

The Dogumentary

29th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

April 2011

April Floods Bring May Buds

April 2011 Meeting

The April meeting will be at Tuttle's Grill and Bowling Alley on Shady Oak Road in Hopkins, as usual. Dinner starts around 6, and the meeting will follow at 7pm.

Our speaker will be Lance Schmidt, manager of Prior Lake Bait and Tackle who will discuss crappie fishing for our tournament and also explain the meaning of the bumps on a fathead minnow's head.

In addition, we will be repairing some rods and reels for the Fishing for Life organization, so **Bring Tools and Cleaning Supplies** to the meeting to help with this project.

2011 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

April 7	Monthly Meeting
April 30 (5/7)	Crappie Tournament
May 5	Monthly Meeting
May 21-22	Walleye Tournament
June 2	Monthly Meeting
June 18	Bass Tournament
July 7	Monthly Meeting
July 23-30	LOTW Rock N Roll Musky Tour
August 4	Monthly Meeting
Sep 1	Monthly Meeting
Sep 10	Multispecies Tournament
Oct 8	Smallmouth Tournament
Nov 3	Banquet!

From the Desk of the President, Captain Kirk



Our tournament season got started Saturday on what turned out to be a very nice spring day. I will leave the results for another article in the Dogumentary but say that it was great to get out again after a long off season.

I have always enjoyed the social time our club has when we gather at the end of a tournament. Watching those mud-covered SUV's pulling into the parking lot after the trout event is always interesting. Maybe we should have an award for dirtiest SUV. The tired and stiff Dogs then fall out of the SUV's many of them covered with mud and a few still wet from a morning unplanned dip in the icy streams. Then you hear "how did you guys do?" The typical response is "a tough day but got a few". Everyone is still pretty guarded about what they say but still very anxious to see how they did compared to the others.

Once everyone has peeled off their waders and extra layers of clothing we get inside where everyone seems to loosen up. There is a lot of smiles greetings and story telling of the day's experiences. For me this is one of the most enjoyable times in our clubs activities. Then it's time for that hour drive home while driving into that bright afternoon sunlight. At this point I am looking forward to taking nap after a couple ibuprofen and then getting back to the normal family activities.

Troutzilla On A Stick

I had an interesting experience while pre-fishing for trout this year that I would like to share. I would expect that many of you like me have found yourself fishing a stream when you come across a spot that you just can not cast your bait to for a proper presentation. You know that this spot holds Troutzilla but you just can't get at it because of the trees, brush piles or under cut bank. After thinking about this for a while I finally got an idea.

A couple of years ago I had bought a 16.5 ft telescoping Crappie Stick at Cabelas before our crappie tournament. What I thought might be a good idea at the time turned out to be not very practical for crappies. I tied about 4' of 8lb Fireline to the eye on the end of the stick and then a 1/8 oz jig which I could add some Gulp to. I figured there were not many places I couldn't reach with a 16.5 ft rod.

Friday afternoon the day before our tournament I had an opportunity to try out my new Trout Stick. I had been in Wisconsin for some business on Friday morning and was planning to check stream conditions on the way home in preparation for the tournament. It was late in the afternoon when I stopped by the log filled Plum Creek for a couple of minutes of fishing. The water was quite high and muddy but I thought I would try my invention anyway.

Not far from the road there was a spot with about an 8-9 ft high bank which was under cut with some logs and tree roots protecting about a 3-4 ft hole. I extended the pole to its full length and dropped the jig into the hole. Almost instantly there was a strong tugging on the line. The battle was on with something that was under that log. It was probably a minute or two before I could see what I had on the other end. He finally tired enough for me to bring him forward in the strong current to a spot where I could beach him. I then secured the rod in some trees and climbed down the bank to grab my

catch. It was a Brown that measured 19 inches. Troutzilla had been caught a day too early.

Thinking back it must have been a funny sight with me 9ft above the water on the bank, a 16.5 ft pole, only 4ft of line to work with, a 19 inch Brown fighting in the current while I was looking for a place to land it. If I would have had our new headcam this may have been a Youtube hit.

Just a reminder that we will be doing some R&R repairs at our meeting this week so bring the usual supplies. I look forward to seeing all of you Thursday at Tuttle's.

