

10 Tips For More Walleyes

by Jim Barta

DO YOUR HOMEWORK: Homework, in this case, means obtaining river or lake maps, obtaining information from local bait shops, or contacting anglers native to the waters you want to fish. Use this information to plan a strategy that will meet the challenges you're likely to encounter in the day's fishing.

INTERPRET THE BEST LOCATIONS: Once on the water, evaluate the season, weather, and lake conditions to determine likely fish patterns, then use this information to evaluate the best structures, bottom conditions or depths to be fished.

UTILIZE A PROPER APPROACH: Weather conditions are likely to affect a walleye's response to an approaching boat. Clear, calm days will make them susceptible to boat traffic. Approach your fishing location quieter on calm days than on days where the water camouflages our boat with a chop.

PROPER EQUIPMENT: Be sure the equipment you fish with is in peak condition and of the best grade possible. Subtle strikes will require anglers to use quality rods to be felt. Line should never be last year's supply that was left on the reel through the winter and hooks should always be sharp.

CHANGE PRESENTATIONS: Just because a particular presentation worked last year, doesn't mean it's guaranteed to be successful this season. Don't be afraid to change tactics until you find one that's working.

MATCH EQUIPMENT TO PRESENTATION: Balance equipment to the presentations and tactics you plan to use. For what should be obvious reasons, don't try using the same rods used for trolling in waters off Erieau to jig with on the river.

USE FRESH LIVE BAIT: In tough conditions, the physical state of your bait can often make the difference between catching fish and having a slow day on the water.

MATCH BAIT TO GAMEFISH: Species and size of bait can be the determining factor between success and failure in fishing. In early spring, tip jigs with large shiner minnows for best success. As late spring approaches, switch to natural crawlers or plastic imitators.

CONCENTRATE, CONCENTRATE:

Since the strike of a fussy walleye can be very faint, your success may depend on how much attention you give to your presentation. It's important to talk, joke and have a good time while fishing, but always pay close attention to what is happening at the business end of your line.

BEST TIP OF ALL: When all the above tips fail, throw this list away, get out the 'OLE cane pole and cuss Jim B@#\$*# out and have a good time!