Many days, fishing with a tandem rig comprised of two or more hooks, flies or lures is your best option for catching more and bigger walleye, trout, bass, whitefish, crappies, bluegills and yellow perch. And let there be no question about it, I am not referring to multi-hook presentations like the outdated “pickerel rig”. Rather, these are modern methods employed by some of the best anglers in the business.

And while we never object to catching two or more fish at the same time, it is not the only reason why tandem rigs excel. It is because you can do things with them that you cannot accomplish with a single bait method.

**DOUBLE FLUKE RIG**

Take the double fluke rig as a good case in point. It is an easy way to present two soft plastic fluke-style baits and is deadly anytime you hear a splash, turn around and see a pack of smallmouth, largemouth or striped bass herding a school of baitfish up to the surface. Most anglers reach for a topwater lure when they see this kind of surface commotion, but the predators aren’t feeding on top. Instead, they’re using the water/air transition like a ceiling against which to wedge their prey.

A double fluke rig is also one of my favourite ways to search for bass when I am fishing a new lake for the first time, or a body of water that I know well, but have lost contact with the fish. Catching a fish is always decisive, but many times I just want one to show itself, so I can slow down and pick apart the school.

And when bass are scattered, especially smallmouth and I am looking for a reaction strike rather than a feeding response, nothing entices them to bite faster than a pair of flukes dancing past their noses. I should mention, too, that in the spring and fall when lake trout, speckled trout and spalke flood the shallows to gorge on minnows, a double fluke rig is astonishingly productive.

To assemble it so the baits never tangle, I tie a barrel swivel to the end of a 14-inch leader comprised of 10- to 12-pound test Maxima UltraGreen monofilament or fluorocarbon line. Then, I knot a 2/0 to 4/0 EWG Gamakatsu hook (depending on the size of the fluke) to the other end. Next, I take my 10- to 14-pound mainline braid and thread it through the open end of the leader swivel so that it runs freely up and down the line. Finally, I attach a barrel swivel to the end of my mainline so that it stops the free sliding dropper line, fasten an 18” – 24” leader to the end, knot on a second hook and attach a fluke-style minnow to each hook.

The rig is amazingly tangle free.

A couple of words, however, about the components. Using a light braid is essential to cast the baits as far away from the boat as possible, to work them erratically and to set the hook with authority when a fish hits at the end of a long pitch. I also typically fish the rig for smallmouth bass using spinning gear, although some largemouth pros prefer baitcasting tackle. Finally, I always use a hook with a top notch bait keeper to stop the soft plastic from slipping. Many days, too, I add a drop of Super Glue for insurance.

**Oh, yes, one last important rigging detail:** hook your baits weedless with the point slightly embedded under the skin along the back of the baits if you’re casting around weeds or wood. But if you’re fishing open water structure you will increase your hooking percentage significantly by keeping the point exposed.

Next, because I am looking for a reaction bite or schooling strike and trying to simulate a herd of panic-stricken minnows, I tend to fish the rig more quickly and erratically than when I am pitching a single fluke-style lure, that I often let pause and flutter down slowly. I almost always keep it in the upper four feet of the water column as well.

(Continued on page 4.)

By: Gord Pyzer

They may be called Alabama rigs, but as Liam Whetter will tell you, Canadian (Ontario) smallmouth love them just as much. Maybe even better.
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CRAPPIE CANDY (Panfish Panacea)

One of the things I most look forward to each year at the Toronto Spring Fishing Show is hooking up with Dan Dannenmueller, founder of the popular CrappieNow (www.crappienow.com) website. Dannenmueller tours the southern United States tournament circuits where crappie fishing is as much a religion as a sport and he always has a plethora of panfish aces tucked up his sleeve.

“Since Canadians can only use one pole,” Dannenmueller says, when I ask him to divulge his “go to” presentation, “my favourite way to catch crappies when I come north, is to vertically jig, or drift, push and pull a double rig.”

To assemble the vertical arrangement, Dannenmueller ties a Blakemore Live Shot’n Fry 12- to 18-inches up his 10-pound test Gamma high-vis main line. It is a unique feathered finesse fly-like jig with barbell eyes built around a Blakemore Standout hook. Then he knots a 1/16-ounce Roadrunner jig dressed with a Bobby Garland Baby Shad to the end of his line. “It flat out catches just about everything that swims,” chuckles the personable pro.

“If I am drifting, or using my electric trolling motor to push or pull the boat, on the other hand,” says Dannenmueller, “I fashion my double rig around a Thundermist three-way swivel. It is the only one that offers true 360° rotation to minimize tangles. I tie my mainline to one end of the (Continued on page 6.)
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swivel and a pre-tied #1 Blakemore-snelled hook to one of the open ends. I always bait this hook with a minnow. Then, I attach a 32-inch length of 8-pound test clear Gamma monofilament (six-pound if the water is clear) to the third end of the swivel and three-quarters of the way down, I loop the line four times through a 1/2-ounce egg sinker to stop it from sliding. It is important to have at least 10-inches of line below the weight. Then, I finish off the rig with the same Road Runner-style jig and soft plastic dressing that I mentioned earlier.”

While most Canadian anglers use six- to seven-foot light action spinning rods for their panfish presentations, Dannenmueller says a much longer rod will put your jigs farther away from the boat, where the fish haven’t been spooked. When he is vertical jigging, he uses a 10-foot long Sam Heaton BnM jigging pole, opting for an even longer 14-foot BnM trolling rod when he is slowly pushing and pulling the boat.

“Since most Canadian crappie lakes are clear,” says Dannenmueller, “I look for deep water structure and cover like isolated rocks, humps and grass beds. In the heart of summer, the fish will go deep enough to just be out of the light, near schools of minnows. If the water has any colour, you will find the crappies shallower. I really like vertical weed walls where the grass grows right to the edge of deep water. And if you fish a lake with plenty of cottages, and can find docks over deep water, you’ll catch crappies by vertically jigging in the shady areas.”

GET THE LEAD OUT

Drop-shotting is arguably the hottest technique to hit the bass scene over the last decade. So efficient, in fact, that it has been quickly adopted by walleye, trout and panfish anglers as well.

Drop-shotting is so effective because you tie your hook a foot or two up the line and then add a lead or tungsten sinker to the end, the opposite way anglers have been doing it for centuries.

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Super8Slick V2 is now re-engineered to the next level of toughness. With a new eight-end dense weave construction coated with PowerPro’s Enhanced Body Technology (EBT) process, it now delivers all of the smooth, silent benefits of original Super8Slick, plus providing added slickness for longer casts and added abrasion toughness for any fishing situation.
When you attach a live or soft plastic bait to the hook, and then fish it over the side of the boat, or cast it out and slowly work it back, you can let the sinker lie on the bottom and suspend your offering in front of the fishes’ faces.

More and more anglers, however, have taken to substituting a jig for the weight on the bottom, giving them two hooking options. It is particularly effective in ultra-clear water situations, like the Great Lakes where bottom dwelling gobies fuel the energy cycle.

Lacking a swim bladder, gobies literally scoot across the bottom, where they’re gobbled up eagerly by bass, walleye, yellow perch, lake trout and whitefish. In fact, before the advent of the drop shot rig, most anglers targeted the top predators by dragging a tube jig. Then it became fashionable to argue which technique was better – a plowing tube or slightly elevated drop shot bait. Why choose when you can fish them both at the same time?

My favourite walleye presentation is using a 1/4- to 1/2-ounce ReelBait Tournament Flasher jig tipped with a minnow, leech or nightcrawler with a similar offering pinned to a #2, #4 or #6 VMC Neko hook positioned 14- to 16-inches up the line at the depth that I can see the fish cruising on my sonar screen. Many anglers tip the two hooks with different baits – a minnow on the jig and a leech on the drop shot hook, for example – so the fish have a choice. But I always use the same bait on both hooks for what I think is a more natural look.

When I am fishing for bottom-dwelling smallmouth bass, lake trout and whitefish, on the other hand, as well as yellow perch and walleye in lakes with burgeoning populations of rusty crayfish, my “go to” lure on the end of the line is a Meegs jig. The unique Meegs is a compact, nose-heavy minnow with the...
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(Double Trouble continued from page 8.)

line tie positioned where the dorsal fin would be. When you lower it to the bottom and gently lift it up and down, you can make it peck into the sand, mud and detritus looking exactly like a feeding shiner, goby or sculpin.

But here is the turn-on-trick: bait your drop shot hook above the Meegs jig with a soft plastic insect replica — like a GULP! Hellgrammite — and every few minutes, lift up the Meegs at least two or three feet and let it crash into the bottom. Then lift it up only inches and hold it as still as possible. When you drop it into the bottom, it creates a mini-volcanic eruption, spewing up a cloud of silt, announcing to every bass, walleye, perch or whitefish in the neighbourhood that the gravy train has arrived. They see both the Meegs minnow and the floating soft plastic above it and come charging in when the dinner bell rings.

And what is so interesting is that you typically will find the fish zeroing in on one offering or the other. It is rarely random and the preference often switches suddenly and noticeably, as weather conditions, light levels and fish preferences change. But you never have to worry about it when you’re fishing a modern-day tandem rig.

(Sidebar)

Check the Regs

In most provinces, anglers are allowed up to four hooks on their line, with a treble normally counting as one hook. It is the reason why most jerkbaits, crankbaits and musky bucktails are adorned with three or four trebles and the venerable four hook “pickerel rig” has remained in vogue. But, certain areas and lakes are managed on a single-hook-only basis. So, always check the rules and if in doubt, consult the local Natural Resource office.

About the Author — Gord Pyzer:
OPENING DAY IS EVERYDAY
Jeff, line up that big birch tree with the red willows and drift us out past the edge of these surface weeds... Ben, drop the anchor... right here” instructed “The Captain”, Lou Matity, as he pointed his finger and nodded to his crew.

