

Fishing Videos, My Newest Challenge

by Steve Welch

Early this spring I was kicking around the idea of getting something to sell at my booth at this winter's fishing shows. When Dave Haugh, a retired laborer and camera buff, mentioned to me that he makes hunting videos to show his potential clients what kind of dogs they would get if they were to buy one of his puppies. He shows the parents of those puppies in hunting situations. The videos have been a huge success.

Since Dave had all the equipment, the ability to edit a finished product and was an accomplished fisherman in his own right, it just seemed logical for Dave and I to collaborate and put together our first, of hopefully many, how-to fishing videos.

I didn't want this video full of sponsor's ads and I wanted a homespun look to it. The video has just me and Dave talking about spring crappie fishing patterns and of course, catching a ton of fish.

I mention some tackle companies that I use and believe in. I have traveled to many lakes all over the Midwest and these baits work for me wherever I go.

The DVD was filmed on Lake Shelbyville in May of 2008. This is my home lake that I have been a guide on for fifteen years now. I have had a lot of success there and at other lakes in Crappie U.S.A. and Crappie Masters tourneys. I won both the qualifiers on Shelbyville this spring. First was the Bass Pro Crappie Masters then just a couple weeks later, I backed it up with the Crappie U.S.A. semi-pro win.

I go into extreme detail on how to crappie fish, how to interpret your electronics and equipment to use and everyone that has seen the video has liked it. They are all e-mailing me and trying to guess where on the lake it was filmed. Of course nobody has figured it out yet. I am glad because these spots are some of my best spots on the main lake.

Before the winter fishing shows get here, I am planning on doing a white bass/buffalo summer video and a fall/winter crappie video on Lake Shelbyville and lastly, a winter ledge crappie video down at Kentucky Lake at Paris Landing.

This summer has got to be a strange one for me. I had more guide trips lined up for the white bass/buffalo deep ledge fishing than I have ever had. I had trips booked solid for two months in advance then the rain hit and boy did it ever.

We got fifteen inches of rain in less than ten days and this fell into the same time frame that Iowa got flooded as well. Since we are an Army Corp of Engineer flood control lake and the Mississippi River sure had a ton of problems, they decided to hold back the water at Shelbyville. The lake came up fifteen feet. The bathrooms at Wilborn and at Ninth Street boat ramps had water four feet up on the doors. The weigh in sight for the Crappie U.S.A. tourney had water higher than the picnic tables. All my ledge spots had forty to fifty feet of water on them and since our thermocline usually runs around eighteen feet, there just isn't any oxygen in fifty feet of water. Hence all my normal summer patterns could just be thrown out the window. The fish could just hide anywhere and were spread out everywhere. We had willows in fifteen feet of water and you could just go right into the woods and still be in deep enough water to fish.

As soon as it looked like I could get on some fish, as the lake had fallen about four feet and, boom, we get hit again, back up to fifteen feet over summer pool. I went down a ton of times on my own looking for anything that would translate over into a good guided trip and it just wasn't to be. I could get a few white bass while they were up on the surface at daylight but once that quit they would bury themselves into the flooded willows and would not come back out until just before dark. I was used to just hammering the fish out on the river channel ledges in the middle of

the day and really couldn't ask a client to commit to a trip that would probably only have about sixty minutes of good action twice a day.

I decide to just bite the bullet and cancel all my trips for mid June, all of July, and so far all of August. Hopefully I can get on some fish about mid-month in August. Anyway the total of lost guide trips has climbed to 47 and if that were my total means of financial support I would be hurting. Guiding is my part-time passion and I will not guide if I am not on fish. Keeping my regulars happy and making new clients are important to me and this summer would not be a good one for repeat business. Many thousands of dollars is a ton of income to lose but my clientele is more important. So I will just bite the bullet on this one.