

A Legacy of Innovation
Since 1969

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The Mack Attack
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Fishing and Flushing

by Paul Wright

I had to make a decision between three choices:

A. An invitation to judge the American Field Pheasant Futurity bird dog field trial on October 7th and 8th.

B. Plan for two weeks of fall wall-eye fishing on Lake Erie near Vermilion, Ohio.

C. Contact two friends who had always wanted to go to Lake Erie but had never been there.

I decided to do all three! Now this may appear to be a conflict of two interests but believe me, it has everything to do with Northwest Ohio in the fall. I have been involved in raising, training, hunting, and competing with English Pointer bird dogs for nearly 40 years. Wow! I am getting up in years, 62 soon.

I have been fishing for walleyes for over twenty-five years; first in Canada for summer vacations and then competing in National walleye circuits all over the upper Midwest.

For anyone that has been to Lake Erie and caught "BIG" walleyes it can be life changing. And if you have never been, it's time to start making plans to "get 'r done"! Now I'm talking walleyes in the 5- to 8-pound av-

erage and 10-plus-pound trophies.

Fall is the best time for these big fish because the weather is usually a little more stable and the fish are really eating. Every fish will be loaded with rolls of fat and they are not shy about hitting just about any type of bait you want to fish with.

I had the last full week of September to fish by myself and fine-tune my game plan before two of my friends; John and Mike came over for their very first

walleye trip to Lake Erie. Mike had been to Canada one time and had caught walleyes in the 16- to 18-inch range. John had never seen a walleye before, let alone "hook" one.

John and Mike arrived the

evening of September 30th and I had to tell them that they would not be fishing on Wednesday and maybe not on Thursday. The other very important part of planning a trip to Lake Erie any time of the year is the weather. My rule of thumb is go for twice as long as you want to fish because you will usually be kept off the lake half the time due to rough and windy conditions.

We did the usual things on Wednesday and Thursday that you do when you can't go fishing; we went to every bait and tackle shop for 30 miles. It was a little boring for John and Mike but it gave me the time and opportunity to talk about Mack's Lures.

Friday morning was still a little rough but the wind was

dying and it looked like we would get out for a little training session late in the afternoon. You have to remember that these two guys have never been to Erie before and had no idea what a trolling board, reel clicker, or



line-counter reel was or how to set one up. Friday evening was perfect for a quick lesson

or two. The water was still pretty dirty from three days of strong winds but John and Mike were very quick learners.

Saturday morning we started out trolling large crankbaits and caught our first fish. Both guys were really excited when they heard the “clicker” go off and then saw the board sink. It was a very nice 7-pound “average” Lake Erie walleye. Both John and Mike were ready for another monster. We caught a couple more fish on cranks and then it slowed down. We made a move and it was time to break out the “meat”. Crawlers. Big Canadian crawlers that are nearly a foot long!

My favorite presentation for walleyes when fishing with crawlers on Erie has always been Wally Pops and we caught most of our fish with this presentation. But I had a week to “play” around and try Mack’s new bait, the “HummBait”. I fished it quite a bit off and on and just did not have the results that I was having with the Wally Pop and crawlers. One evening I was looking at the bait and decided to try a little different approach. The HummBait has such a unique profile and flash in the water that it just had to work on Lake Erie. I took the feathered treble hook off the HummBait and added a two-hook crawler-type harness to the Humm Bait (see photo at the top of this page) and started to use it right along with the Wally Pops. I was truly impressed. It caught just as many fish as the Wally Pop but the size of fish was always bigger on the modified HummBait. This was my first experience with the new HummBait on



Lake Erie but I guarantee it will not be my last. Pick up a few in different sizes and colors and give them a try.

John and Mike had a trip of a lifetime and will always remember how long they had to wait to fish. They couldn’t have known how much fun they were going to have and how big those Erie “eyes” would be.

After leaving Lake Erie and fishing, it was off to Upper Sandusky, Ohio and two days of horseback field trailing and watching young (2-year-old) bird dogs point and handle those wily ringneck pheasants. All of my old-time bird-dog friends kept asking about the “boat” behind my truck instead of the usual horse trailer.

I have been very fortunate to be able to travel and compete all over the country from the Canadian prairies to the pinewoods of the Deep South with the “dogs” and from the Dakotas’ through the upper Midwest to Lake Erie in pursuit of walleyes. Competition is great and I have enjoyed most of it with the dogs and fishing. But, the very best time is when you have friends or family hunting or fishing and just have one of the outstanding days that you will remember for the rest of your life. Take a friend or young person hunting or fishing in the near future and enjoy the moment.



Cookin' Your Catch

Cornmeal Crusted Trout

For this delicious treat you will need about four medium sized trout (roughly 12-16 ounces). Butterfly the trout fillets for best results.

- 6 bacon slices, chopped
- 2 cups cornmeal
- 2 tsp seasoned salt (Johnnie’s or Lawry’s)
- 1 tsp garlic powder
- 1 tsp ground black pepper

Fry the bacon until crisp, then remove and set aside. Stir together the cornmeal, garlic powder, pepper and seasoned salt. Fry the trout in the bacon drippings for about 4-6 minutes per side over medium heat. Sprinkle the bacon pieces over the trout and serve.

