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January 12th, 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

Predicted Data

Day	Average Inflow	Midnight Elevation	Average Outflow
1/12/2012	99,240	355.00	63,465
1/13/2012	97,400	355.41	75,500
1/14/2012	101,418	355.56	88,000

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...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 20s. West winds 10 to 15 mph.

Friday Night...Mostly clear. Lows around 20. West winds 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the mid 40s. Southwest winds 5 to 10 mph.

Saturday Night...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 20s.

Sunday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the mid 40s.

Sunday Night...Mostly clear. Lows around 30.

Martin Luther King Jr Day...Partly sunny with a 40 percent chance of rain showers. Highs in the lower 50s.

Monday Night...Showers likely. Lows in the mid 40s. Chance of precipitation 70 percent.

Tuesday...Mostly cloudy with a 40 percent chance of showers. Highs in the upper 40s.

Tuesday Night...Partly cloudy. Lows in the upper 20s.

Wednesday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the lower 40s.

Fishing Report ...

The higher water levels and good lake current we've enjoyed over the last several weeks is now a thing of the past. With the lakes at winter pool level we're back to the normal generation

schedule and subsequent current flow for this time of year. This has changed the location and feeding habits of some species but bass fishing in particular continue to be unusually good for this time of year. Crappie and stripes are starting to suspend in schools in open water. Also the better fishing seems to mirror the type of weather were having; good weather brings good fishing and not so good weather equals poor results. Overall we have a lot to be thankful for as fishing is still pretty good for this time of year.



Bass Fishing ... Outstanding! Bass have backed out somewhat since last week but are still being caught in unusually good number and size. Jerk baits (SPRO McStick being an excellent choice) and Alabama type rigs like the locally made Ken's Barbrella Rig are doing a pretty good number on both Largemouth and Smallmouth. The jerk bait bite seems to be best on calm warm days on the main lake points and at the mouth of the bays. Secondary points and banks with deep water nearby are holding good numbers of fish too. Some ridiculously huge stringers of bass have been

caught over the last several days like the quartet of bass that Brandon Hunter and Tyler Moss (*Photo*) caught using on a umbrella rig made by Picasso called the *School-E-Rig*. The magic depth for catching suspended fish on umbrella rigs seems to be 12-15 over submerged brush. A slow retrieve works best. With the water temps higher than normal and lack of a significant shad kill being major factors, bass fishing is the best I've seen in recent memory for this time of year. Sooner or later old man winter is going to show up and put a damper on things but for right bass anglers are on a pretty good roll.

Crappie fishing has been fair on minnows over submerged brush in 15-18 feet deep. Schools of crappie are beginning to suspend over open water where slip bobbers have come into play. Some good crappie are being caught among lots of non-keeper sized fish. You just have to go thru several smaller fish until you catch a keeper.

Sauger fishing is slow 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**.





Use Slip Bobbers & Sonar for Suspended Crappie



Bobby Day Wilson and his son Adam with monster Black Crappie caught on Slip Bobber rigs.

Where did all those Crappie go? When water levels recede and surface water temperatures drop, crappie will vacate your favorite brush piles and suspend in open water. Locating crappie when this happens is not overly difficult if you know where to look and you can increase the odds in your favor of catching them if you employ the right methods. Using High Definition Sonar is an excellent way of locating schools of crappie at this time and using Slip Bobber rigs can be a pretty effective way of catching them. Put these tools to good use and you'll get back on track and extend your fishing season.

What is a Slip Bobber Anyway? Many fishermen love to fish for Crappie but are unsure of what a slip bobber is or how to rig it. A slip bobber consists of a straw-like tube that is surrounded by a float. The float is generally a fluorescent color. The line is inserted thru the tube allowing the bobber to slide freely up and down the line. A slip bobber will not work properly if there is not a method to hold it at a certain spot on the line; therefore a bobber stop is needed. The bobber stop consists of a round bead that goes above the float and a stop knot (a line tie) which is positioned above the bead. Both are threaded onto the fishing line. The *bead keeps* the stop knot from going into the float tube and the *stop knot* is used to adjust the depth of the bait or lure. To adjust the depth you want to fish you simply move the stop knot up or down the line. The bead and stop knot are generally purchased separately from the slip bobbers themselves and you'll need both to make the thing work. Putting the finishing touch to this rig is a real simple task; add a crappie hook, minnow and a split shot or your favorite crappie jig and you're in business. Here's a diagram of how to attach the stop knot.

