

September 23

Staff Report

Nothing going at the St. Clair Light and a trip out to the Mid-Lake Humps only produced 1 short fish with an hours worth of work. A slightly heavier than normal stain was here.

The pike were active in Fair Haven and there were a few short largemouth caught.

Strawberry Break did show some potential. One 3 lb. smallmouth lost on a Formula G3 tube.

NOTE: One thing that we are waiting for is the Lake temps to get below the St. Clair River temps. Right now this mild weather, although beautiful, is holding back some of the fall bite patterns. Watch for cool nights to start to liven things up.

The speed bite is a great way to locate fish right now. Rattle traps and spinnerbaits can cover a lot of water but if you think you are on fish, you might want to consider going to a crankbait. This period can be similar to the pre-spawn period where fish tend to suspend and a slow moving crankbait can be deadly. We really aren't at the water temps that match that pre-spawn bite but crankbaits should be effective from here out nevertheless.

September 21, 2008

Signs of life

Squirrel Island Beach was serving up about as many keepers as you wanted to catch. Although the weight wasn't there, it was refreshing to get on a bite that wasn't super tight to dial in.

The Russell Island Drift had some better fish on the back end of the hump in 30 to 33 feet of water.

I managed to get out to the Coal Piles and the results were about the same as they have been for awhile. The perch fleet had moved off of them though, about 1/4 mile

south.

Water conditions were still iffy in places but there wasn't anywhere I fished where I didn't feel like I could get bit. Reports from others mentioned very dirty water in spots in the St. Clair River.

September 13, 2008

Tough conditions

I was determined to get some work done in spite of the heavy rains. I worked up the U.S. shoreline at Brandenburg Park then up to the North Channel. Nothing going at Brandenburg but the water quality wasn't as bad as it could have been.

I worked the Belvedere Boat Club drop and came up empty.

The seawall just up from Decker's Landing was holding keeper largemouth.

I worked several Middle Channel spots from the beginning, to just patch the Middle Channel notch. Nothing going at all.

September 10, 2008

Staff Report—Revtro

The Mile Roads Plateau was in good shape with morning fish of 2 1/2, a couple of 3's and a 4 lb. smallie. It was a slow bite but the best of the bite came in 13 feet of water. The water clarity was good.

September 9, 2008

More on Walpole—The Horseshoe

I was able to spend enough time at the Horseshoe to see a solid population of smallies. We fished the west break for about 30 minutes and could have kept catching these fish all day long.

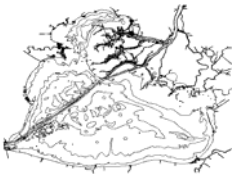
Most of these were sub-legal with an occasional keeper to 2 lb.'r. This may not sound very impressive but the bite was aggressive. We fished plastics the whole

time and never did take the time to get the speed bite baits out. That's how you can usually upgrade out of these batches of smallies.

Normally I prefer jerkbaits, but spinnerbaits and rattle-traps are solid too. The 4" St. Clair Crayfish was being picked up and carried around by these aggressive fish. The winds were strong to the point there was a large bow in my line with a 3/16 oz. tube head. The fish would let go though.

Baits and presentations

I was able to get some fish going with tube trailers this week. As usual, I've been experimenting and put a pearl-treuse tube trailer on an Emerald Shiner 4" tube. I was getting bit OK but couldn't determine if it was helping my production or weight. Fall bite fish usually school and the tube trailers have a solid track record on schooling fish.



Lake St. Clair Journal



September 5, 2008

Shallow and deep

Friday, I took a hard look at shallow zones surrounding the Channel System. Instead of hitting bread and butter spots, I focused on some areas that are similar in structure (shallow breaks 2 to 4 feet, 3 to 5 feet) to the successful spots I've been working in front of the North Channel.

One of those zones is the break that stretches from Grassy Island into Bouvier Bay. There is a mile or more of weed patches and lines that look like prime smallmouth territory.

I've fished this over the years and haven't done well, but the way the smallies have been positioned, it was worth a shot. We found a bumper crop of top notch quality pike, and that was all.

