



March
2011



Editor: Tom Raschke (tomraschke50@gmail.com) or 608-219-9243

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

Icing Lake Michigan Trout

Great notes from Stan Nichols

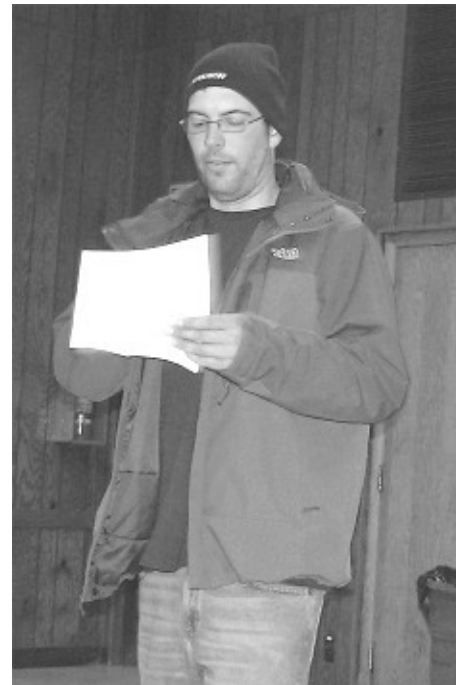
I get some practice in the winter pulling six inch bluegills through a five inch hole so the potential of pulling a big fish, brown trout in this case, held a lot of intrigue for me. Ben Kueng, a Milwaukee area guide told us how to do it at the monthly meeting, then the following Saturday we went to the Milwaukee Marina and put talk into practice with Ben's help.

Although the Great Lakes don't usually freeze over in the winter many of the harbors, bays, marinas, and inflowing rivers do, so there is the potential for ice-fishing for Great Lakes trout. Ben concentrates his efforts on the southern portion of Lake Michigan, mentioning the harbors and marinas at Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha, and Sheboygan as potential fishing locations. He prefers fishing in the Milwaukee Marina because it doesn't have a river flowing into it. This keeps the water clarity more consistent and the ice is probably safer. You want two-to-three feet of visibility for fishing. The other harbors have rivers so water clarity changes more quickly. I liked the Milwaukee Marina because it was easy to get to, just take I-94 to Milwaukee and follow the signs on I-794. The parking was ample, the area wasn't crowded, even on the weekend, and the fishing was right there. You didn't have to walk two miles to the fishing hole. Another Milwaukee location Ben suggested was the Summerfest lagoons. I saw an outdoors show on television where they were using the same techniques we did on a river by Sheboygan. It didn't mention the name of the river, but it was a smaller stream, I don't think it was the Sheboygan River. I suspect there are other harbors and marinas farther north along Lake Michigan and along Lake Superior that hold trout in the winter. I know they fish for lake trout around the Apostle Islands off of Bayfield. Some more exploring may be in order.

Our primary targets were brown trout and

steelheads. Four different techniques were used to fish for them. The first was the Automatic Ice Fisherman. This is a rig that is a pole holder where you arch the pole over and hook the tip guide in a peg and string the line out on an arm. You leave some slack in the line that is held down by a weight (generally a float). When a fish hits it pulls up the weight on the line and trips the pole that snaps up and hooks the fish. When fishing trout you should watch the float. If it starts going up or jiggling, get ready to set the hooks. Trout can be notoriously light biters and may not trip the rod. A loose drag on the reel keeps the

fish from breaking the line until you reach the pole. The reel is spooled with eight to ten pound monofilament line with a six to eight foot, six-pound fluorocarbon leader. Spawn sacs are used for bait and they are held on with a number 6 or 8 Gamagkatsu or Eagle Claw octopus type hook. Colored hooks can be used; red is probably the best color. The bait is set close to the bottom, about six inches up. The Automatic Fisherman is



Ben Kueng

Continued next page

available with two different rods. For trout or other larger fish, I recommend the stiffer rod. Another item we used with the Automatic Fisherman was the Ice-Stopper bobber. This is a hollow float that you fill with a de-icing agent and run your line through it. It prevents your line from freezing in the hole. For more information on Automatic Ice Fisherman gear go to their website www.automaticicefisherman.com. Automatic Fisherman type rigs have been used in the Apostle Islands area for years. I think I have plans for making them, if I can find them. I think the plans came from In-Fisherman magazine. With a search of the WEB you could probably find plans to make your own.