“Guaranteed pickerel and jackfish”, added Dad confidently as son, Benjamin, and I anticipating some good fishing. The 14-foot “Teaspoon” pivoted into position. Immediately, fish began gobbling our ReelBait Flasher jigs. Success... thanks to our human GPS, Grampa Matity!

“Old school” triangulation-navigation will never go out of style! However, for the past few years, I have dedicated myself to “colouring” with my Humminbird Helix 9. Creating my own “live” hydrographic maps, has proven fun and educational, although at times, grueling and outright heartbreaking.

Mapping takes some discipline and, I feel, is best done without a line in the water. No distractions, please! For that reason, my two favourite times of year to map are spring and fall. Where I live, April is closed to angling on most lakes; perfect conditions for getting the boat in the water and doing some “colouring”!

Again, come fall, when most outdoors people are in the field, I’m on the water, mapping and scouting for first-ice hot spots. Fewer boats on the water means safer mapping with fewer “holes” in the map created when avoiding someone’s anchored boat along your mapping path.

Here are “5 Tips” for better mapping although, I don’t claim to be an electronics master. No, I’m just a regular guy, lucky enough to be using the most user-friendly technology in the industry. With several hundred hours of experience under my belt, I feel I can speak from that experience and, above all else, highlight the importance of common sense and discipline.

1: Save, Save, Save

Most people have experienced losing data, at one time or another, with their phone or PC after penning an essay or long email only to have the power flicker or fail and the work vanish. Your fishfinder is no different. Know your boat’s power supply and always save your data often (even just small map sections at a time). You see, my boat has a master power switch that defaults to “off” when I shut off the key and then turn it on again. One day, after completing a 3-hour section on my home lake, I decided to try a favourite spot for walleye. It was a good decision to stop.

The Humminbird showed my completed Autochart Zero Line map that included several waypoints I’d placed, with care, along the small underwater point. My 1/4 oz., ReelBait SpinDoctor smeared with Pro-Cure BaitWaxx was what the doctor ordered and I got bit! I didn’t want to quit; but, it was supper time. So, I turned the key to fire the big engine and the Humminbird screen went black!

My heart sank as I powered up the machine and scrolled over to the lake section I’d just mapped... I saw nothing but my pretty grid of lines from my mapping passes! I was unable to recover the map. With my wiring I must Stop recording and manually Powered Down the unit for the data to be collated and stored properly. Now, I have yellow electrical tape stuck to the bottom of the Helix unit with message, “Saved??!”

Speaking of Saved, don’t leave your precious maps on your finder only. Have a file system set up on your PC and back-up all your maps. Be conscientious or be sorry!

2: Safety, Safety, Safety

My home lakes are Glacial Prairie Gems. Unlike Canadian Shield Lakes, there are few reefs, fewer islands and, for the most part, soft bottom points and bays. However, each summer, my wife/musky girl, Lori, trolls with me at 6 mph, mapping island-after-island and reef-after-reef in our ongoing search for Girthra – Lake of the Woods’ giant musky. At this speed, I am able to be quick on the steering wheel, throttle and my engine’s trim in order to negotiate interesting areas.

In unfamiliar and very tight spots, we cast under the power of the MinnKota Terrova, with the big engine trimmed up, out of harm’s way. In any unfamiliar waters, Never, Ever, Ever put yourself, your guests, your boat and your engine in perilous danger. Saving time “pushing” a mapping job is senseless. Hasty and careless, now, means sorry and expensive, later!

3: Speed Kills – Know your Throttle Threshold

For those who ask me about mapping speed, I start with some standard advice; 6-7 mph on straightaways and 4 mph in corners. I say this so that folks will be able to move at a quick enough clip, be safe; as well as, avoid “washouts” on corners. Washouts are caused when the transducer skids sideways and cavitates on a curve causing map “blemishes”.

(Continued on page 14.)
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I know my local lakes well. Here, I stretch the speed barrier quite a bit. In shallow water, as deep as 10-15 feet, I actually get my boat up onto plane and hold it at its lowest planning speed... around 13-14 mph. In deep water I drop from plane down to 9 mph. Speed-mapping is best when the water is flat and there is no bouncing of the bow to jostle the transducer from its optimal, parallel angle with the bottom. I can’t always pick my day, and mapping in choppy water is usually the norm. For this, I adjust my tactics a bit taking a big “sausage shaped” bite out of a shoreline and working from the perimeter inward. I still do the shallow-water speed-run with the wind; but, hold steady against the breeze, with a reduced speed for the deep-water stretch.

4: Map-Blemish Fix

During your learning curve, you will end up “washing out” on a turn or on a speed run. What you will see is a blemish that looks like a “black-hole” on your map. The fix is simple: pull up on any black-hole and “hover” in the middle of it. The hole will begin to shrink rapidly as the mapping unit continually truths the data and, finally, morphs into the colour of the surrounding map… voila!

5: Hugging Curves

The general rule that I adhere to when mapping is to “run parallel” with the contours. Now, on the “sausage shaped” maps you cannot avoid “contour cutting”, which is slicing up and down changing water depths. What the transducer signal, finder-computer and mapping image will create is a “dragging” effect of the image. I think of it like a perfectly drawn water-colour contour map that you have dragged a wet paintbrush across and, in doing so, dragged the clean contour lines out of sync with the original map. To fix, return to these “drag marks” and carefully run the contour. By running the contour several times, you will “tighten up” the drag marks to accurately represent the true contour.

EQUIPMENT EXPECTATIONS

A boat engine is not cheap to operate. Over a season of colouring sessions, I spend several hundred dollars on premium gas; as well as, Evinrude 2+4 Fuel Conditioner and Evinrude E-Tec XD100 oil to keep my engine running perfectly. The way I look at it, my sport of choice is not free. However, the information that a lake gives up once I discover her secret spots and the migration routes of the fish is priceless! Also, the care and attention that I give to my boat and motor when mapping in the fall (before I put her to bed for the winter) or in the spring (when I wake her up from her winter slumber) is time and money well invested.

DON’T TAKE MY WORD FOR IT: SUPER-PRO TIPS

Darrin Bohonis, of www.bohonisenterprisesinc.ca, specializes in Humminbird products and has spent more time mapping than most experienced folks have spent fishing, period! He annually logs 100’s of hours behind the wheel, mapping. Here are his words of wisdom:
“Jeff’s TIPS are solid; but, a few details can be added here…”

A: “Safety is, without question, the primary goal. Do not let yourself get ‘hypnotized’ by the mapping screen. Instead, try to look up at your destination as much as you look down at your screen.”

B: “If you make a “blemish” on your map, go to: https://www.technologicalangler.com/repair-autochart-live-maps for instructions on how to delete the data point instead of trying to erase it by repetitive passes through it.”

C: “With a properly installed transducer, it is possible to travel, on plane, as fast as 20 mph without causing blemishes on your map. Just understand that your data is not as accurate since your data-point recordings are more spread out. You will also notice the width of the map drawing will be narrower than when traveling at 6-9 mph. However, this is not an issue when mapping expansive, featureless basin area.”

“Colouring” with my user-friendly, feature packed Humminbird is rewarding and educational. However, every chance I get, I take along “The Captain” for “guaranteed pickerel and jackfish!”

About the Author: Jeff Matity
A Fishing Industry Professional for nearly 30 years as a Fishing Guide & Promotional Staffer, with Bachelor’s Degrees in both Science & Education, Jeff uses this training in his job as a Fisheries Professional & Outdoor Educator (specializing in fishing via family business, GetFishing.ca) to reach out to anyone interested in learning about fish.

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YOUTUBE.COM/MATITYSFETCHFISHING
One of the hottest finesse bass fishing presentations recently has been a Ned Rig! This rig was developed in the Midwest by several finesse fishing pioneers whose goal was to catch as many bass a day as possible. Ned Kehde, hailing originally from St. Louis, MO, is widely considered as one of the forefathers of Midwest finesse fishing and is whom the Ned Rig is named after. He has been using finesse techniques to catch bass since the early 1960’s along with other well-known names in the fishing industry. Among these names were Chuck Woods who developed the original Beetle and Beetle Spin, Charlie Brewer of Slider Fishing System fame and Drew Reese who competed in the first ever Bassmaster Classic in 1971 on Lake Mead. Drew managed a 7th place finish at the inaugural Bassmaster Classic, catching most of his fish on a jigworm and a Beetle Spin.

Today’s modern Ned Rig was born out of 2 critical moments in Ned’s life. In 2006 Ned shared a boat with Japanese pro bass angler, Shinichi Fukae on Beaver Lake. Shin’s finesse presentations impressed upon Ned the similarities to the finesse tactics he had learned, pioneered and used back in Kansas. Later on, that same year, while covering an event for In-Fisherman magazine, Kevin VanDam gave him a pack of Strike King Zeros which was a stickbait made out of a material called ElaZtech. These were made for Strike King by a company from South Carolina called Z-Man. ElaZtech products were created by Z-Man’s proprietary formula and were advertised as “10X Tough”. They are extremely soft & pliable while extremely resistant to nicks, cut and tearing. Another unique property of the ElaZtech material is its natural buoyancy, which is one of the keys to the Ned Rig’s effectiveness.

Kehde eventually cut a 5” Zero in half and threaded it on a 1/16 oz. Gopher jighead and learned really quickly how effective it was at catching not only numbers of bass but size as well. He found out that it was also extremely durable, literally often catching over one hundred on the same bait. Eventually with the assistance of Drew Reese, they convinced Z-Man Fishing to come out with the Hula StickZ and the Finesse T.R.D. (The Real Deal) and the Ned Rig era began.

A Ned Rig setup consists of a mushroom shaped jighead with some type of ElaZtech bait from Z-Man. Although to a Ned Rig neophyte, a Ned Rig may look like just a half of a Senko on a jig head, this is simply not the case. The buoyancy of the ElaZtech material and the mushroom shaped head are both keys to this presentation. When combined together, the ElaZtech bait stands the mushroom jighead up off the bottom. When stopped, the ElaZtech bait slowly quivers while standing off the bottom, an action which almost no bass can resist.

