

**The**

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# Mack Attack

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## Mack's Lure Hooks New State Record Walleye

*19.3-pound walleye to be Washington State's new record*

*by Bernie Barringer*



The Columbia River has produced the largest walleye ever recorded in Washington state, and in fact one of the largest of all time, anywhere. Mike Hepper of Richland, Washington pulled in the huge fish on February 5, 2007. "I was fishing an area known as the Finley Area, near buoy marker number 30," Hepper said. "The fish hit a crawler harness with chartreuse beads and a Mack's Lure Smile Blade in silver scale pattern." He was fishing in 32-34 feet of water with the Smile Blade rig behind a 36-inch leader on a 1-ounce bottom bouncer. This rig is a go-to bait for Hepper, who is a serious big walleye angler who puts in a lot of time chasing the Columbia's monster walleyes. "The Smile Blade allows me to move slowly, and it keeps turning even when I am only pulling the bait at 1.3 to 1.5 miles



per hour.” Moving slowly around the contours of the river in the winter is important, he says, because the water temperature is in the mid-30’s and the walleyes are not likely to chase a fast-moving bait.

Hepper, a retired school teacher, fishes the Columbia around 200 days a year and is no stranger to big fish. His largest last year was 17.7 pounds and he nearly missed the state record in 2005 when he caught one that weighed in at 18.57 pounds, just under the record of 18.9 pounds. He

has caught dozens of fish in the teens and walleyes over ten pounds, considered trophies by most walleye anglers, don’t even get a second look.

For the record, the fish was officially registered at 19.3 pounds, with a length of 35 inches and an impressive girth of 23 inches.

Hepper was right back on the water the following day. “Now through March is the best time for big fish,” he says. He doesn’t intend to quit fishing for these big fish any time soon. He believes that the record

may well be broken again, possibly soon, and you can’t catch a big one if you’re not on the water.

Mack’s Lure Smile Blades have produced huge numbers of walleyes on the Columbia River for many years, and are now beginning to catch on in the Midwest and other parts of the walleye belt across northern North America. They are available at most sporting goods retailers or on-line at [www.mackslure.com](http://www.mackslure.com).

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## My Tournament Go-to Baits... Try ‘Em – You’ll Like ‘Em

*by Curt Linneman*

I love fishing tournaments and the time it allows me to spend with my son, who is also my partner. Like most of you, I have a full time job that does not allow me to fish professionally. My job restricts my entries in tournaments to locally operated events in South Dakota, Iowa and Minnesota. My son has a wife and three small children with a full-time job himself. It is always difficult to coordinate our free time so that we can fish together.

This past summer, we fished in four walleye tournaments. Of the four we participated in, we won one and got in the money in one other (catching the largest walleye in the tournament). We could not have gained the win or the money without the use of Mack’s Lures. I would like to tell you about the products I used and how I used them.

First of all, I have used Smile Blades for many years now. At one time, I did not think there was a spinner rig made that you could use at the same time while jigging or Lindy rigging. Smile Blades changed all of that. What

a great attractor that blade is!

Many times walleye fishing requires a slow presentation. With a Smile Blade, you can fish slow and still have the attraction and vibration that only a Smile Blade can deliver. I discovered in a tournament this summer that Smile Blades are even more effective when used in conjunction with a Slither Rig. This combination works better than a Bottom Bouncer as it is able to slides through

rock crevices with ease and also seems to work very well in wood.

Another Mack’s Lures product I have used with great success the past two summers is Hot Wings. They can either be used in front of crankbait, straight-lining using monofilament or, my favorite, using them in conjunction with lead core. I have always been intrigued with using some type of attractor in front of my crankbait when I am trolling for walleye. Over the years I have used various attractors, but I have never had the success I have had with Mack’s Lure Hot Wings.

In the tournaments I fish in each person is allowed by State law to have two lines. I always have at least one of these lines rigged with Hot Wings. I always place my Hot Wings at least four to six feet in front of my crankbait. I use various colors dependant upon the forage base or the amount of sunlight. A glow in the dark Hot Wings always seems to work.

This summer, try these methods and you will have success too!



***The author’s son and grandson display a nice walleye caught on Smile Blade spinner.***

## Casting Or Trolling “You Gotta Rig ‘Em Right”

*By Hall of Fame Angler Stan Fagerstrom  
Part 1*

Nowhere is it etched in concrete that you have to use any item of fishing tackle exactly as some manual details.

The sooner you realize that, the more fun you'll get out of your fishing. I've been involved in writing some manuals myself. What I've just said applies to those I've written every bit as much as it does to those someone else has done. None of us has all the answers where fishing lures and how best to use them are concerned.