The second and third techniques are jigging rigs. The line set-up is the same for the Automatic Fisherman, although the pole I was using had superline on it and I remembered why I didn't like superline for ice fishing. It ices-up a lot easier than monofilament. Jigging spoons such as Swedish Pimples and Do-Jiggers are two recommended lures. I'm not too good on size, but they were "medium" sized, not big or small. Silver and green or silver and blue are the recommended colors unless the water is turbid, then gold, brass, or copper colors are preferred. Minnow heads were hooked on to the jigging spoons. Another lure option is 3-to-4 inch, white tube bait with a jig head inside. I also saw some Mr. Zips on some of the rods. A quarter-ounce jig head with a Berkley Gulp minnow is another jig rig. The jigging motion is similar to that used for panfish and you should be fishing close to the bottom, but every once-in-awhile jig up higher in case some fish are suspended. I was thinking of taking one of my jig poles, but I am glad I didn't. My poles and reels are kind of "wimpy" for landing a big trout.

The second jigging technique is with spawn sacs. The rod is set up with a slip-bobber so the bait is just suspended above the bottom. Then the rod is jigged to attract fish to the bait.

The final technique is tip-ups. The tip-ups are baited with minnows on a size #8 or #10 treble hook. This technique is recommended in turbid water.

Bait deserves a paragraph of its own. For

minnows Ben prefers lake shiners. For spawn, the fresher the better, and Ben likes smaller sized spawn sacks, about the size of a marble, than are usually available commercially. He also changes the spawn once an hour so you always have fresh bait on the line. For us Madison area folks that don't fish over there regularly I see getting good spawn as the most difficult problem. Ben recommends Bob's Bait at the corner of Highway 100 and Greenfield Avenue in Milwaukee as a good source of bait, although he thinks Bob's spawn sacs are too big and he cuts them down and reties them if he uses Bob's spawn.

Landing big trout through a hole in the ice also needs a special technique. First you want to use an abrasion resistant line. I think something like Berkley's XT would be good. Ben uses Berkley professional grade fluorocarbon line for leaders. He doesn't think Berkley's Vanish or P-line are as good. You want to keep the line center in the hole when a fish is on. Don't let the line rub against the side of the hole. When landing the fish use a pumping action. Lift the rod and crank it down toward the water. Don't try cranking the fish in when it is running and taking out the drag. All you do is twist the line. Setting the drag is critical, especially when using only six-to-ten pound line. If the drag is too loose you never land the fish. If the drag is too tight, the fish breaks off. A fast person with a gaff is also good,

Where to fish in the marina? – look for corners, docks, points and walls. These are structures that the fish follow when moving around the marina. They also move along troughs in the bottom if you can find them. The trout are constantly moving in the marina so it is better to stick with a hole and let the trout move to you than to do a lot of "hole hopping". Use patience and try adjusting the depth of your presentation if you are not getting bites. As an example Ben said if he was fishing three lines in twelve feet of water he would set one line six-inches to one-foot above the bottom, one at eight feet down and one at four feet down. Trout are extremely "spooky" so Ben doesn't like to

Continued next page

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Trout, continued

use depth finders or underwater cameras. He also doesn't recommend using rattling jigs. For safety reasons Ben fishes on the inner half of the Milwaukee Marina. Although watching him drill holes I don't think there was any safety problem with ice thickness when we were there. He provided a map at the meeting of some of his favorite fishing locations.

So how well did we do on the outing? For me I had a banner day. One 36-inch brown trout made my season. I'm ready to go back for another try. In general the fishing was slow. The total crew caught four fish, one northern pike, two browns, and one steelhead. One brown and I think the steelhead was caught jigging with Swedish Pimples. The big brown was caught on the Automatic Fisherman and spawn. I don't know what the northern was caught on. Others still had some excitement with broken lines or early release fish. For eating, Ben recommends not keeping any browns over five pounds but most steelheads are smaller fish so are better table fare. The equipment for ice-fishing trout is a lot more simple and inexpensive compared to trolling for trout or salmon in the open water.



