

In-Line Attractors

With all of the uncertainties of early Spring (unpredictable weather, spawning, baitfish runs, etc.) behind us, we can now concentrate on putting some firm and relatively reliable late Spring and early Summer patterns together as walleye's will become much more responsive and begin to feed in earnest.

This being said, it is no longer necessary to employ the dainty little tactics that are so common early in the open water season. If there is one mis-conception that the majority of walleye anglers will cling to like their mother's breast, it's that walleye's are shy, timid creatures, responding only to small offerings...examined in great detail. Absolutely nothing could be further from the truth. Walleye's are a top of the line predator in all of the waters they inhabit. Just make a few very simple observations and you can easily discern this. They have enormous eyes capable of giving them a distinct advantage over prey in any light conditions-particularly low light. Add a streamlined body built for speed, with a relatively large mouth containing plenty of sharp teeth, and you cannot tell me that an animal such as this will not run down and attack anything it perceives to be a substantial meal.

This is key knowledge if we are looking to consistently catch mature (big) walleyes. More often than not, anglers go completely backwards in selecting baits; feeling that if a standard sized bait is being ignored, they need to downsize. It's probably being ignored because there is not enough reward in the form of calories for the effort expended. No sense settling for a snack...when a meals awaits. These fish have survived several seasons and grown large because of their efficient nature...take note of this.

The use of large crank baits or spinners-beefed up with oversize blades and beads is a step in the right direction. But we can go even further and use a system that will enhance the overall profile and thus appeal of any bait. That being inline attractors. Think of flashers or dodgers used by salmon and trout trollers, only on a bit smaller scale. We are looking to create the appearance of either a school of bait and or said bait being chased by our lure. Either way, this trips some irresistible biological feeding cues that even inactive fish will react to.

There are two systems that although somewhat different in concept, nonetheless achieve the same results. The first is the Hot Wings manufactured by Mack's Lure® www.mackslure.com. It consists of 2 thin, counter rotating mylar blades producing 360 degrees of flash in a 4 inch package. We all know just how proven spinning flash can be to all fish...this just intensifies it.

The second is the Teaser Leader from LaDredge Outdoors www.ladredgeoutdoors.com. It's attractiveness is created by a squid type approach employing 3 skirts that when trolled are about 1 1/2 inches in diameter with an overall profile of 8 inches. A somewhat beefier proposition that will shine on days when the fish don't prefer flash, but still respond to an oversized presentation.

With both systems, just snap your lure or spinner into the back of the attractor and fish it in your normal manner. Please note that neither are speed dependant, nor will they greatly affect running depth. In fact, I plan on running the Teaser Leader in front of the Hot Wings this season for a smorgasbord of triggering cues. If you are looking add some unique techniques to your bag of tricks this season, employing tactics such as these will put you well on your way.