

Trolling For Walleye, White Bass Busts As Well

By Steve Welch

Early in the month we do a little something different than any other guide on the lake. I do this for the last half of May and about all of June. That is pull bottom bouncers and spinners on line counter reels. We use minnows over crawlers simply because I can get you your limit of post spawn crappie while walleye fishing.

My clients love it just sit there and hold the rod and reel in the fish, pretty simple but it takes a ton of waypoints on stumps located on edges of flats and the knowledge of how deep your baits run so you can pull those spinners right through standing timber.

No other guide on the lake does it because first you must have a 36 volt trolling motor to pull at the speeds we use all day long and secondly I am the only guide on the lake that fishes from something other than a bass boat. Bass boats and I have owned many of them are nothing but good casting platforms. I now have a walleye boat a YarCraft 2095BTX backtroller with a 200 hp. Mercury tiller.

This boat has a trolling motor on both the front and rear and the room to set four of us in seats and pull the spinners through just about anything. I have rod holders to put your rod in to help land a big walleye and with the line counters we can get our lines set perfect so we don't snag each other.

I make my own spinner rigs from 15lb. fluorocarbon and make them much shorter in length so we can pull them across stumps and not get hung up on them. Blades are number three and four in both willow and Indiana. Colors I use are white and pink, chrome and blue, hammered chrome or anything close to those colors. I put four or five beads on the spinners and a circle hook.

This system works because the crappie are in post spawn and feeding up to recover from a long spawning period. They are out in deep water suspended under schools of bait, walleye are with them as are white bass. The sauger are buried under stumps on flats. This takes a ton of waypoints by doing your homework over many years.

These trips are my most popular and booked six months or more in advance. Walleye in Illinois that isn't heard of. Actually Lake Shelbyville is by far the best walleye/sauger fishery in our state. They put in over 350,000 each year of six-inch fingerlings and nearly that many fry.

For the most part you can expect to catch your limit of 15-26-inch fish with an occasional 28 or 29. These run from 2lbs to 9lbs. Our limit is six fish fourteen or bigger of walleye/sauger combo and fifteen crappie with a limit of ten over ten-inches and five under ten-inches.

You can catch these fish by casting and that is what most do but you cover more water pulling spinners and at the end of the day the results speak for themselves.

About mid-June the white bass have left the river and are chasing shad all over the north end of the lake. They push the shad to the top and catch them on my in-line spinners or my Candystripers. These busts are awesome and you can put yourself in a school of an acre or more and catch two on every cast. We watch for both the seagulls and the blue herons hovering over them and bounce from spot to spot.

We also use points and ledges that whites push the bait up against and we fish my Candystripers and fish them like a jigging spoon. The Candystripers are a tailspinner like lure similar to the Little George but I put a much better in-line blade on it and that has made all the difference.

Fishing for white bass is about my favorite thing to do, tons of action and a great fight and no limit. We usually clean a hundred or more day and it does not take long to get them.

I follow the whites all summer, but it is June that is my favorite you have to see the thousand fish busts that we have.