Originally, Z-Man offered mushroom shaped jigheads like the Finesse ShroomZ and Power Finesse ShroomZ, available in open hook and weedless models. These were great on light spinning outfits and in the shallower waters for which that type of finesse presentation was developed. Ned would fish this rig anywhere from 3 feet to 12-15 feet, but as the use of the Ned Rig spread across the country and into Canada, anglers started using them to catch smallmouth bass in deeper waters. So, Z-Man introduced the TT Lures NedLockZ HD jighead and this year the Pro ShroomZ jighead, which both feature stouter hooks and heavier weights to handle those hard fighting smallies and the depths that they may live in. Using jigheads with heavier gauge wire hooks is definitely recommended when targeting smallmouth bass as they can easily open up fine wire hooks. There is always a balance that must be maintained because if the hook is too heavy it will counteract the buoyant property of the ElaZtech bait!

Other quality manufacturers quickly got on board with the Ned Rig craze. Owner introduced their Block Head jighead, which although initially developed to catch numbers of largemouth bass, the Ned Rig has evolved into a must-have presentation for smallmouth bass!
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is available in weights from 1/16 oz. to 3/16 oz. and they just added a Block Head jighead with an offset hook in order to rig your bait weedless. In the upcoming year, Ultra Tungsten will be introducing a tungsten Ned Rig jighead in an open hook and weedless models. For finesse purposes Ned Rig jigheads are usually black or green-pumpkin but some are painted chartreuse, white, red or left unpainted. These other coloured heads are useful for those who are starting to use Ned Rig to target Walleye and other species of fish, although red is the colour of Ned's favourite jighead.

The current line-up of Z-Man T.R.D. products are currently very extensive and they seem to add new models every year. Starting with the 2.75” Finesse T.R.D., there is also the larger 4” Big T.R.D., the Hula StickZ, Finesse WormZ, T.R.D. HogZ, T.R.D. MinnowZ, T.R.D. CrawZ, T.R.D. TicklerZ and T.R.D. BugZ. These are all extremely effective and offer different shapes & colours, some have appendages so there are lots of choices to pick from. There is always a huge buzz each year since the Ned Rig was introduced, surrounding the Z-Man Fishing booth at ICAST as everyone tries to get a look at the next latest T.R.D. product that they’re going to debut.

At the 2019 ICAST show, Z-Man expanded the Ned Rig out of the finesse fishing realm and introduced the 6” Giant T.R.D. and the Mag ShroomZ Jighead with a 6/0 hook in 1/8 oz. to 3/8 oz. sizes. There is a weedless version of the Mag ShroomZ jighead as well. This substantial sized rig should quickly become a favourite in the southern big bass states such as Florida, Texas and California. Of course, this rig would probably best be fished on a baitcasting outfit. The new Daiwa Tatula SV TW103 spooled up with 1 lb test Sunline FC Sniper fluorocarbon on a Tatula Brent Ehrler signature series TAE701MMHB-AGS rod would be the perfect combo for this rig.

For finesse fishing with a Ned Rig, a spinning combination like a Daiwa Ballistic LT BLSLT2500D-XH spooled up with 6/8-lb. test Sunline FC Sniper fluorocarbon line on a Daiwa Kage KAG701MLFS rod would be ideal. A silky-smooth drag like the one found on the Daiwa Ballistic LT reel is very important when targeting bass with light lines. The medium-light power of the Kage rod offers a fast action for casting the lighter Ned Rigs and a slightly parabolic bend to help fight trophy fish on lighter lines. Fluorocarbon line is also a key component of this finesse presentation because of its invisibility and abrasion resistance factors. But also, many Ned Rigging retrieves are often fished on a slack line and fluorocarbon line is actually more sensitive than braided lines when using a slack line presentation. It is fluorocarbon line’s stiffness and memory.

(Continued on page 19.)
properties that gives it that sensitivity. When using fluorocarbon as a main line it is important to treat it with a line treatment like Kevin VanDam’s Line & Lure Conditioner or ReelSnot. This treatment removes some of the fluorocarbon’s memory and makes the line more supple and more manageable, especially on spinning reels.

Fluorocarbon line’s unmatched abrasion resistance property is extremely important as a Ned Rig is often dragged along or very close to the bottom, but it is always wise to constantly check your line for any nicks or damage. If you really prefer a braided mainline then don’t go any heavier than a 10-15 lbs. test braid and use a fluorocarbon leader.

A Ned Rig is most effective in clear to slightly stained waters. It can be fished as shallow as 2-3 feet but with the heavier jigheads now available it can also be used in waters as deep as 25-30 feet. Ned Rigs should be fished with relatively short casts and many of the various retrieves are no-feel retrieves. Here are some of the retrieves that you can try with your Ned Rig. Experiment with them and see which one works best for you!

**SWIM – GLIDE – SHAKE**

This is probably the most commonly used retrieve for a Ned Rig. You can make a relatively short cast 30 feet or so and let your Ned Rig drop on a slack line. Keep your rod tip in a downward position and shake your rod tip as your lure falls to the bottom. Start reeling your Ned Rig about 6” off the bottom for about 3 rotations of your reel handle then pause allowing the bait to glide back to the bottom for a couple of seconds. During that pause, shake your rod tip then perform another 3 turns of your reel handle. Repeat until your lure is back at the boat. Of course, if you feel anything strange while retrieving your Ned Rig set the hook with a solid steady sweep set! You can vary how hard you shake your rod tip until you find what the fish want.

**DRAG & SHAKE/DEADSTICK**

This is a great presentation while fishing out of the back of the boat. Cast out perpendicular to the boat or out the back of the boat and shake your tip again as your bait falls to the bottom. Once your Ned Rig hits the bottom you can drag it along the bottom by reeling slowly or letting the forward motion of the boat do the work while shaking your rod tip. Occasionally you can pause, feed out some line and dead stick your lure for up to a count of 5 then drag and shake your bait again until it’s back at the boat or you get that next bite!

**STRAIGHT SWIM**

According to Ned, this presentation was developed by Charlie Brewer. In this “do nothing” retrieve, you would cast out your Ned Rig and allow it to either drop to the bottom or count it down to the depth that you feel the bass are at. If you are fishing in 12 feet of water and feel that the fish are a couple of feet off the bottom, then you would cast out and count to 10, then start slowly and steadily retrieving your lure.

(Continued on page 20.)

(Bassin’ Ned’s Way continued from page 18.)

Z-Man Fishing’s T.R.D. assortment is beyond compare; these are just a few options!
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(Bassin' Ned's Way continued from page 19.)

HOP & BOUNCE

Make your cast again shaking while it drops to the bottom, then make 2 quick rotations of your reel handle. Stop and watch your line as your bait falls back down to the bottom. Once your line goes slack as it hits the bottom then make 2 more rotations. Again, repeat this retrieve until your Ned Rig is back at the boat. The Z-Man T.R.D. CrawZ is a great bait to use with this presentation as the fish which fall for it are usually feeding on crayfish along the bottom.

STROLLING

If you happen to be fishing as a co-angler and draw someone like Doug Brownridge who is going to keep the boat moving at a fair clip, you can just cast your Ned Rig out the boat of the boat. Then you just let the boat movement help you stroll/drag your bait along, shaking it occasionally to impart a little action to it.

All of these retrieves can be very effective and you can modify them to suit your needs. A great deal of the effectiveness of a Ned Rig occurs as you lose feel of your bait. It is important to be an avid line watcher in order to help you detect those subtle bites. Select your mushroom jighead weight based on the depth of the water you’re fishing and experiment with different types of Z-Man T.R.D. baits. If the water is clear then start with more natural colours and switch to brighter colours if the water becomes more stained.

Get on the Ned Rig train and it will help you catch those finicky or pressured fish. Until we see you on the water... Fish Hard! Dream Big!

Editor’s Note

David Chong is widely recognized as one of Canada’s top competitive tournament anglers. He is also an avid multi species angler and is a strong advocate for affordable, accessible angling for all! David loves sharing his vast fishing knowledge and stories with anglers of all ages, beginners and pros alike!
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To More Muskies This Year!

By: Jim Saric

One of the things I really enjoy is teaching people how to catch more muskies. I started teaching musky schools with my good friend Joe Bucher back in 1982. When Joe decided to stop teaching his muskie schools, Steve Heiting and I started the University of Esox in 1996. Throughout the years I have been able to fish with many musky anglers of different skill levels. Many of the students have become excellent musky hunters, some of which are top guides and tournament anglers. What is interesting is that having taught fishing schools for 35 years there are a few skills that many anglers continue to overlook and instead focus on a specific lure technique such as working a glider jerkbait, or ripping a big soft plastic. Plus, every year there seems to be a new “magic lure” that brings eternal musky hope.

However, as any seasoned musky angler knows, there is no such thing. Although developing lure techniques will make you a better musky angler there are three skills that most anglers don’t take as seriously, yet over the long haul, perfecting this trio will put more muskies in your boat than any one lure technique. The three must-have skills are Casting, Figure 8s and Boat Control. Let’s examine the importance of each as food for thought.

Most musky anglers I encounter are pretty good with a baitcaster, but they could become much better. Also, since we often make long casts to non-specific targets, musky anglers aren’t nearly as accurate as bass anglers when it comes to hitting targets. It is extremely important to focus on reducing backlashes with your reel and being able to make both long casts as well as shorter, more accurate casts to targets. How many backlashes do you get in a day? If you answer more than a handful... your casting needs some work. Actually, with today’s reels, such as a Shimano Tranx 400 having both a break system and magnetic cast control, there really is no reason your goal shouldn’t be to have only a handful of backlashes each season! First, make sure to pop out all of the breaks on your reel. Musky lures are heavy and will pull the line from the spool, so you won’t lose any noticeable casting distance doing this. Then adjust the cast control to let the line easily flow off the spool. Now, the most common reason for the backlash is improper reel position at the beginning of the cast.

