



THE SPLASH

The Official
Publication of
the Fresh Water
Fishing Hall
of Fame

VOL. 37
NO. 1
Winter 2013

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Winter at the Fishing Hall of Fame!



Founded 1960 • Incorporated Not For Profit 1970
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Printed February 15, May 15,
 August 15, November 15

Programs and Activities

- Recognition of World Fresh Water Sportfishing Records
- Record Book Published Annually
- Recognition for Achievement of Excellence in Sportfishing
- Educational Museum of Sportfishing Artifacts and Library

*Museum open April 15 through October 31
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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK
 by Emmett Brown

January 24, 2013

If the old saying, "What is short is best" rings true, then this will be my best attempt at outdoor communication to date. *The Splash* is full of content this issue and that's a very good thing.

I trust all of you are comfortably past the holiday season and, hopefully, trying to stay active in the outdoors this winter. As I write this, it is about 11 degrees below zero at 10am in the morning! I was talking to one of our Kentucky members yesterday and he informed me they were approaching the zero degree mark. That's cold by any standard.

As they always do, this cold snap will break and I'll be back to drilling holes through the ice over the weekend. Truth be told, I would rather be casting a crank bait over a stump flat or new, emergent weed growth.

Do any members in the southeast or southwest have room for me in your boat? I can put away my ice auger very quickly! Just let me know.

Take care,
 Emmett

2013 HALL LAPEL/HAT PIN NOW ON SALE!

As most of you know, the State of Wisconsin no longer allows us to send raffle materials through the mail. This has put a real damper on this very important fund raiser for us.

As the old expression goes, "Time to move on!"

We receive many requests at our gift shop for lapel/hat pins every year. Enter our first, in a continuing annual series, of limited edition pins for Hall members. This very nice pinback is actually made from a genuine Mepps #3



Aglia blade and comes in its own decorative box. We will only sell 500.

The cost is only \$14.95 which includes shipping (anywhere in the United States) and all applicable sales taxes. Shipping outside of the U.S. is an additional \$5.

Please show your support for the Hall and order yours today! They are available on our website at www.freshwater-fishing.org or call us at 1.715.634.4440. Thank you. Note: A flyer, further describing this fund raiser, will be sent in our May *Splash*.

HALL AWARDS ARE PRESENTED!



David "Crash" Mullins receives his 2013 Legendary Guide Induction Plaque on January 11th at the Chicago Musky Show. Wendy Williamson, of the Hall's Awards Committee, is presenting to Crash. Thank you Wendy and huge round of applause goes to Steve Statland for continuing to make this venue a showcase for our awards program.

Also on hand for Crash's induction were past honorees: Back row (left to right): Bill Sandy, Larry Ramsell, Don Dubin and Jim Saric. Middle row (far right): Hall awards committee vice-chairwoman Wendy Williamson. Front row (left to right): Larry Dahlberg, Russ Smith, Steve Statland and David "Crash" Mullins.

Photos courtesy of Justin Mullins

WE'LL MISS YOU!

On January 2, 2013 Dennis R. Boyle of Burlington, Wisconsin passed away peacefully. "Uncle Denny" was a well respected attorney in Burlington, but what he liked to do most was fish and play the piano. He was most at home when plying his trade on Brown's Lake near Burlington; casting for smallies on Crow Lake, Ontario or "tickling the ivories" when his work would allow. He did all of these things with great enthusiasm. You will be sadly missed and fondly remembered, Uncle Denny!



• • •

Longtime Hall supporter, fishing tackle industry giant and World War II Ace William Cullerton passed away on January 12th at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital in Downers Grove, Illinois. After returning from "the War" Bill started his family and became a pioneer in the sportfishing tackle trades. Fishing was always a love of his, so it was only natural he would do so. Bill was a longstanding member of the Hall's Board of Governors. In 1995 he was Enshrined by the Hall, obtaining the highest level of achievement that can be bestowed on a sport fisherman. You will be missed by all who knew you Bill!



On December 11, 2012 Hall president, Hall awards committee chairman emeritus and Hall supporter extraordinaire William "Bill" Gautsche, Jr. passed away in Hayward, Wisconsin. Bill will always be remembered by everyone whomever met him as a sincere, kind and thoughtful man. Bill left the Hall and the sportfishing tackle industry much better places than when he made his "first cast" toward them, many years ago. Please see page 4 of this issue for a well deserved tribute to Bill. Goodbye Bill, we will miss and think of you often!



• • •

On December 24, 2012 longtime Hall supporter and Hayward, Wisconsin resident Steven Sisko died in a tragic accident on his beloved Chippewa Flowage near Hayward. Steve was the consummate outdoorsman, enjoying almost every outdoor activity throughout every season of the year. Steve's good nature and willingness to share information will be sorely missed by all who knew him, especially by those guests of his family's resort of the Chippewa Flowage (Sisko's Pine Point Resort). Goodbye Steve!



A TRIBUTE TO BILL GAUTSCHE By Chris Slusar

The Fishing Hall of Fame, friends and family were saddened to hear of the passing of Bill Gautsche, President of our Executive Board of Directors. Bill died peacefully on December 11, 2012 in Hayward. Many of the membership will remember Bill for his passionate dedication to the HOF and a lifetime of accomplishments in the world of fishing.

I met Bill while chasing down the origins of the Billy Finn Bait, a fishing lure company Bill started in the late 1940's. Through our many meetings I grew to appreciate Bill's incredible knowledge of the fishing tackle industry and his knack for telling a good story. Many of our conversations focused on his early years on the water and development of the Billy Finn Bait, a bucktail spinner borne from his experience as a guide. Bill was quite proud of his design and its contribution to fishing. In tribute to our friend, I am pleased to share this background on his life and prized Billy Finn Bucktail.