Shatner

Trout Tournament Washes Downstream

The first tournament of the 2011 series was for trout on the rivers and streams of Western Wisconsin, as usual. All the streams were open to competition for brook and brown trout by the 23 Waterdogs in attendance. It was the warmest day of the year so far, with temperatures reaching 50 degrees, and along with that the runoff in the streams created more water and muddy conditions on many of the waters that were much easier to fish during the earlier pre-fishing weeks. This caused a change of tactics for many teams, and made it difficult for all but one team to put together a full card of 8 brookies and 8 brown trout. In fact, out of 11 teams, six of the teams caught five counting fish or less, which illustrates the tough fish-catching conditions that we faced.

Most teams went for brook trout first, with many of those fish found on the South Fork of the Kinnickinnic River. After that, catching browns proved to be more difficult. A total number of 36 brook trout were "weighed in" at the tournament, and 41 browns were caught, for a total of 77 fish (7 per team average) out of 176 fish possible to fill the cards. Had the water levels and cloud cover been more favorable, the numbers would have no doubt been much higher.

The tournament was won by the team of Griz and Banana Boy, who' card weighed more than twice that of second-place finishers Nasty Boy and OJ. Their strategy also required some adjusting to their original plan, but they found the winning method as Griz outlines in his story below.

A great lunch was enjoyed by the Dogs at the Orchard Restaurant in Baldwin after the tournament, as arranged by Mama's Boy.

Trout Tactics

By James "Griz" Ferstenou

Branden Happel and I were partners for this year's trout tournament, and heading into it we were hoping to avoid a repeat from a few years ago when we got skunked. We were able to get out pre-fishing the Saturday prior to the tournament to check out a few potential areas we wanted to fish on tournament day. After some discussion it was decided that we'd start our day on the Kinni to try to catch brook trout and maybe some bonus browns. Based on some pre-fishing success we decided to start in River Falls below the second dam (Glen Park). Knowing that the water would be slightly higher than it was the previous week did cause us some concern as to how fishable the area was going to be but we figured that it was still worth the gamble.

We waited on the shoreline until 6:30 AM finally came and then we had our lines in the water. After 30 minutes of casting into fast moving water we had nothing to show for our efforts and started to question the spot. Just down from the dam there is a small island in the middle of the river and I decided to wade out to it and cast the far shoreline where I could see there was slack water and eddies. Branden had on hip boots and the water was too deep for him to reach the island so he ventured a bit further downstream on the shore.

I positioned myself on the tip of the island and cast my 1/8 oz. black jig with a 2" black Gulp! jiggling grub (this proved to be the hot lure of the day and I caught all of my fish on it – Branden caught some fish using a white spinner) up stream, angling across the current. On my second or third cast I was rewarded with a beautiful 13.5" brook trout. What a way to start the morning. Once again I cast into the slack water, lifted my rod tip and took up line until my jig got caught in the "seam" of the current. Then I let the current take it downstream, reeling up slack as needed, and letting the jig tick the bottom along the way. Two casts later I had another brook trout. Another few casts and a 14" brook trout (what turned out to be the highest scoring fish of the tournament) was at my feet. Eventually I caught 6 nice brook trout out of that hole and had several other hits. I shared the pattern with Branden and we continued to fish. Branden added a brown trout or two to our card and I lost another fish (and several jigs) before we decided to move on. We were off to a great start to the day.

Since it was close, we next went to fish in front of the first dam in town and up the South Fork of the Kinni. We filled out our card with brook trout on the South Fork in short order and decided that it was time to go searching for some browns since our brook trout card was looking pretty good at this point. By 8:30 AM we were on our way to the Rush River near where Lost Creek comes in, another area where we had pre-fishing success.

The water was definitely higher and cloudier than the previous week, but we decided to try it. We caught over 15 brown trout on this stretch of river including a fat 17.5"er from behind a small log jam on the bank and several other nice fish. Lost Creek yielded a few brook trout to upgrade our card as well. Our morning was going very well.



