



April  
2010

Editor: Tom Raschke ([traschke@globaldialog.com](mailto:traschke@globaldialog.com)) or 608-233-6765

Club Web site: <http://www.yaharafishingclub.org>

## The Top Ten Moments

*Notes by Stan Nichols*

What is your top ten fishing moments? Captain Dennis Radloff of Sterling Guide Service presented his top ten moments at the March YFC meeting. Dennis targets muskies and walleyes in Waukesha County lakes and on Green Bay. He has been guiding on these waters for over a decade.

Before Dennis presented his top ten moments, he briefly described his fishing year. In mid-to-late March he will fish walleye runs on area rivers where the season is open. In April he like to "jerk" for perch in the Milwaukee harbor. In May he goes into musky mode on the Waukesha County lakes. In June he splits his time between S.E. Wisconsin lakes and Green Bay. July is Green Bay musky month. In August he likes to target Door County walleyes. In September, October, and November he works his way south on Green Bay for muskies. In December he is back in Waukesha County musky fishing if the lakes are still open.

So what is Dennis's top ten fishing moments? Starting with number:

10: "First Cast-First 50 inch Musky". This occurred on Okauchee Lake in June 2009. He was guiding a business-woman from California that had never been musky fishing. She also didn't know how to use a casting outfit. Dennis helped her make the first cast and retrieve. On the first cast the women caught a 50-inch musky on a G-Train lure.

Dennis likes fishing Okauchee Lake because, in its 1100 acres, it has shallow bays, a deep main basin, sunken islands, and 12-foot deep bars. It also has a cisco forage base and grows huge bass, northern pike, muskies, and a few large walleyes. It also has a maximum boat speed of 10 M.P.H. before 8 A.M., seven days a week, so recreational boat traffic is not a real problem early in the morning.

In Waukesha County, Pewaukee Lake has the most muskies per acre, but Okauchee Lake has the most large muskies per acre. Oconomowoc lake has fewer large muskies than Okauchee but the boat traffic is less so it is more pleasant fishing.

Dennis likes fishing these lakes in June better than in May because the weather is more stable. At this time the muskies are usually found off the deep breaklines.

9: "Stlyme Rockets"-Green Bay Pike. Many anglers make nasty remarks about northern pike. Apparently they haven't caught a big one. Dennis catches big pike, up to 47 inches when fishing for muskies in Green Bay. Can you tell the difference between a 47-inch musky and a 47-inch pike on the end of your line? Pike are usually found along the deep weed edges and caught on the same lures used for muskies. The Sturgeon Bay Ship Channel is a big pike paradise.

8: "Walleye Fishing Rocks". This is an August activity on the upper part of Green Bay. Dennis is trolling the reef complexes out of Fish Creek or Sisters Bay. The reefs hold school of alewife, shad, and perch at this time of year. These are large reefs so it is not spot-on-spot fishing. You have to cover water. The common method for catching these fish is to slowly troll (about 1 M.P.H.) crawler harnesses behind planer boards. Usually 100 feet of line is placed behind the board and anywhere from a split shot to a two-ounce snap weight is placed at the 50-foot mark, depending on how deep you want to fish.

Dennis does things differently. He trolls with smaller sized musky crankbaits. He doesn't get as many fish this way, but he usually gets larger fish. When trolling with either method it is important to be able to replicate your trolling pattern when you find fish so electronics are needed.

7: "It Pays to Skip Lunch". In November 2008 his clients caught a 50-inch and a 52-inch musky in 25 minutes while trolling in lower Green Bay. This occurred during the lunch hour. The lesson learned, don't go home when the fish are biting!

6: "The Biggest One Yet". One of his clients, Mike Venardi, is an unlucky angler. During many trips with Dennis he never caught a musky. Finally

*Continued next page*

during November 2009 Mike catches the biggest one yet. A 53-½ inch, 47 pound fish in lower Green Bay. As fall progress the baitfish move down Green Bay to warmer water. Muskies usually follow. The biggest muskies come in November when the whitefish move down the bay.

5. "The Best Five Days". During the fall of 2006 Dennis's clients caught 117 muskies in 21 days. During the peak bite, 53 muskies were caught in five days with days of 10, 10, 11, 12, and 10 fish. Again these fish were caught in lower Green Bay. Many of these fish migrate in from the open water of the bay so they haven't been pressured. When water temperatures drop through the 60s and into the 50s look for this migration.

