the Plautz boys, fishing is in their blood. (top to bottom) Dan Plautz is an RCL winner. Son Danny took second in his first RCL event. And younger son Jimmy finished 6th as a co-angler at the 2002 RCL Championship.

(top to bottom) Rick Franklin took third at the 2002 RCL Championship and Tim Leska won \$75,000 as the top co-angler. And Rick Olson, who has won both RCL and PWT Angler of the Year titles.

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From The Editor

Well, another summer has come and gone and we are in the midst of fall. September and October is a special time for Lake Erie. The lake 'turns over' at this time each year causing the dynamics of the fishery to change. Without the thermocline acting as a boundary, walleye in the lake move more freely about the water column and into shallower water. This can be both frustrating to those hunting the fall 'eyes and rewarding, when the 'eyes can be found.

Later in the fall as water temperatures begin to plummet the walleyes head west to begin preparations to over winter. Areas off of Huron, OH are hot spots for walleyes at this time of year. Several of the central basin charter captains move their boats to Huron for this walleye action. The walleyes are feeding heavily during the fall, before winter sets in.

The perch fishing so far this fall has been very good. Seems that the size of perch is down a bit from last year but the numbers are there. Weather is the biggest factor controlling the success of the fall perch angler. Fall storms can really churn up the lake in a hurry. Not only does it keep boaters off of the lake but following a 'good erie blow' it can take a few days for the perch to gather themselves for another strong 'bite'.

Conditions on the lake can change quickly and anglers really need to be aware. Recently I took my wife, sister and father out for an early morning perch catch. The lake was calm and we limited out in a few hours and got back to the dock before noon. My mother heard how well we did and wanted to catch some herself, so we loaded back up and headed out at 2pm but the wind had picked up and was blowing 15+ knots directly from the east. After leaving the harbor we

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Lake Erie Walleye

Rick Kubb, Editor/Publisher

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Domek said only about 4 inches of Byle's boat were above water by the time he arrived.

"When we pulled up, I knew we only had a couple of chances to do this. So I told them when they get the chance, to just dive into the boat," Domek said.

The stranded men managed to board Domek's boat — but two of the five walleye didn't.

U.S. Coast Guard Station Marblehead dispatched a 47-foot rescue vessel and a 27-foot boat to the area.

Boater's Emergency Service also sent out two boats to join the search effort.

Coast Guard personnel eventually located the swamped boat and floating debris, then towed the boat to shore.

Byle survived the day's winner-take-all, Wal-Mart RCL fish-off with three walleye totaling 15 pounds, 15 ounces — good for sixth place out of the 10 finalists. David Kolb of Riverview, Mich., won the event with five walleye totaling 29 pounds, 6 ounces.

After rescuing the anglers, Domek's boat was battered by waves, shattering his windshield. The boat started to flood, but the men were able to pump out the water and get back to shore.

Byle said Lake Erie conditions worsened in a matter of minutes that morning.

"We went out to make another pass when a wave came over the back of the boat. So we had to get water out of the boat," Byle said. "I couldn't get the engine going when another wave came about 10 seconds later.

"I went to call for my day and another wave hit before I could give my coordinates. I'm very happy to be alive. I'm very proud of what Bob did."

The Wal-Mart RCL Walleye Tour also visited Port Clinton in April 2001.

In April 2000, six competitors in a Port Clinton InFisherman Professional Walleye Trail tournament rescued four swamped amateur anglers during a storm near Niagara Reef, about nine miles north of Camp Perry.

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found ourselves in 3-5 footers and immediately turned back for a roller coaster ride back to safe harbor. The lake had gone from calm to heavy seas in only an hour or two.

In early September I had the opportunity to fish Lake Ontario with a good friend and charter Captain, Captain Frank Godina of Top Gun charters. Frank fishes Lake Erie in the spring and moves his boat to Olcott, NY for Salmon fishing from July through October. We had a great day on the lake, even though conditions were a little rough and a recent Lake Ontario storm had churned the lake up causing it to turn over and scattered the King salmon. We did get three hook ups that morning and I landed a 20+ pounder (see story inside).

Finally, the Ohio DNR is proposing new regulations for walleye. They propose to reduce the daily limit from 4 to 3 during the spring spawn from March through April as well as creating a year-round 15 inch walleye size limit. The Lake Erie Charter Boat Association (LECBA) would like to see the proposal changed and have offered their own view of lowering the bag limit from six to four from September through April.

Each of these proposals has merit and you can make a good argument for both, depending on what numbers you look at. Numbers can be deceiving though. Mark twain said "there are lies, damn lies, and then there are statistics".

Whichever proposal is adopted I feel all anglers will benefit in the long run. These conservation efforts will help us all enjoy walleye fishing for generations to come in wonderful Lake Erie. Till next time, good fishing.