The back end of Grassy, where the Baltimore Highway passes by served up one keeper on a spinnerbait.

We hit a couple of Sni spots and even though we saw some vigorous surfacing activity by other species, we didn't hook up with any bass.

One cool zone that is hardly fished this time of year is Goose Bay. I worked some of the really shallow breaks like 1 to 3 and 2 to 5 feet and didn't get bit. One smallie did lunge at my spinnerbait like a pike and my reflex was to pull the bait away. It was the biggest smallie I have ever seen while on the water. That took awhile to get over.

Saturday

We focused on the deeper bite on the Mile Roads and along the shipping channel. At first, we pulled up in the 15 foot range and picked up a quick 2 1/2 lb. smallie on a 4" St. Clair Crayfish. We drifted a little more and didn't repeat, but that was enough to convince me that that pattern would bring a limit over the course of a day.

The next stop was at the Coal Piles. We picked up only short smallies here. It was under a lot of fishing pressure from meat fishermen that looked like they were fishing for perch and there were two bass boats that pulled up while we were there.

While working this zone, it's very hard to pass up the St. Clair Light. There have been solid reports that have lasted throughout the season here. Normally, you can expect a couple of strong weeks but this year the bite has lasted a bit longer. On this trip I was able to pick up a 5 lb., on the scale, smallie off the downcurrent side of the marker. There was no structure here,



too was caught on 4" St. Clair Crayfish.

The Mid-lake Humps have been producing just fine but that won't work for TBF Northern Divisional Anglers who can only work U.S. water. A good alternative can be the dumping grounds. If you go down to pre-fish this, look for smooth humps without weed on them. After that, look for rock on the graph. During the week, we had to target cast to rock piles in the 15 foot range but things really loosened up on Saturday and we were able to get them casting to rock piles and just fan casting around. Mark Maras pulled in this smallie that was over 3 lbs.



The thing that impresses me about this area is the shear numbers. I would esti-

mate that there is a 15 lb. average available for the full three days of the tournament. The potential to do better is there but almost certainly, both boater and co-angler should be able to fill their limits out.

We caught fish with both the tube and the drop-shot today. The tube was a little stronger. Also, I was able to hook up a couple when I was reeling back in. This got me to snap-jig and I got one on the first cast.

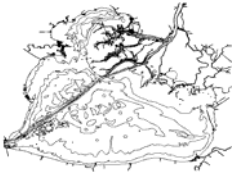
September 3, 2008

River Pre-Fish Strategy

There is a bite coming on in the St. Clair River. There's no telling how long it will last or how broad it will develop. Fawn Island started showing signs of waking up and there have been some good river weights at the tournaments over the last two weeks. The bottom line in the river is you will probably need a full day of pre-fishing time to dial things in.

Also, this pre-fishing time should probably be devoted to a select area, let's say Fawn Island for example. Instead of hitting a few key spots, time will have to be spent getting a bait in every possible zone and location in that area. What we have are small schools that are sitting on small spots. If you don't pass right over them, you won't get bit.

If you do catch a couple, it's time to leave and try something else. The school won't likely take too much pressure before it dries up. A GPS coordinate is a must. That's how tight they are. If you make a long run and try spots all the way up and down the river, it seriously decreases your chances of getting over one of these schools. The upside is the weight can be there. 27 lbs. to win two weekends ago and 25 lbs. last weekend. I had one friend get 16 lbs. in three fish at Stag during a pre-fish but he couldn't duplicate it.



August 31, 2008

Strawberry Ridge offered up a 2 lb. smallie quickly on a 5" *St. Clair Goby tube*. After that, I spend about 40 minutes trying to duplicate that and couldn't.

Look for shallow breaks in the Lake to be strong. I'm finding a spinnerbait bite that fishes about one quality fish for every 50 to 100 casts. I put together an 18 lb. limit in 3 hours today.

The breaks I'm talking about are the ones where the channels empty into the Lake. I was fishing a 3 to 5 foot break but any break like 2 to 4 feet, 5 to 7 feet and such should fish about the same. Typically, these breaks sport a weedline at the base of the break.

