

## Bridge the Gap

Most Walleye enthusiasts are well aware of Bottom Bouncers and a Spinner or Plain Snell coupled with Livebait, as a staple presentation. As effective they are, there has always been a gap between the two.

Both are highly speed dependant. The Plain Snell is best used at extremely slow speeds; picking apart the nooks and crannies of structure. The snails pace we present this at, allows our livebait to do its' thing: Writhe and wiggle in a seductive manner, tempting fish that are in a neutral to negative feeding mood. Increase the velocity, and you negate the whole effect.

When we desire a bit more action, the Spinner comes into play. The flash and thump the blade creates, is exactly what we want when targeting fish that are more aggressively feeding and scattered. The increased tempo lets us cover more ground and contact more fish. If we slow this setup down much below 1 mph, we run into problems with the whole rig falling to the bottom and becoming more of a dredge than a lure.

We need a choice that allows us to benefit from both scenarios. Macks Lures has the solution in its' unique Smile Blade. What it consists of is a nearly paper thin, lightweight Mylar Blade, with a Delta Wing shape. This will easily turn and provide attraction at ¼ mph, as well as the capability to go 2mph plus, without spinning out of control or losing appeal. The beauty of this attractor is that we can effortlessly fine tune the package. By using a wide blade angle and subjecting it to more water resistance, you create an undulating slow spin. Alternately, by narrowing it and picking it up a notch, we now have a flashy tight spin and shake. Thus, we can go from slow and methodical to quick and efficient, in a heartbeat.

The Smile Blade comes in a wide variety of colors and sizes. The size selection is the most important to note: Depending on conditions, a small diminutive profile may be great one day while large and gaudy is the rule the next. You can get them from a minute .08 inches, all the way up to an ostentatious 1.9 inches. The smaller sizes make for a great Panfish offering, particularly when dressed with a tiny leech or portion of crawler threaded on the hook.

You can find prettied packages or bulk components at your Local Bait Shop, Cabela's, or by visiting [www.mackslure.com](http://www.mackslure.com). I prefer to tie my own and customize them to what I feel the fish will want on any given day. A typical rig will incorporate a 6 foot section of mono, the Smile Blade, an inline float, a bead or two, and premium hooks.

A soft, supple line in the 8lb range works best. Anything heavier or stiffer dulls the inherent action we are seeking. The float not only serves to add buoyancy but adds a dash of color, bulk and profile. This along with beads of a contrasting hue, helps to round out the package nicely.

The choice of Smile Blade is dependant on the size and mood of the fish you are aiming for. I tend to start on the smaller side when working lethargic fish tucked tightly onto structure and opt for the larger models when looking for larger, more active fish in open stretches. The hook you choose is the most important and overlooked part of the equation. Gamakatsu's Walleye Wide Bend is a great bait hook that penetrates and holds well every time.

Give it a spin, literally, and let me know what you think.

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