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March 28, 2014

Lake Conditions

Water Clarity and Temperature ...

Kentucky Lake ranges from quite dingy in some of the creeks with the main lake clearing slightly. The water at Barkley has quite a bit of color in it. Surface water temps on both lakes are around 52 degrees and warming to around mid to high 50's in the afternoons on sunny days.

Weather Outlook

Friday...Partly sunny with a 20 percent chance of showers. Highs in the mid 60s. West winds 10 to 15 mph in the morning shifting to the northeast around 5 mph in the afternoon.

Friday Night...Showers and a chance of thunderstorms. Lows in the mid 40s. North winds 5 to 10 mph. Chance of precipitation 80 percent.

Saturday...Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 50s. North winds 10 to 15 mph.

Saturday Night...Mostly clear. Lows in the mid 30s.

Sunday...Sunny. Highs in the lower 60s.

Sunday Night...Mostly clear. Lows in the lower 40s.

Monday...Mostly sunny. Highs in the upper 60s.

Monday Night...Partly cloudy with a 20 percent chance of showers. Lows in the upper 40s.

Tuesday...Mostly clear. Highs in the lower 60s. Lows in the mid 40s.

Tuesday Night...Mostly clear. Highs in the lower 60s. Lows in the mid 40s.

Wednesday...Partly sunny. Highs in the upper 60s.

Fishing the Early Spring Frontal Systems

Early Spring fishing can be fantastic here on Kentucky & Barkley Lakes. However, frontal systems and the changes in weather they bring can wreak havoc on your catch. Knowing how fronts affect fish behavior and feeding habits can mean the difference between success and failure.

Barometric Pressure Change and the affect it has on Fish

All fish have a lateral line of sorts. As an example the lateral line is easily identified on a Largemouth Bass as the black line stretching from the gill plate to the tail. The bass uses the lateral line to sense a change in pressure. Bass detect pressure changes and they adjust their air bladder for neutral buoyancy. When a cold front comes thru, like it did this week, it brought

wind, rain and a major drop in barometric pressure ... and fish reacted to the change. If you'll remember a few days back stable weather coincided with the full moon and the Prime Feeding times were at their peak for the month. We had a couple of days where the bass fed for long periods and at times in a frenzy and all of this good fishing peaked just before the front hit. You may have experienced this also. There is no doubt in my mind, as I've experienced this scenario many times, a bass will feed up before the front and feed minimally after the front goes thru. No argument here.

Knowing What to Expect and What Not to Do Can Help ...

As a fishing guide I'm on the water daily and my clients and I can't always pick and choose when they can go fishing. Dates are booked in advance and none of us guides have a crystal ball. So invariably we're going to have to deal with fishing during some inclement weather and the effects of a cold front. Actually knowing what to expect from a frontal passage and keeping an eye on the weather reports helps me develop a game plan. Since experience has shown me what the fish are most likely **NOT** going to do, I've got a pretty good idea of what I **NEED** to do. Here are some of the ways you can plan ahead and make the most of your time on the water.

1). Plan to start fishing a little later in the morning. Usually the temperatures and daylight warms us up a bit and get things going. I know my clients and I feel better as the morning progresses. Feeling good and being on your game is a good thing.

2). Fish during the Prime Feeding Times. The Prime Feeding Times are provided in my weekly fishing report, available thru many online sources and printed in all major outdoor publications. Fish & Game will be the most active during those times. The PFT's are there for a reason so use them. I make it a habit to know when the Prime Feeding Times occur and make it a point to have my clients in high percentage areas during those times. Increasing the odds in your favor is a good thing.

3). Plan on fishing some protected water where wind is not as great a factor. The water will be warmer and clearer there and fish will find their comfort zone. A happy fish will be a more aggressive fish.

4). During the backside of a cold front you will be dealing with bluebird skies, sometime high winds and extreme high pressure. Fish will not be willing to put out much effort to feed and chase a large fast moving lure so smaller lures and subtle presentations are in order. Remember whether you're using artificials or live bait, small and slow is going to be your best bet. A Steel Shad blade bait, a PJ's jig or ZMan shakey head Finnesse worm crawled along the bottom is good.

5). Fish deeper water adjacent to long tapering banks and points. If there is a ledge or deep under water point nearby look for suspended fish that have pulled out off the end. Use your *Lowrance High Definition System* to pinpoint their location of these fish and a lot of times you will find that they're schooled up. Sometimes the fish will not necessarily be deeper but suspended over deeper water with baitfish. A Steel Shad blade bait or an umbrella rig fished slowly is a good choice for suspended fish at a time like this.

Let's face it; the best time to go fishing is whenever you can. However, being armed with a little know-how and having a game plan can stack the odds in your favor. I hope you find some value in the information above and it helps you put more fish in the boat.

***Crank Baiting For Crappie From the Kick'n Bass Pontoon
Read the full story in this month's In-Fisherman Panfish
Guide ... <http://kicknbass.net/articles.php>***

(Photo) The Alan Thompson Group from Owensboro caught these slab crappie and more while fishing on the Kick'n Bass Pontoon! Come go with us, you might get lucky too!

Book Your "Crank'in For Crappie Trips" NOW! Don't Wait Book Now!

Check out our TV Show "Crank'n For Crappie" <http://feel-n-reel.com/past-shows.htm>



Fishing Report

Crappie ... crazy, unpredictable, windy, cold, rainy, snowy and then calm, warm and beautiful weather this week ... we've had it all, probably more confusing to us anglers than the fish. For the most part Crappie have been scattered over deeper areas. The frontal systems and colder temps has kept them suspended and relating to structure. *(Be sure and read the "Sonar Tip of the Week" below. Our Lowrance HDS system sure came in handy this week).* Nonetheless some are having real good catches. Capt. Rich, while have some very tough days dealing with high winds, has still managed to have several good days of fishing with our clients on the *Kick'n Bass Pontoon*. Some really big fish have been caught. Most crappie are being caught drifting minnows or jigs over flats 10 feet deep and at the mouth of the bays in deeper water 10-15 feet around the old creek stumps. Spider rigging and drifting during windy days with drift socks has been pretty effective. A slow presentation is in order.

