



Hook, Line, and Sinker

The Official Publication of The New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen

February
1996
Volume 5
Issue 2

Excellent turn-out for contest



The 9th Annual New Ulm Area Sportfishermens Ice Fishing Contest was held February 11th, on Clear Lake. We again had an excellent turn-out. There were over three hundred tickets sold, and about 150 people were on the lake that day. If the landing had not been in such bad shape, I'm sure we could have had another 50 people in the contest. All things considered, we had a great contest. There weren't many fish caught, but everyone seemed to have a good time. Many door prizes were given away and we had some very nice raffle prizes that we gave out. Adam Boyum caught the biggest crappie, which weighed a half of a pound. Tom Geifer had the biggest sunfish, it weighed a little over a third of a pound. Again this year there were no walleyes caught. The ice auger was won by Rick Wellmann. Special thanks go out to all of the guys who helped make this a successful event. Oh, the food was great too!

Hooking live bait

Live bait can be one of the deadliest of lures. Many times, however, live bait is incorrectly placed on the hook. When this happens, the bait doesn't act naturally, may die quickly and will turn away lunkers that grew big by learning how to recognize food that doesn't look right. The right way to hook live bait depends on how you plan to fish it. You couldn't, for example, hook a minnow through the dorsal fin if you plan on trolling. Minnows just don't swim backwards. The same applies to worms and night crawlers. A worm washed into a stream will drift with the current, so it should be fished that way. Hook it once through the collar with both ends free to drift naturally. If you're still-fishing with worms, natural presentation is less important and you can thread the worm several times on the hook. When trolling or drifting, hook a minnow under the jaw through both lips so it will move through the water naturally. If you're stillfishing, hook it just behind the dorsal fin, allowing it to swim freely. Crayfish should be hooked up, through and out the top of its tail. The only good way to hook a frog is under the jaw and up through both lips. Remember, live bait is deadly only if it looks natural.

Club Calendar

February 28th
Houses moved off the lakes -
time?

February 29th
Meeting - Schells Tap Room -
7:30 P.M.

March 28th
Meeting - to be announced

FROM THE PRESIDENT

As I enjoyed my fresh Eel Pout fillet, I was reminded of my first contact with fresh water cod (which is what an Eel Pout is). I was about 8 years old when my dad, the late Stonewall Sparlin, took me on what was to be the first of our many regular routine trips to Canada. Being a bush pilot capable of flying into quite limited space and landing our Piper Cruiser on some remote lake and proceeding to explore fishing opportunities for future guiding, was dad's favorite part of being a pilot / guide. If memory serves me right, this particular trip was to about 150 miles to the North West of the English River in Ontario. The lake had no name to my recollection but was (to an 8 year old) a pretty big lake, maybe something to the size of what Vermillion Lake near Cook, Minnesota, is. With the skis, we taxied to the first point that stuck out into the lake quite a way, this was, what I would later find out, to be standard procedure for fishing unknown waters. Dad's back pack, (pea green Army issue), cup style auger (which broke down into three sections), heater (which had a huge reflector and ran off the plane), wood jig sticks (with black line and shaped to lay over the hole and not fall in if a fish bit when you set it down), about a dozen big fat smelt (half frozen) and Air Force issue flight gear made for about 90 below, were all taken out and put to use in a matter of minutes. We would only go to the smelt, if after jigging with various spoons, or my father's all time favorite, Swedish Pimple, did not work. Of course drilling the holes was a real challenge where the ice was often 3 to 4 ft. thick. This made depth finding and guessing depth a real art, because drilling those holes by hand was quite a job even with a real sharp auger. The key to finding fish is the same today as it was 35+ years ago, be on the drop-off at peak fishing times and you'll get 'em. I remember this day was particularly calm and cold. Dad helped me get my rig set up first and I can remember it was pretty deep, deeper than we had been fishing at Red Lake and Winnie, or Leech. He told me to jig with a Swedish Pimple and a little piece of smelt tail. I can remember catching pike and walleye before that trip, so I knew when I had a bigger fish on and somewhat of how to let the fish play itself out before trying to get it up the hole. In a matter of minutes dad had a couple of lakera that were decent sized (in about that 6 to 9 lb. area), and I was not catching anything, so I quite jigging and let my line sit on the bottom and went into the plane to eat a candy bar. When I was finished I remember watching my dad continue to catch fish after fish with total amazement. He asked me if I was going to fish or just watch, I said they don't bite at my hole. He said well take this one and I'll use yours. Well, you could not have made me move faster. I went over to pick up my jig stick and I remember hollering to dad that I thought I was snagged on the bottom. He said to me that's not possible and that I should pull real hard and get it loose. Well I did and it started to pull back, that's when it felt like one of those bigger pikes I had caught on Winnie earlier that Winter. My father's favorite line, (later, he would say it just to bug me) was, don't horse it, so I pulled and pulled until it finally began to give up, by now I was very tired and wanted to hand off the stick to dad, but he said it's about time you do it all yourself, just pull it up! So I grabbed the jig stick, threw it over my shoulder, and started walking, to dad's amazement up came the fish. He began laughing and said, "How you gonna' get that off your line?" Here it was, this huge Eel Pout and it had completely swallowed the whole Swedish Pimple. Dad was great at directions especially if he didn't want anything to do with something. He said just grab it behind the head and you can work on it (I don't really think he thought I could get the rig out of that pout's belly), but in all my innocence I tried. I managed to pick it up, but noticed it really liked me, because it kept wrapping itself around my arm. I couldn't hold it so I became disgusted and threw in the towel on the whole ordeal. Dad said well, it will freeze up in a short while and we'll clip the line and get the pimple out later when we clean the fish. I said you mean we can eat that, he said you bet, that's gonna' taste better than these lakera. Later, when we got back home, dad told mom about the great fish I had caught and that we would be eating it tonight. He cleaned it with me watching, telling me that not many people know how good to eat this odd looking fish are and to remember some day that all kinds of people will be eating these and maybe even they will have contests to try to catch them. Go Figure!