Bill graduated from high school in 1943, and shortly following, enrolled at Reisch Auction College. During the latter half of 1944 and through 1946, Bill worked for an auctioneering service. While a good experience, auctioneering was a tough sell, particularly to a base of older farmers, who, in Bill's words, "...had a tough time trusting a teen-age kid with everything they owned."

Following a friend to Ross Teal Lake Lodge in Hayward, Wisconsin during the spring of 1947, Bill worked as a fishing guide for \$5 per day. Bill grew up fishing, having angled his first musky at the age of 9, so the transition to guide was an enjoyable way to earn a living.

Returning to Ross' in 1948, Bill and fellow guide George Brandt contemplated a tough day of fishing. Customers routinely struggled with tangles while casting spinner baits and had problems with hook sets. Bill and George realized that they were looking for an *almost* fool proof in-line spinner bait, a design that would fly true during the cast and pull properly through the water on retrieve. Taking the discussion a bit further, Bill began work on a design and prototype, with the objective of developing a lure that would achieve 90% casting success and 95% hooking efficiency.

During the first half of the 1948 fishing season, under Bill's direction, a new in-line,

bucktail spinner bait emerged. George participated as a key field tester, providing feedback after each day on the water. The early pieces met their objective, providing fewer tangles and improved hook setting. Capitalizing on the early success of his in-line spinner, Bill quickly began to market his pieces to other guides and bait shops.

In the spring of 1949, Bill returned to guiding in the Hayward area, but was working tirelessly in support of his new bucktail spinner, which was simply known as Bill Gautsche's Bucktail. On July 29, 1949, Bill filed for a utility patent on his creation. Recognizing he could not maintain the pace of production, marketing and sales, Bill contacted the W.J. Jamison Company of Chicago for manufacturing expertise, a business managed by Bill Cullerton. It was during the initial meeting with Cullerton the Bucktail got its name, Billy Finn. Bill commented, "I always liked the name Mickie Finn," a popular fly lure of the time. While traveling to the Chicago offices of Jamison, Bill noticed the name Jerry Finn advertised on the side of a truck. After Bill mentioned his interests and recent observation, Cullerton quickly suggested the name "Billy Finn."

By the 1950 fishing season, Jamison was in full production. Bill continued to market on his own; however, he gained sponsorship from six distributors, including Point Sporting Goods of Steven's Point, Wisconsin. Point-of-sale marketing took the form of six unit counter top displays, with bucktail colors customized to order.

In 1951, marketing and sales were handled through a fairly small distribution group, with Bill pushing local sales through 1952, his last year as a Hayward area fishing guide. During the early 1950's, Billy Finn was selling upwards of 5,000 Bucktails annually.

On September 30, 1952, Bill received utility patent #2,611,984 for his Bucktail lure. Shortly thereafter, Bill was hired by Actionrod Company of Hastings, Michigan to work in their sales promotion department. Beyond the excellent opportunity to advance his marketing skills and forge a career, Bill and his fiancé, Gerhardine, were soon to be married....it was time to settle down.

Following the 1954 tackle season, Bill recognized that he could no longer adequately support Billy Finn, as well as a



This advertising piece pictures Bill Gautsche with a big catch from 1949.

demanding position with Actionrod, so he sold a two-thirds majority in the business to Ralph Schmidt, a tackle store operator in Hayward and Nelson Ross, his former employer and owner of Ross Teal Lake Lodge. In April 1955, Billy Finn was incorporated and the company took a new direction.

In early 1955, production of the Bucktail was moved from Jamison to Marathon Bait Company of Stevens Point, Wisconsin. The Bucktail was now individually packaged in a yellow box with brown lettering, featuring the name Billy Finn Bucktail prominently on the box top.

The young partnership also marketed two new lures, a junior-sized Billy Finn bucktail and the Whirlybird, which featured an off-set spinner. The smaller sized bucktail, known as the Spin-Buck, filled a new market niche, appealing to bass fisherman. Similar to the Billy Finn, the Whirlybird was promoted as a Northern and Musky lure, but allowed for a near surface presentation and faster retrieve. The Whirlybird was packaged in a well marked greenish box with black lettering.

Ross and Schmidt assumed an increasing role in the overall business, with Bill gradually moving into a consulting position. By the early 1960's, Bill was fully immersed in a career with Actionrod Company and had

A TRIBUTE TO BILL GAUTSCHE (continued from page 4)

an expanding family. In view of other priorities, Bill sold his one-third interest in Billy Finn to his two partners and stepped away from the company he founded.

Billy Finn continued production of its mainstay Bucktail throughout the 1960's and early 1970's, but significantly reduced production of the Spin-Buck and Whirlybird during the early portion of the 1960's. In 1976, the company was purchased by Richard "Dick" Scheer, a Hayward tackle shop owner. Those who have traveled to Hayward will recognize Scheer from the famous lumberjack show which carries the name.

Scheer marketed Billy Finn aggressively. He continued to sell the Bucktail in the same yellow box, but also distributed other pieces under the Billy Finn banner. By 1980, production and sale of all Billy Finn product lines had slowed. Throughout the 1980's, any sales are thought to have come through limited residual inventory.

In 1989, a familiar face reentered the scene. Bill Gautsche, following a long career in the fishing tackle industry, purchased the remnants of Billy Finn from Scheer. Bill and his son, John, rejuvenated the company and grew the product line to include varying styles of in-line and off-set bucktail spinners, as well as leaders. In 1998, Billy Finn celebrated its 50th anniversary with a special edition, 250 piece run, of the original in-line black bucktail.

