

Ice Fishing In The New Millennium

If you haven't kept up with the latest innovations, I think you'll be truly amazed at just how comfortable and enjoyable this sport can be. The days of being hunched over a five gallon pail, hoping to catch a fish, before frost bite sets in are long gone.

We now have power augers that quickly cut holes, clothing that is light and incredibly warm, electronics that allow us to find fish and actually view them if we wish and hand held GPS units to guide us back to our favorite spots or help us off the ice when snow or fog sets in. Once we find the fish we have sensitive graphite rods and smooth little reels rigged with lures that glow, to entice and land our quarry. The real beauty of all of this is we can use portable shacks equipped with portable heaters that deploy with a flick of the wrist to serve as our boat on the ice. All of our gear is stored neatly inside, ready to be employed at a moments notice. Hook the shack to an ATV and you have supreme mobility.

I'm going to list what I feel to be the more essential tools and briefly explain each.

Portable shacks: The Fish Trap from Clam has literally revolutionized ice fishing by allowing us to be as mobile as we are in open water and affording us the utmost in comfort. Accept no imitations. Fish Trap's are continually evolving with enhancements that are cutting edge.

Electronics: The most important item in your arsenal will be a three color flasher. Namely, a Vexilar FL8, or its improved cousin the FL-18. These are used to quickly discern the lake for structure, bottom composition and the presence of fish. We can even do this without ever drilling a hole. When fishing they are used to alert us when fish are near and with a little experience we can judge the fish's attitude and adjust our presentation accordingly. Next on the list would be an Aqua Vu. Today's models are quite easy to use and are a great for viewing the fish and their reactions to our baits. Once you have the above two items, a hand held GPS is a handy little device that will serve you well. Lots of good units out there and most are at a very affordable price.

Augers: The latest generation of power augers are so reliable, light and fast cutting that they make what used to be a chore, almost fun. There is a wide selection to choose from. I prefer the Lazer Mag Ultra 9 inch from Strikemaster.

Rods and Reels: Just a few years ago, a quality graphite jigging rod could not be obtained, unless you were to have one custom built. We now have the Genz series of rods that cover every application you will encounter. Coupled with a small reel from Abu Garcia or Mitchell they are an absolute joy to use.

Lures: There has been a virtual explosion of effective lures, many of which now glow in the dark. This feature is always a positive and I fish them exclusively. One particular offering that I will be using a great deal of this season is the Cobra Panfish jig from Bait Rigs.

Tip Ups: There are numerous options. I've used them all and have come to rely on the magnetic Pop Up style from HT Enterprises.

DENNIS FOSTER
16 2ND AVENUE
MELLETTTE, SD 57461
TUSA

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