

Knowledge Is The Key To Fishing Success

by BUCK PERRY

Part V

"This one makes my limit", said Bill, as another big bass took his fast walking lure.

"Just hold a second and I'll get mine", I replied as I made the cast.

As we strung the ten flopping bass which had been thrown to the bottom of the boat, we could hear comments from fishermen in nearby boats who had gathered around to witness the fast and furious action we were experiencing.

"I see those fish being caught, but I still don't believe it!" "Did you get a good look at the lures they're using?"

Another fishermen and his buddy was concerned about the area which produced the nice catch. "I don't see why they expected to catch fish

in this particular area. The shoreline looks mighty bare and I don't see anything that says this is a good spot." His buddy acknowledged that. "I've worked this area some, but I never caught a fish."

"Did you see how fast they were retrieving? They didn't even take time to string their fish, just tossed them to the bottom of the boat", exclaimed another. "I've seen fish caught pretty fast, but never before have I seen two coming at the same time on practically every cast."

"Yeah", said his partner, "and to think we've worked all the good areas along the shoreline since early morning using everything in our tackle box, even worked the bottom with jigs, worms, lizards — you name

it, we used it — and we haven't got a fish."

Such were the comments Bill and I heard then and later at the dock where quite a crowd gathered to see our limit of big bass.

We had come to fish this particular reservoir in mid-summer. We knew that most likely we would have the lake pretty much to ourselves. Water skiers and big pleasure boats were at a minimum and we knew that most fishermen vacated the water during the hot summer weather.

The first day we did have the lake mostly to ourselves, but as the word spread that big bass were "biting", the fishing boats became increasingly more abundant, all bent on catching a braggin' size limit catch. Needless to say, they found the action slow and the pickings lean.

Without listing them in order of importance, there were several reasons why we were able to take lunker fish while the local fishermen were drawing a blank.

One of the reasons for our success was that we used summer fishing tactics. Summer fishing can be quite different from early spring fishing when most of these local fishermen had their "luck".

During the hot weather-warm water periods the larger fish school more tightly in deep water with fewer "stragglers" in the shallows; the fish do not move or migrate constantly nor consistently, but when they do move on structure, they come in bigger groups, have great vim and vigor, move faster and are highly



A two man limit of big bass. That's Buck Perry on the right and his friend Bill on the left. Some day when you're flying United Air Lines you may meet Bill, he's a jet captain. Of course, he's also a fine fisherman ... and with Perry for a guide ... need we say more?

competitive. So, the fisherman must change his fishing tactics accordingly.

The jump-type lures we saw being used at the time, which were productive during the earlier part of the season, failed because they were not suitable to give the SPEED and DEPTH control necessary for that particular weather and water condition. The lures had to be such so that a fast retrieve could be maintained, but, at the same time, proper depth retained. And in this case, that was directly on the bottom in the form of a fast walking, bumping or digging lure.

When a group of big bass move up on structure, speed control must be kept during the entire action. This means BEFORE the strike, and AFTER the fish is hooked. A hooked fish should never be messed around with. The entire group must be kept in a competitive spirit, or in a sort of frenzy, and the speed control of the fisherman, as he presents his lure and his handling of the hooked fish, is the only control that is available. There is only a *short* time to make the catch, as the fish are normally up on the structure for a matter of minutes rather than hours. At times, it's wise not to even take time to string the fish while the action lasts, but wait until it's all over.

There was really no mystery to our selection of that particular spot in the reservoir. Knowledge, plus our preliminary observations and work had told us why it should be, and was, productive. Most of today's fishermen have heard of Structure and have a pretty good idea of what it means, but very few have any great degree of knowledge as to why one structure or "bar", as it was in this case, is productive while others in the area appear to be much better, but produce no fish.

EDITOR'S NOTE: If you haven't already read Page 1 of this issue, "Fishing Talk — Our Language Of Structure Fishing", please read it now so that you can fully understand what Buck Perry is talking about in this article. In particular, study the meaning of the word "Breakline".

Our initial check of this structure produced no fish. But we knew it had all of the needed ingredients to be productive when a movement occurred. Our *interpretation* of weather

and water conditions left no doubt that there would be a movement. We anchored our boat in the *correct* casting position and *waited* for the show to begin. A little less than two hours after positioning our boat, the fun began!

Figures No. 1 and 2 show the condition of *most* of the "bars" found along the shoreline in the area that we were fishing. However, Figures "A" and "B" show the condition of the bar that Bill and I found and *where we were taking our fish*, although the shoreline gave little indication that such a structure existed in that particular area!

As previously stated, a structure must extend ALL the way to the deepest water in the area. The structure must be immediately visible as movement from deep water occurs, and it must have immediate access to deep water. Structure provides the road or path for migration to occur on, while the deep water gives fish an immediate escape route. These are musts for structure to be productive. This cannot be repeated too many times, it is a basic fundamental fact!