If you are right-handed you should begin your cast with the reel handle pointed up toward the sky. If you are left-handed you should start with your reel handed pointed down. Most anglers start their cast with the reel handle pointed to the side. This puts you in the wrong position and adds more pressure to your thumb. Over time, your thumb fatigues and you get backlashes. If you start with your handle up you use your wrist more, which places less pressure on your thumb to control the cast, which results in fewer backlashes. Reducing backlashes is extremely important. Besides a wasted cast, backlashes can result in lost lures on a windy day when fishing around rocks or other dangerous shallow cover. Further, backlashes damage your line. Even 80-pound PowerPro Superslick V2 can be weakened by backlashes. Multiple backlashes can result in the line breaking on a hookset, or even another backlash. This can cause you to lose a lure or even worse, a musky. Concentrate on your casting position and focus on what you are doing and you’ll significantly reduce backlashes.

Try and become more accurate with your casts. When casting, even to open water, pick an imaginary target to land your lure. Try making long casts as well as short casts. Further, when casting close to cover try picking precise spots to place your lure. Try a contest with your boat partner. It’s amazing how quickly your casting accuracy can improve. This will ultimately result in more muskies as you can cast to weed edges and pockets resulting in less lure fouling and getting more strikes. Musky fishing is a game of percentages and throughout a long day the more casts without backlashes and without fouling in weeds or rocks will produce more strikes.

There have been lots of articles and videos, as well as by watching The Musky Hunter television show you can learn how to execute a proper figure 8 with a lure at boatside. Every year I meet many musky anglers, particularly beginners, who don’t believe it really works. Those more experienced anglers that don’t catch muskies in figure 8s, well let’s just say that I am willing to bet your figure 8s need some work. Figure 8s take focus. You have to anticipate the lure getting close to the boat and make the first turn big and fast. Then move along the straight-away and make another turn.

You typically only need 12-18 inches of line between the lure and the rod tip, and certainly a longer rod such as a 9’6” Shimano SKIXXC really helps you make big turns during the figure 8. I tell people to figure 8 the lure and not the rod. This keeps the lure moving in the water. You don’t want to ruin the action. Keep the muskies interest. Also, don’t be afraid to go deep or shallower with the figure 8 if the muskie maintains interest and keeps following.

(Continued on page 23.)
I try to remain calm and watch how the fish is responding during the figure 8, if the fish follows a fast turn quickly; I move the lure along in the straight path and go into the next turn. However, I use a slight hesitation move of the lure at the end of the turn. It’s not a pause or stop, but a hesitation or split-second hang. If you are fishing a Cowgirl, you’ll see the flashaboo flare for a second. Then move back into the straight portion of the figure 8. Quite often the hesitation move will result in a strike or the musky might snap and miss the lure. Repeat the hesitation on the next turn slowing down slightly and the musky is yours. In some situations the musky tends to drop back from the lure go slower and deeper with the figure 8. Quite often the musky might disappear and then reappear 30 seconds later and bite. So, don’t quit on a slow or deep follow!

Think about those tough days on the water with minimal follows, where it seems like there are no muskies in the lake. Where do you usually get a strike... at boatside. That’s because the one active fish you encounter that day that decides to follow is your best chance at getting a bite. You have to remain focused and committed to the figure 8 on every cast as the one bite you most likely will get on those tough days is a figure 8 strike. That’s why I believe practicing and focusing on the figure 8 is more important than learning any specific lure technique. Every year I catch close to 40% of my muskies on a figure 8!

My final point for you to consider is boat control. We have all heard the cliché you have to make the right cast to the right spot to catch a fish. Well making that cast relies upon boat control. If your boat is too close to the cover or too far away from the cover, you won’t catch muskies. You have to visualize how a spot looks, where the muskies might be located and then decide how to fish the spot. Most of the times I work into the wind and use my trolling motor to slowly work the area. If I have a follow or find an area I want to make a couple extra casts, I simply step off the trolling motor and the wind will let me drift away from the spot and make more casts, or I’ll hit the anchor lock button on my MotorGuide Xi5 and hold in position. Most importantly, I’ll use my Lowrance GPS to mark the spot to be able to precisely return to the area later in the day. With today’s sonar, GPS and trolling motors, with a little effort you can become much better with boat control, and make the right cast to the right spot.

Anyone can work the boat on calm days, but it’s the windy days where boat control makes a difference. Try to just use as much trolling motor power as is necessary to move the boat into the wind. Too much speed makes it hard to control the boat and results in “over-corrections.” Too little speed and you won’t move through the spot. Work on your boat control, just like you would any lure technique, as it is the equalizer. These three tips may seem fundamental, and they are, but they are the building blocks for a successful season. Think about how you cast, figure 8 and run your boat. If you strive to get better this season, I’ll guarantee you’ll catch more muskies!

(3 Keys To More Muskies This Year! continued from page 22.)

Editor’s Note: Jim Saric is an American professional angler, best known as the publisher, editor and owner of Musky Hunter Magazine, the largest musky fishing publication in North America. He is the Host and Executive Producer of The Musky Hunter television series, the first television show ever dedicated solely to the hard-to-catch musky.
Being a tackle junkie came easily and honestly for me. As a kid I loved to fish but initially I liked going with my Grandpa more than with my Dad, the reason being my Dad fished for walleye and lake trout, fish that you ate and he used meat to catch them. Jigs or spinners tipped with minnows were the usual offerings. My Grandpa on the other hand had several tackle boxes full of lures. He liked to fish for anything, particularly bass and pike, which I was onboard with. I wanted to cast, watch my lure and see fish strike. I enjoyed that a lot more than dropping meat over the side of the boat.

Today, in my line of work – as a tournament angler and guide – I have to catch fish if I want to get paid so I stay on top of new tackle trends and baits that might open up new opportunities to put fish in the boat. The following are baits that have worked their way into my repertoire over the past few years and they catch fish!

Flutter Spoons for Everything

As a kid, my go to bait for catching pike off the dock was a Daredevil spoon. I’m not sure exactly what my favourite colour was but it was either red and white or a five of diamonds. I caught a bunch of pike on those spoons during my childhood. As I got older and more into bass fishing, catching pike took a back seat for quite a few years. I don’t think I used a spoon in open water for at least 15 years and then I had my eyes opened to their effectiveness for bass that were feeding on large baitfish in open water while I was fishing Kentucky Lake in a tournament a few years back.

Since bass, walleye, pike and all of the other predator fish in our Canadian lakes eat large baitfish I had a feeling that these flutter style spoons would work well and that most of our fish would not have seen them before. On a fall outing for smallmouths I dropped a 3/4 ounce Nichols Lake Fork Flutter Spoon into a group of fish that I spotted on my Humminbird Helix unit and before the spoon even made it to the bottom, my line jumped and I set the hook on a four pounder.

The key with these spoons is you want to fish them vertically, but not directly under the boat. I find making a half a cast away from the boat, then letting the spoon sink to the bottom is the most effective way to fish them. After the spoon hits the bottom, you rip it up about four or five feet and let it flutter back down on slack line, watching the line, for indicating a strike or knowing when the spoon lands back on the bottom.

You want to use a fairly heavy rod for fishing these spoons because if you use one that is too light you aren’t going to be able...
to “rip” it off the bottom properly or set the hook with the power that you need. I’ve been having good luck using a G. Loomis IMX-PRO 7’4” (884) baitcasting rod with a Shimano Curado reel and 20-lb. fluorocarbon line. I like the heavier line because it is stiff enough to prevent the line from constantly getting caught up on the hooks and it’ll take the shock of a strong hookset. In addition to smallmouths, big walleyes and lake trout will hammer these spoons as well, particularly in waters where they are feeding on ciscos.

The larger Ben Parker Flutter Spoons were designed for giant largemouths in the southern U.S. but they certainly have an application for anglers looking to catch musky, large pike and lake trout. They are big baits with a wide action that fish have probably not seen before.

A New Moping Bait

For the past 15 years the most dominate bait style in bass tournaments on Northwest Ontario waters has been a fluke style soft plastic jerkbait rigged up on a jig head. These baits can be fished vertically for fish that we see on the screen or casted and swam back to the boat.

Over the years I’ve used dozens of these types of baits, always looking for the best option

(Continued on page 26.)
of profile and colour, settling recently on a 5” Z-Man JerkshadZ in the shiner colour.

When we hang these baits over the side of the boat, keeping them above the fish that we see on our electronics, we call it moping. That term was coined by famous angler Ron Lindner at a tournament on Rainy Lake back around 2004. In the southern U.S., they refer to it as a Damiki rig. In addition to catching bass, much like the spoon I talked about, a minnow imitator like this catches everything that swims in our lakes.

Last year I started to play around with using a newer bait that Z-Man has in their line-up called the Trick ShotZ. It is a smaller profile minnow-style bait that is designed for fishing on a drop-shot rig but it also works really well on a jig head. Fishing it on a 1/4 ounce jig, I had immediate success for bass, especially pressured fish. I also noticed that every walleye that saw the bait hammered it as well. It has a flat tail that quivers and shakes with minimal rod movement and is just something these fish haven’t seen before. My initial use of this bait has been with the shiner colour, but Z-Man has some other good ones that would work for different conditions.

When I’m fishing with these baits – moping, as I refer to it – I like to keep the bait off the bottom, above the fish that I see on my electronics. It’s almost like if you let the bait drop past the fish, it turns them off, that’s the best tip I can give you there. This bait on a jig head will also work well for spring walleyes when they are in weeds. I like to snap jig them around new patches of cabbage. Check them out.

(Continued on page 27.)
More Options in Chatterbaits

When Z-Man rolled out the Chatterbait back around 2006, initial popularity of the bait was not all that great, outside of a handful of bass anglers. For those of you who have not used one before, a Chatterbait is a jig with a blade attached to the front of it that vibrates heavily, creating a unique action, unlike any other lure. The blade sort of turns the jig into a crankbait, which is the best way to describe them. To fish these baits, simply cast them out and retrieve them with a slow and steady retrieve, ripping them free of any weeds they might run into.