Acknowledgement:

While Bill's accomplishments with Billy Finn were exceptional and special to him, his experience with the fishing industry was much deeper and I think worthy of acknowledgement.

As mentioned, Bill worked for the Actionrod Company of Hastings, Michigan from 1952 to



The Billy Finn Bucktail, shown with its accompanying yellow box, circa late 1950's



Bill Gautsche, September 2006, holding his enshrinement plaque from the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame.

1963, and later, with the combined, Actionrod/Bronson Reel from 1963 to 1966, departing as Vice-President of Sales and Marketing.

In 1966, Bill joined Heddon as Executive Vice-President and ran the business, under Daisy-Heddon, until 1969.

From 1969 through 1973, Bill served as Vice-President of Manufacturing and Sales for Gladding, managing the largest manufacturer of fishing rods in the United States through offices in Miami, Florida.

Following a successful tour at Gladding, Bill joined Woodstream (Fenwick), serving as Vice President Sales and Marketing until his departure in 1982.



The Whirlybird Bucktail, shown with its accompanying green box, circa late 1950's.

Not ready for retirement, Bill became a partner at Tommy Thompson Company, a manufacturer's representative agency for the sporting goods industry in the Upper Midwest United States, a position he held until 1992.

Returning to work with a friendly and familiar face, Bill served as a representative for The Cullerton Company, another representative agency for the sporting goods industry, headed by the son of Bill Cullerton, former head of the W.J. Jamison Company (manufacturers of the Billy Finn Bucktail from 1949 through 1954). Bill remained active with the Cullerton agency, including participation in various Midwestern sport shows, until recent years placed his focus with the HOF.

Bill's many awards, accomplishments and affiliations included the Advisory Board for Fishing Has No Boundaries and the Board of Governors and Executive Board of the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame, having served as President of the Executive Board and Chairman of its Awards Committee. Bill resigned and was enshrined in the HOF in 2006, recognizing a career dedicated to the betterment of fresh water sportfishing.

Flyline gently swishes through the air, eventually propelling a fly or popping bug great distances over lurking bass, bluegill or trout.

Handling fly fishing equipment is an art form that goes back centuries.

Mentors who taught the next generation how to “catch fishes from other men’s ditches,” on fly tackle go back just as far. I had mine.

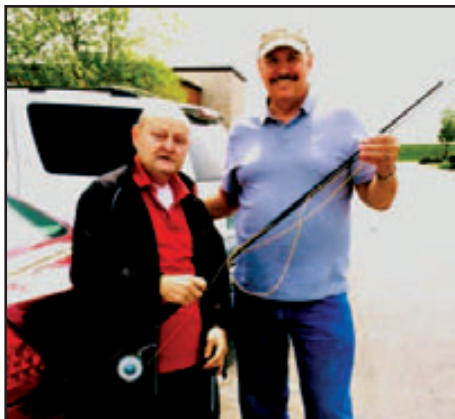
Really, it’s surprising that Stan Richardson paid any attention to the young man who had just turned teenager. The kid, in spite of his mother’s best efforts was constantly dirty, in blue jeans with fresh grass stains from the latest tackle football game or ground in dirt from digging worms for the schools of big bluegill, bass and crappie that roamed the grass lines of our lake. Add an old tee shirt and baseball cap to create—well, a grubby looking kid.

Richardson worked with electronics a subject well above my head then and now. He had a work bench in his basement with many “neat” items. But above it all hung a sparkling new flyrod, the Holy Grail of fishing in a young Zebco 33 rod and reel bluegill fishermen’s opinion. I had read about fly fishing in outdoor magazines, but never realized that anyone but the wealthy could actually do it.

“Hey Chief, why aren’t you fishing,” Richardson asked me one warm spring morning. “The fish should be biting.”

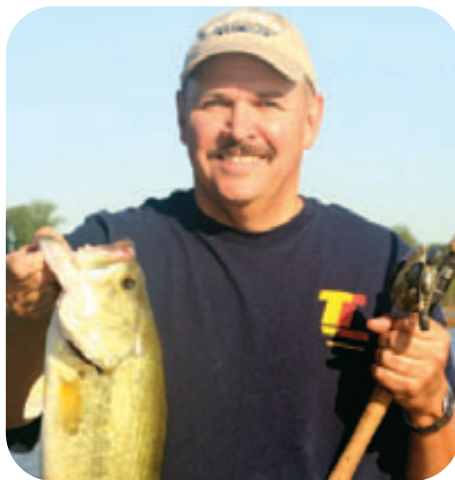
“Aw, been fishing all week,” I said, amused that he always called me Chief. “Might find a baseball game on television later, think the Yankees are playing.”

Then Richardson did something that shocked me, he walked in the garage and



Stan Richardson is presenting the author with his fly fishing outfit—a sad and happy day!

Photo by Kathy Richardson



Ken Kieser

pulled down his flyrod.

“Ever fish with one of these?” he asked.

I admitted that I had not and he took the next hour showing me how it worked. I left with a new desire to expand my fishing horizons, but how? Fly fishing tackle cost money. I ran back to Richardson’s house.

“How much would it cost for fly tackle?” I asked.

“I can get you started for \$10.00 he said, rod, reel, flyline and nylon leaders, I’ll give you a couple of popping bugs to try too.”

I did not realize at the time but he was giving me his mentor’s price, about half of what the outfit actually cost or perhaps it cost even more. Anyway, I ran home to pull out my dad’s trusty lawnmower that started about half the time and quickly found a yard. An hour later I gave my friend the \$10.

