



## **BASS BUZZ**

*Remembering 2008*

2008 – in the spring and early summer, Rainy Lake stepped up to the plate and gave new meaning to the word “phenomenal” as a description of the bass fishing she can produce. About mid-summer, the bass fishing began to slow down for a much-needed rest, and the walleye fishing turned on in a big way...unbelievable in size and exceptional in numbers. Because it was a relatively windy season, the northern pike fishing caught everyone’s interest and the big pike action remained pretty steady all the way through the year.

Art Garcia always starts the season, and this year, a very late spring put Art in camp the day after ice-out. In windy, cold, rainy weather, Art said it was the best two days of smallie fishing he has ever seen. Then, after one slower day, Art and Dean experienced a day that all bass fishermen dream of... over 150 smallies in one day with too many 4+ lb fish to count...the best single day at Campfire Island ever. Bob, Matt and Rob German hit a transition period for the bass for a couple of days, but worked up to a couple of 60-fish days. LB Keller’s group enjoyed some 40-60 fish per day – some very nice pike and 4+ lb smallies in the mix. Eric & Laura Rinchart enjoyed their first 55-fish day, and backed it up with a 65-fish day that included a 5-pound smallie and lots of bass in the 19”- 20” range.

Bill Roller’s group always gets June off to a good start...lots of laughs, and 40-70 fish per day. The bass action was good with the biggest over 4 pounds, but the pike action was better with lots in the 33-35 inch range. Gene Halliday and Matt had some nasty weather to deal with and a spawn that just wouldn’t get going... Paul, Roger and David were in at the same time. But still, both groups enjoyed 25-35 fish most days - Matt found the biggest bass which measured 20 inches, and David Fudge caught a big 35.5 inch pike. The Marek/McMahon fathers & sons group caught the back end of the weather but ended the trip with a really nice day. Jeff had his first shorlunch, Joe landed a 29” walleye, Jim’s biggest bass was 19” and Frank had some fun with a 34” northern pike. Bill Kessler & Rusty Waldrep arrived to good weather and smallies that were starting to bed...so 35-50 top-water hits every day and nice fish to boot...life is good! Phil DeMastro brought Joe with him this trip, and they enjoyed 35-50 fish most days with lots of 18”-19” smallies and Joe’s big 20.25” bass took top honors. Wendel Knox brought his family back for another trip – good smallie fishing up to 19.5 inches and lots of great pike action to heat up the big-fish-of-the-day competition!

July was nice for weather. Art put some 40-fish days back-to-back, with lots of 19+inch smallies and one that measured 20.5 inches. Dan Hanon introduced his 7-year old son Jack to Rainy Lake – Jack was the net-man for Dad’s 36” pike and 19” bass, but he also caught his own 28” pike and 17” bass. Charles & Maudy Stoltenberg got some nice weather this year and it gave Charles his first taste of the top-water action...30-35 fish per day with a 20” smallie as the trophy for this year. For Charles Gorsuch, fishing was a bit slow at first, but Larry played a nice 19.75” smallie, a 36” pike and several 27-29 inch walleyes...Jeff’s big pike was 41”, big walleye was 27” and lots of bass...Charles found several 36” pike and 25” walleye. Bernie & Dallas Clement were troupers – fished through some nasty weather and found some good pike action to 38 inches and walleye in the 4-8 pound range. Jim & Elisha caught some nice smallies to 19 inches and Elisha landed the biggest pike – a 37.5 inch beauty! The fish spread out for Bill Bacon and Fred Henthorne – they fished hard and used everything in the tackle box, and were rewarded with 20-35 fish days and biggest bass of 20” and 19.5”.

In September, Larry & Harry Marek caught the back-end of the windy weather, but still got into some decent fishing. Larry caught the biggest walleye (28”), Harry caught the biggest pike (42.5”), and on the last day the weather cleared and they both got in to some really nice smallie action. Ernie & Marilyn Earnest had a great smallie/walleye trip – they saw good numbers of both fish with walleyes topping 26-30 inches and Ernie landed the biggest bass at 5+ pounds. John Belt’s group had a great trip – a variety of species and good numbers of fish – the biggest were Adam’s pike (42”) and walleye (26”), John’s bass (19.5”), Tom’s pike (38”) and walleye (28”), George’s smallie (5.5 lb), and Andy’s pike (35.5”...3 of them!). Bill Kessler and Brian France enjoyed 4 days with 20-35 fish per day -- both of them landing a 20” smallmouth bass and some 25” walleyes. Art Garcia rounded out the year with a trip that saw good action all the way through, and included some 4.5 lb bass and one 5.5 lb beauty, and lots of walleyes – big one at 28 inches.

Great year – even though the late ice-out set everything back about 2 weeks throughout the season. To Gerry & Mary Denness, Richard & Rich Place, Al Kanak and crew, Jay Klotz, Gil Ash...we missed you! Good to see Larry Marek back after a few (long) years. Dean has had several fishermen ask about doing a fishing trip to specifically target walleyes – his suggestion is to look at August and maybe into September for a really good walleye fishing trip. We are seriously thinking about running a very short October fishing program. Wayne is impressed by the fish activity in the cooler Rainy Lake water ... bass, walleye, and pike. Probably 2-3 day trips back-to-back and 4 fishermen at a time...anyone interested?

If we didn't mention your big fish, please accept our apologies - we'll catch you next year! Campfire Island will have a booth in the All Canada St Louis show from January 16-18, 2009 and Wayne will also be at the All Canada Shows (Ross' Camp booth) in Pheasant Run and Minneapolis. We love to see you at one of the shows.

Take care! Thanks for the summer of 2008! See you next season!

Dean, Wayne, and Pat

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