	
<p><u>1.</u> Thread your line through the plastic tube that holds the stop knot. Give yourself at least a couple of feet of free line.</p>	<p><u>2.</u> Slide the stop knot off the tube and onto your line. Make sure you slide it off the end of the tube toward your rod tip. Slide the tube off your line and discard it.</p>
	
<p><u>3.</u> Slowly and steadily pull both tag ends of the stop knot to tighten it down. When you think it's tight enough, test it. You should be able to slide it under medium (not light) pressure.</p>	<p><u>4.</u> Clip the tag ends of to 1/16 inch. The final product should look something like this.</p> <p><i>Diagram courtesy of ESB slip bobbers.</i></p>

Why Use a Slip Bobber? Many people that switch to slip bobbers find that it is considerably easier to use them instead of clip bobbers plus slip bobbers work in a lot of fishing situations that clip bobbers won't. Crappie in particular like to suspend in and around cover and often feed at a particular depth. A slip bobber allows you to adjust your bait to the fish whether they're suspending in 20 feet of water or 5 feet over brush. Slip bobber rigs are easy to cast and they work well on shy fish too. By reeling the line all the way up you can back off and make a long cast thus keeping a safe distance and avoid spooking wary fish.

Catching Crappie on slip bobbers is a blast too! Fishermen like to feel the fight of the fish while reeling it in and fishing a slip bobber rig allows them to do just that. Using this rig is an easy way to fish for Crappie and with very little practice the beginner can soon catch fish like a seasoned veteran. The bottom line is it's just a real productive and fun way to fish.

Rods & Reels and such. Most likely your favorite rod and reel will work as long as it's an ultra light or medium light outfit. Remember we're fishing for crappie with paper thin mouths with the majority of fish weighing around a pound or a pound in a half. A good choice for this type of fishing is a 6' Shimano Clarus CSS60LB rod paired with a Sedona 1000 series reel. These combos cast like a dream, play a fish out nicely and won't break the bank. A good quality mono like 6 or 8 lb clear P-Line is all you need. For minnow fishing a # 4 light wire crappie hook and

#3, #4 & #5 split shot works real well and a 1 /16, 3/32 or 1/8 oz weight on the crappie jigs will suffice for most applications.

A couple of do's and don'ts ... if your float immediately sinks and you DON'T have a fish on you're using too much weight. Also if you get several strikes while you bait is sinking, shallow up as the fish are suspended above the depth that you have your rig set. Remember, when you cast, let your line remain slack until the bobber floats straight up. That way you won't pull the bait away from the spot.



Everlasting Slip Bobbers ... not just your ordinary slip bobber! Choosing the right slip bobber is just as important as having the right rod & reel and line. **ESB** bobbers have several advantages that will help you catch more fish and keep rigging time to a minimum. As an example every **ESB** bobber comes with a highly polished glass bead that is molded into the top of the tube. No more loose beads to deal with! The high polished bead *won't* cut fishing line and reduced line friction allows the line to flow smoothly increasing

casting distance and accuracy, plus the bait gets to the fish much faster than an ordinary slip float. The bottom end of the tube is protected by a brass guard so the tube itself won't become worn and fray your line. The tube is made of a clear synthetic material that won't swell, split or rot plus you can see your line coming thru the tube when you're rigging up. **ESB** bobbers come in assorted sizes for bluegill to big catfish and in an array of colors, plus each bobber comes *with a slip knot*. What could be better! No more frayed lines and loose beads rolling around on the floor, they cast like a dream and everything you need to rig up comes in one neat little package. **ESB** Bobbers are the only slip bobbers Kick'n Bass uses. (***ESB** bobbers are available at the tackle shops around the Kentucky Lake area or you can order them online at <http://www.hloutdoors.com>*)