Over the past several years I have won a lot of money in bass tournaments with Chatterbait style baits, of which Z-Man has a very strong patent so other tackle companies are not able to knock them off. I was fortunate to finish second in an FLW Tour event at the Harris Chain of Lakes in Florida where I caught all of my fish on a 1/2 ounce Jack Hammer Chatterbait, a high-end model designed for bass tournament anglers. These baits have also been very productive for me in tournaments around home on Rainy Lake and Lake of the Woods, for both largemouths and smallmouths. They really shine in areas that hold both species of bass because they can be fished through weeds effectively and do a good job of imitating many of the things that bass eat, including crayfish and baitfish.

There are now around a dozen variations of Chatterbaits with different sizes and styles for fishing all kinds of conditions. I most often use a 1/2 ounce model tipped with a Z-Man Razor ShadZ body that is designed as a Chatterbait trailer. There are new football jig models designed for fishing deeper water. These will be good walleye baits, especially on darker coloured waters. There are mini and micro sized baits that I have done really well for crappies with in the spring when they are up shallow, spawning around reeds and shoreline cover. Finally, there are weedless models for fishing around heavier cover. Another bait style designed for bass that works well for walleyes, pike and all of the predator fish that we have across Canada.

It’s never a bad idea to use the baits that we have a long history of success when we go fishing but it’s always good to keep an open mind and mix in new baits from time to time as well. There are times when some of these new baits work because fish have never seen them but they can also open up new windows for catching fish because they are simply a better tool than what we are currently using. If you ever have questions about what rods and reels to use for fishing these baits, feel free to reach out to me on my social media channels and I’ll get back to you quickly with an answer.

Editor’s Note: Jeff Gustafson grew up on the shores of Lake of the Woods in Kenora, Ontario. He has made his living in the fishing community since he was a teenager as a tournament angler, guide, outdoor writer and fishing promoter. In 2019 he is competing on the Bassmaster Elite Series in addition to competing in several events in Ontario. You can find him on social media at @gussyoutdoors and on his website at: www.gussyoutdoors.com.
Crappies spawn later in the spring, along with other members of the sunfish family, which includes several species of bass. Members of the sunfish family spawn when water temperatures reach between 18 – 21 degrees Celsius.

Any movements into shallow water early in the spring by crappies and other members of the sunfish family are feeding related and not directly related to spawning. All fish species increase their feeding activities in the spring, as they require more calories in the last stages of forming their eggs and spawn.

If you picture a chicken egg, the yellow “yoke” part of the egg gradually develops over the winter and is the actual bird or fish in this case. The “white” or clear part of the egg is a concentrated food source for the yolk and gets added to the egg in the last stage of gestation.

Crappies spend the winter feeding over mud in many lakes, which is rich in insect larvae and also in zooplankton, which is a staple food source for crappies during the winter.

Crappies in many lakes will switch a good portion of their diet over to minnows in the spring. Minnows offer a higher calorie and higher fat content food source, which makes it easier to ripen the female eggs and increase the volume of spawn in the males.

A temperature gauge is critical in the spring, which is a feature on most sonar units including my Humminbird Helix 12. You can choose the options to display on your screen. Water temperature is always highlighted on my unit. It is a very good indicator the entire open water season for what all species of fish are likely doing in their short- and long-range patterns.

I use the side imaging feature on my Helix 12 to search for schools of crappies and any structural features that might hold crappies. I am looking for the warmest water I can find. Any area that warms up significantly faster than the main lake is potential crappie water in the spring.

Crappies have to utilize what they have available in the lake, which can come in many forms. Necked down bays with dark bottom or warmer water flowing into the bay is a good place to start. I am always watching the temperature gauge, so I can look for anything several degrees warmer than the rest of the lake.

Lakes further north will have lots of rocks, but only a little sand and mud. Rock patches on mud or sand bottom are usually better for crappies than exposed bedrock or boulders with no sand or mud.

Crappies have a unique looking signature on side imaging. You can see the suspended fish and the round shape. I make both the schools of fish and the patches of boulders or stumps nearby and come back to fish them with more stealth after I have checked out the rest of the area with side imaging.

Bait is largely dependent on what is legal and what is available to anglers on the individual lakes. Crappies are visual feeders, so hair jigs, plastics and baits with small spinners...
are all possibilities, along with minnows, wax worms, nigh crawlers or eurolarvae for potential live bait.

St. Croix makes the Panfish Series Spinning Rods, which are a great rod at a good price or the top of the line Legend Elite Panfish Spinning Rods, which are a panfishing dream rod.

A slip bobber lets anglers fish a wider range of depths, but they can be slow to fish with light jigs and the bobber stops can slide when playing a fish, so you have to keep checking the depth. A fixed bobber works for shallow water, but the clips on the bobbers can damage the line and make casting awkward.

Casting is always an option for panfish, especially when searching for fish or targeting larger crappies. Small spinners or little crankbaits are good search baits for crappies.

The profile of the jig is either horizontal or vertical, with a few jigs holding the bait at a 45-degree angle. Anglers need to keep

(Catching Up On Spring Crappies continued from page 30.)

(Continued on page 32.)
Fall 2019 called a Hook-All to deal with this problem. You aluminum. Ergonomically efficient, they are my Z-Man plastics into different Money Bags Coffin, Blade Coffin, Line Bag etc. The bass be used to keep plastic baits from balling up or remove it. Now there is no chance you will lose Smooth, soft and silent—

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(You NEED to Tie This On! continued from page 30.)

often-overlooked place to cast for these big high percentage spot is contained.

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sizes —1 00 yard spools (2lb -20lb) and For larger soft plastic swimbaits, you want the surface at a slow and steady rate.

Ironically, the same invasive species that these fish are feeding on, round Torc, all made possible through sponsorship process is easier with a friend pushing Many apex predators in nature hunt in no or more active as the day progresses peaking.

patrol a piece of cover like a dock and a lifelike

in the water, a top tactic amongst Lake of the

featuring all of the sponsors.

child received a personalized team jersey

rigging needs.

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braid yet smooth and strong.

Deep Fried Turkey cooked on site,

Rigging is fun, but if you'd

Over the years, I have used marabou jigs,

the main weapon.

For larger soft plastic swimbaits, you want

also a multi-species angler and has fished bass his website at: www.gussyoutdoors.com.

hook point into the mouth of that smallmouth.

If you have fished in any Canadian bass

if you'd

and Hiram Archibald. These guys used to getting snagged. More line is better when a

easier, which is necessary when following

tangled. One trick to help with this is feeding

hands down, across the ice belt. Set your bait

out. When a fish hits, duplicate this amount

for it as you could easily tear the hooks out

tipped

Over the years, I have used marabou jigs,

the main weapon.

If you have fished in any Canadian bass

if you'd

and Hiram Archibald. These guys used to getting snagged. More line is better when a

easier, which is necessary when following

tangled. One trick to help with this is feeding

hands down, across the ice belt. Set your bait

out. When a fish hits, duplicate this amount

for it as you could easily tear the hooks out

TIP:

screws. Once installed you can then mount the number you bore through aluminium.

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Rigging is fun, but if you'd

Over the years, I have used marabou jigs,

the main weapon.

For larger soft plastic swimbaits, you want

also a multi-species angler and has fished bass his website at: www.gussyoutdoors.com.

hook point into the mouth of that smallmouth.

If you have fished in any Canadian bass

if you'd

and Hiram Archibald. These guys used to getting snagged. More line is better when a

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While April showers bring May flowers, names can be deceiving. Mayflies, for example, are usually most abundant throughout southern Canada in June & July, and often play a key role in your early summer walleye fishing.

At the tail end of spring and leading edge of summer, schools of tiny minnow and baitfish fry that hatched in spring may provide tasty meals for hungry panfish, yet by and large are still too small for adult walleyes to efficiently pursue and eat. Fortunately, nature finds another way to take care of her own at a time when sizeable minnow forage is at its lowest level of the year.

The end of June and early July are prime time for mayflies to begin hatching out of moderate-depth mud basins. Large mid-lake expanses of featureless, structureless mud bottoms often become food factories for walleyes, with fish either gravitating out across the basin itself, or lining up along the edges of points and humps that intersect with the mayfly production zone. In effect, mayflies become an important transition food source for many species of fish – especially walleyes – until minnows and other baitfish grow large enough to draw walleye attention.

Ever wonder why livebait rigging with leeches is so good at this time of year? Leaches are not only tasty and easy for walleyes to catch, but they sort of resemble insect larvae. A slow-moving leech, danced along behind a walking slipsinker rig, is deadly.

A leech/livebait-rig bite usually goes big-time in June through early July, then suddenly tapers. Fortunately, that’s when a faster spinner presentation kicks into high gear, triggering strikes with added speed, flash and vibration while chiefly using nightcrawlers as bait.

But guess what? At times, substituting a leech, or nipping your ‘crawler in half, sometimes works better. That’s likely because the smaller profile more closely resembles a mayfly – matching the hatch, so to speak. With fish still focused on eating smaller profile meals, the down-sized bait has more appeal – until it doesn’t. Because at some point, the fish inevitably switch their preference to minnows, also trolled behind spinners. That’s coincidentally right about the same time the lake’s minnow population finally reaches viable size, with walleye shifting their focus to feeding on minnows.

Throughout the Canadian walleye range, slipsinker bullet rigs often work best along the edges of weeds and timber. In reservoirs of the central prairies, and in natural lakes with rocky offshore humps rising out of the basin, bottom bouncers are ideal for trolling spinner rigs along shoreline flats, up and down fast-breaking points to deep water, and around the perimeters of otherwise snaggy rock reefs.

As an alternative, try vertically jigging smaller #5 and #7 Jigging Raps along the deep edges of offshore structures meeting soft basins. These lures are small like mayflies, yet heavy, allowing you to fish them deep. They’re not designed to be jigged in and out of the mud, but if you focus on firm edges where hard bottom meets soft basins, they trigger strikes, even from fish whose bellies are stuffed with abundant mayflies.

