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## January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2012

### Lake Conditions

**Lake Levels ...** As of this morning both lakes are approximately 1/2 foot above winter pool. Below is up to date and projected lake level forecast. For additional info on Kentucky Lake visit the TVA website: [http://www.tva.gov/lakes/kyh\\_r.htm](http://www.tva.gov/lakes/kyh_r.htm)

### Predicted Data

Day	Average Inflow	Midnight Elevation	Average Outflow
1/05/2012	73,778	354.49	106,250
1/06/2012	73,318	354.56	72,000
1/07/2012	53,805	354.52	59,000

As you can see just in the nick of time and by the weekend, the gates are supposed to close and good fishing will begin below the dams.

### Water Conditions ...

**Barkley** - main lake is lightly stained with the clearer water on the LBL side. Water is very fishable

**Kentucky** - Water is very fishable and in real good shape

### Water Temps ...

Surface temps on both lakes are in the low 40's warming to the mid 40's on sunny afternoons.

### Weather Outlook

**Friday**...Sunny. Highs around 60. Southwest winds 10 to 15 mph.

**Friday Night**...Mostly clear. Lows around 40. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph in the evening shifting to the northwest after midnight.

**Saturday**...Partly sunny. Highs in the lower 50s. Northeast winds 5 to 10 mph.

**Saturday Night**...Partly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s.

**Sunday**...Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 40s.

**Sunday Night**...Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. Lows in the lower 30s.

**Monday**...Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 40s.

**Monday Night**...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 30s. Highs in the mid 50s.

**Tuesday**...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 30s. Highs in the mid 50s.

**Tuesday Night**...Partly cloudy in the evening then becoming mostly cloudy. A 20 percent

chance of rain. Lows in the mid 30s.

**Wednesday**...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of rain. Highs in the lower 50s.

### **Fishing Report ...**

Considering the cold weather and water temps fishing is pretty decent for those who brave the elements. The good fishing seems to mirror the type of weather were having; good weather brings good fishing and not so good weather equals poor results.

**Crappie** fishing has been fair on minnows over submerged brush in 12 - 18 feet deep.

**Sauger** fishing is fair on the deep flats near the old river channel on jigs and blade baits.

**Stripes** are being caught on the deep water flats yo-yoing blade baits especially the Steel Shad.

**Largemouth & Smallmouth** bass are being caught on jerk baits (SPRO McStick being an excellent choice) and Alabama type rigs like the locally made Ken's Barbrella Rig. Best locations are main lake points and points at the mouth of the bays.

**Remember to dress warm and wear your PFD at all times!**



### **A Shad Kill is on the way! Once the gates are closed at the Dams get ready for some prime action!**

If you're going to fish when the air and water temperatures drop, you're eventually going to see a shad kill. What? Dead shad! Don't worry it's a good thing. It's a natural occurrence that happens when the water temps plummet. On several of the creeks and bays on Kentucky Lake the shad kill has already

began. Maybe you've seen the gulls feasting on this smorgasbord. The gulls can't eat all of the shad and eventually the floaters will travel downstream in the direction of the Dam. With the surface lake temps bumping 40 degrees overnight some shad will go deeper in search of warmer water. The colder the water gets the deeper the shad will go and the deepest water in the lake is in the Tennessee River channel closest to the Dam. When the schools of shad have gotten deep enough, some are sucked through the turbines at the bottom of the dam and end up in the river. Some shad die and others are stunned and some even float on the surface. Once in the river, they become easy prey for any fish that swims. When this happens the fish go on a feeding frenzy. The more shad that pass through the generators, the more intense the feeding frenzy becomes. The shad kill can provide some very exciting fishing. A dead giveaway that a shad kill is on is the presence of huge numbers of gulls working below the dams.

Now is the time for anglers to be thinking about the opportunities for catching Striped Bass and other species that inhabit the tailrace below the Dams. This holds true in your area not just here in my home state of Kentucky. One needs the right equipment and a little know-how to take advantage of this opportunity. Here are some tips to get you started.

**The Bait ...**If fishing with live bait is your thing, then threadfin shad is the way to go. You might catch a fish or two on artificials but since it's shad they're feeding on, there's no sense in trying to re-invent the wheel. I'm going to back up a little bit here ... I do keep a stout rod handy with my favorite blade bait, a *Steel Shad*, tied on and a multi-lure *Ken's Barbrella* rig tied on just in case we get into "the jumps" which can happen! Getting live bait is not difficult if you know where to look. The best places are along the lock wall and in corners where there is a slight eddy in the current. The easiest way to get a fair amount of bait is to use a cast net. It takes a little practice to cast one effectively but if I can do it you can too. When cast, the net fans out like an umbrella and the lead weights on the hem cause the net to close, trapping the bait. Retrieve the

net and shake the shad into the live wells. Aeration is important in keeping the bait energetic and the live wells do a decent job of keeping the threadfin lively. Remember this; if the nose of the threadfin turns red, get rid of it. To store the fish we catch, a 48 quart cooler is bungee corded to the cleats on the back deck.



