

The

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Mack Attack

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Trouble-Shooting Kokanee



by David Pitts

Kokanee are schooling fish. When targeting known kokanee lakes you will find them in the water column, more times than not, deep enough to evade bright sun, with water temperatures that not only offer a temperature comfort zone but hold their food source. If no other anglers are nearby, make large circular trolling patterns, for the most part the max depth of my tournament kok's come from eighty feet or less.

Kokanee are territorial and will follow lures, sometimes making numerous passes at your offering before taking it. This is a key issue.

When a strike or a release occurs,

look at your GPS, fish finder and speed indicator immediately. Punch an icon on your GPS screen. Make a mental note of your speed. After landing or re-rigging, you will be able to return to the bite speed without guesswork.

I have found the best trolling speed for kokanee is between 1.0 mph and 1.2 mph. Maintain this speed even in long turns. When you make turns with two or more rods you will automatically produce two different speeds, the inside rods will always slow down, sometimes pulling fish away from the faster lures and picking up the slower ones or

Tip of the Month

Quick Change!

One of the great advantages of using Smile Blades with spinner rigs is the ability to change blades sizes and colors quickly. When using a traditional bladed spinner, one must either use a detachable clevis or disassemble the rig in order to change blades. Not so with the Smile Blade. You can slip the blade right off the end of the leader right over the knot and quickly install a new one.

Typically when fishing multiple lines, you would start out trying different colors and sizes, then when a pattern begins to emerge, you would change the other lines over to duplicate the successful pattern. Smile Blades give you the option to do so quickly and effectively!

*Have a neat tip that will help others be more successful while using Mack's Lure products? Pass it along to newsletter editor Bernie Barringer at bernie@mackslure.com and we may feature it in an upcoming edition of the **Mack Attack**.*



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Depths & Downriggers

It is critical that you have a fish graph that shows the downrigger weights, so you can accurately see where your lure is in relation to marked fish. I use ten-pound weights. Heavier weights eliminate the up-swing or pendulum effect lighter weights produce, bringing your lure too high in the water column and above the fish you're marking. Ever wonder why you pulled through a big school of fish and never produced a strike?

Heavier weights hang straight down. This means truer readings and more take-downs.

If you mark fish between 33 feet and 49 feet, drop the upper rod to 32 feet and the deeper one to 49. Fish strike upwards not below; larger Kok's will always dwell towards the lower end or outside of a school as will big Mackinaw and Browns.

Frustrations

Frustration is one of your worst enemies. I always come across one angler having trouble getting hooked up. After hours of trolling right next to you with no fish, frustration kicks in. Even though they may be cloning your speed, lure and colors, they believe they are doing everything the same way... but are they? Two things come to mind immediately: scents and downrigger weights too light. Be sure to have an array of Mack's lures in different colors and be prepared to switch out often, at any one time I have more than a dozen different colors, blades and sized lures pre-rigged.

Scents

Scents are huge when fishing Kokanee. I use six small plastic containers; filling each one with approximately a half inch of drained White Shoe Peg Corn using Pro Cure's Bad Azz Bait Dye in chartreuse. On another I add Kokanee Special Oil, on

another I use Shrimp Oil and I bait yet another with Super Corn Scent. Here's an old school trade trick: salmonid species have a sweet tooth. Pour some straight white sugar covering the corn, gently shake and set all of them in the fridge for at least 24 hours. Keep these on ice even when fishing.

Make sure you do not handle gas or oils or fuel lines. If a lure even so much as touches your fuel tank, take it off. If your hand towel falls on the fuel tank or an area that had spilled fuel throw it in a plastic bag and wash your hands with a citrus cleaner then spray them with WD40 or squirt some shrimp scent in them. Wear gloves as I do.

Lures

Vibration and scent is what these guys home in on. Here are the tournament combinations I run:

- 1) Ringmaster Series: silver blade with a red flash tape, red beads on the upper end with chrome on the lower.
- 2) Silver blade with chartreuse tape red beads upper and chartreuse lower.
- 3) Wedding Ring Pro Series silver mylar smile blade red beads upper and lower.
- 4) Wedding Ring Classic Series red,



The Author and his daughter Crystal with a fine Kokanee

red, and RED!

5) Imperial Spoons in hot pink and chartreuse.

For blade colors I would stay with chartreuse, silver, golds and reds.

Another welcome addition to my arsenal are Flash Lites and Hot Wings in combination with the other Mack's Lures and are constant kokanee getters. When fishing Hot Wings or Flash Lites, I run those off of my downrigger balls and sometimes in tandem with one another, be sure that when you run your lures they are approximately 12 inches to 18 inches above your flashers and approximately 12 inches to 24 inches past your ball flashers.

Cookin' Your Catch

A New Twist on Pan-Fried Salmon

Cut skinned salmon fillets into one-inch strips and let them air dry or pat with paper towels. Roll the strips in yellow mustard. Use just enough mustard to get a thin film on the strips. The idea is to get a dry fish batter to stick... you can put too much on it.

Put a dry batter/breading of your choice in bowl and roll the strips until fully coated.

Heat a skillet with 1/4-inch of oil in the bottom. Cook the strips until they are brown and the salmon flakes. Be careful, this cooks pretty quick because the strips are really thin.

For a little variation in taste, try frying in butter rather than the cooking oil.

We are always looking for new recipes! Send your favorite recipes to bernie@mackslure.com.

California Angler Gets The Drop On 'Em!

