



Hook, Line, and Sinker

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New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen • P.O. Box 294 • New Ulm, MN 56073 Web Site: newulmsportfish.org

A Case for Big Pike

By Jason Mitchell

Courtesy of: <http://jasonmitchelloutdoors.com>

Northern pike are such an incredible predator. Smooth and sleek with the curves of the most expensive sport car. Rows of teeth that resemble tooth picks. Amazing acceleration. Pike are cool and really big pike are simply awesome.

Consider this little tidbit of information. Northern pike are found throughout the northern hemisphere across the upper third of North America from New York to Alaska. These fish are also found across northern Europe and Asia. A northern pike caught in the Balkens is almost identical to the same fish caught on Lake of the Woods.

The North American Continent spreads further apart from the European Continent at a rate of three inches per year. Now imagine how many years it took for the North American continent to separate from Europe. In all of those millions of years, the pike never changed. No room to change perfection.

Right now in the fishing world, particularly in Minnesota where musky stocking has become controversial on some bodies of water, there has been a stigma associated with esox because these fish are such perfect predators. While big northern pike and musky capture the imagination of anglers, they obviously eat other fish. My own perspective on these big predators is that big predators whether they be big largemouth bass, musky or big pike almost always point to a good fishing lake. The best panfish lakes, many of the best walleye lakes... good healthy fisheries almost always see predators that get to a top end size.

I think the argument that isn't getting discussed nearly enough is that you are probably going to have northern pike or musky of some capacity on just about any lake in Minnesota or Wisconsin. Would you rather have one forty inch pike patrolling a weed bed of fifty 12-inch hammer handle pike in the same vicinity? I can tell you which option is worst for a fisher



The smaller inland lakes of Minnesota used to have a lot of big pike and on so many of these lakes, the big pike were simply caught and kept by anglers. On much of this water, musky have replaced pike as that large alpha predator and now serve that role to balance that particular ecosystem.

In some ways, musky are better suited to serve that role because by nature, musky are much more temperamental with short intense feeding windows and now with the protected slot limits, these fish can grow to a size to be useful for a fishery.

Pike are programmed much differently in that they are much easier to trigger and have much larger feeding windows. Big pike are going to get caught fairly quickly so the only way you will see big pike is either on large water where the size of the lake can diffuse fishing pressure or if a lake is remote or has little fishing pressure. When the big predators are gone, the pike population in particular seems to explode with extremely high populations of hammer handle pike. The high densities of hammer handle pike that never seem to get past 24

inches are what you have to worry about and recent studies from the Minnesota DNR confirm that.

Over the past twenty years, opportunities across the board to catch really big musky have gotten much better while the opportunity to catch really big pike is becoming tougher. In the lower 48, a northern pike over forty three inches is a rarer trophy than a forty eight inch musky, a twenty inch largemouth bass, a nineteen inch smallmouth bass, a twenty seven inch walleye or a ten inch bluegill. Good catch and release practices are crucial for conserving big pike populations on most water because of the fishing pressure we see today... just as those same practices are crucial for conserving big musky. If you think these big predators are the devil and want to kill them, fine have your hammer handles. Low population densities of esox are good, high population densities are bad.

There are still opportunities however to target big pike and these predators provide an incredible angling experience. Obviously, Canada reigns king for numbers of massive pike. Northern Manitoba and Saskatchewan have so much big pike water. If you draw a line from the Pas to Thompson Manitoba, the region to the north is staggering for big pike water. We traveled to Wolverine Lodge near Lynn Lake, Manitoba last summer to film and the quality of pike was top notch. There are also pockets of big pike scattered throughout northwest Ontario. In the states, I don't know if you can beat the Missouri River Reservoirs right now for numbers of quality pike. Fort Peck in Montana is incredible. Lake Sakakawea in North Dakota and Lake Oahe are both really good right now with good opportunities for fish over forty inches. My home water of North Dakota's Devils Lake produces some really nice pike. Minnesota's Red Lake, Lake of the Woods and Mille Lacs all have quality pike fishing opportunities for big fish. There are more under the radar lakes and flowages across Minnesota and Wisconsin that still hold big pike.

Continued on page two

Club Calendar

August 25th.....NUASF Club Meeting
September 8th.....NUASF Social Night at Club House
September 17th.....Peterman's Fishing Contest Ponderosa
September 29th.....NUASF Club Meeting

October 1stCCMR Pub Crawl
October 13thNUASF Social Night at Club House
October 27thNUASF Club Meeting

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From the President

By Jason Kuester

First things first, we had to postpone the Kids fishing contest till August 31, 2016 due to high water on the river. We will need a bunch of volunteer's for that day from 3:30 – 8:00 Thanks in advance for your help!!

I would like to remind everyone about the Peterman's Fall Fishing Contest. The date is Saturday September 17th, starts at noon and goes until the last man is standing. It is on the Minnesota River off of the bottom road by Hwy 4 (watch for the signs). All proceeds go to the EE Mecklenburg Scholarship. HOPE TO SEE YOU THERE!!! (P.S. Bring a camper if you can, there is plenty of room!!!!)

Labor Day is just around the corner. Where did summer go? Please be safe while enjoying the holiday!!

