

Thunder Bay Walleye Club Newsletter

December 2014

PO Box 812 Alpena, MI 49707

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TBWC REEL FUN ICE FISHING RAFFLE TICKETS WILL BE AVAILABLE

IT WON'T BE LONG

Last winter was long and cold, and it looks like we are headed down that same road again. At least we have ice fishing to look forward to. All of the local lakes with the exception of Hubbard, have recently locked up, and should be safe soon. There have been people fishing already, but please use extreme caution, as the ice is just forming and is very inconsistent. Get your gear ready, and settle in for a long cold winter.

On that note, it's about time to start thinking about the Reel Fun Ice Fishing Tournament. If you can fit it into your schedule we can certainly use all the help we can get. It is always held on free fishing weekend in February, so we will need help drilling on Friday of that weekend. More information and specifics to come soon.

This December meeting we are going to get the TBWC 2015 fishing schedule set. Be prepared with some ideas for the meeting. Here is a few suggestions to consider.

Hello Denny, how about Harrisville as a late May / June date. I would like to see the De Tour stay in August and Burt / Mullet replace the Hubbard Lake tourney.
Just my .2 cents. Dean Miller

Would love to see a tourney down at Augres or Linwood this year. Early to mid-summer. Adam Birk

I would like to see a jigging tournament during April. Wouldn't have to be strictly jigging but the last couple of years we have had unreal jig fishing right in our backyard on the Thunder Bay River and not many of the club members have been in on the action. I think the first weekend in May would hit it right. Also pushing night eyes back a weekend or two would be better for more of the public so the long runs down to black river and sturgeon point aren't necessary to catch fish. I know that tourney is a tradition but it would be nice to be able to fish closer to home. Just my .02. Have a good one.
Chris Wade

As you know I'm always traveling so I cannot make club meetings...here's my thoughts on next year's Club Schedule...

> Banquet: March 21st as this is in the window when Walleye Season is closed on inland waters, and in the end of winter when Everyone is stir crazy, and before the Detroit River Runs starts...we are a walleye club right???

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> April 12th Detroit River 7a-3p

> May 17th Augres Saginaw Bay 7a-3p

> June 7th Hubbard Lake 6p-1a

> June 27-28th Night Eyes 6p-1a

> July 12th Thunder bay 7a-3p

> August 2nd Rock Port 7a-3p

> August 16th Long Lake 7a-3p

> September 20th Mullet Lake 7a-3p

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> This is an 8 tournament schedule which is enough to get your best 5. Another tourney could be added if desired. These are somewhat substantial changes and I think for good reason...notice only one Hubbard tourney, I (and most locals) feel 2-3 TBWC tourneys per year on one inland body of water is irresponsible.

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> DR and Saginaw Bay are 2 of the top 5 walleye destinations in the county and are 4hrs away or less, let's utilize them at their peak times!

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> Our inland lakes are really slow until the water warms up. Let's fish the later on the year when fishing is best.

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> Let's move night eyes back so the fish are actually in the bay and everyone can catch them without running to Black River and beyond. This should increase participation.

>

> The vast majority of our club members that fish tournaments aren't interested in learning to fish tough bites. We do this so we can catch a ton of fish, have fun, and learn a little along the way. So let the focus of the tournament schedule be to land every tournament on a hot bite. I know this is not a guarantee of a hot bite at every event but it should put the odds in our favor.

>

> Just my 2 cents for what it's worth. Hope it helps.

>

> Sincerely,>

> Eric Kruczynski>

I think the club should consider again, having the special bonus continue for next year. I think we had 27 entries at Grand Lake? Nice to see that many people participate! Also a late season tournament would be fun and different. September is a great month on the water. Because of later daylight time, start and end the tournament one half hour later. Think out of the box, extra bonus points for the winner, bonus money for the largest fish, bonus money that was not won at Grand, Long, or Hubbard lakes. The ideas that you could come up with are endless!

Mike McGirr

November meeting notes

There are no notes. No meeting in November.

HOW ABOUT A DEER SEASON STORY

I know you're always looking for something for the newsletter – hopefully a few folks get a good laugh out of this, like fishing, sometimes it's better to be lucky than good.

