



March 9, 2006

Richport YMCA: 7:30 PM

Our next meeting will be held at the Richport YMCA on Thursday, March 9, 2006 and we will begin at 7:30 PM.

The Elk Grove Village Library hosted 15 members on a chilly February evening. Those present included Joe Zaremba and his sons Brian and Kevin. We haven't seen Joe in awhile and it was good to have him back in attendance. Another Spoonplugger was placed on the injured list as *George Schauner* underwent surgery last month while in Florida. His back has been giving him some problems of late and he thinks it was aggravated when he replaced the battery in his boat. That's taking one for the team! He reports that his recovery is coming along and hopes to be back in the boat for the upcoming season. It seems his wife, Judi also underwent knee surgery and George reports she has come down with a bad case of the "gitmes": "George, get me this; George get me that!" We hope they will both "get" well soon!

BUSINESS

1. The agenda for the evening was flip-flopped and we started with *Phil Szafranski's* year in review report before getting down to business and preparing for the Winter Seminar. The highlight of any Illinois Spoonpluggers meeting has always been the fishing reports given by members and Phil's review didn't disappoint us. This was another good year that featured fishing and mapping a couple of new lakes which he went on to describe in detail. He put his Spoonplugger maps up on the overhead and led us through the fishing situations encountered over the year. A significant facet of the report was his comparison of published maps to his structure maps. It was quite obvious that published maps don't contain the finer details needed to put fish in the boat. Phil uses these maps to put him in the area but the final interpretation comes from what he generates while on the water. Even while fishing local waters that he's familiar with, Phil searches for and maps new areas looking for productive features. Congratulations on the great season and excellent report! Check out his maps that have been included in this newsletter.

2. *Scott Duff* led us through preparations for the upcoming Winter Seminar and final details were discussed at the meeting. Phil reports that 32 Spoonpluggers from around the Midwest

are registered and expects the number to grow as the seminar approaches. Spoonpluggers are reminded that the registration fee is \$20 at the door. Registering early helps us plan accordingly and you save \$3.00.

3. *Jim Taylor* has created a beautiful display case that will be set up at the seminar. We're asking members to bring one item to put in the case at the meeting. We need the *Green Book, Spoonplugs in all sizes, Silver buddies, and anything else that you feel is an important tool for a Spoonplugger to have in the boat.* All items will be returned after the seminar. Excellent job on the case, Jim!

4. *Harry Caliban* has generously donated 2 lure knockers to be given as door prizes. If you've got anything you'd like to donate, bring them along.

5. *Joe Renholds* is once again handling the printing and *Wayne Dyllo* will have coffee ready for the start of the meeting. *Craig Hubbard* will handle lunch and will try to get his fishing partner and wife, Jenny to do the filming. Scott is handling just about everything else. Special thanks go out to these individuals for stepping forward. Your efforts are appreciated!

NOTE: Lures orders were collected at the February meeting and should be ready when we meet in March.

The questions for discussion have been included in this newsletter and Walt Kulikowski has this reminder: *"All Spoonpluggers are encouraged to share on-the-water experiences relevant to any of the questions Remember, group interaction perpetuates a healthy dialogue, which provides additional insight into each topic of discussion.*

Dates for upcoming 2006 National Outings:

Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar, Elk Grove Village, IL, March 11, 2006; Land of Lincoln Spoonpluggers, Crab Orchard Reservoir, June 22-25; Michigan Lunker Hunters, Muskegon Outing, July 19-23; Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers "Buck Sez" outing August 10-12, 2006; We will pass other dates along as they become available.

Scott has been in communication with Bob Macuilis of Outdoor Notebook and extended an invitation to attend the seminar. While Bob will not be able to attend he sent along this response:

Scott,

Thank you for the kind invitation. I'd love to mingle with club members since it would give me

a chance to find out more about Mr. Perry's incredible system. We first began Spoonplugging during the late 1960s, although with my meager understanding of the real principles behind mapping etc. what we did was probably more akin to blind trolling than actually applying Buck's techniques on the northwoods lakes we fished. Still, it was a great way to work the weedlines and to find deep bars before the era of locators and modern trolling aides. We also stumbled on to some nice bass and pike and it was great fun!