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Why I Fish

What is it that causes so many of us to climb out of bed way before dawn, drive to the lake and fish all day without catching much - then get up the next day and want to do it all over again? If you're an angler, consider these four questions: 1. Where do you fish?

2. When do you fish?
3. How do you fish?
4. Why do you fish?

If you can't provide very specific answers to the first three questions, then you probably don't fish and the fourth question is moot. Set this magazine aside and wait patiently for the dentist to call your name.

I will continue now with a select audience of devotees and aficionados. You are the hard-core fishermen of the 1990's. You are equipped with sophisticated electronics, polarized sunglasses, single-purpose fishing rods and huge collections of tackle. The monetary investment alone should be enough to occasionally prompt the question: Why do you fish? I personally arrived at this question one day, when I returned from 14 hours of fishing with my friend Mike. My wife asked, "What did you and Mike talk about for 14 hours?" I quickly attempted to recall topics of conversation. Health care? Global warming? Declining test scores among college students? Love and marriage? Finally, with a look of embarrassment, I admitted, "We didn't talk much. We just fished".

At this point my wife got a strange look on her face. She then started asking for bonafide evidence that my time had indeed been spent on the water, rather than in the company of horses, women or other potential problems. Obviously, it seems, I don't fish for the conversation.

From an article by James Luken



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The *Hook, Line and Sinker* is published monthly by Joyce Reese for the New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are solely those of respective writers and not to be construed as the opinion of the NUASF or its members. Send all correspondence and submissions to Mike Deinken, Editor, 1022 Spring St., New Ulm, Minnesota 56073.

The NUASF Board

President - Scott Sparlin (359-2346); Vice President - Jerry Carlson (354-8869); Secretary/Treasurer - Mike Deinken (359-9650); Board Member - Jim Hulke - (354-3654).

Clear Lake Update

As you know by now the aeration system was started on January 24th. At that time the oxygen was 7.5 ppm. Since then the system has opened a good sized hole in the ice. The oxygen has continued to drop though. The last reading, which was taken on February 7th, was 3.7 ppm. This is still in the safe range and hopefully it will turn the other way shortly. The fish are not in danger until the oxygen level drops below 2.0 ppm.

There have been some decent fish caught in the last couple of weeks, mostly crappies. No one seems to be able to entice the walleyes to bite, although there have been numerous reports of anglers seeing them in their holes. I have also heard of some people catching some northerns. If any of you should happen to catch one, please keep it, no matter what the size may be. We have several members who have volunteered to pickle any that are caught. The reason we want all northerns kept, is to get as many as possible out of the lake. Clear Lake is not big enough to support them. The northerns will gradually reduce the numbers of the other game fish in the lake, causing a decline in fishing success for the anglers.

Due to the recent warm weather, getting on and off the lake has been quite an experience. Thanks to Rolland Wendler, we now have an easier time getting on and off the lake. Rolland spent about an hour with his skid loader clearing a new path onto the lake. He said he did it so he could get his house off, but if you see him thank him just the same. I close with a little reminder, with the coming of warm weather, ice conditions can change in a very short time. Be careful out there, make sure you check the ice before you drive out.

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