Watch to see how the current relates to the water you are fishing. I found the best size to come where the current was blocked by land near the end of the channel than directly in the current itself.

This is the kind of bite that could last for some time. There are miles of breaks like this and as long as you are close to channel current, there probably isn't one that is too shallow.

What I figured I was looking at was a schooling situation where you would run into a school here and there. The way the fish came however, told me that these fish were not tightly packed into a spot, but spread out through the area. I basically had my trolling motor on about 3/4 speed and made a lot of casts.

A strong bait came on our basic white on white double willow leaf painted blades but chartreuse on chartreuse should work as well or better. I experimented with nickel on nickel willow leaves and caught some of the bigger fish on that.

CW

August 30, 2008

We started in the afternoon at Strawberry Ridge. There was one other boat there that stayed awhile. We put up with the boat chop for about 45 minutes, didn't hook up and got out of there.

The Sni didn't have anything for us today.

The North Channel largemouth spots were weak, but that's to be expected in the afternoon as cruiser wakes muddied up the shoreline.

The North Channel Old Dock was vacant for largemouth but OK for smallies. We did the drift and finally connected when we got close to Sassy's. Everything we got was a keeper or less though. Our fish came between 30 and 40 feet.

We did drift a couple of spots in Anchor Bay without getting bit. The water quality was better and boat traffic lighter.

Water quality overall was very poor. The most of it was boat chop stirring up silt. Surprisingly, the fish can bite fine in this, probably because they are used to it and/or have to eat sometime. A spinnerbait worked well out in the open water on shallow breaks. I also had one on a rattle-trap.

CW

August 28, 2008

Thursday morning is was pretty gloomy and wet. There were SE winds that weren't strong, but they were something you had to deal with. This didn't feel like a bad thing at the time. The way the system has been fishing, it could use a little shaking up. As it turned out, things hadn't changed much at all.

I will say the 2 to 2 1/2 lb. smallies I did catch were very aggressive. Not only were most of the hits solid, the ones that weren't the fish would pick up the tube and

not let it go.

The Sni was quiet around the **Baltimore Highway** so I ran out to **Marker #2** in the South Channel. This trip, like the last one for the newsletter was a hunt for big fish only. Marker #2 had the 2 pound class smallies. I was using a 5" *St. Clair Goby tube*.

The Firecracker was open so I took a pass through there. Not getting bit, I went around to the #1 position (as in No Secrets on Lake St. Clair Vol. 1) and did get one average fish on, then lost it close to the boat. That came on a Canadian Mist drop-shot tube.

I couldn't pass up an opportunity to work the X40 Marker. It's a perennial big fish spot. I explored all the depths, including up on the flat without as much as seeing a fish.

A20 was the next venue and as soon as I got there I watch a big fish chasing at the surface. I quickly zipped in my spinnerbait and as I suspected, it was a really, really nice musky. Luckily, years of practice have honed my skills to the point where I can get that spinnerbait away from them with about a 50% success ratio. No harm, no foul.

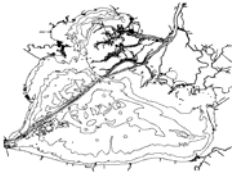
Stopping at the deep seawalls was a huge disappointment. When the 4 lb. class smallies are strong in here, you can get them up and down the wall. There weren't even small fish on this trip.

Before heading back on this short trip, I had to stop at the Coal Piles. I made a quick 10 minute pass over a few piles, broke of then broke for home.

Most of the reports have been of small fish or if there were big fish, the pattern couldn't be duplicated.

See you on the water,

Capt. Wayne



August 21, 2008

So far, the newsletter information is holding up as far as size and bass displacement. The harsh cold front affected a lot of spots pretty much the same way as we saw it do on Tuesday.

The winds are supposed to turn tomorrow from SE to S and stay that way until Sunday where they switch back to the north. That should be a good bite on Friday and Saturday. Some of those spots that were holding good numbers, just not quality are the most like to turn around and be good to us.