We're probably not going to be in town during that period but if weather forces us to change plans, I'd love to join you. Terry O'Malley and others shared great articles with us over the years, especially during the 1980s and we're so glad that Joe Roth helped to reconnect us with the Spoonpluggers. Jeri has been kind enough to put us on the mailing list so we'd gladly like to reciprocate and publish any and all Spoonplugging info you can provide. It can be a review of your meeting, tips and techniques items, theory of Spoonplugging, whatever you would think appropriate. We could also run info along with the reports steering readers who may want to learn more to the right people, including ways to join the national organization as well as the Illinois Spoonpluggers.

Please stay in touch. If there is anything we can do to help get the word out, just let us know. Meanwhile, continued success and our best wishes for the coming new season!

Bob Maciulis

Outdoor Notebook

A Balanced Approach

Walt Kulikowski

A well-rounded curriculum for learning promotes interaction among peers, achievement through individual effort, and allows for a period of self-evaluation.

Buck Perry stated unequivocally, that first and foremost, Spoonpluggers become great fishermen through their personal on-the-water experiences... with a hands-on-the-tiller approach. The more they fish, the more knowledgeable they becomes, period!

It is also a truism that personal confidence is spawned and nurtured through a sense of self-achievement. This is probably why, whether in the company of preferred fishing partners or by themselves, all accomplished Spoonpluggers relish charting their own course, fishing certain waters in a more solitary

environment. Here, they can work at a preferred pace or delve into those aspects of Spoonplugging where improvement may be needed. Moreover, they can experience fishing certain lake-types and/or pursue a certain species. Oftentimes, many of the highlighted moments of one's Spoonplugging experiences tend to occur during these personalized sessions.

Spoonplugging Outings, whether sponsored at national or local levels, also provide anglers with an excellent opportunity to expand their fishing knowledge. Here, they can take note of the various tactics/techniques employed by accomplished Spoonpluggers, and also be privy to valuable information about local bodies of waters, available species, fish populations, structure types, etc. In fact, these venues are so rich in the information/exchange department that one could hardly expect less experienced Spoonpluggers to assimilate all of the knowledge shared. Buck Perry has told us "knowledge" becomes a more permanent fixture in our minds when we are able to experience it on the water. In this vein, witnessing on-the-water experiences/results at Spoonplugging events is the next best thing.

Lastly, in the "Mental Aspects" phase of fishing education, Buck Perry urged Spoonpluggers to sanction time during the off-season so as to reflect upon fishing successes or failures of the past season. Through this period of introspection, an evaluation can be made as to their standing as successful fishermen. In this respect, areas of weakness can be identified and resolutions can be thought out before upcoming fishing season commences.

In our Spoonplugging, knowing what you're going to do and why you're going to do it is not always axiomatic. Nevertheless, instituting "a balanced approach" to one's fishing education most readily develops this mindset.

Keep 'em Coming

IT TAKES A BALANCED APPROACH

Common Traits of Each Feature Fished

- Produced limit plus results under good to excellent conditions**
- Most days fished were pre-frontal stable conditions**

- All had good to great water color
- Features had immediate access to the deepest water in the area