Two days later he motioned me to come to his house. I ran up the street, probably burning rubber off my tennis shoes, and stopped to be handed my first flyrod and reel, rigged with popping bug tied on. I had never seen anything so beautiful, at least at that point in my life. His little kids, Kathy and Kenny and my younger brother, Rodney followed us down by the lake to watch.

On my first cast I correctly stripped out the line that slapped the lake surface too hard and very loud, but the leader somehow straightened out. The popping bug, no doubt propelled by the spirits of fishing, dropped next to a half submerged tree limb. I twitched the bug as Richardson told me to do and “WHOP” a 1-pound largemouth bass hit it. That bass wasn’t the only one hooked that day.

Richardson and I fished our lake and several strip pits over the next couple years, until responsibilities took me away. Since, I have fly fished all over the country for most predator fish and written volumes on the subject. My goal is to catch a tarpon on fly tackle like my hero and friend, Stu Apte who owns most saltwater records on fly tackle, a tough but not impossible venture.

I recently received a lunch invitation from Richardson and his family. My work and travels had taken me all over the country and I had not seen the family for many years. My fly fishing mentor had some health issues and brought me a special surprise.

“I can no longer use my fly fishing tackle, so thought you might like to have it,” Richardson said over lunch. “I have a brand new fly outfit still in the package too, thought you might find something to do with it.”

I knew exactly what he meant and the following day knocked on the door of my neighbor, Drew Nielsen, a young fishing enthusiast. I told him all about my mentor and promised to help him get started with flyrod, reel and tackle. Soon we will visit a nearby lake to start a passion I have enjoyed for about 45 years. He will soon turn 13, my age when Richardson first placed a fly rod in my hands.

Flyline gently swishes through the air, eventually propelling a fly or popping bug great distances over lurking bass, bluegill or trout. You can mark time of this fabulous way of fishing through students and their mentors!



Drew Nielsen shows off his new fly fishing outfit. The legacy keeps going and hopefully always will.

Photo by Kathy Richardson

GEARING UP RIGHT FOR MID-WINTER WALLEYES By Legendary Anglers Gary Parsons & Keith Kavajecz

No doubt that by the time you are reading this article, ice fishing season will be well underway throughout most of walleye country. Ice fishing is a great and popular winter sport, but it can be a frustrating for many avid walleye anglers. Sure, species like panfish and pike are active and relatively easy to catch in mid-winter, but walleyes often prove tougher to catch with any consistency. It's not that the walleyes are any less active under the ice than those other species, but, as it is in many cases during the open water season, finding these fish and using the right presentations is key to putting 'eyes on the ice.

There seems to be two schools of thought when it comes to what approach is best for catching mid-winter walleyes. Basically you've got the "Sitters" and the "Runners". Sitters are a patient lot ... staking out a particular spot on the lake, drilling a few strategically placed holes, setting a few tip-ups and with jig rod in hand, wait for the fish to come to them. Then there are the Runners; the ones that approach their ice fishing like a wolf pack with a mission. These anglers systematically turn potential hot spots into Swiss cheese-like slabs of ice, drilling hole after hole. Their mission is to hunt down the walleyes in their wintry lair with a "run-and-gun" attitude. Armed with power ice augers, plenty of gas, jigging rods and lures, these anglers are looking to cover water and trigger bites.

Is one of these groups going to be more successful than the other? The answer is yes and no ... the secret to consistent success is being versatile enough to do both, each at the right time.

When it comes to ice fishing for walleyes, there's a time to be a "Sitter", and a time to be a "Runner". Walleyes are not much different under the ice than they are during the warmer months of the year ... that is to say; they are generally most active during the low light periods around dusk and dawn. When the fish are active and on the move, that's the time for anglers to be "Sitters", waiting in key areas to intersect the walleyes as they forage. These areas may be a saddle area between islands, the edges of sunken humps, or on a point ... anywhere where anglers are likely to catch fish moving from deeper water to feeding flats.

As the day progresses, walleyes will



*Gary Parsons with a walleye:
Successful ice fishing for walleyes in mid-winter
is all about gearing up right and knowing
when to move and when to sit.*

become less mobile, and relate closely to structure not far from their feeding areas. These types of spots could include irregularities on breaks, cups, or deep transition areas. This is the time to become a "Runner", because now is the time to take the game to the fish, searching out these holding areas to contact and trigger bites. Since it's rare to find a good concentration of fish that'll bite at this time, you're likely to only get one fish here, and one fish there. That's why the "run and gun" approach gives you the best chance at finding numbers of walleyes.

Regardless of whether you're a "Sitter" or a "Runner," gearing up right is imperative to success. Electronics have become a major part of the modern ice fishing scene. Anglers have taken what they learn from using GPS and sonar locators on their boats and utilized the knowledge and the technology to improve their ice fishing successes. A full-color, GPS/Fishfinder combo unit like the Lowrance Elite-5 Ice Machine gives ice anglers every advantage one would want from their fishing electronics. Although flashers were once thought to be the fishfinder of choice for ice angling, LCD units like the Elite-5 have several advantages and are quickly eclipsing flashers in popularity. One big advantage; while a flasher can show you when a fish comes into your cone, you must be looking at the unit at that specific

moment, or you'll miss it. With a LCD, the image is "recorded" and scrolled across the screen, so if you happen to look away from the unit for a few seconds, you could miss an all important fish entering the cone. By using the LCD when you look back at the unit, you will still see what happened when you weren't looking, and in fact you can scroll back to check out what you might have missed! Another advantage is that you can very quickly interpret the size of the fish coming into your cone by the signal indicated on the screen, the same way we do when using these units on our boats in open water.