There are a couple big tournament events coming up that could affect the fishing pressure. There is a BFL, then a TBF Northern Divisional. You will probably notice the out-of-state registration stickers on the boats.

Some anglers have given up on the river and are focusing on the Lake. I know the plan for me is to go way up the river next Tuesday, weather permitting. The plan is look for big fish only and cover a lot of water.

Although Mark Frickman won the co-angler side of the FLW event with *St. Clair Crayfish drop-shot tube* and other customers have been cashing checks, I haven't done well with it. The *4" St. Clair Crayfish* is fishing strong for me however. Finally, I did hook up during Tuesday research with it and caught my best fish of the day.

August 15, 2008 STAFF REPORT

St. Clair Craw was really working well along with green craw. The fellow I took out made me give him some of both as well as the drop shot size. Once he put the St. Clair Craw, that's all he through and he caught fish all day

August 14, 2008

Most of the information updates were

done in the Marked Map series in the last two weeks, and there is even more this week. Staff Reports have been strong and that means expanded coverage.

CANADA

Sand grass (cont.)

There was a little bit more to the sand grass story as I found it to be heavy inside of the stakes but also, on the drop to 7 to 9 feet and even large flats in the 7 to 9 foot range near Mitchell's Bay. Since the water was crystal clear (normal status for this area), I was able to see many big smallies rooting around and cruising the sand grass flats. Most I would put in the 3 lb. class which is typical for this area.

The reason this structure/cover element is so important is that it is holding fish, but requires presentations that deal with the bottom cover. In plastics, a drop-shot rig will keep the bait up off the bottom and is very effective in clear water. It would be hard to pass up on the topwater, especially in the morning. Jerk baits have always been strong but I normally work those in or near cabbage. There was very little of that along the break. The thickest cabbage running along the break at the stake line was at or closest to Mitchell's Bay.

Mitchell's Bay

I got a chance to take a peek at the bay in 5 to 7 feet of water at The Garden's. The only thing I got for my efforts was one 2 1/2 lb. largemouth on a buzzbait. The thing that was so impressive was the volume and type of baitfish available in the bay. So many types and so many of them. On the way back to the U.S., they were jumping out of the way of the boat in up to 15 feet of water off of The Stakes.

The water was crystal clear. The sandy break that drops off from the flats into The Gardens was full of sand grass though. It was sparse enough that I could work a Carolina Rig along the bottom without getting jammed up right away. All the fish caught along that break ranged from short,

to keepers.

Carolina Rig

Any of you who have fished with me know that I WAS Carolina Rig challenged. Ever since In-Fisherman published an article about it about 15 years ago, I've tried to use it but things just haven't worked out. Well, now thanks to River2Sea and the new tungsten weights, I was able to hook up with nearly every fish that got on my bait. Other than the weight (1/2 oz.) style, I also rigged a wacky rigged 4" worm at the end and now hookups aren't a problem. Old challenge, new confidence!

The Johnston

There was a boat on my main coordinate so I wasn't going to crowd them and I just fished nearby. There wasn't much weed to hold them in this area and I didn't get bit. I have gotten reports that this area is still producing, as long as you find the weeds.

9—12 foot break behind the Firecracker—This is great timing for this spot but I didn't find anyone home.

STAFF REPORT 08/14

South Shore

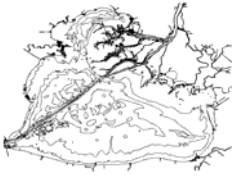
The South Shore has a algae bloom way to 15 ft. from Stoney and past Bell River in some spots.

STAFF REPORT 08/12

Assorted spots

Headed down the Middle Channel. Stopped at the wreck about halfway down and got nothing. The water in the area was silted up pretty good. Moved out to the end of the MC and only caught rock bass.

Headed to Marker A and B (by Gull Island)..nothing.



July 31, 2008

Bob Mann Sr.
reporting from
Canada



The Pike Creek area is producing well as you go out deep.

Askin's Point continues to pump out good numbers, especially in the morning. Top-water is working well. Don't forget to probe the deep parts of the Sturgeon Hole too. It's most likely you'll find most of the big fish in the 3 lb. class.

