



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held November 16, 2009 at the Kendallville Public Library with 17 members present.

President Denny Coulardot opened the meeting by presenting all members with a nice Christmas gift of a knife for our tackle boxes.

Denny also reported that despite catching some nice bass recently, he has been keying on the muskies. He and several others have caught a goodly number recently. The fall turnover is complete and although the fish could be anywhere in the water column, the deeper breaklines are still the key for the bigger fish. Water temperatures have dropped into the 40's and as a result, the trolling speeds should be slower, however Denny suggested that if our primary target was for the musky, faster speeds may be needed to produce a strike. This is why it is so important to check all speeds, even when slower speeds seem to be called for. You just can't trust fish to obey **our** logic on where they should be, how deep they should be, or what speed they should prefer. Following the Spoonplugging guidelines eliminates all this second-guessing.

There can be no fool-proof method when it comes to fishing. Constantly changing weather and water conditions make infallibility an impossibility. However, the Spoonplugging guidelines are as close to fool-proof as we will ever get when it comes to fishing. John Bales drew some illustrations of a lake he has been having good success of late. The lake produces lots of bass, but has an extremely dirty, silty bottom. The bottom has several feet of very soft goo that makes walking a Spoonplug impossible, yet he is

still able to make good catches. The key is proper line length.

We are increasingly facing lake bottoms here in the Midwest where walking the bottom is unattainable. It could be a soft bottom such as the one John illustrated, or one with short weeds or moss.

A walking Spoonplug is a deadly lure presentation. However, if it is not feasible to walk the lure, being as close to the bottom as possible is the next best thing, therefore, correct line length is critical if we are to be successful on these bodies of water.

John suggests letting out line a little at a time until the bottom is reached. In the case of a very soft bottom, we must pay particular attention to our rod tip. Our "feel" may not indicate when we have come in contact with the bottom since it is so soft and we may be running underneath the bottom and not realize it. Watching the rod tip will allow us to see when the Spoonplug is running slightly less "crisp" than normal. If we have counted our layers of line, all we need to do is take in a quarter or half a wrap and recheck. This will put us in very close proximity to the bottom.

With a weedy or mossy bottom it is even easier. As soon as you let out enough line to touch bottom, you are fouled.

Remember to recheck from time to time with this free-running approach. Keep in mind that the person closest to the bottom will always catch the most fish!

**NEXT MEETING: December 21, 2009 at
the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P. M.**

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS"



Lloyd Klein with a very fat
46 inch musky

Mike Price with a nice
21 inch largemouth
bass



Denny Coulardot
with big bass
caught while fish-
ing for muskies.



“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS”



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



We are definitely near the end of the 2009 season. Tomorrow looks like it may be the last day to fish out of a boat. Many of you might think that we just might be lacking a bit in the brain category. You might be right at times but lets look at it another way. Mr. Perry said it the best. He said that the guy up on the bank having a siesta does not have much of a chance to catch a fish. My point is that you must be on the water when the fish become active. Let's take tomorrow for instance. Our fish that we are going after is the walleye. Being that the lake is gin clear, there is a chance that the fish may be the most active right at daylight. And then again, it may not happen till high noon. Our best chance is to be there at daylight and stay till the fish move. If we are at the right place, at the right time and fishing in the right manner, we have a chance of doing well.

Lets take a look at a couple of different fishermen and see which one fits you best. You both start out at the same time. You are fishing the same lake in the same way. You are both Spoonpluggers with limited experience. You both start out running the smaller lures with no success. You both then go to the next size lure and still no success. By now you both are running the 250 and still nothing. Here is where the changes take place. The first fisherman has extreme confidence in what he is doing. The other still has doubts. By now the first fellow has some markers out and is now making straight line passes where the markers were placed. The other fellow breaks out the bluegill equipment and starts fishing for panfish because he feels like he has got to catch something. In the next hour the fish move and the fisherman who stuck with it gets into a nice group of fish. About the time that this takes place, the other fellow is up putting the boat back on the trailer. It does not take much thinking on which of these fishermen is making progress and is going to end up being a good Spoonpugger.

Being able to stick with what you are doing at a particular time on the water is very important. Confidence plays a big role on sticking with the guidelines. Experience is what will give you that confidence. We can read everything that is written in Mr. Perry's material and study it until we can recite every word in our sleep. But it does very little good if you cannot commit yourself to do it on the water.

With each day on the water you gain fishing knowledge. You take that knowledge and apply it to the next situation. Since no two days are ever a like, you never stop learning. The variables in weather and water vary so much that we can never become experts. However, if you and I put in some effort with our studies and put it to use with time on the water, we have a chance to become a pretty good fisherman. Which fisherman are you?

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:

.....Another thing which might be mentioned is the problem encountered after you reach the 15 foot depth. The amount of line used, the type of line used, or the lure types used to reach depths below this 15 feet will separate the men from the boys. It becomes increasingly more difficult to have control beyond this depth. The “feel” starts to disappear, interpretation becomes harder—fishing in general just becomes more difficult and tiring. **To cap all this**, as depth increases, the fisherman has to become **more exact**. Fish react to depth in such a way that they are more difficult to catch and more exact presentation must be made in order to make them take. **BUT**, you must not pass up this deep water trolling just because it is difficult. Working this water or trying to place your lures correctly in this water, is the finest **teacher** around. It may take some time for you to become **exact**, but it will be well worth your effort.

If I appear to have put a lot of emphasis on trolling, you are right. In my opinion it takes far more skill to become a good troller that it does to become a good caster. For generations fishermen have been instructed in the proper procedure for casting, but never on trolling. There is a definite purpose for every trolling maneuver. And in the final analysis, **it is trolling that will tell you where, when, why, and how to cast. I can’t say the same for casting.**

Trolling will be a constant reminder of DEPTH and SPEED control—**casting will not**. If you limit yourself to casting, or overdo it, pretty soon you will be putting faith in the size, color, and action of your lures, rather than in Depth and Speed control. You can put this in your pipe and smoke it, because it will happen.

Trolling will also: more quickly eliminate unproductive water, greatly facilitates and shortens the time of mapping and interpretation, allows a greater area to be covered to find fish, produces more ‘straggler’ (Remember these fish are important on those days which produce little or no movement), allows more varied and better speed and depth control. Competes with modern day traffic, makes fishing a family sport, no casting skill is needed, allows the use of lure weights and sizes which may not be usable with the available casting rig—plus many more.

While Spoonpluggers are taught the importance of trolling, this does not rule out casting by any means. **If you want to become a good fisherman you must be in a position to do BOTH in a sane and intelligent manner.**

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