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The Mack Attack
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PLANER BOARDS and CRAWLER HARNESSSES



by Bryan Youness

Planer boards have been most commonly associated with fishing big water for salmon and lake trout with outrigger masts and releases clipped on the planer board line. Now with growing popularity of inline planer boards it very easy to spread your lines away from the boat when fishing for other species. I sue them a lot when trolling Mack's Lure crawler harnesses.

They attach to your line by a simple pinch pad fitting, and they can be added to, or removed from, your line in seconds. They are ideal for trolling in an area where you want to fish lures at different depths. One example would be using planer boards

to send a shallow bait out from the boat and have it fishing within a few feet of the shore. You can then run another planer board farther from the shore with a deeper presentation. Meanwhile your boat is in deep water where you are less likely to spook shallow feeding fish.

Another situation where planer boards have an advantage is trolling rocky shores that have an erratic bottom contour. With planers you can send lures out to run along reefs and through rock piles or any other obstruction that could either damage

your boat or propeller while you stay out in the deeper water. The most common is to simply spread out your baits and cover a much greater area.

Planer boards are available from various manufacturers with the leading brands being Offshore Tackle, Tru-Trac, Church Tackle and Big Jon. I prefer the Offshore Tackle planer board. It has the advantage of being able to be used in a wide variety of ways. It can stay on your line or slide down the line when a fish hits. You can use the add-on "tattle flag" conversion that has a flag on the board that folds back when you have a fish on. This will save you from dragging a small fish for miles that might not show on the board. It will also alert you when your lure has picked up weed as the flag will fold back. The Offshore Tackle planer can

also be outfitted with lights for tolling at night.

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especially on tournament day, so here is the best advice that I can give. The first thing I do when I purchase a new planer board is remove the front release that is included and replace it with an OR16 release. The difference in the stock release and the OR16 is not only in the tension, but also there

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is a center button that holds the line better and can prevent having to circle back to pick up strayed boards.

When loading this front release I also will wrap the line around the top half and back through the plunger again. This will prevent the board from sliding down the line and forcing the fish off the hook.



Another common misconception is that planer boards are just for crankbaits and for trolling spoons. If you are not using them for pulling spinners you're missing the boat. Any of the planer boards can be used to pull spinners and harnesses. Whether you are fishing shallow or deep, you can present spinners, worm harnesses and floats directly to shallow feeding fish or fish holding tight to deep structure. I like to rig a variety of types of spinners from the Double Whammy Ring Master to one of the many color variations of the Wally Pops in the Crawler Series.

To present these baits to deeper fish there are many methods you can use. The most popular method is the



Tip of the Month

Tips for tying your own crawler harness

By Tony Glynn

- 2 Gamakatsu circle hooks or Guide Series circle hooks
- 2 Mack's Lure stack beads
- 1 Mack's Lure wedding rings
- 1 Mack's Lure quick change clevises
- 1 Mack's Lure 3 or 4 mm beads
- 15 lb. test fluorocarbon leader material (P-Line)

Putting it all together:

Start with a 6 foot piece of 15 lb. test P-Line leader material. Snell both hooks on, about 3 to 4 inches apart. There are a couple different methods for snelling hooks. The easiest way is to hold the first hook in your hand by the bend. Slide the leader material downward through the eye of the

hook and down to your fingers. Pinch the tag end of the line and hold it tight. Hold the line just above the eye of the hook and tightly wrap the line downward around the shank of the hook. Make at least 12 wraps. Pinch the line again to hold the coil tight. Run the far end of the line back through the eye of the hook in an upward direction and pull it snugly. Slide your second hook down the line leaving around 3 to 4 inches between the hooks and repeat the process.

Now that the hooks are on, add the first stack bead. Continue by adding a wedding ring, a second stack bead followed by a quick change clevis, and then a 3mm or 4mm bead. Lastly, tie a loop in the end of the harness. Using a loop here will enable you to change your Mack's Lure Smile Blade to a different color or to remove it all together and use a Colorado blade on the quick change clevis.



use of snap weights. Snap weights can be quickly attached to the line and the weight can be changed to the depth you are trying to obtain. Snap weights use the same OR16 release mentioned earlier. The button in the center of the pad will help prevent

losing the release and weight. After trying the basic planer board setup with crawler harnesses and snap weights, you will find countless opportunities to make changes and improvements to suit your needs or the individual situation.