July 25, 2008

It looks like things are perking up out there. More and more big fish reports are coming in. Some are attached to big small fish reports too but some are coming from folks in steady areas.

Deep in the Lake is looking about the best for consistency. Many of the deep spots that haven't been producing have started to come on line. That is showing us some movement in the population.

Formula G3 is also coming on. I'm getting steady reports about the 5" version knocking them dead.

It might be time to start to think about sitting on spots for 5 big bites. I have many areas in mind but can't say for sure about the quality but I thought you should consider this possibility on your stuff.

July 18, 2008

Staff Report -

Shoal City has been producing well lately. The smallies have been all around the shoals and not necessarily located on any one specifically. Find the action between 9 and 11 1/2 feet deep.

July 15, 2008

What we found in the **Sturgeon Hole** was encouraging. The range the smallies

were at went from the 30 foot range and up on 20 foot flats. Given time, I think we would have been able to work some of the high edges for active, feeding fish too. We didn't get the chance but I suspected that the flat in front of Peche Island could have been active too.

The flat as **Askin's Point** was interesting in that the current was so strong, I had to crab the boat to get it to go straight out from shore. Part of this was the function of moderate to light north winds the night before but the other probably has to do with a little higher water this year. I'm finding stronger currents almost everywhere I go. In this case the current laid the cabbage down flat in as little as 5 feet of water. This really seemed to affect the way the fish were responding to our baits. They wouldn't touch the buzzbait which is very hard to believe. The drop-shot seemed about the best and then of course, my drop-shot tube under a bobber worked as well.

We are now into the "summer bite" period where bait **color selection becomes critical**. This is one of those times when it might be good to get off your "best" color and start to throw other colors out there to see what kind of reaction you get. I've noticed a few changes this year so far. Formula G3 isn't fishing as strong overall, but for some anglers it's their go-to bait. So far, my firetiger jerkbait hasn't produced so I'm starting to think about taking my own advice and start to experiment there.

St. Clair Crayfish was super strong in the spring then slowed down in the post-spawn. It's back and very strong. Mark Frickman just won the co-angler division of the FLW Chevy Open with it. If you're "on" fish but they just don't size up, try some of the stronger colors like St. Clair Crayfish, Firetiger, Great Lakes Craw and such. Adding a tube trailer can make all the difference too.

After the big event last weekend, there was very little fishing pressure on the Lake in the early week. That will probably change since there are two major NBAA

events coming up and folks will be out pre-fishing.

July 06, 2008

Bob Mann Sr.
reporting from
Canada



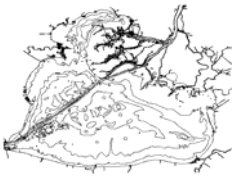
Bob called in to let me know his **21.60 lb.** stringer took 3rd place in a Canada tournament Sunday. The **Great Lakes Craw drop-shot tube** was responsible for his 3 biggest fish brought to the scales.

During pre-fishing trips he found dirty water along the South Shore from Pike Creek down to Askin's but it was better in 7 ft. That's where he hammered the 4 lb.'rs in practice but today they were nowhere to be found at that spot.

Editors Note: It's not unusual for the post-spawn fish to school hard during this point in the season. They move a lot and a lot of times it means staying in the zone until they come around to where you are at. Very tough to do mentally but it can pay-off big.

Look for **summer bite patterns** to firm up this week. That means some strong moves made toward bait color in all types of baits, especially plastics. There are a lot of colors that are effective, but once you are on fish, work different baits to see what kind of response you get.

This week in the newsletter I'll be trying to cover the middle of the Lake. A lot will depend on how the storms come through and if the winds allow it.



June 29, 2008

Bob Mann Sr. reporting from Canada

The **Belle River Hump** had fish on the tip but most were in the 2 1/2 lb. to 3 lb. class. This weekend, the west Baby Belle had even better fish.

The **Great Lakes Craw drop-shot tube** was mostly responsible for an 8th place finish at 17.95 lbs. and a 2nd place finish with 20.55 lbs. in a Canada tournament.