**The Rod ...** This is not sissy fishing and it calls for stout tackle as in Medium / Heavy action rods. By using medium/heavy action rods the fish aren't as apt to let go of the bait as if you were using a stiffer rod. A 7' rod works best for me but it really comes down to what you feel most comfortable using.

**The Reel ...** Your favorite bait casting reel will work but make sure the drag works smoothly. The drag plays a very important part in this type of fishing. Hopefully sooner than later you will hook a really big fish and you'll appreciate how a properly set drag helps you in landing the fish. You'll want to crank the drag down but not all the way. Set it so the line comes off the reel smoothly but not easily; you can always adjust it as you go.

**The Line ...** My personal choice is 20 lb fluorocarbon for the main line. The line weight of the leaders, and I'll explain more about leaders below, needs to be 12 lb max so that if you get hung up you'll only break off that leader. Remember to set your drag to the leader weight as it will keep break offs to a minimum.

**One 3-Way Swivel ...** Size 4 is about right.

**Sinkers ...** I prefer the bell type sinker in 3/8 oz with a swivel attachment. The bell shape will bounce along the bottom helping you feel your way through rocks and won't get hung up like other sinkers.

**The Hooks ...** The Plain Shank Size 1 offset hook is a great all around hook for this type of fishing. These hooks are strong and sharp and are big enough to hold a good size fish without killing the action of the bait.

**Putting It All Together ...** First, attach the 20 lb main line to the top of the three way swivel. Next, using about a 10 inch 12lb. leader, attach the bell sinker to the bottom swivel. Finally, tie the hook to the remaining swivel using a 6 inch 12 lb. leader. Using different length leaders will keep the rig from getting tangled and keep the bait just off the bottom. Also by using the lighter weight leaders, if you get hung up, they will break as opposed to breaking the main line and you won't lose the entire rig. One thing I really like about this set up is if the fish are suspended off the bottom you can adjust the length of the sinker leader in order to keep the bait in the strike zone. This next part is very important ... wet your line before tying your knots. Fluorocarbon line will weaken if you put too much stress on the line when tying the knot. Now set the drag to the leader line weight, NOT the main line. This will keep break offs to a minimum when fighting a big fish. Remember, you've got three knots tied and you want a big fish to be able to take line without breaking the lighter leaders.

**The Drift ...** Fishing the Shad Kill is done by drifting at the same speed as the current. Game fish like to hang along the current break waiting for an easy meal to come by, so set your boat up so that it will drift along the current break. If needed, use your trolling motor to fine tune the drift. Cast out about twice the amount of line as it is deep. Reel in until your sinker is barely bouncing along the bottom. Keeping it in contact or near the bottom is very important in finding the fish. You will know when things are right when you feel it hitting bottom most of the time but not getting hung up. If you are getting hung up you most likely have too much line out. Ideally, your line should be drifting ever so slightly upstream. If you hook a fish before you hit bottom, it's possible they're suspended. If this happens several times, you'll need to adjust the

length of your bottom leader. If you find a hot spot, visually mark it along the bank and set up your drift accordingly. Marker buoys are useless in this type of fishing so don't bother. Keep in mind that drift patterns can change according to the number of generators that are on. Expect this to change from day to day. Just remember to start off by working the current break.

**The Catch ...** Expect to catch a mixed bag which could include Stripers, Hybrids, White Bass, Sauger and anything else that swims. Yeah, you'll probably catch rough fish too... but you don't have to tell anyone about it. Try tailrace fishing during the shad kill; it can be pretty productive this time of year and don't forget to wear your life jacket

## **Sonar Tip of the Week**



The screen shows a ledge at the mouth of a bay with submerged stumps. A good way to find hot spots like this is to use your Lowrance High Definition Sonar system in split screen mode with the electronic topo map on the left side and StructureScan on the right. Look for contour changes on the map like bends in creek channels, the ends of underwater points and ledges and pay special attention to the mouth of the bays where any of these areas meet the old river channel. As you can see on the right a school of crappie is suspended above the stumps. We alternated between a Steel Shad blade bait and a grub to catch several nice fish before the school got wise and moved on. Our HDS 10 not only located these fish but gave us an idea of how deep to fish. Without the aid of our electronics, locating these fish wouldn't have been possible.