Where and when walleyes move out across soft-bottomed basins surrounding offshore reefs from late spring through midsummer, traditional walking sinkers tend to disappear down into the gooey bottom, dragging your bait down with it if you don’t hold your sinker a bit off bottom. Consider switching to

In late spring or early summer, mayflies atop the surface indicate that walleyes are likely feeding on insects emerging from soft basins, or actually rooting mayfly larvae out of the mud. If you don’t switch your tactics to match the walleyes’ feeding strategies, fishing may remain unusually difficult. But if you match the hatch, you’ll improve your catch – even when other anglers around you are singin’ the mayfly blues!

(Continued on page 36.)
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three-way spinner rigs incorporating 2 1/2-ounce bell sinkers and 2- to 3-foot dropper lines to position your spinner farther off bottom, where walleyes can see it above the spongy bottom.

Also consider using spinner rigs constructed with size 2 blades compared to the larger size 3 or 4 blades you find for sale in most walleye markets. These finesse spinner rigs are held above bottom for short distances, then occasionally lift-dropped to reconfirm that your sinker is still near bottom, as the spinner trolls and flashes along, wobbling your bait behind it. They are tried-and-true July standbys for triggering strikes with increased flash, speed and vibration, whether they’re baited with leeches, minnows, softbaits, nightcrawlers—or half-crawlers that closely resemble mayflies.

In the event that walleyes move even farther away from structure like points and humps, out across expansive basins, trolling with leadcore line and crankbaits is a great way to troll lures barely inches above the soft basin. As you troll along at speeds of about 2 to 2 1/2-mph, simply keep letting out additional lengths of line until you feel your lure’s vibration change as it begins to deflect off bottom. Then reel in a few turns to bring the lure up a foot or so, place the rod in a holder, and keep trolling along with your lure in perfect position to catch walleyes digging mayfly larvae out of the mud, or eating mayflies as they emerge from the soft basin.

The nice thing is, weighted leadcore line allows you to troll smaller lures down into the depths; 30 or 40 feet is no problem with the right amount of line out. Smaller cranks in brownish or whitish colour patterns closely resemble mayflies—certainly much better than a traditional long-billed 5 1/2-inch lure that better resembles minnow forage. Once again, it’s a case of matching the hatch. And when mayflies hatch, fishermen should listen, because the walleyes certainly do!

(The Walleye-Mayfly Connection continued from page 34.)

About the Author

Al Lindner ranks among the most renowned leaders in the fishing industry. Averaging about 180 days a year on the water, Al is hailed as one of the world’s best all-around anglers. Al’s long and honored career as an author, syndicated radio & TV fishing show host, video producer, fishing guide, tackle manufacturer, lecturer and champion tournament angler has spanned 35 years of the most revolutionary years in sportfishing.
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Spring Crappie Secrets – Courtesy of Northland Tackle

Spring crappie anglers usually think shallow water and finding the warmest shallow water is often the key. Warm water, at least relatively speaking, usually attracts crappies as the spring’s first signs of life often occur in the warmest of the shallows, drawing hungry fish. These fish are to there to feed first, and soon will be invading many of these same areas to spawn.

Classic spring crappie spots are shallow, dark-bottomed bays. Marinas, boat channels, and pencil reed patches are other shallow spots that draw panfish now as well. Regardless what spring crappie habitat your chosen lake features, staying on the move and searching various shallow spots for fish is sound advice. Small panfish jigs tipped with crappie minnows and fished below small bobbers are long-time presentation favourites when targeting crappies. My favourite crappie jig has long been a 1/32-ounce Gypsy Jig in the pink/white or chartreuse patterns. This bait features crystal flash tinsel and a teaser tail that shallow crappies usually can’t resist.

Fishing the jig/minnow combination a couple feet below a slip-bobber, and casting it around shallow cover – weeds, brush, and timber – usually results in bites pretty quickly if fish are present. One key is to fish the bait up above the level the fish are holding at as crappies are notorious for “feeding up.”

Jigs and crappie minnows go hand-in-hand for spring panfish. Recently, however, soft baits on tiny jigs have really produced good catches for me and other anglers as well. A small Bro’s Bug Jig tipped with an Impulse Water Flea gives a tantalizing, quivering action that even the most tentative crappie can’t seem to resist. I keep my bait colour simple, going with white or pink on both the jigs and plastics.
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THE SEASON STARTS HERE!
Spring is the best time to catch whitefish. While whitefish can be elusive and shy biters, anglers willing to put in the time to locate these silvery specimens are rewarded with hard pulling battles and tasty, omega-3 rich fillets. Plus, in springtime, whitefish may share habitat with other gamefish, making for exciting multi-species outings. Here are some tips on where to find whitefish and how to catch them.

**Spring = Location Options**

Lake whitefish prefer cool water. In spring, lakes have yet to thermally stratify and whitefish go where they please. Deep to shallow structures are all fair game when they hold good food and suitable water temperatures. “They’re so plastic and flexible,” said Rob Swainson, a retired Ministry of Natural Resources Fish and Wildlife Biologist from Nipigon. “Whitefish can live in range of habitat, and they’re capable of having a range of behaviours. In any lake, any individual fish can adapt to shallow life and deep life.”

Swainson’s observations blend his experiences catching whitefish from Lake Superior, along with professional work, which included observing commercial fishermen net whitefish from different areas. In one instance, he noted commercial fishers netting whitefish from Lake Nipigon had given the different whitefish strains nicknames based on their preferred habitat and commercial value. Examples include “walk alongs” for whitefish favouring shallow to moderate depths who were more likely to have parasites, and “cherry nose” for the cleaner, deep-dwelling strain who’s snout’s blood vessels ruptured in nets due to the pressure change from capture. In short, different groups of whitefish can occupy different areas. Anglers can hedge their bets, however, focusing on the following three locations.

**Smelt & Sucker Smörgåsbord**

It’s common for whitefish to move to rivers, streams, and bays containing inflow to feed on eggs from smelt, suckers, and other spring spawners. The baits are also prey for large whitefish, along with lake trout and brook trout, making multi-species action common. Swainson often catches whitefish when targeting shallow-water lake trout from Lake Superior, for instance.

Evers has good success using jigging spoons, crankbaits, spinners, jigs, drop shot rigs, and floats. But, his top bait is a smelt tail on a #8 fine wire hook tied 16 inches below two small split shot sinkers. “Cast it out and work it back staying close to the bottom,” Evers said. “You will feel a few taps, a bit of weight, and fish on... It’s easy to come out with a limit of 12 fish for the smoker if you hit it right.”

**Shallow-Water Cover**

In spring, whitefish, along with trout, walleye, and crappie, also cruise weed and woody areas looking for freshwater shrimp, aquatic insect larvae, and baits. Knowing whitefish are around, however, makes for some fun multi-species action.

This is what Shimano Pro and fishing guide, Rob Jackson, and I did a couple springs back in the Land O’ Lakes region. We planned to devote the early morning to jigging 60 to 85-foot flats where Jackson had caught whitefish before. Sonar revealed fish tracking our lures with interest, but we had a hard time triggering bites; this is whitefish angling, folks. Eventually, I hooked into one, but the feisty, freshwater tarpon came unbuttoned below the boat.

Changing tactics we moved to a long, weedy bar beside deep water to look for whitefish and crappie feeding around the vegetation. It was the right decision. After a half hour the livewell held several crappie and a whitefish that ate a 1/16-ounce hair jig.

Robs and I weren’t along in capitalizing on this pattern. Year-round guide, JP Bushey has caught whitefish patrolling weed growth during walleye opener. “My biggest ever from Georgian Bay annihilated a big jig and minnow combo pitched over budding weeds in less than ten feet of water at midday,” he said.

Wally Robins, a Shimano/G. Loomis Field Staffer from Ottawa, also double-dips for walleye and whitefish on Lake Temagami between late May and early June. He catches both species in long back bays containing tree lay downs and timber. “I love fishing shoreline blow downs for walleye,” Robins said. “These locations are also whitefish magnets holding early growth stage minnows, lota bugs, and creepy-crawly things on and in the harder cover. Unlike the walleye that would hug the fringes on

(Continued on page 41.)
Just Fishing

a blow down, most of the whitefish I caught were a half cast distance away from the wood.”

Robins keeps invertebrates and baitfish in mind when selecting tackle. Rarely fishing deeper than 12 feet, he sticks with 1/8- and 1/4-ounce black, brown, and off-white bucktail jigs or tube jigs. When whitefish forage near the surface, he casts a 1/16-ounce crappie-sized tube towards the activity, letting its slow fall tempt cruising whitefish.

Dwellers of the Deep

Whitefish also inhabit deep, shoal water in spring. Also called confined open water, these offshore regions contain humps and other structures intermixed with deep flats in the 60 to 100-foot range. Scott and Crossman refer to this in their definitive Freshwater Fishes of Canada stating, “Throughout most of the Great Lakes, these fish (whitefish) move from deep to shoal waters in early spring and back to deeper water as warming occurs.” While they reference the Great Lakes, whitefish use shoal water in many waterbodies.

Lake Simcoe is one example, and no discussion on spring whitefish is complete without mention of this giant lake where flotillas of jigging anglers hover over deep flats and humps in search of these shy, silvery fish. It’s a scene Chris Hockley, former guide and Rapala Canada Product and Web Manager, has seen many times starting with the season opener on the second Saturday in May. “I might start getting them from humps topping out at 35 feet,” Hockley said. “As the season goes on, I’ll catch them in 45 to 55 feet. Then out to 85 feet at the base of some humps.” This pattern isn’t exclusive to the Great Lakes or Simcoe. Hockley’s observed similar whitefish behaviour on deep shoal water in Haliburton Highland lakes.

In addition to humps, whitefish also feed on deep flats. Bushey offers this advice. “Structure that whitefish like in Simcoe is unlike most places I’m used to fishing,” Bushey said. “A lot of it is super gradual, like going from 79 feet to 89 feet in a hundred feet or more of horizontal travel. They’re a fish of gentle slopes, wide ledges, and flats. Walleye, muskie and other fish like butting up against vertical surfaces a lot. I find that whitefish are most comfy over gradual areas, where they can mill around and graze. They’re like cattle. Kind of slow, goofy wanderers.”