4. "Mike's First Musky". I don't know who this Mike is but the caught a 51 inch musky on a perch "Swimmin Joe". The lesson here is that persistence and patience pays off.

3. "Dave's Double". On June 10, 2005 Dave caught a 47 and 52 inch musky on a black Magnum Dawg. They were caught on Okauchee Lake where the drop-offs are so steep you can be sitting in 30 feet of water and cast into 12 feet of water. The lesson here is that a bow-mounted depth finder is invaluable to stay in the area where you want to fish. Where there are steep drop-offs it is easy to "over run" your target area.

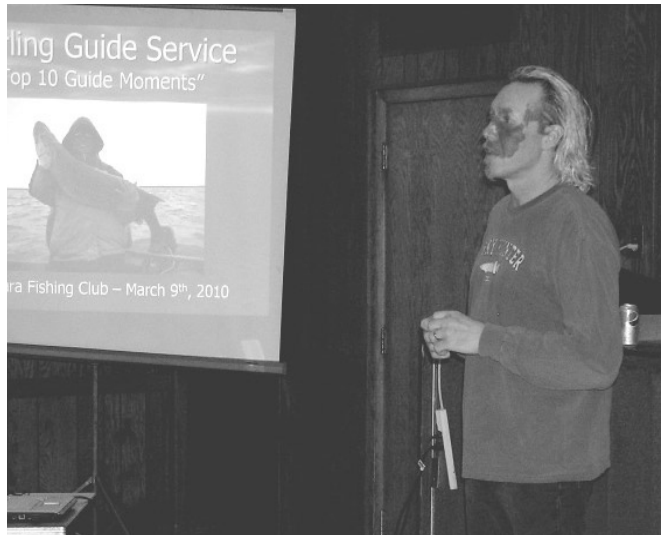
2. "After Lunch". On June 17, 2008 a client of Dennis's caught a 50-inch tiger musky in Green Bay on a Magnum Dawg. This is a large tiger musky. Tigers were not planted in Green Bay but with large northern pike and muskies some natural reproduction is occurring.

1. "Water and Woods". After numerous unsuccessful trips trying to get a musky catch on film for John Gillespie he finally got one on June 7, 2005 on

Okauchee Lake at 3:55 in the afternoon. This was five minutes before they were going to call it quits. This fish was also caught on a G-Train bucktail, one of Dennis's favorite musky lures. The other part of this story was they were filming a walleye-fishing segment earlier in the day on Lac Labelle before they moved to Okauchee Lake. If you want to practice catching walleyes, Dennis recommends Lac Labelle, but with a 20-inch minimum size limit, you are unlikely to keep any fish.

Finally Dennis says don't let trying to catch a big fish become an obsession. Enjoy the experience but there are more important things in life: family, friends, neighbors, and community.

You can contact Dennis at Sterling Guide Service, phone 262-443-9993 or at [www.sterlingmusky.com](http://www.sterlingmusky.com).



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**Mike's Prop Shop**

This shop offers a 20% discount to members of the Yahara Fishing Club. They have repaired several of my props, a skeg, and welded a sailboat rudder back together. All were done expertly.

*Editor*

## Wading Wisconsin's Rivers for Walleyes and Saugers The Where's, When's, and How's

By Gary Engberg



Two Mississippi River Walleye caught by Bob Zownir of Madison while wading.

Anglers have been fishing many of Wisconsin's rivers for walleyes and saugers for weeks. The nice thing about early spring river fishing is that a majority of Wisconsin's rivers are open year-round for walleye and sauger angling. If you are unsure about a river being open for fishing be sure to check out the 2010-2011 Fishing Regulations booklet before fishing. Here are some of the state's rivers that are open all year to walleye fishing; the Mississippi, Wisconsin, Rock, Fox, Wolf, Crayfish, Pecatonica, Black, and Yellow Rivers. I've kept a fishing log for as long as I have been guiding and many of the year's biggest walleyes come during the months of March and into April when female walleyes are heavy with eggs before spawning.

During early spring and into the month of May, many anglers find that wading is an excellent way to fish for walleyes. One of the reasons that wading is so productive is that the fish are in shallow water and very accessible. As soon as the water temperature hits the low to mid 40's, female walleyes spawn and drop their eggs on rocky and gravel shorelines when available or they will use marshes if no other suitable spawning location is available.