Not a lot of **mayfly** action to be found. The South Shore was very dirty up until about 5 feet up to the Puce. Askin's Point was clear to shore.

Overall, **weed growth** in the deeper water is way down compared to last year.

June 28, 2008

Brian Belevender and I fished the NBAA DB Shootout and brought back 16.59 lbs. We had solid fish available on the **South Shore** but the cloud cover never let up and the best bite going was in the sun. Still, that shoreline looked very good for 20 lbs. so we stuck with it.

When we got there, there were no boats shallow and about 8 in 7 feet or more. My best stuff to start with is in **3 to 5 feet** and we ended up pulling out 3 that we took to the scales from there. Eventually, one boat pulled in the same line as us then another. Before you knew it, three boats pulled directly in front of us from the deeper water and cut our water off. We circled around to a weed/rock patch that produced then took off to **Pike Creek**.

We pulled up in 6 feet and with the wind blowing hard, ended up drifting out to 9 feet of water. It wasn't too long before we had an upgrade fish. Overall, we probably went through about 60 fish that day. That was the plan though.

One of the best bites was prior to the storm that came through. I've been in this situation before but these fish even sur-

prised me as there was one on every cast. After the storm passed, the bite shut down but we did manage to upgrade one more smallie before starting back.

Even through all of the heavy rain you could see the rock piles and shoals. Not having the sun did affect us being able to target rock piles with more efficiency but the biggest thing the sun does here is to hold these fish closer to structure.

There was some algae on the bottom which affected any bottom presentations. I stuck with the drop-shot most of the day to keep the bait up off the bottom. The bite was excellent on the dark melon tinsel when there were some higher light levels. If the light levels dropped, I switched to the Great Lakes Craw drop-shot tube and kept the bite going. Any in-between light levels gave me a chance to get the Canadian Mist drop-shot tube out.

That's one big advantage to using the drop-shot tubes. The presentation is sound for Lake St. Clair so changing color can tell you a lot about the bite. Here are the colors I have:

- Erie Goby**
- Great Lakes Craw**
- Dark Melon Tinsel**
- St. Clair Crayfish**
- Formula G3**
- Canadian Mist** (sold out but coming)
- Emerald Shiner** (sold out)

Switching colors is done so fast that I keep my drop-shot tube box on the deck with me at all times. No retying or searching for anything in your tackle, just take one off, put it back in the box and thread another on to the hook. With a list of colors like you see here, you can move from natural to bright colors to see what is working best.

20 Pound Limits

So far it looks good for more 20 lb. limits this year. Some areas have appeared to cool down compared to last year and I suspect the bass have repositioned. We'll

know more in the next two weeks as the summer bite develops. This year is cooler overall. That will tend to scatter the fish some but only if it stays low. So far, we have had plenty of days in the mid to high 80's which is enough to keep us out of a "spring all summer long" situation.

Smallies Love Flats

Although it looks like Lake St. Clair is flat across the board, there are independent flats all over. Whether shallow or deep, flats make up a lot of the community water that gets fished. The key element is how close the flat is to other structure like drops, channels and current.

If you are looking to get on some water that doesn't get much pressure, shallow flats in the 6" to 6 foot range are a great place to be all summer. Many of these are set up perfect for sight fishing which is very effective, but also a lot of fun. Working topwater, spinnerbaits and plastics is a routine that pays off with quality smallmouth.

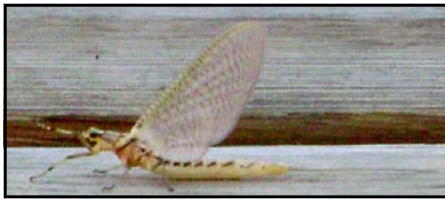
The flat by Windmill Point has been targeted hard over the last few years and it shows no sign of getting a break. Anglers who launch from Elizabeth Park have a good reason to go here. Not only does it get pressure on tournament day, but for practice as well. During the week, you can always catch fish up here but buy the weekend it gets a lot tougher.