The only setback was when I took an unexpected swim. I was crossing the river in a small rapids area in knee deep water when a rock gave way under my left (upstream) foot. Instinctively I went to brace myself for the fall with my left hand and accidentally dipped the top of my chest waders below the waterline in the process. Water rushed into my waders from the rapids and swept me off of my feet. I floated down stream momentarily until I could reestablish my footing and wade to shore. I

was wet from my neck down and had filled my waders up to mid-thigh with water. I looked down stream toward Branden, but he had missed the show. After taking a few minutes to drain the water out of my waders it was back to fishing, no worse for the wear other than a few pinholes that need to be patched on the front of my waders and a bruised knee from the rocks. This happened at about 11:00 AM and luckily the temperatures were warm enough by then, and I was dressed warm enough to where I could continue fishing without being cold, although it did feel like I was wearing ankle weights for the remainder of the day. I guess that if you trout fish long enough it's inevitable that you'll get wet at some point and I guess that Saturday my number was up. I was glad that I didn't have my cell phone or camera with me though since they would have been waterlogged. I've made it a habit to never carry them trout fishing since I know that this is always a possibility. At the end of the tournament I learned that I was not the only one who got wet on Saturday.

Having now filled out both halves of our card with quality fish we were feeling pretty confident in our plan, execution and pattern. It was now about 11:30 AM and after a quick sandwich we decided to check out a few more spots on the Rush and work our way north toward Baldwin. Our first stop was at the bridge at 570th. There were two fly fishermen there getting ready to head downstream so we decided to take a few casts near the bridge and upstream. I caught two more nice browns on the downstream side of the bridge on my first two casts. Branden lost a fish on the upstream side and eventually I caught one more on the upstream side. Now it was time to move again.

Our final stop was at another popular bridge south of HWY 63 on the Rush. We pulled up to find the three man team of Farm Boy, Chips and Mama's Boy fishing upstream of the bridge. We decided to try it anyway. We fished the bridge and downstream and picked up two more decent browns. It was now about 1:30 PM. Since Branden had to skip our weigh in and head to St. Cloud, and since I felt like finally getting out of my wet clothes and since we felt like we had a good card we decided to call it a day at that point. In the end, we had fished well enough and gotten lucky enough to find the right fish to be able to win the tournament. Prefishing success helped us come up with our plan, but finding the right lure and eddy/"seam" pattern early in the day was also critical to our success.

Spring Break up North

By the Analyst.

While many families headed south for Spring break I decided to do the opposite; I took my son to Canada ice fishing. I have fished several times out Wheeler's point out of Baudette and have always caught fish. However, the majority of the fish were 10"-14" Saugers with a few Walleyes mixed in. I have heard the reefs up north are much more productive so I booked a 3 night stay with Dave at the Angle Outpost.

Since I have never fished out of this area I decided to use a guide service. We fished two main spots: the west end of Oak Island and a reef located approximately 2 miles to the south off of what's called Lunatic Island.

We caught between 20-30 fish every day. Including 1 pike, several 2-3 lb Tulibeas (which are actually quite tasty in Shore Lunch), several Saugers, but mostly Walleyes. Our technique was simple: 1 jig stick each with a buckshot tipped with a minnow and 1 dead stick with bare hook (#8 Gamagatsu) and minnow. More often than not the jig would attract them in, but they would end up taking the nearby dead stick.

The first day off of Oak Island the Buckshot jig with a live minnow worked well. Our dog/puppy actually helped us catch the first 2 fish and unearthed the most productive technique. What happened was I had set the jig-rod down with the bait set close to the bottom. The dog came by and bumped the rod, which moved the tip sideways. A Walleye immediately hit the bait. Same thing happened 10 minutes later. We replicated this non-aggressive technique successfully the remainder of the day.

Day 2 in the same house was a bit more difficult as the fish were easily scared off. I ended up removing the treble hook, attaching a 3-4" section of 6 lb Fluorocarbon line and a #12 treble hook on the end. This worked great with a lip-hooked live fat head.

