

**The**

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# Mack Attack

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www.mackslure.com Mack's Lure, Inc.. 2514 Easy St, Wenatchee, WA 98801 509-667-9202

## Soggy sandwiches and Smiles or From Trials to Tournaments

*By Bernadine Ayres*

### *Continued from last month*

In our first year of tournament fishing we were going to dive in head first. We would not only fish just one tournament association, but picked two.

Our first tournament will always remain a fantastic memory. We watched the sun come up over the water and saw the first light of day. We looked across at each other as we were waiting for take off, shook hands, and gave the thumbs up! We were really doing this. We had learned a great deal since the day we watched from shore. Now we were participants, waiting for our chance to prove that just about anyone can fish in a tournament, all you need is to believe in yourself that you can do it. What a rewarding feeling.

It rained the whole day of that first tournament. Just as soon as we would take our sandwich out of its wrapper, we would have to put it down,

because we were jigging on the Detroit River and if you ever fished there before you know how easy it is to lose your tackle in the debris on the bottom. When we had the oppor-

tunity to pick up our sandwich, again it would be soaking wet. It was like taking a bite of sandwich and a drink of water at the same time. However, that did not dampen our spirits. We just looked at each other and smiled. Soggy sandwiches and smiles were the memory of that first tournament day, and we finished in 19th place. Not bad!

Sure, there are many hours of quiet time on the water. That is the times that you can just mull over thoughts in your head, absorb the beauty around you; talk with your fellow angler, or just get in tune with yourself and with God. I truly love those hours. They are precious.

I am not like the majority of anglers; I am a woman. In all the tournaments we fished there were only a couple other female anglers. I thought of a variety of reasons why there are not more women fishing. The main one probably is that they do not have anyone to teach her the sport and encourage her to try it. Most men start fishing because their father or friend encouraged them when they were young. Women rarely get this encouragement. An example of this is when we are out fishing. Most men talk to my husband about what they have caught and what bait they



are using and literally look through me. I think they assume that I am just there to get the net when he catches a fish. However, little do they realize I am a serious woman angler, and we usually each catch the same amount of fish on any given day, and it takes two people to catch and land a fish. We believe in teamwork.


I have learned everything about fishing from my husband, listening to other anglers talking, reading fishing magazines, and trial and error. Before learning to fish I never realized the amount of bait available, hard bait, soft bait, and brands from A to Z. There is so much to learn about presentations, methods, and weather conditions. My dear husband is an excellent teacher, and never tires of my questions. He did not have anyone teach him as a boy, everything he has learned he taught himself, but he shares all those years of information with me freely.

Some couples do not have any interests they share with each other, and shudder to think of hours in the boat together. I am not saying fishing together is for everyone. I know neither of us have any interest in golfing, so if I were to see an article on couples golfing together, it would not keep my interest as fishing articles do. What I feel is important is to find something that both of you enjoy doing together and try it.

When we are camping and the alarm goes off at 4:30 a.m. there are mornings I would like to just roll over and go back to sleep, but by time we are on the water and take a deep breath of that clean morning air and watch the sun rise, it is magnificent. Sometimes it is an hour or more between bites. Sometimes I am standing jigging for hours. However, it does not seem that long. We talk about some of the nice places we have been, we talk about things in

our childhood and those years in between that we each were living separate lives. We catch up on so many memories that we did not get to share with each other. There is nothing to distract our mind and we can almost see and re-do the things in our mind as we talk about them.

We have fished in pouring rain, sun so hot the sweat ran in streams down our face, and then the ultimate perfect weather when you lift your face up to the sky and just want to look at the beauty of the sky

  
***“Every time we fish, I learn something. I believe anglers at any skill level continue to learn with each time out on the water.”***

forever. Sometimes a weather change really improves the fishing. We have fished many a tournament in rain all day. In one tournament on Lake St. Clair, my shoes were soaking wet and the air turned cooler, which made my feet uncomfortable. I chuckle to think about it, but we were near a shoreline and there were several people sitting in lawn chairs and I laughingly called out to the woman “I would pay you anything for a pair of dry warm socks”. Hours later at the weigh in that same woman came up and talked with us, what a nice conversation we had, she was a female angler also and

shared her love of fishing with me. I will never forget that day.

Every time we fish, I learn something. I believe anglers at any skill level continue to learn with each time out on the water. It is like parenting. When I brought that baby home from the hospital there was a lot I didn't know. Every day, month, and year I learned more. Well actually--I am still learning about parenting and I am a grandmother. You never stop learning.

In 2007, we began our fourth year fishing Walleye tournaments. We will once again fish the Michigan Walleye Tour, and Cabela's Masters Walleye Circuit. The past years we have fished the GNWC, WWA, MWT, and MWC, plus local events. In 2005, we were WWA Husband and Wife Team of the Year. In 2006, we purchased a new bigger boat. We are now driving a 2050 Skeeter with a 300HP Yamaha engine. Recently we were chosen as “Pro Staff Members of the Year” with Mack's Lure, one of our sponsors, and our main line of tackle.