In Figures Nos. 1 and 2 you will note that the breakline of the bar, or structure, does not go all the way to

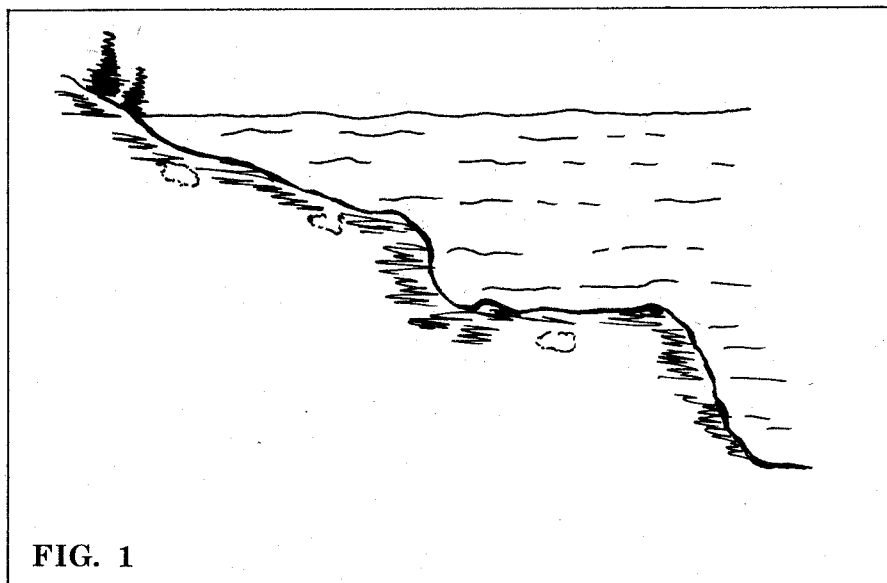


FIG. 1

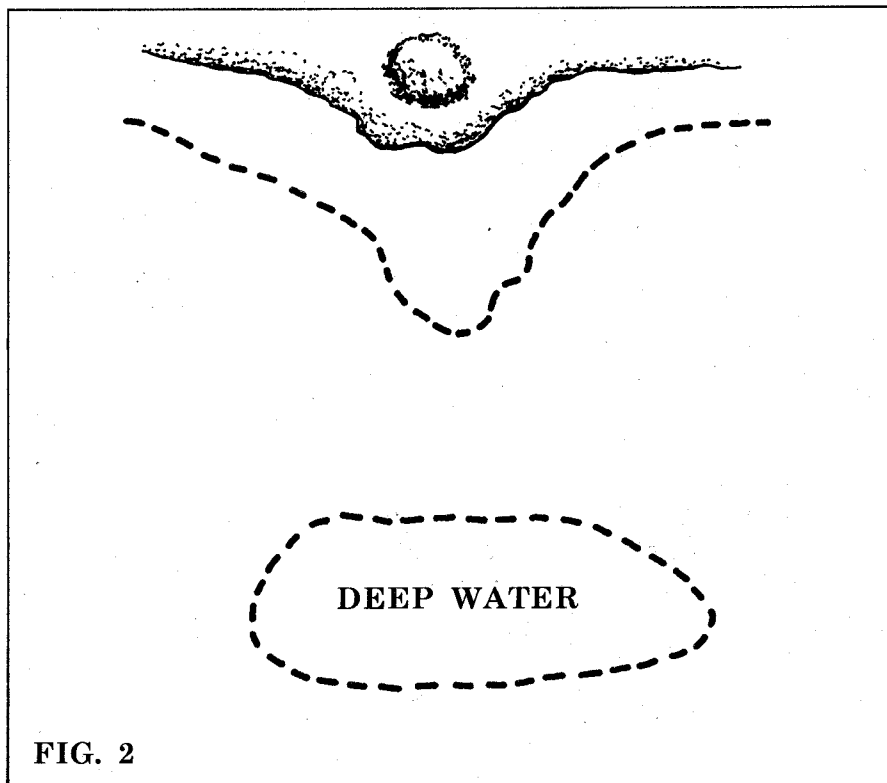


FIG. 2

deep water (this could be a hole or a channel). A large "flat" exists between the breakline and deep water. In Figures "A" and "B", however, you find a different situation, here the structure extends all the way to deep water. The breakline becomes the drop-off, and access to the structure and deep water is readily available.

It quickly became obvious to us which of these two structures would be the productive one. It should be obvious to you, too!

Quite often, though, it is not so obvious as to which structure will prove to be the better one and it will

be necessary to get a complete picture of the differences and similarities so as to make the proper judgment.

To illustrate this type of situation, let's add a few additional details to the two structures just discussed in order to expand a little on interpretations since *interpretation of structure* is one of the important keys to success, and since this situation will often occur.

