

# Doug Wynn's Fishing Report

**For September 3, 2019**

*Report for Kentucky Lake and Lake Barkley*

Hey! From the Excel Bay Pro 230 "Fishful Thinking".

With the last holiday of the summer upon us, you'll find me in front of the TV, watching college football. When I started making up my fishing calendar this spring, I marked off every Saturday, Sunday and Monday of each holiday. My love for fishing is the same but my dislike of holiday weekend boat traffic has driven me to swear off booking trips on those days.

I did have a wonderful Friday trip with a family from St. Charles, MO. Myron, Renee, and Joe came to me to learn how to pull crankbaits so they could fish that tactic for the rest of their first trip to KY Lake.

They warned me when they stepped into the boat at Sportsman's Marina that I would be answering dozens of questions. I told them there was no such thing as a dumb question on my boat and I would try my best to answer each question as honestly as I could. That's what I do. I try to teach folks how to execute the tactics I use to catch crappie and the other species we catch. Their questions were mainly about pulling crankbaits but we also discussed several other crappie fishing techniques.

We caught several keeper crappie just off some deeper drops. The crappie I have been catching much of the summer have found new places to hide as the lake levels have dropped. Pico INT crankbaits accounted for all the catch. Renee even asked to help clean the catch and I gladly obliged. She handled the American Angler electric fillet knife like an old pro.

Vicki and I had the privilege to attend the King Kat catfish event at the Burnett Street boat launch park in Paducah last weekend. Excel boat is a major sponsor of that tournament trail and I had been asked to display the Bay Pro 230 there. Some teams competing were fishing out of the Excel Storm Cat boats. One of those teams is headed by fellow Excel Pro Staff team member, Jeff Dodd of west TN.

The two-day event was attended by teams from all over the south and Midwest, even Texas. Fishing was allowed from the Ohio River bridge at Wickliffe to the Smithland, Barkley and KY Dams. It was amazing to see the quality of the blue, channel and flathead catfish weighed in. Many folks have lamented the demise of fishing both below our dams and in the lakes due to the Asian carp invaders. This event showed there are still plenty of quality catfish in our rivers, Asian carp or not!

Jeff Dodd and his partner took the lead with just a few boats left to weigh in. His catch included a 50+ pound blue catfish that took the lead for both total weight, but also big

fish. The next to the last boat, two anglers from Ohio who were in 9th place after day one, came to the scales. Vicki and I watched as they dropped four nice cats in the box.

I told Vicki that Jeff has the win unless the 5th fish was huge. It was a 70+ pound blue cat that pushed the team's total weight to just over a few ounces more than Jeff Dodd's and was the big fish of the event. Jeff was wonderful in defeat and had nothing but good things to say about the winners and the event.

Once the Labor Day Holiday is in the rear-view mirror, we should start to see fishing pick up. Many anglers put their gear up in May and don't break it back out until after Labor Day.

The lake levels are steadily dropping and should slow down as they get near the winter-pool mark. With the drop in lake levels also come the gremlins out of hiding. The stumps, rock piles, house foundations, and sandbars that have been covered are now being exposed.

If you have Humminbird electronics, I encourage you to use the LakeMaster mapping cards and learn how to set the lake level off-set to account for the drop in lake levels. Right now your level off-set should be set at -4 for the four foot drop below summer pool.

This feature is one of the most important features on my electronics. I also encourage you to set your depth alarm at four feet. That way any area four feet or shallower will show up in red. You would be surprised how many boats we witnessed Friday run wide open across areas in the mouth of Jonathan Creek that are four feet deep or less. Those pleasure boaters didn't have a clue of the danger.

Get out there and try your luck. No fish are ever caught sitting in the recliner in the living room.

Several crappie are being caught in depths less than 10 feet. Most anglers are spider rigging or slow trolling jigs and minnows. Many of the crappie are now ABOVE the 10" size limit. The days of catching mostly 9 7/8 inch crappie are slowly getting behind us.

Bass fishermen are moving into the bays as the schools of minnows move back into the bays. Top-water, cranks, swim baits and creature baits are all catching bass. Look for schooling activity along rocky banks and around cover like blow-downs.

Be careful out there. Now is the time of the year to make sure you have plenty of gas in your tank BEFORE you get to the ramp. There are very few places to get gas on the water after Labor Day. Wear your PFDs when running your big engine. They do you no good if they are tucked away. Watch out for those who might need help but also watch out for those who won't watch out for you.

Welcome to our slice of Heaven.

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