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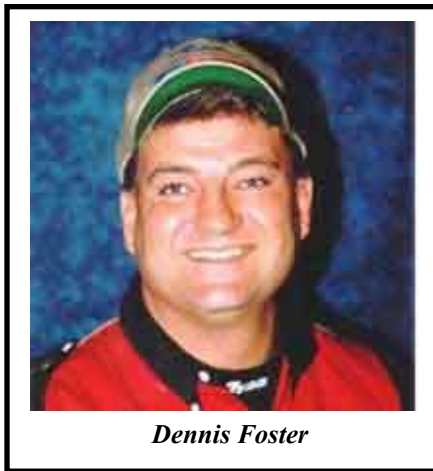
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The Mack Attack
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REFLECTIONS ON THE DOG DAY DILEMMA

By MACK'S LURE PRO STAFFER DENNIS FOSTER



Dennis Foster

Once the calendar rolls around to August and September, fishing for walleyes on most bodies of water becomes decidedly tougher. The weather is typically hot, often muggy, and most folks experience sporadic success at best. There are a variety of theories and excuses as to why this is; interestingly most of them hold little water. The most common conclusion ends up being that the fish are just not biting. In reality, nothing could be further from the truth on what might actually be occurring.

Realize now that the water temperature is high; it has driven the walleye's metabolism, i.e., feeding activity to its peak. Also... minnow species and the young of this year's panfish have reached the perfect eating size and are at the yearly peak in population. If you add in all

of the emerging aquatic insects such as Mayflies; Mother Nature has set out an all-you-can-eat buffet, and the fish are taking full advantage of the bounty.

So my conclusion is; the fish are really biting better now than ever... they just have a lot of choices of what to bite. And if we anglers want to achieve any consistent amount of success; we need to make our baits stand out from the plethora of easy eating options that they currently have available.

That being said, lets veer away from those presentations that were working so well just a month or so ago. I'm referring to not only our bait choices, but the locations we choose to fish, as well as the time of day. It should be pretty obvious that if what you were doing is no longer working, you need to change it. Make the change as dramatic as the change in weather can be.

First, where your lure choices are concerned throw caution to the wind, think aggressively, and bump everything up a notch to get yourself noticed. Where you would have normally pitched a jig, now burn a hard-thumping crank bait through the area. When you've been daintily presenting live bait with per-

haps a 0.8 Smile Blade, try adding a float and increasing the blade to a 1.9 for more flash, thump, and profile. As I mentioned quickly pulling crank baits through likely areas is always a good option. Now change again and add an additional attractor a couple of feet ahead of it, like a Mack's Lure Hot Wings. I feel a bigger presentation is usually better for these dog day situations.

Location is another factor since these fat and sassy fish do not have to actively hunt down food along traditional shoreline haunts. Sometimes finding the location can be as simple as fishing directly adjacent to a formerly productive structure, but now out in deeper water. Realize these fish would likely be suspended at roughly the same depths they were previously found near bottom. Try moving away from shore and out in some open basin areas. Search even a seemingly featureless basin with quality electronics...you'll be amazed at what you might find. I've relied on Raymarine units to do this for years due the fact that I can quickly cover ground with zero clutter, and still be assured that I'm seeing everything that is there, including baitfish and thermoclines.

Fishing at other times during the day should be tried as well. A night-time foray may be just the

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ticket. Bottom line is that things are not quite as easy as they once were. So use your God-given superior intellect to outsmart those fish and put the odds back in your favor. Thought, imagination, and a willingness to experiment can pay some handsome dividends.

BIG FISH IMAGES.COM

DAVE SCHAMP

I wanted to send you a few shots from a recent trip to Walter's Cove, British Columbia. The fishing was off-the-hook with plenty of big coho and chinook. Every member of the party landed at least one Tye (chinook over 30-pounds). I tagged three over 30 and handed-off another in the mid-30's. We didn't get a 40, but there were several caught in the three days we were there. This is open ocean fishing about 10 miles off-shore, right over the Continental Shelf, with nothing between you and Japan but 2200 miles of ocean. Needless to say it can get a little lumpy. Our first day was spent enduring 35 knot winds in 13 - 15 foot swells with a 2+ foot wind chop. What we will do for the "tug!"

After we had our chinook on day two we started using the Smile Blades on one rod. Immediate hook-up and it was no surprise that the coho love these things. We were fishing deep on down-riggers, 150 - 175 feet, and the third fish hooked on a Smile Blade was a dandy 30+ chinook. Over the next couple of hours we probably hooked a couple dozen fish on the Smile Blades, both coho and chinook.

Day three we gave the Smile Blades a work-out. Our guide was impressed that they accounted for both coho and chinook and we couldn't keep two rods in the water. What was most impressive is that with the Smile Blade above a

hoochie NO flasher was needed. You know what a pain a flasher can be, especially with coho, and our hooked to landed rate was excellent when using the hoochie/Smile Blade combo. The double blade arrangement seemed to account for bigger fish. I put a 3.3 inch Smile Blade on three beads above the hoochie and then tied a bobber knot about 1" above the Smile Blade. I put another three beads above the bobber knot and added a 1.5 inch Smile Blade. The bobber knot allows moving the upper blade closer or further away from the lower blade and eliminates any pressure or friction from the upper blade. The double blades really stir up the water and worked extremely well.

The 2.8 and 3.3 blades definitely produced quicker than the smaller blades. We didn't run a Smile Blade in front of bait because they were just killing them in front of a hoochie. Generally I rigged 4.5 inch hoochies with two 5/0 or 4/0 hooks on 40# leader. Just a guess on the number of fish hooked and landed on the Smile Blades in just over 2-hours of fishing on day three, 20 - 30. Would have been more, but we couldn't keep the gear in the water. Many coho hook-ups happened before the down-rigger ball was even dropped.