Walleyes and their cousin, the sauger, begin their migration up rivers in the fall and winter looking for suitable holding areas for winter. As the water warms and we get close to spring, the walleye move as far upriver as they can before encountering an immovable object or a dam. As an example, there are numerous dams on the Wisconsin River and then look at the many pools on the Mississippi River that are separated by dams. Once the walleyes come to a dam, they'll then filter

back down the river (up to a few miles) to staging or holding spots out of the main river current where they will stay until the water warms up for their spawning. All walleyes do not spawn at the same time, so you may find fish in shallow water for a month and even longer. The smaller male walleyes and saugers arrive at the spawning sites weeks before the females and are very active while they wait for the females. Remember that not all females will travel all the way to tailrace area, so fishing can be good for miles below the dams.

The best time to wade rivers is early and late in the day during low light periods. This is the time that many of the walleyes and particularly the big females will be in water less than 5 feet deep. No matter where you live, there are always rivers with walleyes within driving distance.

### Clothing

You're going to be wading in cold water, so you need a quality pair of neoprene waders that are 4 ML thick. The balance of your cold weather fishing clothing is also very important, if you want to be comfortable in 40 degree water. Fishing is no fun if you're cold, so make sure to dress properly! Underneath my waders, I wear long underwear made of the new "space-age" fabrics that wick the moisture away from your body or wool and cotton long underwear, if you prefer natural fibers. Next, I'll wear a cotton turtleneck and layer whatever else I feel I need for the day. Gauge your clothing by the weather and it is always better to have too many clothes on than not enough. On your feet, wear a thin pair of thinsulate socks and then a pair of medium weight wool-blend socks. Lastly, wear a Gore-Tex jacket on the outside in case of rain or snow and to break any wind. Always wear something on your head because that is where most of your body's heat is lost. A wool or Gore-Tex hat works in all weather. If you feel that you need them, wear some neoprene gloves or gloves with the fingers cut off so that you may still cast and reel. One last item of importance, especially if you're fishing at night is a light source, like the clip-on light made that attaches to your hat's bill. Walleyes often go shallow at night to feed where the water can be a little warmer. All that is needed is water a degree or two warmer to attract walleyes and saugers during this cold water period of spring. Fishing during low-light times is good, but night fishing can be great if you hit things at the right time.

*Continued next page*



## Equipment and Gear

The equipment that you need for spring walleye fishing is nothing special. Use a 6 foot rod with medium or medium light action and a fast tip (I use a G. Loomis SJR 720 or 721). If casting crankbaits, you may want a longer rod about 7 feet long for making longer casts and not spooking walleyes in the shallows. For reels, try the Daiwa SS 700 or the Garcia Cardinal spooled with Berkley Trilene monofilament in green and 8 # test. You can use 6 # test mono, but I've found that the higher test mono saves you a few jigs and allows you to pull free of the many snags that you'll encounter in a river. Last, an angler needs a good quality jig with a wide hook gap and a slow fall (like the Bait Rigs Slo-Poke). Some fishers prefer to use a "stinger hook" on the end of their jig for light biting fish.

As far as terminal tackle goes, have a good supply of jigs in assorted colors and sizes. Change jig colors regularly or have a couple of rods already rigged with different jigs and baits, so you don't have to waste time while you change jigs and crankbaits in the cold. Try using some glow colors that show up better at night or during the low-light periods. Be sure to have some different kinds of plastics like ringworms, shadtails, and grubs because the river's current gives action to these attachments. Hair jigs are also great for river fishing because like plastics the river's flow makes the hair pulsate and create its own movement. Again, have a variety of sizes and colors and change them regularly to see if there is a certain size, color, or movement that the fish want the day you're fishing. Live bait isn't always necessary, but it never hurts to have a few different size minnows along in case that is what the walleyes want that day. Berkley (Pure Fishing) has been making a new product called Gulp which works great and many successful anglers are now using it exclusively instead of live bait. Although, I've found days when the fish want a certain size and color plastic tail or Gulp and other days when a plain hook, a

split shot, and a minnow does the trick. The best rule of thumb is to be prepared and cover all your bases when it comes to color and kind of bait.