Some welcome news is that clients fishing out of my Ranger Boat this week have caught a few black crappie. The blacks are just beginning to show up on the banks and are being caught 4-6 feet deep and in some cases a little deeper. The most favorable bite seems to be along chunk rock banks in the afternoon on sunny days. Our best method is casting 3/32 oz Ken's light wire lead head with a 2.5 - 3 inch KY Green curly tail and then switching off and casting a small feather and hair jig on a weighted bobber and working it back slowly to pick off another fish or two. Also we're catching a few using a slip bobber and minnow fishing over and around submerged cover. As you can see a number of methods are being used to catch fish. Our success rate largely depends on our ability to deal with the frontal passages and especially the high winds we've had this week.

Bass Fishing ... No one pattern or technique seems to be dominant. Bass are feeding but at times don't seem to be exerting much effort to do so. On calm sunny afternoons it seems we can't do any wrong then other time it's as tough as nails. So goes early spring, huh. We've caught some fish on SPRO medium diving crank baits fished along deeper chunk rock banks. The best retrieve has been to cast the bait shallow crank it several turns until you feel bottom and then work the bait back to the boat using a stop and go retrieve. Actually I would consider the retrieve to be more like working a deep diving jerk bait with a jerk, jerk, pause and then jerk retrieve. This scenario has been most productive in the late afternoons after the sun has warmed the Northwest banks. Late this week we did see a

movement whereby the largemouth are beginning to show up on the flats adjacent to the feeder creeks. Several nice fish were caught on lipless crank baits, square bill cranks and Steel Shad blade baits. As better weather becomes more consistent so will the fishing and the shallow water bite can do nothing but get better and better.

SONAR TIP OF THE WEEK ...



Now this is what you call the mother lode! We found this large school of fish travelling along an old submerged roadbed this week a on a warm, sunny, calm afternoon. As you can see the fish were suspended therefore we set our spider rigs about 3 feet off the bottom and caught some really nice fish. The challenge this time of year is to be at the right place at the right time and then using the right presentation to get them to bite. Notice the surface temp had risen sharply due to the southerly flow, calm and sunny conditions but just a few feet down the temp was 50 degrees. Remember it's the base water temp that moves the fish not always surface temp. Without the help of our Lowrance High Definition system no way would we have found this school much less known at what depth to fish.

Remember ... The first step in our "On the Water Sonar Class" is to perform an inspection of your system to make sure the installation has been done to factory specs and all components are installed in the proper location. If adjustments are needed we can have them made prior to beginning your class. Doing so assures you that your system will perform at a high level and you'll get the most out of your time on the water.

You've made a Significant Investment in Electronics. Be the best angler you can be by learning to use your electronics to their full potential. For your personalized "On the water Sonar Class" contact Lowrance Pro Staffer Randy Kuhens at rk@kicknbass.net

Here's what one of our clients had to say about his "On the Water" class today ...

Randy, what an exceptional day! Class was better than advertised. Matt and the guys at Bass N' Gas did an exceptional job on the installation of my Lowrance system. Anytime you get the opportunity to learn on a one on one basis with a pro on the water, whether it be fishing or on the electronics system I consider it a life lesson. Your sonar class was a 1st class experience and I would recommend to anyone that purchases or has already purchased Lowrance units to take your class. When you can learn to locate structure but also distinguish the difference in the species of fish, it is a plus. I left today with the confidence knowing I will catch more fish. Thanks for everything.

Barry Baker - Springville, TN

The "On the Water Sonar Class" is a one on one, hands on, in your boat using your electronics instruction that will take your understanding and know-how to another level. We get it and you will too!

Kick'n Bass' 7 Essential Steps to Simplify Using Your HDS System.

Kick'n Bass will perform the following ...

- 1. Complete a detailed inspection on your system to certify the installation has been done to factory specs. (If adjustments are required technicians are available to fine tune your system prior to beginning your class. Doing so assures you that your system will perform at an optimum level and you'll get the most out of your time on the water).***
- 2. Check all network settings for compatibility and make adjustments if needed.***
- 3. Program the individual screens and install the overlay data that is best suits the type fishing you do. Example: Depth, Water Temp, Time, etc. Eliminate unwanted, non-practical on screen clutter that hampers using your unit to its maximum potential.***
- 4. Arrange the screens so that going from page to page is orderly and non-confusing. You'll become familiar with the screens and commands and what they'll do for you.***
- 5. Dial in Sonar and Structure Scan Graphics and choose appropriate Palette for the lakes you fish.***
- 6. Demonstrate the art of waypoint management. No more cluttered maps with useless or unproductive waypoints. You'll learn to identify which locations are waypoint worthy and how to go back to those locations without ever assigning a waypoint. You'll assign a waypoint once you are satisfied the location is worth saving.***

7. Demo the unit so you'll be able to take advantage of its fish finding capabilities. You'll learn to identify shell beds, submerged stumps, brush piles, ledges, game fish species and more.

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.

Installation Photos of the Smart Bracket Console Mounting System on a Ranger RT Aluminum Bass Boat.



The Smart Bracket Mounting System is available on other makes & models of boats.

Be sure and Check out our webpage for more photos and other Sonar Accessories.

<http://kicknbass.net/sonar-accessories.php>