Steelhead Fishing On The Columbia "He Does It With A Dancer"

*By Hall of Fame Angler Stan Fagerstrom
Part 1*

When and if my travels take me to the Tri Cities area of Washington State I know the first guy I'm going to contact.

Who is it? It's Chris Roney, of Richland. Chris is young man who has a couple of different jobs. The first is as a full time paramedic with the City of Richland Fire Department.

But it's not the skills associated with his medical or fire fighting abilities that peak my interest. Chris, you see, is a fish-catchin' son of a gun who also operates the Mid-Columbia Excursions Guide Service. Friends tell me he's one of the best when it comes to taking salmon and steelhead out of the Columbia River. I had opportunity recently to visit with Chris. In the process I found out how he goes about putting fish in the boat when he's on the Columbia. This likeable and talented Richland angler is an expert at either salmon or steelhead fishing. This time around let's just consider his approach to steelhead angling.

I'll tell you one thing right off the bat. If you think Roney uses a dozen different lures when he's out there on the big river---guess again. Almost all the time he uses just one and it's a Mack's Lure product called a Rock Dancer.

If you're familiar with Mack's Lures, you're aware that the Rock Dancer is a bucktail jig. These well made lures come in two different hook sizes. They are available with either 1/0 or 2/0 hooks. These jigs



also come in 1/8th, 1/4th and 3/8th-ounces weights.

Examine a Mack's Lure catalog or scan the company's web site catalog and you'll see that the Rock Dancer are available in 14 different colors or color combinations.

Lots of Roney's fishing is done in the big pools formed by one or another of the Columbia's dams. Many anglers go after steelhead with plugs that wiggle or wobble one way or another. That's not the route selected by Chris.

Like the rest of us, he has experi-



mented with a variety of lures but today it's a Rock Dancer jig that he hangs on his own line or the lines of his clients each time out. The fish he puts in his boat are proof that it works.

Roney has been guiding on the Columbia now for the past seven

years. The best way to fine tune your approach to any kind of fishing is spending lots of time on the water. In his job with the Richland Fire Department, Chris works a 24 hour shift, then he's off for the same length of time. When he isn't on duty you'll more than likely find him on the Columbia.

I mentioned that the Mack's Lure Rock Dancer is available with 14 different skirt color or combination of colors. There are just two that get almost all of the Richland's expert attention. "I've experimented with different colors," he says, "but my first choice is the solid purple or the purple and black combination."

This Columbia River guide also has firm opinions where the weight of his Rock Dancers is concerned. "I use the 3/8th-ounce jigs," he says, "and this is important. "I find the jigs of 1/8th and 1/4th-ounce just don't

get down as deep as the fish are often holding.”

Roney says steelhead are available in the area of the Columbia he fishes from mid-October on through March. The largest of these migratory battlers he’s put in his boat so far is a 22-pounder. He’s had a number of others in the 20-pound category.

If you done much steelhead fishing I don’t have to tell you steelhead that size are handful. You’ll have your work cut out for you before they wind up in the net.

So far I’ve provided only some of the basic planks in Chris Roney’s steelhead fishing platform. In my next column I’ll share details on exactly what he does with those Rock Dancers he trolls in the Columbia’s productive waters.

Some of his tactics may surprise you. I’ll reveal what they are in my next column!

Cookin' Your Catch

Parmesan Bake

by *Dane Stanaway*

This recipe works equally well with walleye, salmon or trout and may be good with other species... feel free to try it with any fish you can filet.

Filet fish out, making sure all bones are out of the fish.

1. Lay down a sheet of heavy duty tin foil.
2. Either spray the sheet with Pam nonstick spray, or cover with lettuce.
3. Lay fillets down on the foil, placing them relatively close to each other, leave room around the

edges. Fold edges up to contain the ingredients.

4. Cover fillets with lemon juice
5. Put slices of butter on the fillets, as much as you desire.
6. Season with Lawry’s seasoned salt and garlic powder.
7. Sprinkle grated parmesan cheese over fillets.
8. Cover with another sheet of tin foil and seal on edges. Again make sure edges are bent up and sealed so nothing will leak out.
9. Preheat oven or grill to 350 degrees. Cook on 350 degrees for 20 minutes. I like to cook it on the grill but either way is good.
10. Enjoy!

Photo of the Month

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



Jason James braved the cold January weather to catch this great steelhead on a black and pink Mack’s Lure Rock Dancer jig. It was caught between Wells and Chief Joseph dams on the Columbia River.

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