A Legacy of Innovation for...

40 Years!

Yes it’s true, Mack’s Lure will be 40 years old in 2009. Watch for more info in upcoming editions of the Mack Attack Newsletter!

He Busts 'Em With a Blade

By Hall-of-Fame Angler Stan Fagerstrom

Part 2 of 3

My bass fishing memory book is overflowing with a variety of fishing adventures.

Which of those memories brings the most satisfaction? It would be hard to say. The first time I cracked the 10-pound bass barrier is one. There are many more that are right in there vying for attention.

In my last column I wrote about a recent trip to two of Mexico's top bass lakes--Lake El Salto and Lake Mateos. I shared that trip with Bob Schmidt, the guy who calls the shots here at Mack's Lure. I also mentioned that on one morning at El Salto Bob and I put 19 bass in the boat out of 20 casts.

Be assured our combined experience that morning is also going into my memory book underlined in red. And I've got to believe that if Bob hadn't set the stage and primed the pump on the first day we fished it probably wouldn't have happened.

We fished at Lake El Salto for three days. As I mentioned in my last column, on the first day Bob wound up putting the most fish in the boat and one of them weighed 7-pounds, 8-ounces. Except for the fish we took off the surface during the early morning bite, all of Bob's bass came on a plastic bait rigged with a Smile

Blade.

The second morning started out the same way. We caught fish on a variety of surface lures, and then switched to plastics when the guide moved us to deeper water. After what I'd watched Bob do with his Smile Blade and plastic combination the first day, I was rigged up and ready with my own similar set up the second day out.

There wasn't anything particularly unusual about the place where the guide took us that second morning. But Pepe, our guide, knew what he was doing. The area where we stopped was loaded with bass. We started catching one fish after another and wound up one stretch by boat-ing 19 bass out of 20 casts.



Stan and Bob discovered that the Smile Blade in front of a Senko creates some great fish-catching action.

Now that's great action even by El Salto standards. And those fish weren't dinks. Most of them ran from 2 to 5-pounds. Again, every last one of them hit a plastic bait that had a Smile Blade out in front.

The plastic bait we used for those fish was a 5-inch Yamamoto Swimming Senko. If you've thrown one of these dandy little baits you know it's made so the tail wiggles and waggles on the retrieve.

After we'd caught a bunch of fish I got to wondering where the credit really belonged for the super action we'd been having. Just how much did the addition of the Smile Blade have to do with it? One of the keys to the effectiveness of a Smile Blade used ahead of a worm is that the lightweight plastic blade gives the worm a unique action. The Swimming Senko has a good bit of "come-hither" action on its own.

I made a comment along that line just as the guide unhooked another of Bob's bass. Instead of taking time to rig with another Senko as he had been doing, Bob just cast his Smile Blade out toward the submerged trees we were fishing. Wham! A bass smacked his Smile Blade and its bare hook before you could blink.

The guide eventually netted that fish and I don't think Bob quit smiling for the next two hours.

Now I'm not recommending that you rig a Smile Blade in front of a bare hook the next time you go bass fishing. I'm sure Bob doesn't either. But by golly that twirling little blade that you slide on your line or leader ahead of whatever you're throwing will, at least some of the time, increase your chances of catching fish.

After we'd caught all those bass on a Smile Blade/Swimming Senko combination, I found myself wondering how a Smile Blade would work ahead of a 10-inch black and blue Berkley Power Worm. I picked that particular worm because ever since El Salto Lake has existed that big worm has consistently caught some of the largest bass taken there each year.

It didn't take long to find out. As soon as I got the big worm rigged behind my Smile Blade I cast it back into the area where all the other fish came from. I'd only crawled it along the bottom for a half dozen feet before something chomped down on it. This wasn't the sharp, quick jerk so often associated with the strike of

smaller bass. It felt more like I'd hooked a snag and then suddenly the snag began to move off.

I snapped back on my rod and immediately there was that tremendous downward surge of a really big bass. Before I could get my thumb off the reel spool there was a sickening "snap" and my 20-pound leader popped like a piece of cheap cord string.

If you're into bass fishing chances are what you've read in these last two columns has left you with a few questions. My guess is you're wondering exactly what kind of set up we used; what was the size and color of the Smile Blades, etc. Stay tuned. I'll provide those answers in my next column.

Photo of the Month

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



It's that time of the year again! Bob Parks and Phil Keegan of Kansas City, Missouri took these terrific triploid rainbows from Rufus Woods reservoir in Washington. Fall is a great time to get in on the action.

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: In what year was the Smile Blade introduced and what is it made of?

A: The Smile Blade is made from a plastic called "Mylar" and it was introduced in 1998. The Smile Blade has become a favorite attractor for many species of fish in the last ten years.

The Mack Attack is a free service provided to anyone who is interested by Mack's Lures Inc. We need your input! If you know of anyone who would like to be on the mailing list to receive the Mack Attack, please forward their e-mail address to al@mackslure.com.

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

THANK YOU!

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