

Hello from the white Excel. It's been a good fishing week between storms and holiday traffic.

Shout out to the great folks at Sportsman's Lodge and Marina. They were as busy as a bee hive the last week but still kept a smile and friendly disposition. Having grown up around a marina, I remember how demanding the public can be. If you are looking for a nice place to spend a few days, give them a call. If you need a covered slip for your boat or pontoon, they can help you out there too.

We are starting to settle into summer patterns now that the bulk of the spawn and migration that goes with it are coming to a close. The lake level is holding near summer pool with some slight changes. Surface temps are in the high 70s. One thing that has been in fisherman's favor this spring has been the lake has stayed very clear with visibility as good as we could expect.

I have a couple of items that have been put in my ear lately.

First is when you clean your fish at the cleaning stations around the lake, be sure to puncture the swim bladder located in the rib cage of the fish. Nobody likes to see floating carcasses around the banks or marinas. Take a couple of seconds to puncture the swim bladder and the marine life that feeds on the remains on the bottom will clean them up in short order.

Second is some folks are being criticized for dressing and eating bass caught here. Sure, there is a huge number of fishermen who look at all bass fishing as catch and release but there are an equal number who like to keep, dress, and eat their legally taken bass. The creel limits on fish are based on an expected % of the fish being kept. Nobody thinks about keeping crappie or panfish for the table so the person who chooses to keep their bass to eat should be able to do so without having to hear snide remarks about it.

Soapbox stowed away.

Crappie;

We are still catching good numbers of nice sized white and black crappie trolling crank baits on drops and flats on the main lake and mouths of creeks. Spider rig fishermen and slow trollers/longliners are also doing well on jigs and double minnow rigs. Look for cover near drops and channels and you should be able to put some good fish in the box. For the next several months of warm water temps, you should plan on putting your fish on ice rather than trying to keep the fish you are going to clean alive in the livewell. The fish will be easier to clean and have a much better taste if put on ice. Of course this takes catch-and-release out of the game.

Gills and redears;

It has been tough for both lately. We have a full moon coming up on June 9th so the bedding action should kick into high gear in the next few days. The full moon of June is typically the end of the pursuit for bluegills and redears for most fishermen but you are missing some great action if you fail to keep an eye out for willow fly hatches that should be starting soon. This is the time the fly rod folks get into some great action around the banks and cover where the willow flies are hatching out.

White bass, yellows, and hybrids;

Yes, that wasn't a misprint. I said hybrids. I got a report over the weekend of some nice hybrids being caught in the mouth of a creek on crankbaits. Nothing would make me happier than to see the hybrids become a major player in our fishing. I am starting to see large schools of large Asian carp minnows on the main lake bars. Hybrids and stripers are large enough to eat the small carp. There are starting to be white bass and yellows chasing baitfish on the main lake. Keep an eye out for "jumps". Spoons, in-line spinners, and crank baits will take these.

Catfish;

The spawn for catfish is in full swing and they are being caught in big numbers around rip-rap, chunk rock, and pea gravel banks. Cut bait, stink baits, worms, and leeches will get the job done, both on bottom rigs and bobbers. We are catching nice numbers of big channel cats while trolling cranks.

Bass;

From the numbers of bass boats lined up on main lake ledges the last couple of weeks, it's clear the main game is on the depth breaks near cover. Good numbers of large bass are being caught on crank baits, spoons, and creature baits fished near deep water drops.

The bass are wearing us out on trolled crank baits.

Since we are now past the 1st major holiday of the boating calendar, the pleasure boats and personal watercraft are out in full force. Keep an eye out for them when fishing near marked channels and in all the major bays.

Fishing and catching are both great right now. If you are looking to book a day or two on Ky or Barkley Lakes, I have several days open for all the upcoming months. I'm sort of the new guy on the block and am quickly building a client base. Some folks are puzzled when they inquire about dates for bookings and I have several open. Folks tend to repeat with guides they have had good trips in the past with so I'm working on building repeat clients rather than having a large past client base.

Be careful out there! Wear your PFD when the big motor is running, obey all game and maritime laws, and be courteous of others who share the lake.

Welcome to our little piece of Heaven.

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