If you like to be left along, the sandy flat behind the stake line between Mitchell's Bay and The Horseshoe is an excellent spot to enjoy a day. The sight fishing is among the best. If you haven't done this sort of thing before, plan to spend a few hours up in 3 to 6 feet of water to learn what to look for. At first it all looks the same but after awhile, the subtle differences begin to stand out.



June 24, 2008

In my meanderings on research day there were some really cool things I came on. One was that mayflies occupied every inch of the Lake. Usually the hatches are semi-isolated but this round of hatches were put off I believe by the cooler weather and now we're getting it all at once.



Firecracker

Another thing is that they are doing some dredging at the Firecracker. This is on the North side of it and rather close. It should give us some new options through the course of the summer months as long as they stop soon.



Coal Piles

If you know the Coal Piles area then I can tell you I gave it a good going over (with baits only) and only caught a musky. It was nice to locate a few more rock piles around one of my main spots.

Did you know that this "community hole" was the domain of Dave McDonald many years ago? He was leading the pack at the Canadian Open the first day and the next day a bunch of boats followed him out there. In spite of the show of poor sportsmanship, Dave went on to win the event. He is one of the most decent people you'll

ever fish against and it was great to see him succeed.

Visitors

There are a lot more out-of-state anglers coming in to enjoy Lake St. Clair these days. We've always had visitors but I've seen a substantial increase. I enjoy watching them come in, be very excited about the fishery then come back again and begin to be disappointed that they aren't getting 100 fish days. Now they are just like the rest of us.

What's it going to take to win this weekend?

I think anything short of 20 lbs. will be runner up. In spite of the difficulties of getting on consistent fish, there are ways to put the bite in your favor and there will be a few who will get 'em. If you have been out since last Saturday you probably have seen the bite shift, and shift hard. There are a lot of small and very active bass with and occasional bigger fish mixed in. Some of that will continue but those post-spawn females should be getting more aggressive by the day.

Cannibals

We had one male caught by Memorial Park on Monday that was spitting fry up on the way back to the boat.

Musky

These fish are everywhere lately. I've gone three trips with three musky either taking the bass away or taking our baits. It would be a good time to make sure your stainless prop isn't rotating while you are trolling motoring the boat. Just put it in gear before you start fishing and that will stop the prop from turning. The musky will follow the shiny prop and the bass will get real nervous.

June 21, 2008

Detroit River Open

Jeremy Baker and I fished the NBAA Detroit River Open and we didn't quite get the results we were looking for. Thank you Jeremy for working with my strategy but it turned out to be a week

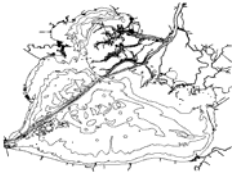
or so early for the post-spawn females I was looking to capitalize on.

We started at Selfridge on the shallow flat I like so much and the bite had vanished. Not even the small fish were interested. It turns out the mayflies had just fired up that Friday or early Saturday and it switched the bite around. We almost stayed to take advantage of that but it would have been a guess at that point and there were two other spots at the Mile Roads that we had staked out. It was time to go. Before we left I did do a simulated mayfly bite cast and let the Formula G3 tube hit the water hard, then started snap-swimming it back. A largemouth hit it right away. That was my first INDICATOR that the mayfly hatch bite was coming on.

We picked up a 3 lb. smallie off of a Metro Beach wreck then moved off to the Mile Roads Plateau. Casting at the rock piles didn't do it so we moved off to 11 and 12 Mile for the last part of the day. We did end up patterning a group of fish that were very tight in 12 feet of water but not nearly enough to tip the scales in our favor.

The good news is we fished the day with zero mistakes. No fish got off that would have helped us, none knocked off by the net or broke off. We worked hard together to get the best possible result with what we had to work with.

As it turns out, if I had stayed solely with the Mile Roads strategy I recommended to my customers, the results would have been way better. The real problem is that I connected with a 4 lb. 12 oz. smallie on that flat on Thursday and I couldn't get away from the idea that a few would be there on Saturday. Big fun fishing with Jeremy though. He's a good stick and someone to watch.