**Attention: High Definition System Owners**

# **CONFUSED! FRUSTRATED! NEED ANSWERS?**

## **KICK'N BASS CAN HELP!**

Read the owner's manual or watched a DVD and still baffled? Let's clear up your Sonar confusion. Have your unit(s) programmed by someone who depends on the HDS technology daily. Together we can make your system more user friendly and help you become a better angler.

### **Here's just some of what Kick'n Bass can do for YOU!**

- Make sure your HDS unit(s) has the correct settings for the type of fishing you do. In most cases the units factory default setting is set for "general use" not specific.
- Program the individual screens and install the overlay data on the screen that you want. Example: Depth, Water Temp, Time, etc.
- Arrange the screens so they display what you want them to show and make going from page to page orderly and non-confusing.
- Eliminate unwanted, non-practical on screen data that clutters your screen and gets in the way of using your unit to its maximum potential.
- Demo the unit for you to help you be familiar with the screens and commands, so you'll have a good understanding of how to use the unit and take advantage of its fish finding capabilities.
- Learn how to assign a waypoint to a fishing hot spot and find it again.
- If needed, install the most recent updates.

As a bonus Kick'n Bass will help you learn to read an electronic topo map and find "places of interest" that could be potential fishing hot spots.

**You've Made a Significant Investment in Electronics. Learn to Use Them to Their Full Potential.**

**Don't Wait ... NOW is the time to get it done. Spend this winter using your system and be ready for Spring Fishing!**

**Call Now! (270)703-6133 or email [rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net)**



### **New for 2012 ... Kick'n Bass Guide Service Offers Pontoon Trips for the Whole Family!**

That's right, nobody gets left behind! Mom, Dad, Grandma and Grandpa and the kids can go too! Catch fish from our newly acquired state of the art fishing machine and have fun doing it! Crappie, Bass, Bluegill, Redear, Stripes or Catfish ... the choice is yours. Don't want to fish, rather relax and chill out? No problem, we can customize your trip. If you have something special in mind just let us

know. Contact us well in advance for reservations. Call **270-703-6133** or email [rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net)

**Our June Canadian Fishing Adventure is SOLD OUT! Now taking reservations for our July Trip.**



Come on and go with us ... you'll be glad you did! You don't have to have a partner, you might not know the person but by the time the trip is over you'll feel like old friends. Canoe Country has a way of doing that to you. We use our 30 years of experience in the Northwood's and wilderness skills to make your trip a memorable one. We do it all for you ... pre-planning, permits, transportation, gear, etc. Our clients young and old alike say it's a can't miss trip and "Cadillac Camping" in the heart of the Great Northwoods.

For more info call (270)703-6133 or email [rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net)

*(Photo) Kenny Dement from Missouri, with another big Smallmouth Bass.*

Don't take our word for it. Click on the link below to find out what our clients had to say about their once in a lifetime experience. [http://www.kicknbass.net/archives/canadian\\_trip\\_recap\\_july\\_2011.htm](http://www.kicknbass.net/archives/canadian_trip_recap_july_2011.htm)

**Don't forget ... book your Spring Fishing Trip NOW and get the dates you want!** [rk@kicknbass.net](mailto:rk@kicknbass.net)

**\*\*\* Special Announcement \*\*\***

**ANNUAL JET-A-MARINA OPEN HOUSE Saturday Jan 7<sup>th</sup> from 8:00 a.m. -2:00 p.m.** The guest speaker this year will be Brent Ehler one of the top professional bass fisherman. Brent will be participating in a Q & A session at 1 PM so come ready with your questions. The Q & A session will be facilitated by FLW tournament director Ron Lappin. You can bet Ron will twist Brent's arm to give up some of those secrets he's used to become one of the best fisherman in the world.

**SPECIAL PRICING ON ALL NEW & PRE-OWNED BOATS IN INVENTORY!!!** See the new 2012 Ranger, Stratos and Lowe fishing boats and Suncruiser Pontoons. Demo and Pre-Owned boats are priced to sell.

**HUGE SAVINGS on NAME BRAND TACKLE!** ... 50% off marked price on a huge selection of your favorite lures.

Jet-a-Marina is located in Calvert City on U.S. 62 just a couple miles from I-24/U.S. 62 junction (I-24 exit 27). For more info call 270-395-4030

**Thanks for reading Kick'n Bass' fishing report!**

**Tight Lines ...**

*Randy Kuhens*