Deep Tactics

Heavy jigging baits are best for catching deep whitefish. Ice-fishing lures work well for vertical jigging. “I was catching whitefish on a Rapala Jigging Rap long before I worked for the company,” Hockley said. “Essentially, you’re looking for a small bait you can get down quickly in deep water.” Hockley will free spool the Jigging Rap, watching it sink on the sonar as aggressive

(Continued on page 42.)
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whitefish often streak up to attack the dropping bait. Otherwise, he gets the lure to bottom, then bangs it several times to create a plume before letting it lay on the floor. Sometimes whitefish suck up the bait, but more frequently fish hit as he slowly raises it after a pause. Hockley matches lure size to the depth, along with whitefish profile preferences. He finds the 2.75-inch, 5/8-ounce model is a good starting point.

Hockley’s not alone in catching whitefish this way. Cory Schmidt, a Minnesota-based outdoor writer and exceptional multi-species angler, has been at the forefront of the deep, open-water jigging trend. He’s caught a lot of bass, walleye, and whitefish from confined open water by locating fish on sonar, then vertically working a Jigging Rap, Custom Jigs & Spins Rotating Power Minnow, or fast-sinking jigging spoon.

“Whitefish get really turned on and get aggressive by big rips,” Schmidt said. “Take a small Jigging Rapala or jigging spoon with a dropper and work the dickens out of it.”

Schmidt’s spoon recommendation is important. The big flashy bait attracts whitefish, while the dropper is bite-sized enough for their small mouths. It’s a common ice-fishing rig that’s equally deadly for straight-down springtime tactics. Schmidt’s a fan of heavy European “verticals”. The Akara Vertical Winter Lure Wing is his top spoon-dropper combo. Spoons also work without a dropper. Good picks in either case include the Northland Buck-Shot, Luhr Jensen Crippled Herring and Cast Champ, Lucky Strike Swedish Rattle, and Bay de Noc Swedish Pimple. Bushey has good success with a 3/8-ounce Sebile Vibrato spoon. Schmidt gives the nod to the Fiskas Verticals Stor Blixten Large Flash 7-gram version.

Balance jigging minnows are another ice bait for open-water. Bushey likes a Meegs jig. He stuffs the entire jig into a bass tube or tips the Meegs’

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(Continued on page 43.)
Hockley has good results drop-shotting a minnow-shaped soft-bait in the 2.5 to 3.5-inch range. When whitefish are eating insect larvae from soft-bottom areas he drop-shots smaller, panfish-sized plastics.

Fishing whitefish in spring can be boom, bust, and everything in between. Elusive yet hard-fighting, frequently fickle biters but tasty in their own right, whitefish check all the boxes for anglers keen for a challenge beyond the usual springtime suspects of trout, crappie, and walleye.

Reg Reminder
While whitefish season is open year-round in many areas, anglers are reminded to review the fishing management zone exceptions for specific season time frames and fish sanctuary details for individual lakes.

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JP Bushey – busheyangleguidedfishing@gmail.com – (705) 717-3159

About the Author: Tim Allard is a full-time, award-winning outdoor journalist and author/photographer of the book, Ice Fishing: The Ultimate Guide. He’s a regular contributor to numerous North American print and online publications. From panfish to northern pike, Tim fishes whatever he can, whenever he can.
Sponsorships are the lifeblood of professional fishermen. Ask any touring pro and they will tell you, there’s no way to survive without them. Sure, you might make it for a while on your credit cards, or by cashing a few checks, but eventually the costs of doing business will catch up to you. And that’s why sponsorships are so essential.

Fortunately, I’ve had longstanding relationships with many of the biggest brands in fishing. Brands like Mercury Marine, Ranger Boats, Power-Pole, Shimano and Rapala. Companies who have backed me for decades. Those relationships weren’t established overnight either. They took years of hard work and dedication to gain their confidence and trust, which was my focus from the start. I wanted to provide a strong return for those who would back my pursuits in competitive angling. A key part of it was offering input and learning about newer products as they evolve, and grasping their related marketing strategies. And that sometimes requires going back to school.

THE SUMMIT

Recently, I was invited to the first-ever Shimano Pro Staff Summit. Hosted at their Charleston, South Carolina headquarters, more than 30 professional anglers, guides and TV personalities were asked to participate in an intensive, two-day training session. Included were Elite Series pros Jeff “Gussy” Gustafson, Chris Johnston, Ed Loughran and Greg Dipalma. There was also a strong contingency of saltwater anglers.

Shimano’s pro staff manager, Blaine Anderson began the meeting with a brief explanation of their objectives, then introduced various marketing and department heads – some of whom would provide instruction as the sessions progressed.

After that, we broke into two groups (fresh and salt) and toured the facility. My group entered their massive warehouse first, to see how product is pulled and processed for shipping. It was eye opening, to say the least. There were trolley tables and front-end loaders constantly moving about – pulling stock items and pushing them through a very efficient shipping process.

Although busy, the warehouse was extremely well organized... and spotless, too. You could literally eat off the floors! After viewing the warehouse, we entered the Shimano Experience Center for a tour with company VP, Steve Ferrara. He walked us through numerous exhibits, explaining how each was impactful to the company’s growth and development. Among them was an impressive timeline of how Shozaburo Shimano began his family business by forging bicycle freewheels in 1921, then expanding its offering to a broader range of bicycle components, and eventually to producing fishing reels.

Included were numerous displays of rods and reels, some of which provided part-by-part breakdowns, showing all their components from large to minuscule. It was amazing to see how much detail and workmanship is involved in the design and construction of each reel.

BACK TO SCHOOL

After the tour, we took a short break before entering a conference room for a series of seminars – where each speaker delivered PowerPoint presentation on their respective areas of expertise.

The topics ranged from Shimano’s futuristic production techniques and product development, to future marketing strategies and their efforts in conservation and advocacy... all of which was quite impressive. Equally impressive was the discussion of how Shimano cold-forges their gears – a proprietary means of compressing and shaping high-grade aluminum into highly detailed gearing with zero loss of strength to the material. The end product is termed “MicroModule” precision gearing, and it’s on par with the detail required in making quality timepieces.

After a day of instruction, the group went for dinner in the heart of old Charleston, where the architecture reflects a much earlier period – stark in contrast to the futuristic backdrop of the Shimano Experience Center.

Day 2 was more of a think tank session, where the pros were given the opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions. Then, to punctuate Shimano’s commitment to conservation, we engaged in a hands-on effort with the South Carolina Chapter of the Coastal Conservation Association, bagging recycled oyster shells to be used for habitat restoration. It was tiring, but fun, and I’m sure all who participated felt a sense of pride and achievement.

Afterward, Shimano provided dinner and games at their unique, indoor/outdoor dining and recreational facility. It gave everyone a chance to decompress and spend some quality, relaxed time.

(Continued on page 46.)
Shimano technology achieves the optimum balance of lightweight, strength and control.

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(The Shimano Experience continued from page 44.)

TO THE BRINE

On day 3, Shimano invited us to fish the coastal waters near Charleston. Knowing this was an option ahead of time, I brought my skiff up from Florida. As it turned out, I was paired with Shimano’s creative marketing guy, Kurt Mazurek and fellow Elite pro, Ed Loughran. Together, we probed the flats and channels near Isle of Palms, just north of Charleston Harbor. And for a crew unfamiliar with the area, we managed a good day of fishing.

Afterward, we had lunch and said our farewells.

Looking back, the Shimano event was not only informative, it was truly inspiring. Seeing how committed they are to making the best products possible, and their stance on conservation and angler advocacy, I’ve never been more proud to represent a brand.

Editor’s Note: Bernie Schultz competes on the Bassmaster Elite Series and serves as a columnist to Bassmaster.com and InsideLine.net. He’s also an educator and promoter of angling, representing many of biggest brands in fishing – including Mercury Marine, Ranger Boats, Power-Pole, Fuji Rod Components, Shimano, Rapala-VMC, Yamamoto, Hildebrandt, Garmin, MotorGuide and TH Marine. You can visit him at: www.bernieschultzfishing.com and on Facebook at “Bernie Schultz Fishing.”
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In the beginning, there was Fishing 101 for Women—a program designed to introduce women to the sport of fishing—and, for the first couple of years, was run solely by myself. But, as the group and its activities grew, I knew I needed to find like-minded people to help run and organize events. As the program evolved to an even larger organization, now called Ontario Women Anglers, volunteers became even more essential.

Not only did the number of events increase each season but we diversified to include species and technique specific outings—fly and ice fishing, bass tournaments, muskie, steelhead and pike fishing to name just a few. Not only did I need help but I needed people with skills and experience in areas that I was not yet familiar.

Since the inception of Fishing 101, I have been extremely fortunate to have met so many talented, visionary and generous people in the fishing industry, many of whom have volunteered their time and expertise, donated product, contributed financially and helped promote OWA and its activities. There have been both men and women that have stepped up to lend a hand and, over the course of time, a core team of volunteers formed, comprised of women that have become instructors, ambassadors, mentors, promoters and organizers. In this issue we begin introducing our team members. Watch for Part 2 in the upcoming Summer issue of Just Fishing.

Each year, we add two or three more to the group and I’d like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the ladies currently on the team. Of course, we are always looking for further support and would welcome additional volunteers particularly in southwestern, northern and eastern Ontario. If you should be interested in finding out more about volunteering with Ontario Women Anglers, please contact me at: yvonne.owa101@gmail.com.

Anneliese has been fishing most of her life. She introduced her children to fishing when they were young and together they explored all over Southern Ontario. When her son expressed an interest in fly fishing, the two of them began another adventure, this time an almost two-decade exploration of all things fly fishing including many epic road trips.

