

Rub a Dub Chub

A large, lively chub is by far, my favorite of all live-bait options for Walleyes. It's true, big bait does equal big fish. If they were readily available during the summer months, and easier to keep alive: I can guarantee you that my boat would never leave the trailer without them.

Once we enter the Fall period, keeping them healthy is no longer a problem and we have no excuse for not using them. Keeps things very simple...throw in a couple dozen, a quality live-bait rod, some pre-rigged snells, and you're good to go.

I'll give you some tips on selecting your chubs: If you can find them, Creek Chubs are the absolute best you can get. They're tough and will stay super-active on the hook all day long. They actually seem to irritate the fish into biting. If not available, the second choice would be a wild shiner. These aren't the dainty and fragile little pond raised models, but rather, the darker and friskier ones that are trapped. There is a huge difference and I would personally avoid the domesticated type. The third and most commonly found choice are Sucker Chubs. A pretty good bait, as long as you're conscious about replacing them often, as they tire easily and become listless on the hook.

As we fishing sizeable baits; the best way to present them is by using a slip sinker rig. I typically start out with a Lindy style sinker and if snags become a problem, then switch to a Pencil style slip bouncer. Always fish with your bail open and when you feel a pick up, release line to the fish and let them have it for at least 20 to 30 seconds. This lets them get the bait positioned in their mouth sufficiently for you to set the hook.

The most important part of this system is having a good leader setup. Once you have the fish located, an attractive leader, and lively bait...your odds of tying into a good fish are very high. I tie all of my own leaders and have come up the following combination of components.

I begin with a 6 foot section of a quality mono with supple characteristics such as 8 pound Berkley XL. This will allow the chub to move freely and in turn, be much more seductive. For the hook, a number 2 Gamakatsu Walleye Wide Bend, is snelled on. I choose this particular hook not only for Gamakatsu's well known reputation for sticky sharpness, but also for its design. It has a unique bend which creates a much larger hook gap. This is extremely important when using big baits. The large gap gives you a lot more "bite" than a conventional hook provides. Thus, ensuring a nearly 100 percent hooking ratio. After all, our goal is to convert bites into hooked fish.

Directly above the hook I like to place either a Glow Bead or a Rattling Floating Bead. This helps to serve two purposes. As an additional attractor and to act as a spacer, for the jewel of the presentation: Mack's Lure Smile Blade.

The Smile Blade is a unique, nearly paper thin mylar blade, with a delta wing shape. This gives it the ability to turn, and therefore attract, at speeds in a range from one quarter mph all the way up to two mph. The slower end of the spectrum is the key. We want to give the chub every opportunity to do its deadly dance and not quickly drag it by.

Give this a try. I think you'll appreciate the results.

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