Ben Kueng (above)

A poem to summarize the day:

The weather was great

The company was fine

We learned a lot

But you don't get fish every time

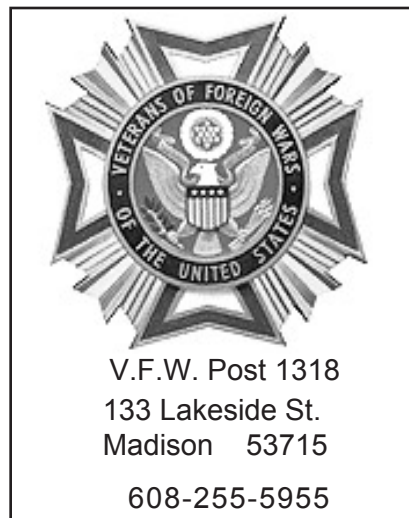
The lunch was delicious

But not many fishes


Tom Klein (Right)




Ben provided his WEB site www.benkueng.com. He is usually very agreeable to answering further question, especially if you mention you heard him speak at the club meeting or that you were on an outing with him. He also recommended keeping an eye on Lake-link to see when the best times to go to Milwaukee to fish.



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Pete Froland Award

Yahara Fishing Club

2011 Madison Fishing Expo



Former Treasurer Brad Czebotar receives the Pete Froland Award. Great Job Brad! Thanks a lot!



YFC members Don Gostomski, Jim Pankrats, Jack Hurst, and I think new members.

A Proposal from Kurt Welke, DNR

I would like to bring to the Yahara Fishing Clubs' memberships attention a pending proposal to change the current southern Wi walleye reg from 5 fish X 15" to 3 fish X 18". This will be up for a vote at the April 11 Conservation Congress spring hearing.


I will be coming to the 3/8 mtg with pamphlets, etc., but would like you to post this on the web. FYI, the Mad lakes are exempted from the proposal because to me, they did not meet the justification or objectives found in other waters: fishing pressure on walleyes is far below that for panfish, bass and perch. We do not have much natural reproduction so having potential spawners does not equate with or guarantee more fish, and 3rd; current size structure from our work does not suggest a cut off at the size limit- to the contrary, in Monona, Waubesa and Kegonsa, there is a large % of fish well beyond 15" and up to 29". More on that if you like..

Movie presentation : <http://dnrmedia.wi.gov/main/Viewer/?peid=677d8dcf11e24b8cbfd27001c12acbe9>

Web site ; <http://dnr.wi.gov/fish/regulations/springhearings.html>

Thanks so much,
Kurt Welke
Dane County Fisheries Manager
DNR South Central Region Headquarters
3911 Fish Hatchery Rd

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Notes From the Prez

Here it is folks.....a big thank you to the members of the Yahara Fishing Club from the board of directors of the Madison Fishing Expo this past weekend. And that's official! I witnessed it all firsthand and was, one more time, so impressed with our club's commitment to helping out at the show. It sure doesn't seem like a year since I wrote about this topic last. My back hurts today.....and my feet! But I sure had a great time seeing old friends and meeting some new ones. Did a little bit of shopping too. Lots and lots of positive reviews from everyone I talked to.

Judging by the e-mails I've seen from Jim Pankratz, the booth and raffle were a terrific success as well. Many thanks to him, Kevin and all the others who got prizes, set-up, tear down, sell raffle tickets, and just generally talk up the club to the folks out there. What a great way to showcase this club we all love.

Looking ahead to the March meeting, get ready for auction time folks. Hope to see all members there on March 8 to donate a few things and buy a few things to help out the club. "One man's trash is another man's treasure." If that's true, then somebody's got one heck of a lot of treasure in my garage and basement! I'll be bringing some of it to the meeting to give me a bit of breathing room. When I told my wife I bought a couple new fishing rods at the Expo, she said "that's fine dear, but maybe it's time for some culling!" She's probably right.

It sure sounds like the 20 or so members who fished for giant trout in Milwaukee last month had a super good time. I wish I could have gone on this outing (had to be out of town) and openly wept when I heard the reports! Congratulations to those who caught one of those monsters! Especially Stan Nichols who I think took big fish honors.....hope to hear all about it at the next meeting. The fishing was good.....the food was better... ..and the Badgers beat Ohio State. What a day!

Looking ahead past the March meeting we have lots on the calendar to start planning for. Our April speaker will be fish manager and longtime friend of our club, Kurt Wilke. Kurt should have some interesting updates on the current state of our home waters. The club is still looking at an outing to the Wild Rose fish hatchery in April as well. And in May, our own Jerry Paffenroth will speak on White Bass techniques in preparation for our planned club outing to the Oshkosh/Lake Winnebago area on May 21. Jerry has personally guaranteed everyone at least one fish.....or else he's buying the beer. I hope I can go along on this one as well.....but nothing is for sure when these new grandsons keep arriving! As I write this, we're still waiting.....but any day now.

