



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held March 17, 2008 at the Kendallville Public Library with 23 members and guests present.

Ken Koenig of Garrett joined us to see what Spoonplugging was all about.

The recent Illinois Spoonpluggers 6th Annual Winter Seminar was discussed. Several members attended and all agreed that the Illinois group puts on a very interesting program. If you have not yet attended this function, you are encouraged to put it on your "to-do" list for next year.

John Bales discussed his recent attendance of the induction of Buck Perry into the Bass Fishing Hall of Fame. John was impressed with the induction and was a bit surprised with the graciousness shown by everyone in attendance. There has always seemed to be a wide division between the tournament fishermen and the Spoonpluggers, however, the two groups have much more in common than their differences. We go about our fishing in different ways; they are restricted from using our methods and we don't believe their methods are nearly as efficient, but both groups are interested in preserving fishing and fishing waters. John, Terry O'Malley and Jeri Perry were very impressed the respect shown by "the other side" for Mr. Perry and Spoonplugging.

John got to meet with several of the fishermen who had come to Greenville, S.C. for the induction ceremony as well as the start of the Bassmaster Classic tournament on nearby Lake Harwell. John was especially eager to meet Kevin VanDam and was able to do so by coaxing Dick Kempthorne, Secretary of the Interior of the United States to arrange a meeting

with Kevin. It's always nice to have friends in high places!

John discussed Mapping and Interpretation. We have discussed fishing the deeper depths over the past few years. With the numbers of new members, John impressed upon everyone the need to learn the first three sizes of Spoonplugs; 500, 400, & 250 series, BEFORE attempting to go deeper. It is often difficult to find a lake that the first three sizes can be used while bumping the bottom. John stated that it is worth the effort in finding such a lake...even if you have to drive to Timbuktu in order to do so.

Once we become good at running the first three sizes and understand the procedure of slowly turning in until the lure begins bumping bottom, then turning slowly out until the lure begins to run free, in order to determine the size and shape of a particular structure. The first three sizes will also help us understand and interpret the differences in bottom conditions, both hardness and softness.

As we carry our fishing deeper, everything becomes more difficult. The sense of feel of the bottom is diminished. You must be much more accurate with trolling passes the deeper you go. You must be much better at interpreting your depth meter readings and the fish are typically less active than they are when shallower. For these reasons, if we are not skillful in the shallows, we will never be skillful in deeper water.

NEXT MEETING: April 21, 2008 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Denny Coulardot (above) and Mike Price (below) with some early season muskies caught a day or two following the ice breakup.



“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



We have a lot of new members in our club. This may have more of a bearing on them than some others but is still worth mentioning. What other lures should we have in our tackle box other than Spoonplugs? There are a handful of lures that will cover most all fishing situations anywhere in the country. Those other lures that we mention come in the form of jump type lures. There are a handful of others that we can mention that will be of some use for about 6 days of a season and then they can be put away for the rest of the year. A rattletrap style lure is a very good lure for when the fish make it into the shallows. It also can serve as a jump type lure as long as the depths that you are checking are not too deep. Some kind of minnow-type jerk bait works well also, maybe one that floats and one that will suspend when paused or stopped. Keep in mind that when talking about a lure....ANY lure, we always think of that lure as using it to control our depths and speeds. If you think in that way, you will know better what you are trying to accomplish with that lure. You may want to have a few crank baits with a larger lip. At times a rattletrap style lure may not run quite deep enough under some situations when reeled at a fast rate of speed.

And then we can cover the slower speeds and a bit deeper with our jump type lures. We should have a good supply of jigs in several weights which we will use from the shallows to the deeper depths. The shallower we fish, the lighter the weight of the jig. If we want to increase the speed of the jig, we may need to increase the weight. The deeper we fish, the heavier the jig. We should carry jigs from 1/8 ounce all the way up to 1 ounce. Early in the season or when ever the lighter jigs are needed, it is one of the few times of the year that a spinning rod will come into good use. For the lighter jigs to perform not only in the water (to control our depth and speeds) but on the cast, we must go to a lighter pound test line. The spinning outfits work well for this situation.

The silver buddy-type blade bait is one of the best jump type lure that you can use. A lot of fishermen believe that they are only good in the colder water but they are very effective all year. We want to have them in 1/2 and 3/4 ounce and have a few over an ounce for the muskies. Many of us in the club make our own so if you are in need of some, bring it up at the next meeting.

For the jigs, you can use what ever tickles your fancy for a dressing. Any plastic worm will work. Tube lures work well also. You may get into a situation where there are a lot of snags. A silver buddy would not work well as a jump type lure in this situation. A Carolina rig, a jig with a weed guard, or a Texas rig will work well through snags.

Having a few of everything that we have mentioned will take you through a season just about anywhere you want to fish.

Good Spoonplugging

John Bales

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”



**“The more I learn, the more I see
there is to learn.”** *E. L. “Buck” Perry*

BUCK SEZ:

MAPPING AND INTERPRETATION

Most important of all in the mapping and fishing process is for the Spoonplugger to RE-CORD what he finds.

The drawings and markings on your first structure map may not be complete and in correct detail. You may find that there will be slight changes to be made on every trip. These changes may be something you missed, such as a small detail or break, or it could be a depth factor. Even a slight direction and distance change will have to be made. This will call for an additional change in your trolling and casting patterns, and your shoreline sightings will possibly be altered.

A proper record of structure will not only tell you where it's located and what some of its particular features are, but most important is that in making this record you increased your knowledge about proper interpretation. This is the important factor in your fishing know-how and growth. **THIS IS THE TEACHER THAT YOU CARRY WITH YOU.**

You may ask, “Do I have to have **exact** depths, distances, and scale when preparing structure maps?”

The answer is NO.

The important thing in mapping and recording the findings, is to show LOCATION, SHAPE AND DETAILS. Having **exact** depths, or **exact** measurements in feet, of the different dimensions of a structure is not necessary. It is not likely you would gain any knowledge, or that it would help you present lures correctly, if you had exact measurements.

If exact measurements are desired, there are several methods which could be used to get them; the use of contour maps prepared by engineers, depth sounders to secure depth readings, and even a tape to measure the distances.

Having everything to exact scale isn't important. In preparing your detailed structure maps, you would be using a certain section of the shoreline as a reference point. You would be using a certain object on the shoreline as a reference in determining location of the structure. With very little effort you will relate these things and a satisfactory SCALE will fall into place.

After all, the purpose of the map is to allow YOU to know where it is, how it is shaped, how far out it runs, how trolling passes are to be made, what size lures to use to reach certain sections, and where to position the boat for casting, etc. What do you care if your map does not give a true picture of actual measurements.

The same thing applies in your shoreline sightings for locating certain areas on structure, trolling paths, or casting positions.

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