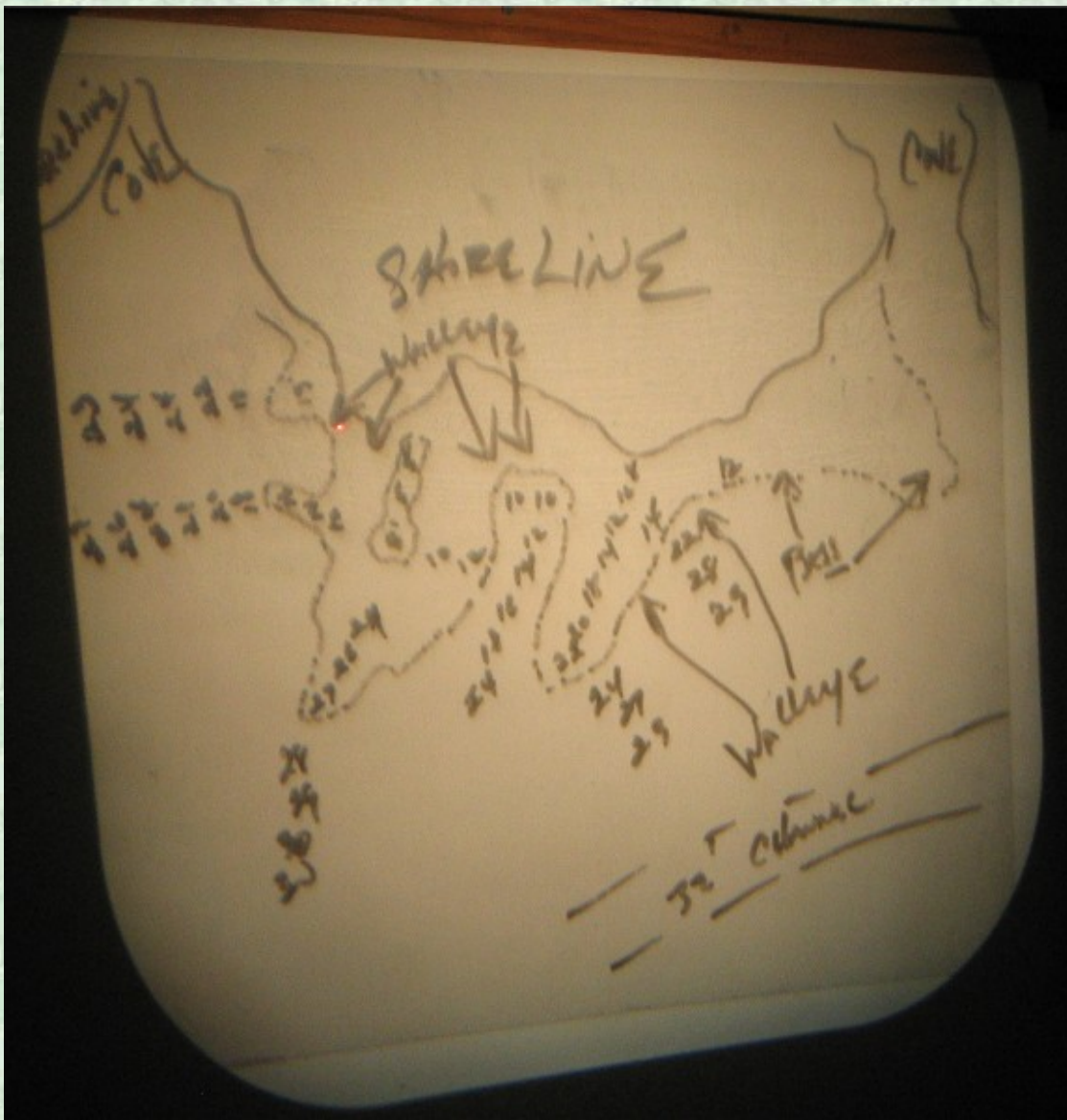
Timing of Year

- Started late March into early May – Fishing Lowland Reservoir
- Moved to power plant lake for Walleyes May thru first week of July
- Mid summer (July) on Natural Lake pursuing Bass and Pike
- Late summer yielded Bass on Lowland Power Plant Lake
- Late Summer Early Fall on Natural Lake pursuing Bass and Pike