I'm partial to the chartreuse, silver, blue and glo/gold blades. The glo/gold blade worked well above a white or purple haze hoochie early in the morning and when there was a heavy overcast. Silver, chartreuse and blue worked the best with blue/glo (OG144R) or green/glo (OG142R and OG140R) hoochies when the sun was shining.

**VIEW DAVE'S IMAGES AT:
WWW.MACKSLURE.COM**

Cookin' Your Catch

Yakitori Glazed Salmon

Ingredients

- 4-8oz. salmon steaks
- 1/2 cup soy sauce
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/4 cup mirin
- 1/4 cup sake
- 1/2 cup Dashi *
- 1/2 cup scallions (white part only-minced)
- 1/4 cup gingerroot (minced)

Place ingredients for yakitori sauce in saucepan and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to medium low and simmer, uncovered until the sauce is glossy and syrupy (about 15 minutes). Remove from heat and strain into a bowl, discarding scallions and ginger. You should have about 3/4 cup. Cool to room temperature.

Prepare medium fire and brush salmon steaks with yakitori sauce. Place on grill and occasionally baste. Depending on thickness, grill fish about 3 minutes on each side and serve immediately.

*Dashi, also called hon-dashi, is a Japanese fish soup stock base. It is sold in sachet packets to which boiling water is added.

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“Make Your Down Time Pay”

by **Hall-of-Fame Angler Stan Fagerstrom**

Part 3 of 3

I don't care where you are or what the time of year is---you simply can't catch fish unless you've got a line in the water.

As I've endeavored to point out in my last two columns, the advance preparation you make in your down time this winter pays big dividends when you get back on the water come spring.

I've talked about a number of things that help the preparation process. Here are some others. A couple of other items I use to great advantage in my tackle workshop are duct tape and electrician's tape. I prefer to tape my reels in place with electrician's tape on my rods that don't have a fixed reel seat. It's light and keeps my reels right where I want them. The one thing it doesn't do is make it easy to remove the reel for cleaning. I do that in my winter down time. When I put a cleaned reel back on the rod I use new tape.

I mentioned duct tape. I use mine for a dozen purposes. One is as a means of labeling what's inside my tackle storage boxes, especially those that don't have see-through lids. I simply cut off a strip of duct tape and stick it on the outside lid of such a box. Then I use a Sharpie permanent marking pen to list what's inside.

Chances are if you've fished panfish much you've discovered crappie, bluegill and yellow perch often

can be caught on miniature plastic grubs. If you catch as many as I do, you also find you're often having to change grubs because the fish keep pulling them down on the tiny jig hooks it's necessary to use.



If you're into panfish angling you're aware these little scrappers often grab miniature grubs. They also often manage to pull these grubs down on your jig hook. You can remedy that problem in your down time. Just add a drop of glue to your hook where the head of the grub will be before you pull the grub into position.

You can do much to beat that problem in your spare time this winter. Get some super glue. Put a drop right behind the head of your panfish jig. Now slide your tiny grub into place. You'll find it stays where it's supposed to and you'll catch more fish because you'll spend more time with a line in the water.



Use the glue and then you pull your panfish grub into the position as pictured here. Now it will stay where you want it. Advance preparation like this lets you keep a line in the water more of the time and that means more fish.

I could go on for the next 10 pages detailing the reasons to polish spinners or wrap guides, but anybody

who knows a salmon from a shark recognizes those needs. One thing that isn't as apparent is what a great help it is to have a space in the house you can use for working with your tackle.

These days I have an entire small room for that purpose. It hasn't always been so. When we lived in a duplex many years ago, I talked my wife into letting me have one corner of a bedroom for the desk I used to house my fly tying materials, tackle tools, etc. In another house I managed to set up shop in the attic. I couldn't walk around up there, but I'm almost always sitting when I work on my gear anyway so it wasn't a major problem.

Having a place where you can keep your tackle repair tools in one spot is a tremendous help. You can walk away and leave a project and come back to it at your convenience. A second hand desk with lots of drawer space is ideal. Be sure it has room to mount a couple of small vises.

You'll need two vises. One should be the fly tying type, the other just a miniature of a big vise. Both are super tools for those many times you'll need a third hand. Set up a light that can be adjusted to different angles and you're in business.

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A small vise and a fly tying vise are among the tools you'll find lots of use for in your down time tackle repair and preparation. I'm forever using one or the other for a variety of purposes.

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One final thought: If you've lived long enough to know girls aren't just soft boys, you also know anticipation is half the fun of doing almost anything. Certainly it applies to fishing. Find that place in the house I mentioned, get a couple of rugs for the dog or cat to lie on, plug in a small radio and go to work. I've got to believe you'll enjoy it every bit as much as I do.

Best of all, somewhere down the line it's a cinch to pay off in more fish.

-end-

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sizes...

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Question of the Month

Have a question? We'd love to answer it! Contact us at bob@mackslure.com if you have a question you would like to see featured!

Q: Who is the founder of Mack's Lure and is he still involved?

A: The founder of Mack's Lure is Vern McPherson (The name of our company was derived from his last name). Vern still regularly drops by to pick up a few lures to go fishing (he says), and say hi. But we know it's mostly to check in on his daughter, Dawn who still works here at Mack's.

The Mack's Lure Forum...

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Photos, stories and comments are welcomed and encouraged. Please forward all content materials to bob@mackslure.com.

THANK YOU!

Photo of the Month



This just in from Mack's Lure Pro Staff Jerry Brown: Bouy 10 salmon caught with various Smile Blade combos. Now here are some happy fishermen!