And, of course, June takes us into the heart of the fishing season. The Kid's Fishing Day on June 4, the fish fry at St. Paul's church again on June 10, an on the water meeting somewhere on June 14, and on and on and on. Lots to talk about and plan for folks!

Hope to see you all at the auction..... bring some cash.....or I'll lend you some.

Surely some good deals are waiting for you there. Think spring.....start looking for Robins.....better yet, Red Wing Blackbirds.....I'm still at 220-8934.

Charlie



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Charlie hoists a big one.

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Five "See-Touch-Do" Expos have been held in Dodge County since 2006, attracting about 21,000 students, teachers and volunteers. Attendees interacted with the Expo's many featured activities, including archery, wildlife, conservation heritage, team building, firearm safety, fishing, sporting dog demos and trail recreation.

From the beginning, the Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo staff, sponsors and volunteers have worked together to ensure this remains a free, fun, educational experience. In tough economic times, outdoor activities often offer low-cost, healthy alternatives to indoor hobbies, and the Expo is a free gateway into inspiring children to become active outdoor enthusiasts.

In addition to inspiring outdoor recreation, Expo staff collaborated with the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction, Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources and various other organizations to develop the camp activities and tie them to academic standards for subject such as math, science, history and physical education.

From academic to conservation education, the Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo offers diverse activities for students, teachers and chaperones. We have and will continue to welcome home school classes, public schools, private schools, and even individual families to this fun-filled, family friendly event.

If you are interested in volunteering the next Expo, please call Coordinator Heidi Hubble at 608-833-2040 or email Heidi at hdidihubble@tds.net. You can also get information at: www.wisexpo.com.

Duffy Kopf will be volunteering both days in the fishing camp and encourages everyone to volunteer as much time as they can to this wonderful event. We hope to see you at the Dodge County Fairgrounds just off of Hwy 33, east of Beaver Dam.

Volunteer Application

Send your application to:
(mail, fax, or email)

Wisconsin Outdoor Education Expo Planning Office
5308 Valley Ridge Plaza Middleton, WI 53562

Name of Organization/Business/Agency/Individual: _____
Contact Person _____
Signature _____
Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Fax _____ E-mail _____

Please circle the day(s) you are available to volunteer (Wed – set-up/clean-up).
Beaver Dam: Wednesday, May 18th Thursday, May 19th Friday, May 20th

Check the area(s) you would like to volunteer.
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Set up ___ Clean up ___ Security ___
Other, please specify _____

Other people you know who would like to receive a volunteer application:
Name _____ Name _____
Address _____ Address _____
City, State, Zip _____ City, State, Zip _____
Phone _____ Phone _____
E-mail _____ E-mail _____

Please return this form before April 2nd, so we can schedule logistics



This picture is proof of how hard I work on Saturdays now that I am retired. The Crystal Lake Tournament had over 200 participants and everyone had a good time. My Jiffy products were in the hands of many people starting at 6:30am.

Duffy Kopf

More Work

Just an early “heads up” that I will be working with the people at Dwyer Marine and Geoff Crandall to have a fishing seminar. It will be Saturday on April 30th at Dwyer Marine. When I have more details I will let you know.

Thanks,
Duffy Kopf

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.

*An Organization to Educate, Protect and Propagate the Interests of All Fishermen in the Yahara Basin Area
Including all of Madison’s Lakes*

The next meeting is on **Tuesday, March 8th**, at the Lakeside VFW Hall (John Nolen Rr. & Lakeside St.)

The Board Of Directors meet at 6:00 pm, The **General Membership meeting starts at 7:00 pm.**

Speaker : Charlie Grimm, auctioneer

Calendar of Upcoming Events

March Events

March 8th - Club meeting at the VFW hall. Annual Club Auction. Kurt Welke will also discuss a proposal to change Walleye regulations. See page 4.

April Events

April 12th - Club meeting at the VFW hall. Kurt Welke on the local DNR lake surveys and prospects for 2011 on the Madison chain

May Events

May 10th - Club meeting at the VFW hall. Rick Krueger slide show presentation on his diving on the Madison lakes

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

President - Charlie Grimm ...249-9694	Director - Tom Wilke834-9554	Director - Roger Swenson 752-6825
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Check out our web page at:
www.yaharafishingclub.org



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