Since joining Ontario Women Anglers a few years ago, Anneliese has been privileged to assist with clinics, primarily focusing on introducing women to fly fishing and fly tying. As well, she has been able to continue her road trip adventures with other OWA members including an upcoming return to the 2-Fly Challenge in the Adirondacks, the Beast of the East Musky Fly fishing tournament in Pennsylvania and the Monster Mash Muskie weekend in the Kawarthas.

Cat loves to spend her time fishing as well as teaching others how to Euro-Style fish for carp. She has been multi-species fishing for over 45 years and enjoys spending time with other anglers as well as sharing stories of their biggest catches and funniest fishing mishaps. After seeking out other female anglers, Cat discovered and joined Ontario Women Anglers. For the past five years, she has enjoyed making new friends and watching her multi-species fishing experiences grow. “There is nothing more exciting than helping a new female angler catch her first fish. The smile that the first catch creates is amazing!”

Hailing from Kawartha Lakes, Jen has fished all her life and has fond memories of being with her father on both open water and ice fishing outings. These days, she enjoys teaching her love of fishing to her nieces and nephew at every opportunity. As a recent boat owner, she can often be found heading to her favourite lakes to target bass, pike, walleye or muskie. She is also an avid ice angler and enjoys catching pan fish.

Jen connected with Yvonne Brown at the OFAH Women’s Outdoor Weekend a little over four years ago, where she expressed an interest in becoming a part of the Ontario Women Anglers volunteer team. Jen can be found organizing or representing OWA at many events throughout the year as well as ordering OWA swag, picking up equipment, planning for potluck meals and putting together the annual OWA year book. She enjoys the many opportunities that OWA offers to grow as an angler, from exploring new lakes to trying new techniques, and believes that the organization has been instrumental starting many new friendships and fishing connections.

Katie lives in Ottawa and has been fishing off the dock at her family cottage in Barry’s Bay (Continued on page 49.)
(Meet the OWA Team continued from page 48.)

since she was two or three years old. Since her involvement with OWA, she has been introduced to a number of valued mentors and new bodies of water as well as other types of fishing that she has fallen in love with like ice and fly fishing. She was introduced to OWA at the OFAH Women’s Outdoors Weekend in 2017, where OWA runs the angling activities.

In 2013, Leslie came across workshops called Fishing 101 for Women and, determined to learn to fish on her own and to teach her son right along with her, she attended all five workshops offered that year. Women teaching women to fish was a welcomed concept for Leslie and the workshops were packed with info that covered the different types of gear, fish identification, safety and fishing regulations to name a few of the topics presented. Most importantly, it was hands-on and included tying knots, learning how to cast and how to safely unhook a fish.

(Continued on page 50.)

After two years of attending OWA events, she was honoured to be asked to volunteer at the same event that had gotten her hooked. Katie appreciates the opportunity to learn from Yvonne and other women in the group who happily share their incredible wealth of knowledge as well as spending time with women of all ages who share her passion.
Leslie started volunteering for various conservation groups as well as Ontario Women Anglers in 2014. She brought her new found passion for the outdoors full-circle by volunteering and giving back to the resources she loves. Leslie, along with fellow OWA member Rebecca, organized and ran the Angler New-Angler event in Caledon called Angler New Angler from 2015 to 2019. What Leslie loves that OWA has become a community of women who learn from and teach each other in a welcoming environment with tons of events that run all year long, exploring different bodies of water and different styles of fishing.

Linda moved to Bancroft a couple of years ago to spend more time on the water. She trailers her boat to try out different regional lakes and enjoys bass, pike, muskie and walleye fishing. In addition to weekend trips, yearly vacations take her up to the northern Sudbury region for some quality lunker adventures. Hard water is always a favourite for whitefish and perch fishing once the boat has been put away.

Linda was introduced to OWA at an OFAH Women’s Outdoor Weekend a few years back. She felt she was a natural fit to enjoy the company of like-minded women without any feeling of intimidation. Linda has learned new skills, including fly fishing, fly tying, habitat tricks and techniques for success. She says OWA members have so many skills to share and are always up for a great fishing trip.

This concludes Part 1 of Meet the Team of the OWA. Be sure to check out the Summer issue of Just Fishing where we will introduce the of rest the team.

Editor’s Note: Yvonne Brown is best known for Ontario Women Anglers and the Fishing 101 for Women program. Yvonne is a strong advocate for getting women and children outdoors and on the water. She is the first female to receive the Rick Amsbury Award of Excellence.
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Editor’s Note: Avid outdoors person, competitive angler, 2-time gold medal winning chef at the Culinary World Olympics and educator Cameron Tait truly loves being in the outdoors. Cameron is an active member of the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, Walleye Anglers Assoc. of Manitoba, Central Walleye Trail and on the Pro Staff team for Alumacraft / Suzuki and Minn Kota / Humminbird. When not pursuing his passion for the outdoors, Certified Chef du Cuisine Cameron can be found surrounded by mouth watering food. 

Some of you might be asking if walleye and bacon go together, my answer... Absolutely! People might ask what a walleye cake is? Quite simply it’s just like a delicious crab cake but with walleye as the main ingredient. Add in all of the other ingredients listed below and you have what I call a flavour home run! But let’s not stop there. Adding in parmesan cheese, garlic and parsley develops layers of flavour, albeit subtle. Best of all, I guarantee that you cannot make this recipe just once!

CRISPY WALLEYE & BACON CAKES

Yield: 4 Servings
Preparation Time: 30 minutes – Cook Time: 20 minutes

INGREDIENTS:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>500ml (2 cups) Chopped Walleye</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Slices Bacon – small dice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Egg Yolk</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Clove Garlic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinch Chopped Parsley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30ml Grated Parmesan Cheese</td>
<td>(depending if fish is fresh or frozen)</td>
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<tr>
<td>30-50ml Breadcrumbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kosher Salt &amp; Pepper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Canola Oil for frying</td>
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SALAD:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ingredient</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Gold Bbeet, thinly sliced</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1/2 Cucumber, thinly sliced</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 Orange, sectioned</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pinch Chopped Parsley</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60 ml Mayonnaise</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 ml Sriracha Sauce</td>
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DIRECTIONS:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Place bacon in a fry pan and heat on medium for 10 minutes, stirring often. Remove partially cooked bacon from pan using a slotted spoon, place on paper towels.

Place walleye, bacon, egg yolk, garlic, parsley, cheese, breadcrumbs and seasoning in food processor. Pulse mixture for 30 seconds, making sure not to puree, it should be lumpy. Remove a small amount and roll in hands to see if it stays together, if not, more breadcrumbs can be added. Scoop out mixture into even sized balls and flatten out to 3/4 of an inch, place in fridge to set.

Prepare salad and chill.

Bread cakes using a flour, egg wash and breadcrumb mixture. Using a thermometer, heat oil to 350°F. Lightly brown cakes in oil then place on sheet pan, bake for 12-15 minutes. When cakes are hot, place on plates and garnish with beet and cucumber salad, serve immediately.

Happy cooking!
Often times it’s hard to relate to fishing personalities on TV unless you own a $50,000 boat or fish for a living. The CFN Fish Off is a new TV show who’s tagline is, “Real People, Real Life, Real Fishing.” As of January 2020, it will be airing on the Sportsman Channel and the World Fishing Network.

The CFN Fish Off will document the travels of six everyday anglers representing 3 teams over a six-week period. The team that accumulates the most points (based on length and species) at the end of the tournament, gets to donate $1000 on behalf of the Canadian Fishing Network to the charity of their choice. Teams are allowed to fish from shore or use non-gas powered boats (ex. canoes, kayaks, inflatables).

If you have ever dreamed about being on your own fishing show, this is your chance! In April 2020, the Canadian Fishing Network is hosting a multi-species online tournament. The winning team from the online tournament earns a spot on Season 2 of the CFN Fish Off. In addition, even if you don’t win the tournament, your team’s submissions may still be chosen to be featured on television.

Many sponsors, including Shimano, are generously providing a ton of amazing prizes to be won. The beauty of this online tournament (aside from having the chance to be on TV) is that whether you catch the biggest or smallest fish, you are still eligible to win various weekly Shimano prize packs. Prizes include Shimano’s new SLX combo and other weekly rod and reel giveaways. Imagine winning a brand new Shimano SLX for catching a creek chub!

For more information about how to join the online tournament or the TV show, visit www.cfnfishoff.com and join CFN Fish Off on Facebook.

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Fishing with a Vexilar Flasher continued from page 48.

where the actual fishing skill comes in. If you’re How far you let it go down depends on where remember that you just put a split shot a foot up exactly one foot above your line, when you worm. Yet, on the other hand, you could be It means you could have Mr. Monster Musky, two different phenomenons make reading FL lure, even plankton) can be roughly correlated to a position inside mark on the screen and fish inside the transducer sonar working order to fully understand mean they will bite, well, unless you’re a Pro. maybe flickering into orange. Now you’re movement on the screen. Once it’s in view, unit. If you can’t see it, bounce it a bit and down again until you feel bottom. Watch for to give a return mark. Now, reel it up until Drop your favourite lure down the hole and (fish, bait fish, your Spring 2020 you’re likely to get pretty frustrated. You have old ways of fishing just aren’t good enough tell a fish’s attitude by the way the mark on are bigger or smaller, because the little experience you can tell if fish closer. The fish mark itself holds bodies of water, largemouth bass often school for Buckets is usually more effective where Casting your lure around ambush points such with topwater lures is not to react to the initial worked is critical in order to draw strikes from Yo-Zuri Super Braid is the optimum choice as experiments with rod snaps and stop-and-drop

Toronto Sportsmen’s Show: Canada’s Biggest Fishing & Outdoor Show for over 65 Years! March 18th – 22nd, 2020 – International Centre, Mississauga. 100s of boats, over 400 Exhibitors, $75,000 Toronto Sun Casting Pond, Ontario Out of Doors Hunting Hall, Great Outdoors Seminar Stage & much, much more. The Outfitters and Travel Expo showcases a massive selection of outdoor vacation destinations and activities. For more information visit: www.sportsshows.ca.


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