

Fall Back to Quieter Times

As we put the month of September behind us; too many of us consider this to be the final chapter of another open water fishing season. As most of us have strong interests in several forms of outdoor activities, such as hunting...fishing often takes a backseat to preparations for the upcoming seasons.

I anticipate what awaits us with as much enthusiasm as any of you, but please consider what you may be missing. As far as fishing from a boat is concerned, early fall outings may very well be the most enjoyable of the entire year. Several components factor into this. One of the most important is that you are not constantly confronted with the annoyance of your more recreational types...you already know to whom I am referring.

Rarely will you find the sixteen year old jet skiing daredevil with an X-Games mentality to rip up your favorite spots, nor will you have to put up with the boat wakes created by water-skiers who evidently find the water where you are fishing to be vastly preferable to the wide open and un-occupied spaces where they could practice their maneuvers in a relatively harmless manner. Call me greedy if you want, but all I ask for is that just a minute fraction of the lake that I intend on using...be absent of all this commotion.

Can be downright peaceful in early fall, as about all you can expect to see are a few laid back anglers like yourself enjoying some of the simpler and less chaotic pleasures our lakes have to offer. Now that the pressure is off, you'll find fish of all species (particularly walleye) to be much more responsive to your offerings as well. The Dog Days are behind us and the fish are just starting to enter a more aggressive feeding mode that only intensifies and leads right up through early ice.

Comfort is also at a premium as we enter a period where extreme heat or cold is rare. Kind of like Goldilocks...we have found something just to our liking. The fish too; walleyes tend to respond in a favorable manner with weather patterns being more stable, thus allowing for more predictable and consistent fish location. Once we have found these fish, it generally doesn't take long to put a presentational pattern together (several can and do work simultaneously) to catch them. You'll find that once you establish a pattern-it will remain productive for some time, with little to no tweaking necessary.

Presentations can be characterized by the old phrase, "Bigger is Better", as size does matter. Although there can be exceptions, this is an adage that holds true in nearly every case during this time period. This pertains to artificial's and live bait alike. These fish are keying on various species of minnows and young of the year panfish that have reached a substantial size-your offerings should offer the same enhanced profile. Great time to take a shot at some trophy sized fish...big baits do indeed equal big fish.

Running larger cranks such as ReefRunner's new 900 series may be in order. With

spinners, going to a size 5 dual vented blade that creates added disturbance such as JB Lures Ventilator blades can work wonders. Heavier jigs bulked up with scented plastics like Gulp! and Powerbait are always good. And let's not forget considerably sized live bait, oversized chubs can't be beat for huge fish.

Do yourself a favor this year and commit to some late season forays before the primal urge to hunt becomes overwhelming, and fishing becomes just a passing thought.