Those are great advantages for stationary anglers, but there are advantages for the anglers in "run and gun" mode as well. The use of a portable depth finder helps to quickly locate depth and key structural areas, dramatically reducing the time wasted fishing unproductive areas. After all, ice fishing has a relatively small window of opportunity, and taking advantage of technology can go a long way to help one make the most of their time on the ice.

Mid-winter can also bring with it some very nasty weather. Your choice of outerwear and shelter on the ice can mean the difference between a comfortable day of fishing or a miserable time in the outdoors. Over the years we have worn every conceivable cold weather suit made and we can confidently say that the IceArmor Ultra Parka and Bibs are the best out there. Built to last, these suits keep out the cold and wet, with tons of features every angler can appreciate including super-tough knee patches, a well designed hood system and lots of pockets just to name a few.

Ice fishing for walleyes in mid-winter doesn't have to be a frustrating adventure. Think about all the equipment and gear you use to improve your summer walleye fishing, and take a bit of that mind-set into your winter fishing. Learn when to be a "Sitter," and when to be a "Runner," and you'll warm up your winter days getting your Next Bite.

Editors Note:

If you have questions or comments on this or other articles from Gary Parsons and Keith Kavajecz, visit their website www.thenextbite.com.

CHANGE JIGGING, NOT JIG

By Legendary Communicator Dan Galusha

Jigs are a major part of terminal tackle in ice fishing. For successful fishing it is important to have confidence in the jig, and once it is built, that particular lure usually becomes an angler's favorite.

What happens when suddenly that favorite jig stops producing on a day when the depth finder is showing the fish are still in the same location and depth? Some anglers will change to a different jig or color. This can work, but there is something that should be tried first - changing the jigging technique.

There are three basic types of techniques - active, slow and inactive. The best way to change is to work from one end of the scale to the other. For example, if the jig is first being worked with an active movement go towards the inactive, and visa versa.

To help in this endeavor here are a few techniques in each of the categories. While these are geared towards straight-line fishing, without floats, or a spring bobber, they can be adapted to float fishing.

ACTIVE

Drop the jig to the selected depth. Work it up and down with quick 1-inch jerks, or slower lift and drop movements of the rod tip, keeping it at that depth.

Work the jig down to the desired depth while jigging the lure. Then go slightly past the depth zone. After this, work the jig back towards the surface, being sure to pause at the main depth zone a little longer before working upward.

SLOW

Take off enough line to let the jig fall slowly through the fish holding zone. Pick it back up slowly, to a few feet above this area, and then let it fall again. Don't do any jigging, just let the fall and lift be the action. This



Dan Galusha

normally works best when using lighter weight jigs. Lighter weight allows for a slower fall through the strike zone.

INACTIVE

This is the easiest of techniques, as it could be termed as "do nothing". Just let the jig fall to the fish holding depth, and set still for as long as 10 to 20 seconds before lifting and dropping again. Many times when they are in a mood to take this type of presentation the strike will only be a "hold", making it feel like a snag. Coil spring type bobbers, that can be purchased separately to pop into the end of a rod tip, or as found on a Panfish Popper rod/reel combination, are ideal for sensing this sort of bite. Frabill's new Titanium Spring Bobber is another sensitive strike indicator, which can be adjusted for the size of jig.

In this same category, let the wind do the jigging. Again, drop the jig to the depth and allow it to set, perhaps a little longer than before, but with the wind blowing the line. Of course, this is not always possible, as the

wind can blow too strongly to be effective. Also, it needs to be on one of the warmer days when the shelter can be opened, or when sitting in the open. True, this may sound more in the active category, but the angler is not moving the line. For some reason, many times, I've found this technique to out produce a manmade jigging motion. To use this method to its highest potential, a light wind is best. The strike is usually detected by the straightening of the line, when it takes out any bow or vibration in the line. If the aforementioned spring bobbers are used, the strike will stop the springs from vibrating (or reduce wind vibration), and in some cases cause a downward bend as with any normal strike.

A piece of equipment, which is always vital to successful ice fishing, is a flasher. When changing jigging techniques, my Vexilar FL22HD color unit will show when the technique being used is producing interest in the jig. If the fish are seen moving to the jig, and then moving away, it is time to add a slight variation to the technique. In the same respect, if the fish are seen moving quickly to the jig, and taking it, then that is the technique to stay with for a while.

The next time fish stop biting, and conditions and depths have not changed, don't suffer the problems of tying on another jig in the cold, try changing the jigging technique.

If you have any questions on this or another fishing subject, drop me a line through the *Dan's Fish 'N' Tales*® web site at www.dansfishntales.com. This site also provides a link to the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame website.

Until next time, get out on the water, and enjoy a great day of fishing.



While fishing deep water, with a Vexilar flasher, Dan Galusha and Dr. Jim Nordquist found the winning jigging technique to double several times in a day with big bluegills.



Outdoor Writer, Don Banning, finds that part of the fun of ice fishing is experimenting with various jigging techniques to produce a successful pattern.



Rob Groene was hooked on ice fishing after this trip, as he found out how beneficial a spring bobber and changes in jigging techniques can be to produce a catch of 75 big bluegills.

A WORLD RECORD MUSKY? By Tony Welch

In the waning days of 1942, an avid fisherman by the name of Louis Spray forfeited his 1940 world record musky title, together with all bragging rights.

The new record – and we’re under oath here – was nothing short of colossal. It weighed in at 3,052,000 pounds and measured a stunning 312 feet in length. Any mention of its girth would only provoke further disbelief.

