

Deep Reservoir Walleyes

I am going to relate to you a system for targeting summertime Walleye in water that is unfamiliar to most anglers. These are fish that are found in the depths far from shore and not relating to structure, but to baitfish. In many large western impoundments Smelt are typically the main forage, with a growing emphasis on Shad and Herring.

These are fish that are largely untouched. The exception being Tournament Fisherman who have been exploiting them with increasing success over the last decade. They are totally separate from their shoreline related counterparts and quite often are more conducive to biting. This owes to the fact that they have not been highly pressured and picked over since ice out. An added bonus is that they tend to be mature fish that on average run much larger.

It is well documented that there are numerous big fish suspended out in the middle of nowhere. The first problem we encounter is how to consistently find them. A good place begin your search is directly adjacent to known shoreline producing areas. Surveying likely locations with top quality electronics (run of the mill units just don't cut it in this application) help us to find all the ingredients necessary for success. Namely: Thermocline, Baitfish, and Walleyes. I rely on my color Raymarine E Series to define the Thermocline as a thin blue line extending straight to the first major shoreline break. Directly above this is where you will find the large pods of bait and subsequently Walleyes.

Once we have found the fish, the next part of the puzzle we need to solve is what presentation will prove to be most effective in enticing them to bite. This is a numbers game and contacting countless fish with your baits running at the proper depth is key to success. This is best accomplished by precision trolling, specifically with line counter reels. This allows us to intelligently place our offerings exactly where we want them. Once a productive combination of lures and amount of line out is established we can easily return them there and capitalize.

The only remaining pieces to the puzzle are how do we get our lures down deep enough (generally 25 foot plus) and what speed to pull them at. The speed part of the equation is fairly simple. It is hard to beat going a standard 2 mph, give or take a little. There are times when bumping it up to 3 mph or better can trigger more action, but this is best left as a refinement once all the other variables are in place.

Achieving the depth needed from our lures is the task many fisherman find most daunting. It doesn't have to be, as we have many tools at our disposal. Leadcore Line, Diving Planers, Inline and Snap Weights immediately come to mind.

For those of you just beginning to explore this presentation option, I would recommend starting out with 10lb. Fireline and deep diving plugs. The combination of the thin diameter line and large diving bills found on this style lure will help you to reach down to 40 feet without the aid of other devices.

Reef Runner has several options that excel for this function. They were designed on the shores of Lake Erie specifically for the suspended deep basin fish of the Great Lakes and perform well anywhere Walleyes are to be found. Their Deep Diver and Deep Little Ripper are fine Smelt imitations with the Ripshad series more closely resembling the growing Shad base many reservoirs

now have.

DENNIS FOSTER
16 2ND AVENUE
MELLETTTE, SD 57461
USA

PHONE: 605 - 887-3451
CELLULAR: 605 - 450-1069
E-MAIL: dennis@nvc.net
WEBSITE: www.eyetimepromotions.com