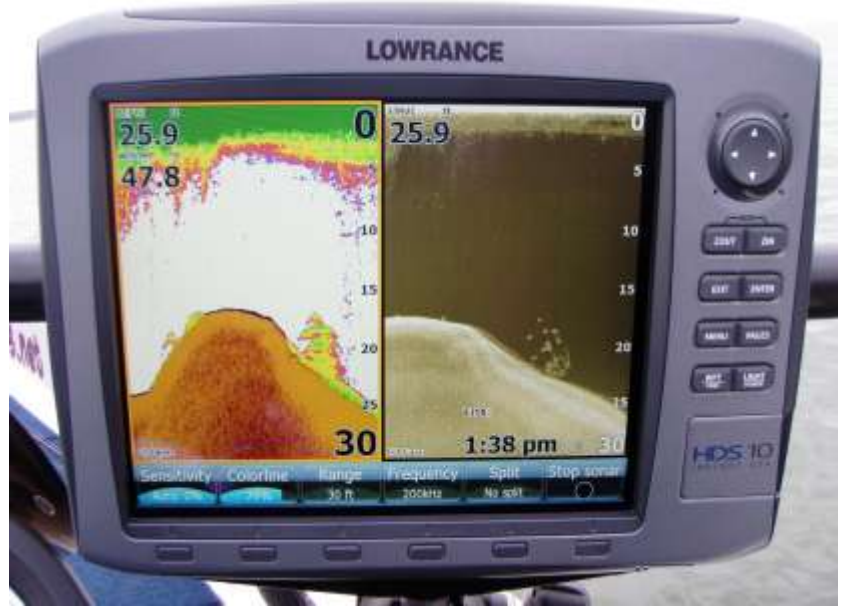


Catching Suspended Crappie ... Slip Bobbers & HDS Sonar units are good tools for locating and catching suspended crappie and they work hand in hand. Catching suspended crappie when they're schooled up in the bays can be very challenging, especially when they're not relating to cover. Like any other technique you have to adjust to the mood and location of the fish. When the water's cold, Crappie will suspend in open water. Since their metabolism is slower, they're lethargic and don't feed as often but they will bite, especially if you put the bait right in front of their nose. To catch crappie under these circumstances the first step is finding the school. Once you have done this,

the next step is to determine at what depth the fish are holding. A good way to achieve this is to use your Lowrance High Definition Sonar system in split screen mode with the electronic topographic map on the left side and StructureScan on the right (*Photo*). 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. Any of these spots can be major congregating areas. Once a school is located, toss out a marker.

Presentations vary. Wind and lack thereof will have a bearing on your presentation and calm days are the most challenging. On clear and calm days crappie are easily spooked. *Slow Rolling*

a slip bobber and a minnow is one of the better ways to catch suspended fish. *Slow Rolling* is backing off and casting to the location of the school and very slowly reeling the rig in. A lot of the time schools of suspended crappie will show up like a Christmas tree (See *Sonar/Structure Scan split screen photo*) and they're notorious for feeding at various depths too. For that reason multiple lines with slip bobbers are employed and set at a range of depths in the school. To find the more aggressive fish a rig is set so the bait is positioned slightly above the school, another in the middle and one near the base of the school. When it's calm crappie like a little movement but not too much so experiment with your retrieve until you figure out what they want. Many times just a slight movement of the bobber is all they need. Make sure to use fresh, lively bait and a small to medium size minnow seems to work best under these conditions. **Wind is good thing.** Wind usually has a positive effect. When the wind starts to blow and the water stirs so do the Crappie. The waves on the water break up the sun-rays and disperse the light; also waves add a natural action to the bait. On windy days position the boat downwind from the marker and cast the rig so the bait floats thru the school. Start by adjusting the rig slightly deeper to compensate for the waves and adjust as you go. Controlling the boat and the ability to fish an area efficiently is the key to consistently catching fish when they're suspended, be sure you don't position the boat *over* the school. When crappie are suspended your electronics play a real important part in locating and showing you how deep to fish, so pay special attention to what they are telling you.



Locating schools of suspended crappie on your Sonar and catching them on a slip bobber rig is another way to extend your fishing season. With a little practice the beginner can soon catch fish like a seasoned veteran.

Sonar Tip of the Week



I get asked quite often "Does StructureScan really make that big a difference in identifying fishing hot spots"? Try this ... Take your hand and cover the right hand side of the screen. Try to determine what the images on the left side represent. Pretty confusing, huh! At best it would be a guess at what they are. Now cover the left hand side of the screen. The StructureScan clearly defines what the images are; Stake beds with fish located in and around the beds. Seeing the split screen with High Definition Sonar on the left and StructureScan on the right clearly shows the value of StructureScan. StructureScan

eliminates the guesswork in identifying the images on your screen!

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**

**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. email 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

(Photo) Kenny Dement from Missouri, with another big Canadian 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

WEST KY BOAT SHOW IN MURRAY Jan. 20 – 22

Admission is FREE! Come talk Fish'n or High Definition Sonar with Kick'n Bass. Look for the big Kick'n Bass sign at Booth # 33 upstairs by the Seminar area.

Don't forget ... book your Spring Fishing Trip **NOW** and get the dates you want!
rk@kicknbass.net

Thanks for reading Kick'n Bass' fishing report!

Tight Lines ...

Randy Kuhens