

Stationary Mobility

This statement just doesn't make sense, on the surface. Particularly coming from a guy who is deeply committed to aggressive tactics while on the ice. I'm an Ice Team "Powerstick" and will tout the virtues of Dave Genz's proven philosophy of mobility on hard water as long as anyone will listen. Except when that big orange ball in the west starts lowering itself to near tree top level and I've had my fill of Perch. I go into a totally different mindset. No, I don't totally abandon mobility. I do it under control on one predetermined spot, and yes, with tip ups. You guessed it. I'm after some easy prime time Walleye's.

The system I employ for this is straightforward, simple, and very effective. All you need is a good spot, a Fish Trap, tip ups, chubs, and a bare minimum of effort. If you stick to this plan you will consistently ice Walleye's in any variety of waters with amazing consistency.

Your Spot

It's important to have your location picked out in advance. This can be accomplished through advanced scouting, detailed map study, and just plain old good information or going to known producers. The first thing I look for is sharp breaking structure with quick access to deep water. Keep in mind, deep is relative to the lake or section of a lake you are fishing. Bottom content change, the presence of rock, or weeds/wood are all an added bonus. During winter Walleye's will typically hold in the basin during daylight hours and make a pronounced movement into the shallows to feed during lowlight conditions. You can truly set your watch by this. These fish are heading in for one reason only, that's to feed. By getting set up right and using sound tactics these can be the easiest fish you will catch, in any season.

Fish Trap

To keep up with the fish during their progression you'll need to make small preconceived moves both quickly and quietly. Fish Trap portable shelters are just what the doctor ordered. Have all of your holes drilled long before sunset/sunrise. My approach is to pop two holes for my Fish Trap at five or six depths up the break from deep to super shallow. On most of the lakes I fish in Northeast SD this usually starts out around 20 feet and ends up as shallow as 5 or 6 feet. Start jigging at the deep station and slide shallower as the sun dips. Pre set tip ups are a great indicator of where the fish are and when to move. If you're in twenty feet and haven't had a hit or any activity on your Vexilar for a few minutes and a tip up goes off in fifteen feet, Move, **Move Now!**

Let your buddy take the tip up fish and you slide the Trap into the same depth range (your predrilled holes) and start jigging. Do so aggressively, now is not the time to be passive, finesse is your last option in this situation. In my opinion nothing beats a Berkley Genz series rod spooled with Fireline and a rattling type of glow spoon tipped with a minnow head for this. Don't be afraid to really work the bait and bounce the jig to utilize the fish calling sound it will produce. Continue this pattern all the way in to your shallowest station. You can also let your tip ups guide you back into the depths as the fish disperse. If you are willing to make the moves this system will not fail you.

Tip Ups

With the recent wave of enthusiasm, (and deservedly so), for taking an Ice Team approach to mobile fishing, tip ups are a vastly overlooked tool for putting Walleye's on the snowy side of the ice. I consider myself to be as good as anyone out there with a jig, but there are times when stationary bait is all that works. Don't be stubborn. Give the fish what they want. Stationary bait will catch fish in any activity level from lethargic to super aggressive. Leave the pride in your jigging ability to tales you can astonish your friends with over beverages. By the educated use of tip ups you'll have the proof, *fish*, that is more likely to impress them, beverages or not. Simple deal, place the tip ups from deep to shallow, with your bait of choice six inches to a couple of feet off bottom. Start jigging and they'll do the rest.

Chubs

Chubs are by far my favorite stationary bait. Large profile, with lots of commotion to call fish from a distance. I don't want a lot of hits, dink fish, perch, whatever. They are placed out for the specific purpose of attracting the larger female Walleye's. About 6 inches are perfect, if you have some eight to ten inches go ahead and put a couple out. Bigger is better is a phrase that doesn't have to be solely confined to the feminine ranks of *our* Species. Type? Hands down Creek Chubs are my number 1 go to bait. There's nothing better in my or the Walleye's eyes. If you can find a good supply take advantage of it, and while you're at it, send some my way. Can't find em? Sucker Chubs, while not near as pretty, can and do work. Do what you have to at closing time, right? Place your weight ten or twelve inches above a #2 Gamakatsu hook and dorsal or reverse hook them and you're all set.

A Little Effort

It takes very little exertion to put the previously mentioned steps into action. Do so, and you will be well rewarded. *If you must sit in one spot:* Telling your local bartender how great an angler you are or on the couch gaining weight next to your significant other is the place for you. Get out, get active (while under control), and catch some fish. Believe me, everyone involved will be glad you did.

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