Here are some important upcoming events for your calendars. The first event is the Peterman's Fall Club Fishing Contest September 19th. CCRM Pub Crawl Saturday October 1, 2016 (Contact Scott Sparlin 507-276-2280), NUASF Ice Fishing Contest is on February 12th 2017. The winter club fishing trip to Dixon Lake is on February 16-19 2017. Summer is here and what a great time to bring our friends and family to the New Ulm Area Sport Fisherman Club. We are always looking for new members to join. If you know of someone bring them along and show them how much fun we have at our club. As always, bring a friend and each of you will receive a free refreshment of your choice!

Hope to see you at the next meeting!!

A Case for Big Pike continued form page one

Big pike are such an amazing fish in my mind. Funny how when I take my eight-year old daughter and seven-year old son out fishing, their favorite fish are pike. I was somewhat surprised as to why they liked pike so much... after all the rest of the world seems to be consumed with walleye. The answers were pretty straightforward. Pike are longer, splash more and they have cool teeth. I couldn't help but smile at these matter of fact answers that are coated with such simple honesty all young children seem to possess. I can't disagree.

19th Annual Youth Fishing Contest

Sponsored by the New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen

Wednesday, August 31st

4:00 - 7:00 p.m. at Riverside Park, New Ulm

Fishing • Fun • Food • Prizes

Free for youth up to 18 years of age.

PRIZES FOR THE LARGEST FISH CAUGHT:

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|--------------------|-----------------|
| \$50 - First Prize | \$5 - 5th Prize |
| \$20 - 2nd Prize | \$5 - 6th Prize |
| \$10 - 3rd Prize | \$5 - 7th Prize |
| \$5 - 4th Prize | |



Page 2



426 North Minnesota Street
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Hook, Line, and Sinker

The *Hook Line and Sinker* is published monthly by Joyce Reese graphic design 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 New Ulm Area Sport Fishermen, P.O. Box 294, New Ulm, MN 56073.

The NUASF Board

President - Jason Kuester (381-2041); Vice-President - Gary Sprenger (359-9358); Secretary - Ross Nelson (507-766-0765) Treasurer - Tony Miller (354-2457); Board Members: Ron Ludewig (507-276-6093), Mike Buechner (354-2739 s), Ken Sutherland (507-276-1534).

NUASF Monthly Meeting, July 28, 2016 Members present 20+ Minutes prepared by Tony Miller

I. Secretary Report – required changes to C) Club House and Grounds Update:

- 3) Change “Temporary repairs done by John Vorwerk.” Change to “Temporary repairs by Zinniel Electric, bucket truck provided by John Vorwerk.”

Also

- A) Motion made by Jim Hulke, seconded by Chad Wills to accept with changes. Passed unanimously.

II. Treasury Report

- A) Balance – motion made by Wymann Forbrook to accept as read, seconded by Orv Rannow. Passed unanimously.

III. Old Business

- A) Membership update

1. 156 members, 16 due

- B) Area Lakes and Rivers Report

1. Minnesota River is high

2. Lake of the Woods – fishing is slow

3. Lake Emily – Northerns are hot!

4. Devil's Lake – hot! Used no live bait!

5. Lake Dieffenbacher – Jeff Spessard family (IFC trip winner), two daughters caught 31” Walleye. 2nd day, one daughter caught a 2nd 31” Walleye

- C) Club House and Grounds Update

1. Sometime this fall, Brown County and Redwood County will start work on water-flow construction project with Ground Zero providing heavy equipment work.

2. Tony Miller installed all gutter guard on clubhouse

3. Tony and Tyleen mowed grass twice this month

4. Lawnmower shed needs light and outlet

5. Orv Rannow has obtained used plastic extrusion deck from Sleepy Eye Sportsman Club. Possible use for deck at back of clubhouse.

6. Orv Rannow will repair shelter for wood pile

IV. Old Business

- A) Key chains are being cut, should be ready by Aug. 6th

V. New Business

- A) Our club won the Outdoor Leaders Award, presented at Game Fair.

1. Plaque and \$500 award presented by Outdoor News

2. Article to appear in Outdoor News

- B) Ice Castle and 4-wheeler ATV tickets are available

- C) Discussion to invite canoeists from Minnesota River to Winnipeg trip to club meeting to discuss trip

- D) Orv Rannow needs volunteers to sell tickets at Brown County Fair Aug. 10th to 14th. Sign up ASAP for 4 – hour shifts

- E) “Win Me” banner is ready

- F) Youth Fishing Contest – August 17th

1. River is high!

2. Need volunteers!

3. Ads have been finalized and will be placed accordingly

4. Allocated each for prizes (NAPA, Running, R&R Bait, Retzlaff's)

5. Betty Retzlaff estate donated \$500 in prizes for YFC, additional prizes will be raffled with funds allocated for YFC

6. See Jim Hulke for any kids that need fishing equipment! Jim says “especially single moms!”

7. Flyers are available for YFC

8. Orv Rannow donated \$ for cash prizes

9. Need to organize food supplies and volunteers

10. Ann Vote (Minnesota Valley History Learning Center) may do a program

11. R & R Bait will supply worms for bait

VI. Other New Business

- A) Gemuetlichkeit in Goosetown event (August 21st, 11:30 – 5pm)

1. See Ron Bolduan and Tony Miller for details

2. See flyers for lots of fun activities, booths and displays!

3. NO BEER! Family event!

- B) Food for next meeting

1. Leftovers in fridge

2. Please bring a dish to pass

VII. Adjourn 8:40pm


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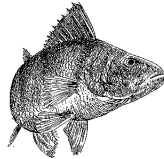
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