Spray’s record catch was bested by the United States Navy, when on December 13, 1942 the fleet submarine *Muskallunge* (SS-262) slid down the ways at the Electric Boat Company in Groton, CT. The *Muskallunge* – “musky” in angling lingo – numbered among an eventual 205 Gato/Balao class submarines, joining earlier boats named after fresh water fish such as Sturgeon, Perch, Pike, Trout, Bass and Bluegill. Before war’s end the Bureau of Ships even found room to squeeze in the Chub, Dogfish and Carp.

Muskallunge set sail September 7, 1943 from Pearl Harbor on the first of seven war patrols. True to its namesake, the boat’s primary mission was to lie in ambush undetected and wait for prey to enter her strike zone. Including travel time, the average submarine patrol lasted 60-70 days and consumed 110,000 gallons of diesel fuel over the course of 11,000 miles. Fewer than half the 85-man crew would see the sky until home port was reached at patrol’s end.

The outbound *Muskallunge* held a bellyful of 24 “fish,” as the 3,000-pound torpedoes were labeled. Aboard were the very first electrically-driven torpedoes to be fired in combat. The electrics traveled at a modest 28 knots, but had the advantage of leaving no tell-tale surface turbulence in their wake, as did the earlier steam-driven projectiles which they gradually replaced. Still, faulty torpedoes plagued submarine skippers well into 1944. Many a Japanese vessel arrived safely in port displaying fender benders – deeply dented hulls, clear evidence of a dud torpedo.

Charles A. Kennedy, an electrician’s mate, helped commission *Muskallunge* and was aboard during the boat’s first two war patrols.

His responsibilities were many, including attending to the 300-ton bank of batteries that drove the ship when submerged. The sub’s diesel engines, used for surface running, were another matter; they proved inherently defective in the Gato class subs and tormented the motor machinists responsible for their care and feeding. Gradually, all twelve boats in Kennedy’s squadron were re-booted with dependable General Motors diesels, packing 6,400 hp.



Muskallunge commissioning ceremony, New London CT, March 15, 1943. The Marine bugler is playing "Anchors Aweigh" as the National Ensign is raised atop the mast. Musky's skipper, LCDR Willard Saunders, is at far left in front row. (National Archives)

“The skipper on our first patrol was a sun worshipper,” recalls Kennedy, now age 86 and a Camarillo, CA resident. “Day after day he’d sit in a comforter chair topside, wearing only shorts and sunglasses while reading a book and munching candy bars as we cruised along.

“On this particular morning, one of the three bridge lookouts spotted a distant Japanese aircraft preparing to attack the boat. The diving klaxon sounded and everybody ran for the open hatch, including the captain. His sunglasses and cap went flying, his book and chair and candy bar went flying, so I’m told. And none of it was ever to be seen again.

“At the time I was way aft in the maneuvering room,” Kennedy continues, “and noticed the propellers were making a com-motion – a very different sound. I happened to glance at the angle of dive indicator and noticed immediately the switch was on the wrong setting, so I ran over and reset the stern hydroplanes to speed up our rate of descent. Moments later a bomb exploded close overhead – it shook the boat badly and scared hell out of me. We continued down to about 200 feet when I heard my name shouted over the intercom – ‘Kennedy – report forward to the captain.’ Well, I got all puffed up – I was going to be complimented by the skipper. Maybe even get a medal on the spot for having saved the boat. Except I wasn’t wearing a shirt, so what would he pin it to? Maybe my bare chest...”

Nothing could have prepared Kennedy for what happened next, and to this day he remains somewhat shaken. “Mind you,” he chuckles, “I was only 18 at the time. And here’s the ship’s captain, the lord our god, standing there with a .45 automatic strapped to his waist. And he yanks the sidearm out of its holster and jams it in my belly, and he says – ‘Kennedy, you (expletive), I’m going to kill you!’ And I half-turned away, and he said it again, and that’s when the ship’s executive officer grabbed the captain

from behind and pinned his arms to his sides.”

Kennedy continues: “I later learned that one of the mess cooks had got to poking around looking for certain food ingredients. Like all subs, we had food stashed in every possible nook and cranny and the mess cook thought he might have moved the control switch by accident. So that’s what happened. But the captain somehow concluded I had intentionally altered the switch on the sly. And then while under attack, that I’d rushed over and reset the controls so I could appear the hero who saved the day.” Kennedy notes that none dared approach the captain with a plausible explanation, adding that “...with all our ongoing engine troubles and various electronic malfunctions, the captain gradually became more and more distrustful of the crew. On more than one occasion he made that point pretty clear, and in salty language we all understood.”

Prowling off the Palau Islands in her assigned sector, and using radar, *Muskallunge* detected a distant enemy convoy at 22,000 yards. Running surfaced in the dark, the boat set off at 20 knots on an intersecting course. A setup on various targets was calculated, followed by a spread of six fired torpedoes. Kennedy pitched in helping to reload the launching tubes.

“Below deck we could hear a series of distant explosions,” says Kennedy. “But except for what sounded like it might be an ammo ship blowing up, we couldn’t tell what other damage we’d inflicted.” The exploding vessel illuminated the night sky, Kennedy adds, and assorted debris rained down on the surfaced sub, including sections of the ship’s smokestack. The electrician spent 14 months and two war patrols aboard *Muskallunge* before being transferred. Kennedy later served on four other subs prior to ending his naval career as a commissioned officer.

Now meet Leland D. White, another Californian (Chula Vista), who says he goes to exercise class twice a week and is still adept at mixing a “just so” before-dinner martini. Approaching his 92rd birthday, Lee’s 24-year naval career began in 1937. “I’m a triple dipper,” he notes, having collected Navy retirement pay for close to half a century, plus a corporate retirement pension and social security. Lee helped commission and decommission *Muskallunge*, and sailed on all seven of her war patrols over a 40-month period.