Here's a little background, as well as my timeline for opening day of rifle season this year:

2014 was a new experience for me, since I just purchased 40 acres adjoining camp this year, and had not 2, but 3 blinds to prepare for season, instead of 1 or 2 like usual. I didn't have a chance to put heaters in the deer blind until the Sunday prior to the opener.

Here's my story – OK, 3 blinds to prep this year, still wanting to get a little late fishing in and watch a little football. Saturday (11/8), attended my daughter's basketball game (10-11a), run out to Trelfa's to get my boat after some repairs and winterizing (can't say enough about how Greg goes the extra mile and charges reasonable prices) (12a-1p). Opted not to run to camp this afternoon, since it's raining pretty heavy now, and I've been seeing lots of buck activity between 10a-2p on camera.

It's now Sunday (11/9) – weather looks pretty nice, wishing I was running to camp instead of my wife insisting we're going to church (9:30-10:30a), Out of church, grabbed a sandwich, my heaters, LP tanks and assorted other items to get blinds ready for the following Saturday. Of course now it has started raining.

Arrived at camp, running with the 4wheeler to my son's blind to put in the heater, make sure there are no problems and prep for Nov(15), 90 min later, finally have the blind ready, had a problem with the door sticking that had to be fixed. Ran to an old blind left on the 40 acres – must be the world's smallest deer blind door – had to sweep out the peanut shells the previous owner left in the blind, mice had a field day with those, they were everywhere. Blind cleaned, heater put in and tested – 20 min. Now I can prep my deer blind – run to blind, really pouring out now, installed heater – lit heater, cleaned the windows – noticed heater made a whistling sound and didn't have that nice blue pilot flame – pilot had more of an orange flame. Changed tanks and lit/re-lit heater several times – orange flame is now blue again, and whistle noise is now gone(I'm thinking there must have been a little dirt in the pilot) – already 3:30p, need to get out of blind before I muck up my hunting for opening day.

Enough back story – on to Opening day, fast forward 6 days into the future:

4:45a – Alarm goes off

4:47a – Drug my butt out of bed and hopped in the shower

5:00a – Out of the shower – getting dressed (decided to not wear too warm of clothes – why bother, I've got a heater in my blind)

5:30a – Packed a lunch, grabbed my backpack and rifle, heading to the barn to take my electric golf cart out to the blind

6:00a – Arrived at the blind in a very quiet stealth fashion, got my stuff carefully in the blind and opened the valve on the 20 lbs. LP tank

6:03a – Lit the heater in the blind so the windows will clear, started unpacking lunch, binoculars, etc. – planning on an all-day sit

6:04a – The heater is whistling again – it's not super loud, and it's working – figured I'd run it for 30 min and then turn off before daylight – wish I had worn my insulated bibs and long johns now.

It's only 17 degrees outside

6:19a – The heater just quit – and won't re-light, I guess I'm just toughing it out this morning – at least the windows cleared. Still 17 degrees out.

7:15a - Nice little spike is out grazing on my food plot, watched him for 10 min before he left – don't know if he was full, or if my chattering teeth drove him out – did I mention it's only 17 degrees out.

9:30a – Got a text from my buddy hunting ¼ mile away – he just shot a 7pt, he's running back to camp to get the 4 wheeler and the little trailer to haul the deer out. It's warmed up, it's now a balmy 18 degrees out – he informs me, he has two spare heaters at camp. Can't take it any longer – going to get a different heater.

9:45a – Back at camp, grabbed a spare heater – he informs me a friend of his dad's "Wayne" fixed it after last year, but he hasn't tried it out yet.

10:00a – Back at my blind – hooked up new heater, just shoved mine in the corner of the blind for now. Lit heater and this one whistles louder than mine, but at least it's working – temp outside might be pushing 20, can barely feel my fingers at this point.

10:02a – Replacement heater quits working, won't re-light.

10:03a – Outside the blind, turning off 20lbs. tank, convinced this is the problem now. Back in blind, unhooked hose, hooked up a 1lbs tank I stashed in the blind for just such a scenario – swapped out heater lit, still whistling.

10:05a – Heater goes out again.

10:15a – Unhook all tanks, put both heaters in the golf cart, went back to camp, by now my buddy has his buck back at camp, help him hang it in the pole barn, dump both useless heaters in the barn, and grab the 3rd heater – heading back to the blind

10:35a – Back in the blind, hooked up the heater to the bulk tank, tried lighting it – can't even get the pilot to light.