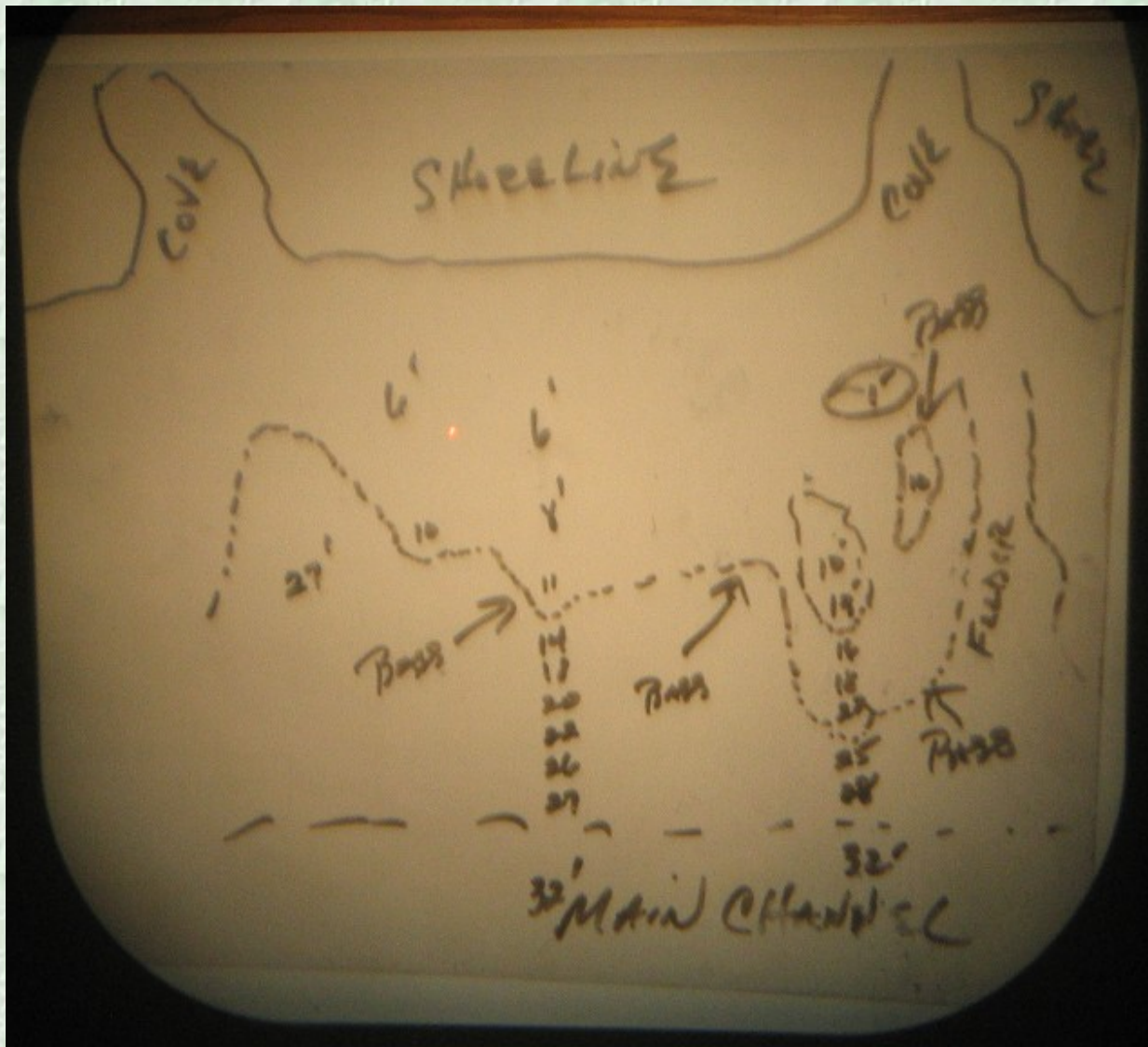




Phil gives his year end review and describes his successful season.







Phil knows that "mapping is the key."



Members discuss plans for the upcoming Winter Seminar.

ILLINOIS SPOONPLUGGERS 4th WINTER SEMINAR

March 11, 2006: Elk Grove Village, IL

The Illinois Spoonpluggers will host the 4th Annual Winter Spoonplugging Seminar on Saturday, March 11, 2006 at the Elk Grove Village Public Library in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. The seminar will run from 9:00 AM-4:45 PM.

The cost will be \$17 per person, and will include coffee, rolls, lunch, and handout materials. LATE REGISTRATION AT THE DOOR WILL BE \$20.