We asked Lee a burning question: were there any musky fishermen aboard the boat?

“Well, yes....I’m certain of it. One would be Leonard Johnson, a chief torpedoman. We were

A WORLD RECORD MUSKY? (continued from page 9)

tied up at Staten Island and the crew was given a month's R&R. Do as we pleased, the war's over. Len invited me to visit his home town, so we hopped the ferry to Manhattan and off we went by train from Grand Central Station to Eau Claire, Wisconsin for Thanksgiving. Besides carousing and terrifying the natives, we went deer hunting. Never got musky fishing, though. Too cold. And no venison as it turned out, but we drank lots of beer and ate platters of bratwurst." Lee even remembers – 64 years later – that the Wigwam Tavern was on Madison Street, "...just before the bridge." (And still is).

Lee had two close calls aboard *Muskallunge*. The first took place at Camranh Bay, Indo-China. The boat lay suspended well offshore at periscope depth as it waited for the departure of a convoy tracked the previous day entering port.

At 0800 hours, a mixed bag of 15 merchant marine and anti-submarine escort vessels got underway for Saigon. At 0952, a sharp-eyed Japanese lookout aboard transport *Durban Maru* gave the alarm. With its wheel hard over to port, the 7,163-ton vessel narrowly avoided the first of three torpedoes. Moments later a second "fish" lanced into *Durban's* number four hold, causing serious flooding. Within an hour the order was given to abandon ship, and *Durban* sank stern-first in mid-afternoon. Unknown to the *Muskallunge*, a full regiment of Imperial Japanese Army troops – 3,354 men – was jammed on board, of whom 515 lost their lives.

Long after the war, Lee would relive the events of August 21, 1944 in a fashion he never could have foretold.

"Shipmate Carl Urbany and I both coincidentally answered a Navy publication classified ad that was seeking contact with former *Muskallunge* crew members," Lee explains. "To our total amazement up pops this Japanese fellow, a survivor from the transport we sank. Only now he's the owner, president and board chairman of Kimoto and Company Limited and its American subsidiary, Kimoto USA in Atlanta."

As honored guests of Ujihito Kimoto, Urbany and White were given the best hotel accommodations at the Ritz Carlton Hotel in Marina Del Rey, CA. Floral arrangements adorned their suite, with a full liquor bar. Following introductory "Ice Breaker" cocktails, the trio and their spouses were driven to dinner and a show in Hollywood. "Mr. Kimoto even provided an interpreter," Lee notes.

Lee learned that Kimoto had survived 24 hours adrift in the South China Sea, first aboard a flimsy bamboo raft and then supported by a piece of flotsam when the raft broke up in a



Muskallunge departs Pearl Harbor September 4, 1943 on her first war patrol. A year later, Musky narrowly escaped an 8-hour depth charge pounding after sinking a 7,160 ton transport off Cam Ranh Bay, French Indo-China. Aboard was a regiment of 3,000 Japanese soldiers, of whom 515 perished. (National Archives)

storm. Of the 12 men in his group, only three remained alive to be rescued by a Japanese patrol boat. "We talked about our lives past and present, anything and everything," Lee recalls of their meeting. Kimoto held the belief that personal friendship between victors and vanquished was the path to forgiveness and a lasting peace between nations. "And he was on a mission to prove just that," Lee concludes.

Hours before *Durban Maru* settled to the bottom, the Japanese anti-submarine vessels began punishing *Muskallunge* with the first of more than 50 depth charges. The counter-attack went on intermittently for eight hours. One or more "ashcans" detonated close enough to the sub to cause serious leaks. "We tried sneaking off at a couple knots – no good," Lee recalls. "Their sonar kept right on tracking us, even below 300 feet. Lots of water accumulated in the aft engine compartment and this extra weight slammed our stern into the ocean bottom, burying the props. Finally we formed a bucket brigade and hauled the water forward, then packed a bunch of the crew into the forward torpedo room for added weight. And that's how we finally broke the stern free – rather like a teeter-totter." A long voyage to Fremantle, Australia followed, for repairs.

On August 8, 1945 *Muskallunge* suffered its first and only onboard casualties. Merchant shipping had been scarce for months, so the captain decided to target lesser prey with the deck gun. "We called these cargo vessels 'sea trucks,'" Lee explains, "They ran around 200 tons – too small for torpedoes. We'd locate them on radar and then move in on the surface."

A heavy fog blanketed the Sea of Japan that day. The radar range shortened until suddenly a cluster of three sea trucks came dimly into view. Selecting a target, *Muskallunge* commenced firing its main deck gun.

"My battle station was to train this modified artillery piece," Lee says. "Meaning, I maneuvered the gun horizontally while the gun

pointer to my left moved it vertically to get the weapon on target. It was tough going because we kept poking in and out of dense fog banks."

Higher up on the conning tower's cigarette deck, electrician's mate Chuck Whitman of Mayfield, N.Y. was busy manning a .50 caliber rail mounted machine gun. As the running battle progressed, several hits from the deck gun were observed. Sudden return fire from one of the Japanese vessels struck Whitman, killing him instantly. Lee escaped the volley, while two nearby sailors received shrapnel wounds. The firefight was terminated, and later that day Whitman – believed to be the last submariner to die in action during the war – was buried at sea off the Kurile Islands in a brief ceremony. Three weeks later *Muskallunge* joined eleven other subs in Tokyo Bay for the formal surrender ceremonies ending World War Two.

Muskallunge was decommissioned in 1947 and laid up for a few years, then loaned to the Brazilian Navy and returned in 1968.