10:40a – Unhook the bulk tank, tried running the new heater off of 1lbs tanks – still won't light – have reached the last straw.

11:15a – Packed up rifle, binoculars, lunch and a pack of beef jerky, went to my son's blind, sitting in there with the heat going, having lunch.

12:45p – Got a text from my buddy, despite already shooting a buck off his field, he's seeing 3 different bucks chasing does on his field – thinks I would see more activity back at my blind than my son's.

12:50p – It's windy and has warmed up a little (22-25), haven't seen any deer yet at this blind. I finished lunch, turned off the heater and packed my stuff up again, going to take the heater with me and relocate back to my blind – this is not at all how I wanted to spend opening day!!

1:16p – Back at my blind, have put all the gear in my blind, and hooked up the heater to the bulk tank (not entirely sure there isn't a problem with the tank) – ready to purge the air out of the line and light the heater.

1:17p – Heater lit, nice blue flame and it isn't whistling!!!

2:04p – Observed what appear to be 2 does run into a shooting lane just to the right of my food plot – the deer like to stage in there before the go out onto the field. The deer acted really strange, ran in, circled the large white pine and the end of the lane and stopped on top of the ridge.

2:05p – Glassed the lane with my binoculars – one doe is actually a button buck – I see antlers on the left edge of the lane, can't tell how big yet, there's a large depression there and I can't even see the deer unless he has his head up. Decide to open the window just in case.

2:06p – Buck finally steps out of the depression and up onto higher ground – I see 3 on one side and two on the other – appears to be an averaged sized 5pt, but still can't tell for certain – deer is broadside, hasn't turned his head.

2:07p – Deer turned facing away & slightly quartering – can see the antlers much better now – discover there are brow tines I couldn't see before – he's not a 5, he's a 7. I can tell by the body size this is only a 2.5 yr. old buck, consider letting him walk, but then I remember I'm out of venison in the freezer and haven't taken a buck since 2010 (I've let a lot of small ones walk since then) – BANG!!! Buck drops right

there, doe and button buck run off. After waiting a minute or two with the scope on the buck, I can see the chest isn't moving – text my buddy to see if he can sneak over and help me get this deer out of that lane, it's rough terrain, and muddy – I have a hard time walking through there, let alone dragging a deer out of it.

2:10p – My buddy sends me a text that he's on his way, figures he can get in and out quietly with all this wind.

2:15p – Doe and button buck come back to the lane where the buck is laying – they stand over him – tapping him with their hooves, like “Dude, why are you sleeping here?”

2:20p – Doe and button buck finally give up on reviving the dead buck, move to my food plot – I want to go tag and check out this deer that's still laying there, but I don't want to spook the deer on my field.

2:25p – My buddy arrives, deep bust out, we drag the buck out to the edge of the field and decide to just put him on the back of the golf cart for now – I'll field dress him under the big light at camp, a little worried if the smell of a dead buck will affect deer coming out to my food plot, but the wind direction should be pushing the smell a different direction.

This certainly wasn't my best preparation before season, and certainly not my plan for how to hunt opening day, but Dad always said it's better to be lucky than good. After tagging the deer, putting him on the cart and parking it behind my blind, I did hunt the rest of the evening – I ended up seeing 11 more deer that afternoon, including 4 more bucks (none of them shooters) – guess that smell didn't bother them at all.

Three hunters at camp this year – two of us shot 7 point bucks on opening day, and my son (11) ended up shooting a spike on the 23rd – we normally don't shoot 1.5 yr. old bucks, but we're seeing so many of them this year, we opted to let him take one out to try and help manage things a little. All pressure is off at this point, have lots of tasty venison at the processor, I need to make room in the freezer now. Looking forward to hunting the last few days of season, looking for a trophy buck – if it's not a wall hanger, it gets a free pass at this point.

Well, that's my story, hope you get a good laugh out of it. We've decided to refer to opening day 2014 as the Great Heater Fiasco, I wouldn't believe the story if I hadn't lived it. Goes to show how much control the rut has over those bucks – I'm sure there was a ton of propane smell in the area from hooking up and unhooking heaters all morning – I think opening morning, I spent more time running back & forth to camp than I did sitting in the blind. Very thankful for the electric golf cart I bought this summer – it's a good option for hunters like myself that have a hard time getting around.