## Techniques and Tactics

As far as techniques go, cast up river and slowly work your jig back varying your retrieve from a slow retrieve to a stop and go one. In cold water, a walleye isn't going to chase your bait and that is why I preach to clients that I guide to use a slow, slow presentation. Areas to fish and cast toward are; back eddies, points, rocky shorelines, riprap, wood, bridges, and slack water areas. One of the most important things to remember is that walleyes and saugers don't want to fight the river's current and burn up unnecessary energy in cold water. They like areas where they can rest and then dash out and grab food as it passes or floats by them. Also, try fan casting these areas with crankbaits like Rapala Husky Jerkbait, Mann's Minus 1's, and any other long stick-type bait. These baits have a tight wobble which is what you want this time of the year. The best colors that I have found are natural ones or try to match the forage with black/white, blue/white, silver/white, perch, chartreuse, and firetiger and make sure that the treble hooks are sharp. Casting crankbaits after dark can be very productive on big walleyes this time of year. The thrill of having a large walleye hit your jig or crankbait in shallow water is tough to beat!

No matter where you live there's a river in close proximity to wade for walleyes. Do a little research, dress warm, and bring a landing net. I suggest that you always fish with a buddy, wear a life jacket, and tell someone where you're going just in case...Keep your boat in storage and try to get into wading because now it can be the most effective way to catch walleyes. The peace and solitude of night fishing is well worth it, even if the fishing is slow.

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# YFC Club News

## 2010 Pete Frohland Award

This year's award goes to ex-president Duffy Kopf. A well-deserved congratulations for your work over the years!



## Fishing Expo Thank You

On behalf of the madison fishing expo board of directors and club advisors, especially Jeff Wydeven, a very big thank you to all the members of the yahara fishing club for all their help in making the 25th anniversary of the madison fishing expo such a great success! we know we can always count on you guys!

Sincerely, Chuck Rolfsmeyer,, President, Madison Fishing Expo

## Clay's back

I went fishing in southwestern Arkansas recently hoping to get into the white bass run in The Little River area called Millwood. My host and I were about a week or two too early, but we did get a half dozen or so 16 1/2" -17" white bass plus some small largemouth. All were caught trolling the three smallest sizes of spoonplugs. Jack Hurst, you would have a ball down here when the white bass turn on.

Clay Russell

## Brittingham Bay Fish Kill

Jack Hurst has provided us with pictures and a narrative of the second year in a row where there has been a fish kill in Brittingham Bay due to street run-off Details will be in the next issue.



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## Notes from the Prez

Spring has sure sprung around Madison. And in a big hurry too. Not much ice left on the area lakes. And few reports on the local bluegill scene sounding positive. After a few months of drilling holes to get at our fish, I'm sure we are all glad to see open water. Seeing a few flowers poking up in the backyard helps too.

At the Madison Fishing Expo meeting last night, MFE President Chuck Rolfsmeyer again thanked all clubs and their members (especially the YFC) for helping make the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary show one of the best ever. Even with a few thousand military folks and their families enjoying free admission we almost set an all-time record for attendance. While many sport shows everywhere are struggling or closing, we are doing great. Our club's volunteer efforts over the years have been one of the big reasons why. This may be starting to sound like a broken record but the Expo is a special part of who I am and who we all are. All board members and officers were re-elected and that means we are on our way for another 25 years of success (God willing!).

Last month's meeting was terrific! Lots of new members showed up and our guest speaker, Dennis Radloff, gave a super informative and personal talk. Big Big Big and I mean Big toothy fish from Green Bay and Milwaukee area lakes were the feature. Judging by the photos he showed us, he certainly knows how to get 'em! A big thank you to Dennis!

Well, as I write this today I'm packing for Alabama Gulf Shores. All next week, when I'm not babysitting, I'll be trying to catch a snook, speckled trout, or redfish.

Then, two days after we return, I'll be off again to Lake Tenkiller Oklahoma. This trip is centered around bass fishin'. Largemouth, smallmouth, spotted bass.....even some big stripers and crappies if there's time. My basement fishing room is sort of messy! There's even one more trip brewing down there.....a week in June on a houseboat on Lac Seul in Ontario. Mass confusion!! Ah what bliss! And all approved by my wonderful loving wife.