I mention this because I've had some questions lately that bring it to mind. It will be the subject of this next series of columns.

Certainly after almost three quarters of a century of sports fishing I'm totally aware that some approaches work better than others. But those

fish we're trying to put in the boat have a tendency to sometimes knock your favorite theories clean out of the piscatorial ballpark.

A friend asked recently about using Mack's Lure Smile Blades for crappie. He wondered if these lightweight plastic, easy-spinning blades would work for that purpose. They sure as heck will!

As a matter of fact, they'll often work better for that purpose than the metal variety. That especially applies when you're trolling. One of the points I always make in any discussion about crappie fishing is that you simply can't fish too slowly when these good eating panfish are what you're after.

I made that clear in my book “Catch More Crappie.” If you're on a new body of water and don't know where

the crappie hang out, trolling is a good approach. It's not necessarily the best once you start getting hits, but it's a great way to find out where the schools are holding.

The best approach is to troll just as slowly as you can and still keep your bait or lure where the fish are holding in the water column. Smile Blades, again because of their lightness and the ease with which they turn, lend themselves admirably to this purpose.

Another advantage is that the Smile Blades you slide right onto your line or leader aren't going to twist things up for you. Even more important, they'll continue to function at speeds where large and heavy metal blades may not.

Sometimes when crappie fishing it's best to have a Smile Blade right down close to the bait or lure you're using. Other times I've had more success when I've used my spinners a foot or so ahead of the crappie bait or lure.

I know anglers who favor circling the same area of a lake once they get hits while trolling for crappie. If that works for you, go for it. But there's another idea I want to share. Keep it in mind if it's something you've not tried.

What is it? Simply this: Whenever you get a hit or two, stop trolling. Then drop anchor and start covering that area of the lake ever so carefully by casting.

If you take this approach you'll want to pay special attention to the depths at which the fish are holding. Where you find one crappie the odds are excellent there will be more of them around.

I recall an experience I had one time on some of the backwater of the Columbia River where it divides the states of Oregon and Washington. I'd been fishing bass since daylight with-



out so much as bump.

Weary and about ready to quit, I decided to take a shot at the crappie I knew the slough I was on contained. I rigged up a spinner ahead of a white and yellow fly. I tipped the fly with a small piece of pork rind.

I made repeated casts into an area where I'd caught crappie before. I had the same lack of success I'd been having for bass. Then to top things off, I tried to throw too far with the level wind reel I was using and wound up with a doozy of a backlash.

My lure sank to the bottom in about 25-feet of water. It stayed there while I picked away at that miserable tangle. When I finally got the backlash picked out, I hopped my lure up from the bottom and began reeling.

I hooked a crappie before my rind-tipped fly moved three feet. My backlash turned into a blessing. It showed

## Cookin' Your Catch

### Batter for Walleye Filets

submitted by Troy Walwood

1. Catch a few walleyes trolling with a Wally Pop.
2. Take 1 cup of flour and mix it with 1 tablespoon of Creole seasoning
3. Add a shake or two of Lawry's Season Salt
4. Add either black pepper or crushed red pepper to flavor.
5. Mix in 7UP soda or your favorite beer to make mix semi solidified.
6. Place cleaned walleye filets without bones into mix so that the batter

sticks to the fish (best if you pat them dry before putting them into the batter)

7. In hot oil float the filets until they turn light brown (almost tan)

8. Allow them to cool on a plate with paper towel (serve warm not oil hot)

9. Eat with friends and tell them the story of how you used Mack's Lure products to catch the fish who knows you might have more people on your boat the next time you go!

me where the crappie school was holding. I hadn't been fishing deep enough. Once I found them, I sat right there and caught all I wanted to clean without moving the boat.

We've also had some questions lately from anglers asking if it's possible to use lures like the ever popular Wedding Ring for casting as well as trolling. I'll cover that next month.

## Photo of the Month

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



*Bryon Bradley of Richland, Wash. caught this 21 lb (36") buck steelhead on the Snake River above Ice Harbor Dam on 12/26/06 floating a black 1/4 oz. Rock Dancer jig tipped with bait shrimp. He's caught several others using the Rock Dancer, but this is his biggest this season.*

The *Mack Attack* is a free service provided to anyone who is interested by Mack's Lure, 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](mailto:al@mackslure.com).

Photos, stories and comments are welcomed and encouraged. Please forward all content materials to [bernie@mackslure.com](mailto:bernie@mackslure.com).

**THANK YOU!**