Day 3 was very slow off Oak Island so we moved to the reef for the afternoon. We knew the house nearby had been doing well (30 Walleyes in the morning) so after 1 hour with no fish I informed my son that I was going to take a jig rod and locator to a house (owned by our guides) that was on the other side of the guys that were doing well—each house was no more than 75 yards away. I was there for about 30 minutes when I heard my son's

voice outside. Clearly out of breath from running he exclaimed that I had to get back to the other house quickly as he had caught a “patch” Walleye—the In-Fisherman Master Angler Patch requires a 30”-plus Walleye. Needless to say I ran back with him to find a monster fish lying in the center of the house. While not a patch, she was a beautiful 27” fish fat with roe, and marked a new PB for him. Estimated weight: 8 lbs.



He had quite a story to tell about her. He said she came in and took down a bobber rig first, but he missed her. While re-baiting she nailed the jig rod and he grabbed it while it bouncing like crazy. At first glimpse he thought it was a Sturgeon due to its size. However, as she came up the hole and opened her mouth he realized it was a big Walleye as she had a full set of teeth. As her head neared the top of the hole she somehow got wrapped around the transducer cable and got stuck. When he pulled on the line it broke. In a near state of panic he reached in her open mouth, grasped her lower jaw, and hoisted her out of the hole. I assure you coming from an excited 13 year old the story was much more entertaining! After several photos she was released to fight another day.

Bottom line we caught a lot fish, ate well and had a great time. Anyone looking for something a little different should give it a try. Great memories.

What I learned ice fishin', sittin' on a bucket and getting' a sore butt

by Father Bertha:

I have had the opportunity to sit on the hard ice just about every Monday for about four months now. I fished all the way through March, and there is still plenty of good ice as I write this. But to be honest with you, I am sick and sore and real tired of looking down a hole. The one tip that I can give you from all this sitting is that I really have had good results with jigging spoons for pan fish, especially big sunfish. You can limit the size fish that you catch by the size of the treble hooks that you use. Here is how I like to fish it. If you do not see any fish on your screen, you can bring them in right away by pounding the jigging spoon off the bottom and or doing dances in the sky. I generally will stick a wax on the one of the treble hooks for some meat. If you are in a school of sunfish they usually will cloud the bait and sometimes they all just stare at the bait but nobody wants to make a commitment. A good trick is to bring them up and then drop the jigging spoon....bounce a couple times and then rip it up and let it sit. You will see one fish zooming in on it, and it is usually a keeper. Go from hole to hole pulling the big fish out of the pods. I was surprised at the large baits that sunfish will be attracted too and hit. Especially, when you have to finesse them with size 14 hooks sometimes. Anyway, add this one to your tricks, it also works well for crappies but I generally am always working the bait from above them.

Redfish – Bigfish

By Stu

Hi guys, just had to send this photo. This is the biggest redfish I have ever caught or seen. Too big to keep. Slot size is 18-27, This guy was 33.



We had just netted some bait (threadfin herring) at a channel marker about a mile offshore. I decided to anchor up some 50 yards from the marker so my guests could catch some Spanish mackerel which we would later use for bait. While they were doing that I decided to put a piece of cut ladyfish that I had caught in the back bay the day before. I use a baitrunner rig that allows the fish to swim away without knowing it's hooked.

Well, about 15 minutes after I threw the ladyfish in, my reel started to sing. I picked the rod out of the rod holder and reeled. What a fight. We had to pull anchor and follow him around. Fortunately it was a stout rod with 40 pound braid and 30 lb leader.

Anyway, I wanted to let you know all is well down here and the tarpon are just starting to show up.

Stu

Pull Duper's Tab

The ad agency, Suzy and Company, I mean Pocket Hercules, has worked with Rapala for some time, and have come out with a new advertising idea for pulltabs, and in April will feature our own Suzy Dupont holding his special fish from Lake of the Woods. The gaming cards will be available mid-April at fine establishments like the VFW across the street from Tuttle's.



2011 Tournament Series

Gentlemen, Mark Your Calendars!

Date	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
√ Saturday April 2	Trout	Wisconsin	Janitor - Shatner
Saturday April 30 (5/7 Alt)	Crappie	Prior Lake	Griz – Banana - Suzy
Sat-Sun May 21-22	Walleye	Mille Lacs	Fluffy - Carmen - Lil Angel
Saturday June 18	Bass	Big Birch Lake	Analist - Bud
Saturday Sep 10	Multispecies	Minnetonka	Chips - Spanky
Saturday Oct 8	Smallmouth	Rum River	Perp - Buick