

May On Shelbyville You Need A Two Pronged Attack

By Steve Welch

I have been crappie fishing now for almost three months. I have seen the winter cold water bite, the warm with the sun suspended fish bite, the pre-spawn and a big portion of the spawn but on May 15th I switch it up and start walleye fishing. I continue fishing for them until late June. But I use a twist that gets you both walleye and crappie on the same rig.

Once we start seeing 55 degree overnight temps you won't lose the water temps you had the day before. We need 62-68 surface temps for the actual spawn of both crappie and bass.

In April you are in the pre-spawn mode and every morning you see the water temps drop about five or six degrees and this backs up the females into deep water and they just suspend waiting on the water to warm.

We use a twelve-foot BnM BGJP with an ultra-light spinning reel and one of my 3/32oz. Deep Ledge Jigs and either a Midsouth tube a 702gl, orange and chartreuse glow, 800gl, chartreuse glow, or if water is really stained a 902gl, brown and chartreuse glow, 202gl, dark red and chartreuse glow. I also use my new BrushPile plastics the Brush Chub in Electric Chicken, Disco Purple or Reverse Green Bean.

We all three set on the nose of my boat and just dip them around on the crappie beds. I have modified my boat to allow three pedestal seats on the nose of the boat.

We also use a slip bobber and minnow approach to stay even further back from the bed and especially if I have three clients for the day. The spawn on this huge lake lasts for several weeks since the south end of this lake is very deep and clear and warms much slower than the north end which I call north end the Findlay Bridge on north all the way up into the feeder rivers.

Once we hit 70 degree water surface temps the shad start to spawn and this triggers both the walleye and white bass to start feeding up on the huge flats that this lake has. I always look for them early in the morning on the boat ramp feeding on moss.

I then change my boat over to a walleye fishing machine. I have a Yar-Craft 2095BTX tiller boat so we can use the whole length of the boat to put on rod holders and arrange seats to allow us to troll.

I have modified the traditional spinner rig to allow us to pull them through stumps and tree tops. Cover water just plain catches more walleye. So pulling spinners is just more efficient than casting blade baits or jigs and twisters.

I use line counter reels to take the guess work out of how deep you are running the rig. We always use 1 1/2oz. bottom bouncers so I have a speed and depth chart built over the last few years. For instance if you are going 1mph to get fifteen feet deep you need to have out twenty-three feet of line.

I make my own spinner rigs which are made from fifteen-pound fluorocarbon line so they don't break as easy. I use small number four spinner blades in both Indiana and Willow shapes. The Indiana runs closer to the main line and does not flash as much and the willows flashes much more.

The colors I like are chrome, chrome and blue, orange and chartreuse, and my favorite white and pink. We add a few beads for contrast and then a number four circle hook. You need to tie these with a Snell knot to keep the hook in line and slightly tipped up.

Like I said we just cover water so a 36 volt trolling motor is a must to do this for eight hours. I have worked hard to put on hundreds if not thousands of waypoints on just a single stump out on the edge of a flat or a group of stumps on the top of the flat. We then troll be them in several different angles to entice that hungry walleye or sauger to eat. I also keep an eye out for wind increase or change of direction. These same spots that did not produce an hour ago will now have fish on them. Very different from crappie fishing. Whereas you just go to their brush pile fish it and leave it alone the rest of the day waiting on it to reload for the next day.

Here is what I have discovered basically due to high water situations. You can pull these spinner rigs right through standing timber and catch post-spawn crappie on them as well. I always use minnows on these rigs over crawlers. The trade-off is crappie over drum and yellow bass.

I am working on my own line of spinner rigs to start selling on my on-line store so keep your eyes peeled. These guide trips are the hardest to get and have been booked solid for several months. Folks love to pull these spinner rigs and just catch everything on them. Everyone can do it with little fishing skills.

I am currently booked until July but don't wait to get in on the summer crappie fishing which starts mid-July and runs through end of September. The thermocline starts this whole pattern so we need water temps in the eighties. I would not wait to get a date booked. Lake Shelbyville is by far the best summer crappie fishing lake in the state due to its depth and width to allow a breeze to help move the slip bobbers. We limit out day after day for several weeks.

Just go to my website at www.LakeShelbyvilleGuide.Com for my current openings and shoot me an e-mail or just call me at 217-762-7257.