

Aggressive Tactics With A Subtle Twist

BY DENNIS FOSTER

As we progress into summer with the resulting warmer air and water temperatures, our previously quite predictable walleye'd friends become increasingly difficult to pattern. This is due to the fact that they have completed their spawning rituals and have gobbled up most everything edible in the nearby areas, and are now on the move to greener pastures.

They can literally be found most anywhere as their metabolism is at its yearly peak, with eating becoming their overriding priority. With the food chain in full swing with newly hatched minnows, panfish, and insects emerging in unimaginable numbers, this means that the walleye have a lot to choose from and different groups of them can be utilizing the many options available, all at the same time. They tend to be loosely scattered, making our job of finding catchable numbers much more difficult.

But, if we are to accept the conditions we are facing and employ tactics that allow us to stay in contact with them, consistent fishing can be had. To do so, we need to take an active approach and do things that cover a lot of water in a quick, yet disciplined manner. We will want to focus on general areas in which we feel there is a decent population of fish and then decide on the best methods of enticing these fish.

Pulling crankbaits or powering spinners through these areas are probably the first things that come to mind and are without a doubt some of your better

options. These tactics can work either shallow or deep, but are ideally suited for the deeper side of things, say 12 feet and out. I will outline a method you may want to consider for targeting fish that are from this point on in shallower. As a rule, fish in shallower water are much more active and therefore the methods I will describe offer a heck of a lot more in the way of fun than just dragging stuff around, waiting for a bite. This is akin to bass fishing with a second option of presenting a more traditional walleye fisherman's live bait fare.

What I am referring to is taking a very aggressive crankbait casting approach. Using your electric motor, simply move along in the 1.5 mph range and cast very quickly with fast retrieves so as to completely pepper any likely looking spots. With two anglers, you can cover structure, such as a broad shallow point, from about every angle imaginable in no time at all. Subtle is not what we are looking for, so high action baits, such as Reef Runners, several varieties of jointed baits, and even lipless rattling crankbaits are desirable to aggravate the most belligerent fish in the area to reacting with an instant and vicious bite.

For those fish that refuse to give in so easily, we can deploy a dead-stick method of dragging live bait in a subtle and seductive manner to cover the exact same ground while we are casting. Simply pinch on a small split shot directly ahead of a snap swivel and leader with a float and a feather light Mack's Lure Smile Blade baited with either leeches or



Another typically aggressive, shallow water, summer walleye falls prey to a cast crankbait.

'crawlers. I prefer to use a long soft rod, such as St.Croix's eight-foot Slip Stick left in the rod holder for this purpose and let the fish hang themselves. Once the rod loads up, simply reel 'em in.

This lets you give the fish two distinctly different options from which to choose, thus allowing yourself to be twice as efficient, and ultimately, as deadly as possible.

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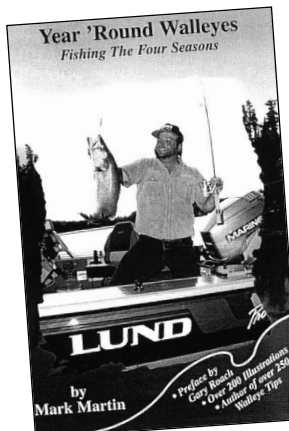
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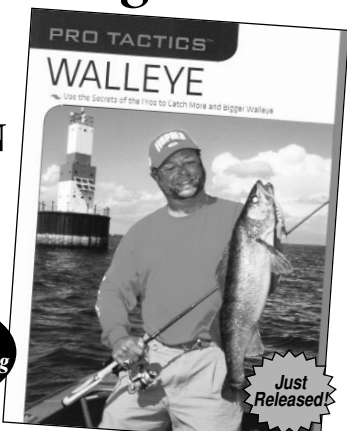
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