We have fished in Michigan, Minnesota, Ohio, New York, and Ontario. We do fishing seminars at Cabela's in Dundee, Boaters World in Saginaw, and several Boat and Fishing Shows. Mack's Lure Smile blades and Hot Wings, plus Food-Source Lures are our main presentations at seminars and on the water. Both of these companies have excellent choices of fishing products, and we highly endorse them.

I am pleased to share my thoughts of fishing with anyone, and I am glad you took time to read this article. If you would ever want to encourage your wife or girl friend in fishing, I would be glad to help in any way. If you are a female angler like me, and are reading this because

***Soggy Sandwiches... see page 4***

# Public Panfish #1

## Part 2 of 4

*By Hall of Fame Angler Stan Fagerstrom*

As I've mentioned in this column before, it's well established that 10-per cent of fishermen catch 90-per cent of the fish. I guarantee anglers in that successful 10 per cent are fishing where the fish are located.

What some anglers never do realize is that only about 10 per cent of a given lake or river holds fish. You can fish the other 90-per cent all day with little hope for success.

The need to fish where they are is every bit as important in crappie fishing--in some respects more so--as in other angling endeavors. I say that because often in the spring big crappie schools tend to congregate in just one small piece of cover.

As I mentioned in my previous column, I like to mark spots where I've caught even just one crappie. As soon as I get a half dozen spots so marked, that's where I concentrate my fishing. I run from one to another of these spots and forget about fishing elsewhere.

I now hang my fishing hat in Arizona. One of the most successful crappie guides in this area gets most of his fish trolling. I've done some of that myself. I'll troll a proven crappie lure of one kind or other behind a Mack's Lure Smile Blade to find where the fish are holding.

However, once I get that first one I much prefer to stay put and fish that

area of the lake ever so carefully. This is especially true if there's cover where the fish might be holding. I say that because this time of year crappie schools are often tightly grouped. Where there's one there might be a bunch.

I remember once fishing at Lake Shastina in Northern California. I was put with a guide. It was in May and we were fishing for bass. The



***Before you catch big crappies like this one, you have to find them.***

***Here's some good advice on locating crappies.***

action was slow, but every now and then I felt something pecking at my small spinnerbait.

The guide pulled the troll motor out of the water and prepared to move. "Please hold on for a minute," I asked. "Something keeps nipping at the trailer of my spinnerbait and I've hunch it's crappie. They can't get themselves caught because the lure's hook is too large. Just hang tight and let me try something."

The guide waited while I rigged up a 2-inch grub on a 1/32nd-ounce leadhead. I hung it on the lightweight spinning outfit I usually carry in the spring. We were near a rocky shoreline and I knew those rocks ran on out into the water. You'll recall I've mentioned crappies liking rocks. I made a quick cast with that little grub. Bingo! A crappie picked up before I moved it three feet.

The guide and I sat right there and caught 24 fat crappie that would do credit to any skillet. You can bet I marked that spot before we left. That way I knew I could go back to the same location and have a good chance of making the same kind of catch. I did exactly that the next morning.

Make finding the fish-holding spots your first priority in any kind of crappie fishing adventure. I've told you the best places to look. Put these suggestions to work in your own fishing. They really do get results. If you don't believe that now, you will after you've given them a fair try.

This is a four part series on crappie fishing. In the next one we'll take a look at the importance of fishing at the right depth, another key ingredient to successful crappie angling.

***To Be Continued Next Month***

## Photo of the Month

We want your photos! Send your photos to [bernie@mackslure.com](mailto:bernie@mackslure.com).



### Lake Chelan, Washington Laker!

*This huge lake trout was weighed in at the Chelan, Washington Hospital on 3/8/07 at 30lbs. 15 oz.. It was 44 inches long with a girth of 25 inches. That is a record length for Washington State. Congrats to Tom Augustine of Hermiston Oregon for catching this trophy laker. This fish was caught on a size T-4 Flatfish with Mack's Lure Hot Wings® in front. Tom was fishing with Joe Heinlen, a Lake Chelan fishing guide who can be reached at 509-682-6245.*

### *Soggy Sandwiches... from page 2*

you enjoy reading fishing articles, I say "Wonderful!" As I said earlier, it is not for everyone, and if they have no interest at all in learning, you cannot make him or her want to. I am just thankful my husband was patient and taught me how much fun fishing can be. He always says I am the only woman he knows that can tie a palomar knot going thirty miles an hour up the river in a blinding rain-storm!

In everything, we do, no matter what body of water we fish, or wherever we place on the leader board one thing we never forget is this---we have fun. Prayer is a big part of our life. We never start a day without first asking God's guidance.

I hope to see you on the water or in one of the tournaments. You will know us by the smiles on our faces, and John 3:16 on the back of our Yamaha. I am blessed.

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**THANK YOU!**