By Stan Fagerstrom

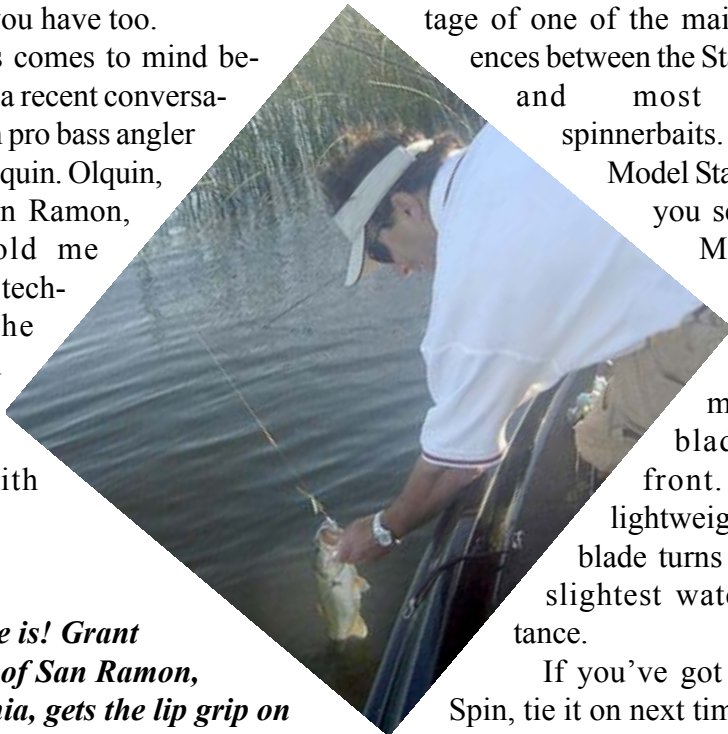
Part 1

There's usually more than one way to do darn near anything.

Fishermen are prone to forget that. Suppose you go out and have a particularly good day throwing one lure in just one way. What are you going to do the next time you're on the water? Odds are you'll do exactly the same thing you did last time.

Now there's nothing wrong with that approach, but only up to a point. It makes no sense at all to go on blindly heaving the same hunk of hardware in exactly the same fashion if the fish you're after don't give some indication it's what they want. But I've done that more often than I care to admit. If you'll think about it, and be honest while you're at it, I'll bet you have too.

This comes to mind because of a recent conversation with pro bass angler Grant Olquin. Olquin, from San Ramon, Cal., told me about a technique he has used successfully with



There he is! Grant Olquin, of San Ramon, California, gets the lip grip on a bass. Look close and you can see the Stan's Spin spinnerbait that the fish grabbed still pinned to its mug.

the Mack's Lure Stan's Spin spinnerbait.

"I used the Stan's Spin silver shad spinnerbait in a Western Outdoor News bass tournament earlier this year on Lake Shasta," Grant says. "I used the bait mostly while fishing timber in deep water. I caught spotted bass by just letting the lure flutter down through the branches."

Go back and read that last sentence. Grant wasn't just heaving the Stan's Spin out there next to cover and reeling it in again. As a matter of fact, he tells me he didn't really make what you'd term a standard cast at all. Instead he flipped the spinnerbait into the timber, then let it drop straight down. His hits came as the lure fell.

What Grant did was take advantage of one of the main differences between the Stan's Spin and most other spinnerbaits. The Pro Model Stan's Spin, you see, has a Mylar blade up front. That lightweight Mylar blade turns with the slightest water resistance.

If you've got a Stan's Spin, tie it on next time you're out and drop it into clear water alongside your boat. Let it fall on a slack line and you'll see what I'm talking about. The Mylar blade whirls like the prop on a helicopter as it flut-



ters its way down through the cover.

But while I said it looks like a miniature helicopter, Grant Olquin will tell you it looks even more like something else. And the "something else" this talented California angler has in mind is the how and why of how he knocked those bass in Lake Shasta for a loop.

"To me" Grant says, "the Stan's Spin resembles a dying baitfish as it flutters down through the cover. That's why it's such a great 'fall' bait. Just cast and let it drop. That's what I did with on Lake Shasta."

Most of the fish Olquin caught at Lake Shasta using the technique I've detailed were spotted bass. "The spots I caught on the Stan's Spin averaged about 2 1/2-pounds," he says, "and that's larger than average for Shasta."

Spotted bass weren't the only species that liked the looks of the Mack's Lure Stan's Spin that day at Shasta. Grant will tell you he also caught a number of trout on the same bait. "I had a German brown that weighed 5-pounds," he says, "and a rainbow of about the same size. I was shocked!"

Grant had an amateur fishing

Product Feature



The NEW 0.8 Smile Blade

As a response to anglers asking for a smaller Smile Blade, the 0.8 size was introduced in September of 2005. The primary application of this blade is to use in conjunction with a jig, to

give it more flash and vibration. However, there are applications for crappie fishing with spinners as well. Only time will tell how creative anglers will come up with more productive ways to use the smallest Smile Blade.

Photo of the Month

We want your photos! Send your photos to bernie@mackslure.com.



A Stan's Spin retrieved through the bulrushes proved to be more than this northern pike could resist for 12-year-old Dawson Barringer. The Stan's Spin is well-known for taking largemouth and smallmouth bass. It is also deadly on pike.

*Stan's Space...
From page 3*

companion along in that WON Bass Tournament on Lake Shasta. "My partner asked if I'd loan him one of my Stan's Spins," he recalls, "but I only had one myself at the time."

As I've said many times before in these Mack's Lure columns, don't get stuck using any one lure in the same fashion hour after hour if the fish fail to respond. Vary your routine until the fish you're after start telling you what it is they'll eat.

That's what Grant Olgquin did with the Stan's Spin in that Lake Shasta Tournament. In my next column we'll take a closer look at some of the other places this California tournament pro is using his Stan's Spin spinnerbait to advantage.

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