June 19, 2008

ENVIRONMENTAL

The cottonwood is flying out there and even though there is only moderate coverage on the water, it will still interfere with your line and baits. I do like to see the cottonwood though because it always signals the start of the topwater bite for me.

LARGEMOUTH

On the Tuesday research day, we probably didn't boat a smallie until 9:30 AM. We launched around 6:00 AM. Granted, we fished closer to shore most of the time but it was still unusual to see so many largemouth for that period of time. We did get on one that went 3 lbs.

The largemouth were also very ready to hit topwater baits like a zara spook. My partner threw it a lot and had plenty of action.

The largies were also occupying the inside weed edges which is usually reserved for the smallies in the places I fish like Gino's surf.

From reports I've heard plus my own experience, it looks like a 15 lb. sack of largemouth is a real possibility this week.

SMALLIES

As it was discussed in the newsletter, the smallies are very much into post-spawn mode. We know that this represents the "main body" of spawners and there will still be bass on beds for some time to come. If you are really looking for them I would suggest somewhere in the 9 foot range or deeper and perhaps a spot where the cooler channel current spills into the Lake. I really don't have anything particular in mind but if this is your thing, maybe the info will help.

I have found smallies spawning on Channel edges. They are easy to spot and could show up at any time. To the last, I've never seen one over 3 lbs. spawning that way so I haven't pursued this too far.

One smallie gobbled up my 5" Formula G3 tube and at the same time had half a perch sticking out of its mouth. There might be a connection there.

While bringing in "one more" 2 1/2 lb. smallie a 50" musky nailed it as an easy meal. I'm thinking, "Now how long is this going to take?" It wasn't more than a minute before the bass was released back into my custody. I did tell the little fella though, "I don't think I'm doing you any favors here" as I released him back.

The staff has been reporting in too and everyone is pretty much on the same pattern: lots of small bass with a big one now and then. These smallies are in such a transition that each day could be different.

The "*running at the boat*" phenomenon is something to take note of. Two things I did that helped correct this are:

Let them have the bait and wait until they turn with it. I would only do this if this pattern was consistent though. When they get this way, they won't swallow the bait.

Switch to skirted twin tails and they hit them hard and you could hook set them like normal.

SPOTS

I took a look at **Strawberry Ridge** today (Thurs.) and found some weed on the break that looked good. I didn't find any smallies yet though. I even took it to the back of the trough where the early action starts and there was nobody home. It was about the coldest morning though. More like a morning in the Fall.

The point at **Point Huron** didn't look too good today either. This can all change as we get into the hotter weather but I didn't see any fish or didn't see anyone else catch fish. Last year it was soooo hot here that it could support 6 or more boats. It will probably get better soon.

I took a look at **the flat between Harley and the Black Creek** again and found the

same small fish I did last time. This time around I didn't stay very long so the random big smallie might have been there.

With the water quality being so high right now there could be a good case to go sight fishing here. A little sun would be nice though. I haven't seen much of that while I've been on the water. This is a nice flat to sight fish and there are almost always enough big fish to cast to. This isn't so much a bedding situation but smallies roaming the flat, mostly alone. I've had very good success casting at these moving fish.

STRATEGY

I'll be fishing the **NBAA** with many of you this weekend and look forward to seeing you there. Here's a look at a St. Clair strategy that could work.

The Mile Roads seem to have the biggest population of fish right now. It looks good to get into the main body and work through the smaller bass until you get the 5 big bites you'll need to compete. Normally, I don't like this because everyone is fishing the same group of fish but there are some things that can be done to put the percentages in your favor.

5" Tubes—Formula G3 and St. Clair Goby have proven themselves to be big fish baits.

Tube Trailers—Good on schooling fish (deep in this case)

Location, location, location—The depth you are at on the Mile Roads can make all the difference. Most anglers will be from 7 to 10 feet so if you want to catch different fish, try a different depth.

Cast ahead of the drift and bring back—This can produce a bigger bite but a drift and drag can be deadly on deep schooling fish.

Speed bite—If you are in a shallow enough zone, a jerkbait, spinnerbait or rattle-trap can get you on a bigger bite and away from the smaller bass.