As we look at Figures Nos. 1-A and 2-B, above, we note similar structure, but in this case there is more than one breakline before reaching the deepest water.

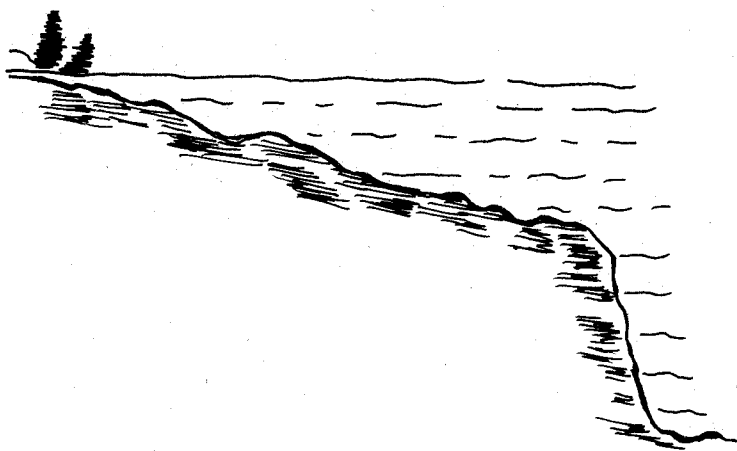


FIG. A

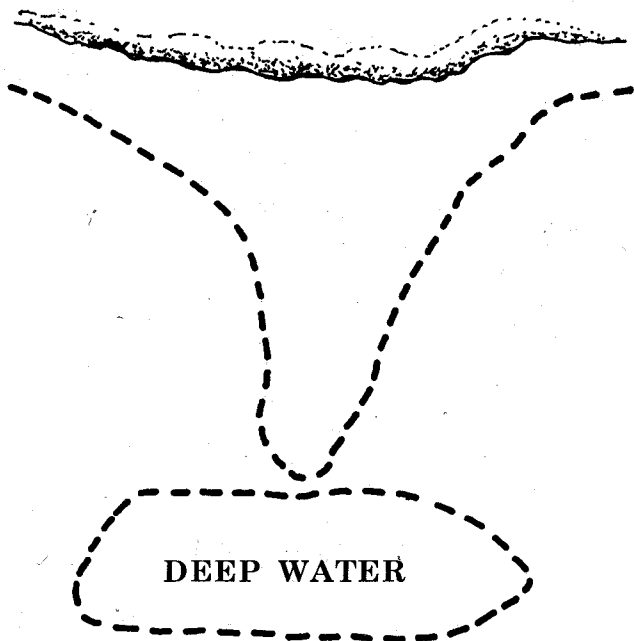


FIG. B

In working the shallows in these two Figures, both are found to run out in a ridgelike manner, then break off on the sides and end, forming a breakline as shown. These two shallower breaklines are identical in nature. The *differences* in the two structures will be determined by what is found at the second, or deeper breakline.

In Figure No. 1-A, as we approach the deep water section, we again find a nice breakline. The breakline reaches the hole, or channel, and at one section it corresponds to a drop-off. BUT the area between the first and second breakline is flat and the ridgelike structure no longer exists.

Even though Figure No. 1-A now has a breakline which breaks direct-

ly into deep water, it will not make this a good structure for migration as the large 'flat' area still exists and fish will not travel over large flats to reach structure, regardless of the break into deep water.

In Figure 2-B the ridge, or bar, extends on beyond the shallow breakline, and the ridge continues on out until it reaches the second breakline which breaks directly into deep water.

You can readily see that the productivity of a shallower structure, in many cases, is dependent upon the breaks and breaklines that exist below in the deeper water, such as in Figure No. 2-B.

Under certain weather and water conditions where short migrations occur, structures such as 2-B could get a migration, while the one with the single breakline (Figure B) would not. In most cases, the second breakline occurs at a greater depth and this in turn makes fish a little more difficult to find on short migrations.

Time spent in mapping and interpreting is never wasted time. If the onlookers to our fishing spree had been aware of the WHY and HOW of fishing, I doubt they would have been so surprised, and fishless that day.

I'm sure, (from later correspondence), that this particular structure produced some nice fish for some of the onlookers, but probably none of them were ever aware of why this structure produced while others in the area did not. Nor will many ever be aware of the other fine productive structures located in other areas of that Reservoir; or if they do find them will they interpret and use proper depth and speed control in presentation of lures.

This all further illustrates why Knowledge Is The Key To Fishing Success. If you put your faith in doodads, gadgets, gimmicks, and "magic baits", you will catch few decent fish. Even a fortune spent in beautiful fishing equipment, boats, motors, depth sounders, etc., will not "buy" you fish. A mechanic who possesses the finest and most expensive tools in the world but lacks the knowledge to use them properly has only wasted his money. This is the message that Fishing Facts and I are trying to get through to you!