Mike McCourt

TBWC LAKE HURON NATIVE TRIBE AGREEMENT

Does the TBWC want to be part of the new Lake Huron native tribe agreement which will go into effect in 2020?

Walleye Club jacket orders

If you are interested in getting a Walleye Club jacket, please give Steve Hubert a call @ 379-4614, so he can make it worthwhile to put orders together. It is really not a cost saver to order one jacket at a time. If you plan on getting one, call ahead, so he can plan for orders.

Steve will have hats, t-shirts, TBWC decals etc. at the monthly meetings for you to purchase.

Here is a list of high quality hooded sweat shirts we have left.

Stone washed light blue, 1 M, 4 L, 4 XL, 1 XXL at \$30.00 ea.

Dark Grey, 4 L, 5 XL, 1 XXL, 3 XXXL at \$25.00 ea.

Light Grey, 1 M, 5 XL at \$25.00 ea.

Dark Blue, 4 XL at \$25.00 ea.

All have a small club logo on the left breast. **All items are at club cost.**

Electric Motor, Canvas, and Downrigger Repair

If you are in need of work on your Minnkota, need canvas work, or your Cannon Downriggers Serviced get ahold of Brad Valley @ Valley's Dockside Canvas

Services and repairs all Minnkota products including Cannon Downriggers.

989-464-1191

Looking for upgrades, repairs, and now fall winter WORK? Call the Boat keeper!

Most of you already know that TBWC member Greg Trelfa is a great mechanic. Why order from the big stores when Greg now has access to a full line of marine parts and accessories for all the major brands like Johnson, Evenrude, Mercury, Yamaha and more? He can also supply you with the latest in electronics from Lowrance and Hummingbird, and does professional high end installations as well. His kind of personal service is hard to come by, so if you are looking to upgrade some electronics or need some repairs or maintenance done and want it done right at very competitive prices, give Greg a call @ 595-3149.

NEXT MEETING

Wednesday December 10th, 7pm 2014

NEW MEETING ROOM 122

ACC Besser Tech Center (Room -122) it's the large room to the left as you go in the front entrance in the BTC on the north side of Johnson St.

Meetings are the second Wednesday of every month unless otherwise noted in the newsletter.

(Please note: If the college is closed due to weather conditions the meeting will be rescheduled or cancelled)

Agenda:

Club Tourneys

Wounded Warrior Fishing Tourney

Club Banquet April 11th 2015

How about March 21st if available

Bonus Again in 2015 for 3 fish on designated lakes

Lake Huron Native Tribe Agreement 2020

OPPORTUNITY TO FISH THE NWT

Have you considered fishing the NWT (National Walleye Tour) as a Co-Angler? A chance to fish some "bucket-list" fishing places? I will be fishing the entire circuit again in 2015 as a "Pro-Angler" and I am looking for a co-angler to sign up with whom might be interested in fishing all (4) or some of the tournaments. If a "Pro" and a "Co" sign up for a tournament together they are both guaranteed to be in the tournament. If you sign up with me as a "Co" it does not mean that you would necessarily fish the tournament with me. There is a blind draw at the pre-tournament meeting which determines the "Pro/Co" pairings. You will have the opportunity to fish with the biggest names in the business and learn from them and at the same time you would be competing against other "Co-Anglers" for prize money. My hope is to find someone interested in traveling with me, pre-fishing with me and sharing some of the expenses. I am also teamed up with 3 other "Pro-Anglers". This could be fun learning experience for someone. I am willing to consider single tournament or entire circuit commitments. I usually pre-fish 5-7 days and then the two tournament days. If you can't commit to the entire 7 to 10 days, I would also consider someone interested in driving to the tournament themselves and fishing the number of days that works for you. You can get more information by visiting the NWT web site. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.

NWT Schedule:

Lake City, MN, Lake Pepin, Mississippi River.....May 8, 9
Leech Lake, MN.....June 12, 13
Green Bay, WI.....July 24, 25
Devil's Lake, ND (Championship).....September 17-19

Wayne Van Dyke

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