ABOUT THE EVENT - Building on the success of this event over the past three years, the seminar will feature a variety of topics and presentations designed to increase your success on the water. Our primary goal is to address specific topics that may be of concern to you. The specifics under discussion will be:

- * Mapping and Interpretation**
- * Weather and Water**
- * Basic Movement of Fish**
- * Structure, Breaks, and Breaklines**
- * Lake Types**
- * Presentation of Lures**
- * Tools and Controls**
- * Mental Aspects**

THE BEST PRACTICES PRESENTATIONS WILL INCLUDE:

How to Draw a Spoonplugger Map

Narratives from Experienced Spoonpluggers (How did they do it?)

REGISTRATION & FEE: \$17.00, PAYABLE TO "ILLINOIS SPOONPLUGGERS." Mail to Phil Szafranski, 1028 Glenlake, Park Ridge, IL 60068. Contact Phil by phone at 847-384-6819, and e-mail at szafranski1@sbcglobal.net.

LATE REGISTRATION AT THE DOOR WILL BE \$20

CONTACT: You may direct inquiries regarding the seminar to the following Illinois Spoonpluggers: Jim Duplex, jjd82@juno.com and Walt Kulikowski, wmkulik@prodigy.net.

Hope to see you at the seminar,

Scott Duff, Seminar Coordinator

E-mail: swdclar@aol.com

Phone: 847-690-1079

Registration Form

Winter Spoonplugging Seminar

March 11, 2006

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone Number: _____

E-mail: _____

Directions to the Elk Grove Village Library:

1001 Wellington Ave. Elk Grove, IL

847-439-0447

Attention: *The library will not open until 9:00AM.* Plan your arrival accordingly. There are restaurants in the area where you can get coffee and breakfast if you come early.

[◀ Get Directions ▶](#)

Enter starting street address:

City, State or Zipcode:



From Indiana/Michigan

Take I-294 (Tri-State Toll road) north to the Eisenhower Expressway. Take the I-290 (Eisenhower Expressway) west to Exit, Biesterfield. Turn right on Biesterfield and continue east about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington Ave.

From the east and south

Take the I-290 (Eisenhower Expressway) west to Exit, Biesterfield. Turn right on Biesterfield and continue east about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington Ave.

From Wisconsin

Take the I-90 (Northwest Tollway) southeast to I-290 and go south to the Biesterfield exit. Go east on Biesterfield about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington Ave. You can also exit the I-90 at Arlington Heights Rd. and go south to Biesterfield. Turn right on Biesterfield about 3 blocks to Wellington and turn left. The library is at 1001 Wellington Ave.

From Northern Illinois

Take the I-294 south, to I-90, the Northwest Tollway. Take the tollway west to Arlington Heights Rd. and go south to Biesterfield. Turn right on Biesterfield about 3 blocks to Wellington and turn left. The library is at 1001 Wellington Ave.

4th Annual Winter Spoonplugging Seminar

Saturday, March 11, 2006

Elk Grove Village, Illinois

Agenda

9:00 AM · Doors Open, Set Up

9:15 AM · Registration, Coffee & Rolls

9:40 AM · Welcome - Illinois Spoonpluggers, Host

9:45 AM · Group Discussion #1 - Q & A Moderators: Jerry Hein, Jim Duplex

11:15 AM · Group Picture, Break

11:35 AM · Group Discussion #2 - Q & A

12:15 PM · Lunch

12:45 PM · Special Feature:

· Narratives from Experienced Spoonpluggers-*How Did They Do It?* Comments by: John Bales, Jerry Borst, Jerry Hein, Chase Klinesteker

1:45 PM · Group Discussion #3

(short break)

3:00 PM · Special Feature:

***How to Draw a Spoonplugger Map* Presenter: Jim Duplex**

3:20 PM · Group Discussion: *Spoonplugging in the Future: Its Up to Us!*

3:50 PM · National Outings 2006, Wrap up

4:00 PM · Clean up

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

Presentation of Lures

- 1. Sometimes I spend a lot of time trying to get good trolling passes because I lose site of my markers and/or have a hard time setting up shoreline sightings? Are there any helpful pointers on how to stay the course?**
- 2. On an irregular weedline with small points, when do you straight-line troll versus contour troll? (Note: think of the North shore of Monona) In this area, the weedline is about 11 feet deep and the area in question runs for about a mile. Depending on what stretch of shoreline, the 11 foot weedline drops to 30+ feet within 50 feet or less of shoreline. On two occasions in late June, I contoured the weedline and did well, when I encountered the small points, I was plowing even when I went deeper. How can I more effectively troll similar areas?**
- 3. Buck has stated that under certain weather conditions, periods of instability, fish will become active in the sanctuary depths but will not make any movement toward the shallows. How do you determine where to try and make contact with these fish? Besides waiting at the contact point, is it feasible to venture out into the deep water in an effort to make a catch? How would you present lures in this situation?**
- 4. How many of the Spoonpluggers in the room routinely anchor and cast the structure situations they fish? What lure or baits do you use?**
- 5. What lures, other than Spoonplugs, are Spoonpluggers using to fish the deep water; 10' and below? I'm talking in terms of crankbait type lures on the troll. What are the advantages/ disadvantages to using them?**
- 6. Few fishermen in the northern states get out in the boat during the winter months. During periods of open water on the inland waters, several members in Northern Indiana Club have reported winter catches of 50-82 bass, including a few lunkers. Such outstanding catches during the cold part of the year up north are very unusual, unless fishing warm water discharges. Please describe the structure situation, weather and water conditions, and presentation of lures.**
- 7. Going back to the Madison outing of a few years ago, we learned that the big northerns were being caught around a 28 foot breakline. Mendota has a weedline that is around 15 feet deep. So, I have been ignoring the weedline when I go fishing. What am I missing by not following normal procedures? When do you know when to take shortcuts and not follow Spoonplugging procedures?**
- 8. On some lakes I fish, I'll notice musky fishermen trolling the deep basin. It's obvious that at some time they've contacted fish. Under what circumstances would this be a productive method of presentation and where would you concentrate your effort?**
- 9. What are some best practices on how to get a lure down to 40-50 feet of water? (I.e. just**

wire, extra weights, etc.)

Movement of the Fish

10. In a lake like Kinkaid, with large and narrow arms; do the Walleyes and Muskies make a spawning run up the creek arms in early spring? Do we treat this arm like a feeder “river”?
11. With water clearing up and weeds going deeper in today’s environment, do we alter our methods since the movements don’t seem to be as shallow?
12. I’ve noticed that “classic structures” with very sharp breaking features seem to hold more of the smaller pike while broader, flatter and more gradual features produce larger schools of bigger pike in the summer. Anyone else share the same opinion? Why does this appear to be so?
13. When could we expect the shallowest movements of fish, in the spring or fall? Why?

Mapping and Interpretation

14. It is apparent that a good fishing report can provide critical learning (immediate and future). What are the basics that should be included in a good report?
15. Buck says to “read” the shoreline terrain. Besides the feeder cuts and slides, what does this mean?

Structure, Breaks, and Breaklines

16. Can a productive spot get over pressured and dry up?
17. When do secondary points become important?

Lake Types

18. When fishing a lowland lake, what are the structural keys one should look for when fishing the summer months?

Weather and Water

19. Is there a so called best water color?

Tools and Controls

20. With all the spoonplugs to choose from, which ones are a must to have in the tackle box?

General Questions

21. What differences, if any, are taken into account when going fishing in the spring, summer and fall?

22. During the early season (pre-spawn) where should the Spoonplugger begin their search in a reservoir, at the entrance of to a cove or in the shallows and work deeper?

23. What is the best all around test for No-Bo? Wire?

24. I have a flasher depth finder and I can read it pretty well, but I cannot determine bottom make up (hard / soft) Can you give me some advice?

25. I read an article by John Bales last month which made reference to a statement which said "By starting out with smaller lures and learning our fishing waters we are able to eliminate unproductive water and we arrive at the fish". My question is "what is the definition of unproductive water"? Is it water that does not produce fish on the troll? Is it water that does not have structure or breaks as we troll? Is it water that is not associated to the deepest water in the area? What if we don't catch a fish all day, what do we eliminate or keep for the next trip to concentrate on and not lose a days' fishing.

Looking forward to seeing you at the seminar!