"By pure chance a former *Muskallunge* shipmate who was still on active duty, Val Scanlon by name, happened to be at a Navy pier when the boat came in and tied up," Lee recalls. "He went aboard and it was a mess. Paint peeling off the bulkheads, trash everywhere. Not the *Muskallunge* any of her old crew would ever care to see."

Steel ships, iron men. And a touch of irony. Three months later Scanlon was ordered to join a certain Atlantic fleet sub for temporary one-day duty. On July 9 the boat departed New London, CT and steamed to a Navy target practice area off Long Island, N.Y. In the distance, Scanlon spotted the submersible he'd helped commission a quarter-century earlier. Now the boat was empty, a derelict rolling in the ocean swells and straining at her anchor chain as though determined to get underway on her own.

The chief torpedoman's duty that day? To accomplish what the Imperial Japanese Navy strove for 32 months to do, but failed. No salvage yard for this aging warrior, nor the indignity of a welder's cutting torch.

Scanlon pushed the red firing button. Two minutes later, her back broken by an exploding torpedo, *Muskallunge* began her final plunge to the ocean floor. Half a world away from where she earned her laurels – but less than 50 miles from her birthplace.

And what of Louis Spray? In 1949, Louis went on to top his old record with a 69 pound/11 ounce Wisconsin musky that may never be bested. Unless, of course, the Bureau of Ships decides to launch another *Muskallunge*....

WORLD ANGLING RECORDS GRANTED

1st QUARTER - 2013 UPDATE

NOTE: World angling records are updated quarterly and the ultimate synthesis is published annually in book form each April, distributed free to members, media, manufacturers and world fisheries as a public service.

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"KEPT" WORLD RECORDS LIST DIVISION #1 - ROD/REEL

Fish	Line Class	Lbs./Ozs.	Angler	Where Caught	Date
MUSKELLUNGE/ Natural	8 lb.	58-0	Joe Seeberger	Bellaire Lake, Michigan, USA	10/13/12

"C&R" WORLD RECORDS LIST DIVISION #1 - ROD/REEL

Fish	Line Class	Length	Angler	Where Caught	Date
BASS/ Spotted or Kentucky	2 lb.	16"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	10/10/12
	4 lb.	17"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	10/12/12
	4 lb.	18"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	11/1/12
	Unltd.	18"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	11/2/12
CRAPPIE/ White	6 lb.	17"	Chuck Justice	Grenada Lake, Mississippi, USA	11/13/12
	10 lb.	18"	Chuck Justice	Grenada Lake, Mississippi, USA	11/18/12
DRUM/ Freshwater (Sheepshead)	All-Tackle	36"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	10/4/12
	14 lb.	36"	Steve Norris	Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee, USA	10/4/12

GAR/ Longnose	All-Tackle	52"	Mark Alexander Foster	Gallipolis Locks & Dam, Ohio, River, Ohio, USA	9/24/12
	40 lb.	52"	Mark Alexander Foster	Gallipolis Locks & Dam, Ohio, River, Ohio, USA	9/24/12
MUSKELLUNGE/ Natural	16 lb.	56"	Bryan Paulson	Mille Lacs Lake, Minnesota, USA	10/11/12
MUSKELLUNGE/ Hybrid or Tiger	15 lb.	44"	Conrad Proctor	Lake Luena, Michigan, USA	11/9/12
PIKE/ Northern	16 lb.	48"	Wendel D. Holloway	Nungesser Lake, Ontario, CANADA	9/14/12
	17 lb.	49"	John Lucas	Nungesser Lake, Ontario, CANADA	9/14/12

DIVISION #2 - FLY FISHING

Fish	Line Class	Length	Angler	Where Caught	Date
MUSKELLUNGE/ Natural	30 lb. Tippet	49"	Kurt Pitney	Chippewa River, Wisconsin, USA	10/21/12
TROUT/ Brook	14 lb. Tippet	22"	Carroll M. Ware	McKenzie River, Labrador, Canada	7/26/12
	15 lb. Tippet	19"	Carroll M. Ware	McKenzie River, Labrador, Canada	7/23/12
TROUT/ Lake	15 lb. Tippet	39"	Patrick Walsh	Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan, Canada	9/19/12
	17 lb. Tippet	40"	Patrick Walsh	Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan, Canada	9/17/12

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CATCH & RELEASE FISH



Bass/Spotted. Steve Norris.
Div. #1 - Rod/Reel. 4 lb. line class. 18". Nickajack Headwaters, Tennessee 11/1/2012



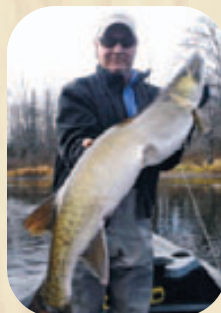
Gar/Longnose. Mark Alexander Foster
Div. #1 - Rod/Reel. All-Tackle and 10 lb. line class. 52". Ohio River, Ohio 9/24/2012



Trout/Lake. Patrick Walsh. Div. #2 - Fly Fishing.
17 lb. tippet. 40". Lake Athabasca, Saskatchewan, Canada. 9/17/2012



Crappie/White Chuck Justice
Div. #1 - Rod/Reel 10 lb. line class 18" Grenada Lake, Mississippi 11/18/2012



Muskellunge/Natural Kurt Pitney
Div. #2 - Fly Fishing 30 lb. Tippet Chippewa River, Wisconsin 10/21/2012

KEPT FISH



Muskellunge/Natural Joe Seeberger
Div. #1 - Rod/Reel 8 lb. line class 58 lb. 0 oz. Bellaire Lake, Michigan 10/13/2012



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