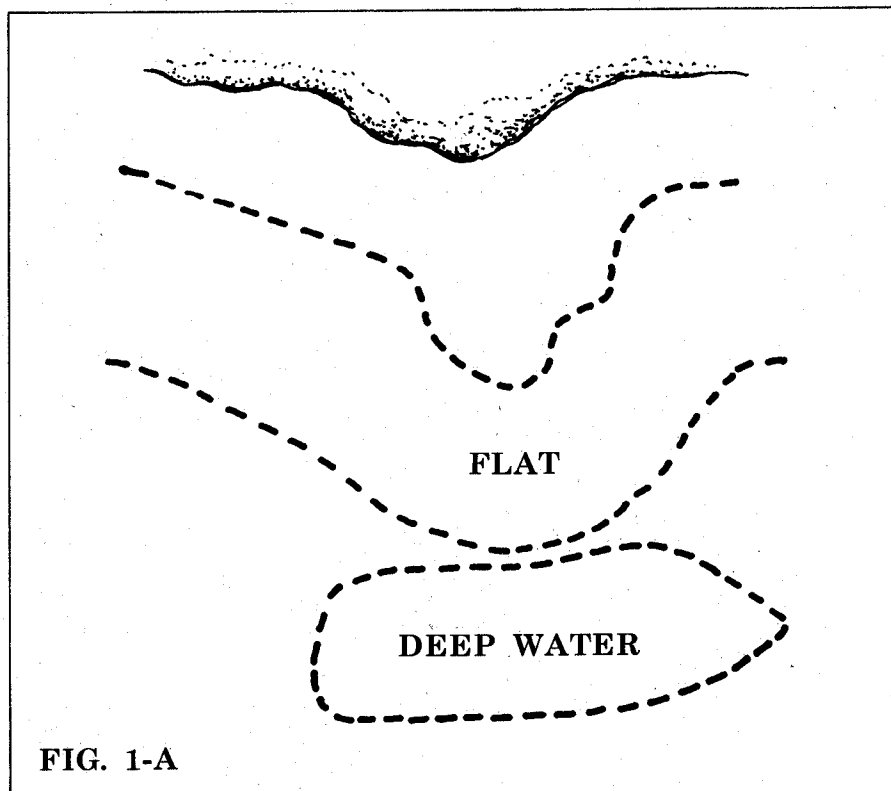


FIG. 1-A

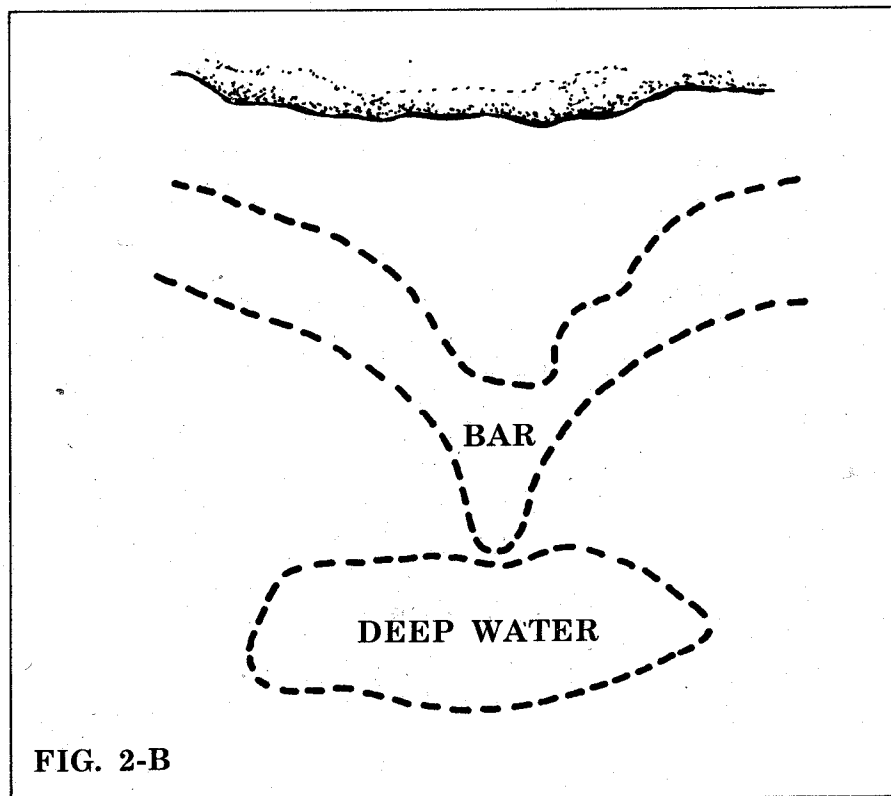


FIG. 2-B