So, I'll be missing a couple of the next few meetings. But our club's board of directors is a very talented bunch and can do anything.....they can certainly run a couple meetings in my absence. The upcoming summer brings lots of fun and a bit of work too. Kid's Fishing Day is June 5 and Fishing Has No Boundaries is July 10-11. Please be ready to sign up to help. There will probably be a couple more projects too. And a few outings. Remember that we should all attend the summer meetings on the water and actually go fishing with one another. Maybe we don't do enough of that.

## April Club Raffle News From Tom Klein

Thanks in part to Maurice Wholesale sporting goods, supplier to Wal\*Mart and Farm & Fleet stores, for the April meeting, we have a lot of quality items to raffle off. A really nice soft side tackle case which holds 4 plastic tackle boxes(included), baseball fishing hat, storm 9" musky swim bait, Suick musky bait, assorted crank baits, Berkley power baits, jig heads, swim shads, fish attractant, Rayovac sportsman flashlights, and more. Have fun and good luck and be sure to patronize our sponsors and advertisers.

P.S. For any Fisher persons who also hunt Turkey, we just got an addition to the raffle of a Quacker Boy Gobble call, Owl hooter, and 7 assorted mouth reed calls, all of which will be raffled off at the April meeting.

## 2010 Fishing Seasons

Early Inland Trout March 6 (5 a.m.) to April 25  
 General Inland Trout May 1 (5 a.m.) to Sept. 30  
 Large and Smallmouth Bass Northern Zone Catch and Release May 1 to June 18  
 Large and Smallmouth Bass Northern Zone Harvest June 19 to March 6, 2011  
 Large and Smallmouth Bass Southern Zone May 1 to March 6, 2011  
 Musky - Northern Zone May 29 to Nov. 30  
 Musky - Southern Zone May 1 to Dec. 31  
 Northern Pike May 1 to March 6, 2011  
 Walleye May 1 to March 6, 2011  
 Lake Sturgeon Sept. 4 to Sept. 30 (hook-and-line)

## For Sale

This boat needs to be sold soon. 2000 Triton TR21 (21" long) and a 2001 225 hp Johnson High Output motor. Two sonars, 74 lb. thrust Minn Kota Maxum trolling motor, hotfoot accelerator many bells and whistles along with a fancy trailer. First \$15000 takes it.  
 Call Steve at: 608-215-3338 or Duffy at: 608-849-7245.

### D&S Bait Seminars 2010

These seminars are on Thursday evenings at 7pm at our store (D&S Bait, Tackle & Archery, LLC 1411 Northport Dr., Madison, WI 53704 (608)241-4225), and are free to the public! So, here it is:

#### APRIL

- 08 Gary Engberg      WI River System Walleye
- 15 Rick Krueger      Under Water View of Local Waters
- 22 Joe Okada      Latest Walleye Tactics
- 29 Ron Barefield      Opening Weekend

#### MAY

- 06 Charlie Grimm      Bass From Shore
- 13 Gene Dellinger      Post Spawn Bluegills
- 20 Wally Banfi      Modern Muskie Techniques

If you have any questions, give Gene a call at the store at 241-4225.

## Yahara Fishing Club Membership Application

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**Except for special Summer “On the water” dates, meetings are held at 7:00 p.m. on the second Tuesday of each month at the Lakeside VFW Hall, John Nolan Dr, & Lakeside St. in Madison.**

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The next meeting is on **Tuesday, April 13th**, at the Lakeside VFW Hall (John Nolen Rr. & Lakeside St.)

The Board Of Directors meet at 5:45 pm, The **General Membership meeting starts at 7:00 pm.**

**Instead of a speaker we will discuss options for the fishing opener.**

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### April Events

April 13<sup>th</sup> - YFC December Monthly Meeting at the VFW hall.  
Club discussion on opening day opportunities.

### May Events

May 11th - YFC Club meeting at the VFW hall.

### June Events

June 5th - Kids Fishing Day  
June 8th - On The Water YFC Meeting  
June 11-13th Winneconne Trip - See Duffy Kopf

The Yahara Fishing Club's doors are open to **EVERYONE**, so invite a friend to the meeting!

President - Charlie Grimm .....249-9694  
Vice President - Paul Marunich...219-4449  
Secretary - Paul Nichols.....309-335-6815  
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