

# The Dogumentary

29th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

July 2011

If you fish the wrong bait long and hard enough, it will sooner or later become the right bait.

## July 2011 Meeting

The July meeting will be at Thorne Brothers in Blaine on Thursday July 7 in advance of the annual Lake of the Woods trip. Plan to arrive at 6pm, for pizza and pop and a talk by Jason Summers. Jason is a pro musky fisherman who won the Professional Musky Tournament Trail (PMTT) in 2003, and was PMTT Angler of the year in 2004. He fishes muskies all over the U.S. and Canada and will talk about how he approaches a new body of water for musky fishing to give us fresh insights for the upcoming LOTW trip. The Thorne Bros buying frenzy will commence after the talk.

## *From the Desk of the President, Captain Kirk*



### 2011 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

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!

## Last Call for LOTW Permits and Licenses

The Canadian postal strike is continuing, and LOTW Border Crossing Permits must now be obtained by faxing the forms along with a copy of your passport or ID to their office at 807-624-2167. They will fax the permit back to you. Those still in need of a license will have to get it at the office on Windfall Island after we get there.

While many of you are starting think about and prepare for LOTW I am starting to think about my families annual vacation on lake Belle Taine near Nevis, Mn. which coincides with the Dog's annual trip. I believe this will be our 20<sup>th</sup> consecutive year of sharing a week at Pine Beach Resort with my family and some close friends. We have built a lot of traditions over these years and although there are a lot of diverse interests among the family and friends everyone seems to reserve this week every summer to come together to continue the traditions. I am sure there are a lot of parallels to the traditions the Dog's have built over the years with the annual trip to LOTW.

What a great tournament we had at Big Birch Lake with a lot of bass caught, decent weather and a very close competition. I really enjoyed partnering

with “The Griz” to learn some more about bass fishing. Not only can that Dude catch bass but you out to see his hook set with a Senko. A couple of times he landed lips without the fish. The only other Dog I know with a hook set like that is Felix with his Frogs. After bombing out fishing with Griz a couple of years ago at Green Lake we turned it around this time and really complimented each other to land a great bag of fish on Big Birch. Griz talks about our experience in a separate article below.

For bass fishermen this is one of the prime times of the year for fishing surface baits. The surface bite got started a couple weeks ago when we were at Big Birch. The small white buzz bait was working well for me while pre-fishing. I have heard a number of other reports recently of frogs catching bass. You can't beat that surface strike by a bass unless of course it is a 40+ Muskie. I plan to get out to Carver Co. over the next couple weeks to take advantage of the surface bite.

I look forward to seeing all of you next Thursday at Thorne Brothers. We have received several calls here recently at the Bank from Thorne Brothers checking the credit limits for some of you big spenders planning on shopping next week.

Shatner

“One thing becomes clearer as one gets older and one's fishing experience increases, and that is the paramount importance of one's fishing companions.”

John Ashley-Cooper & OF

### A Game of Inches

Twelve teams competed in the 2011 Waterdogs Bass Tournament on Big Birch Lake, and of the 12 teams, 10 got their limit of ten fish. In the end, it was one of the closest contests in club history, with just 5 inches of Bass separating the top seven teams. If the seventh-place team could have upgraded a 13.5 bass to an 18.5, they would have won, and there were 5 other teams in between. And so it was down to culling smaller bass off the card during the day that made all the difference in the placing. Shatner and Griz were able to do that most effectively, as their biggest fish of 17” was beat by six other teams, but they were able to bring the smallest end of their limit up to 15.5” for the highest total weight.

The weather was overcast with light winds to keep the fish active and allowed for many different presentations to work.



**Carmen and an 18.5”**



**Felix Appoints a New Board Member**



**Glenn and a 17.5” Smallie**



**Juan with a pre-fishing Smallie**

### **Bassin' on Big Birch**

By: James "Griz" Ferstenou

Captain Kirk and I were paired together for the recent bass tournament on Big Birch Lake and somehow managed to barely eke out a victory in a tight tournament. Here is how we approached things. Kirk and Fluffy, as well as several other 'Dogs, pre-fished for the tournament on Friday and had a really good day on the water. They boated over 50 bass and learned a lot about the lake that would help us on tournament day. Kirk and I strategized at the hotel on Friday night and came up with a general game plan for the tournament. He and Fluffy had caught most of their fish on larger white spinner baits and small white buzz baits, with some other fish coming on Senkos and a jig and pig, so we had a good idea of what lures we'd likely be using the next day. We decided to start the tournament in an area of thicker lily pads where Kirk and Fluffy caught some decent fish on Friday afternoon.

When the tournament started we raced to the spot with Fluffy and Little Angel pulling in just behind us. Kirk threw the small buzz bait and I threw the white spinner bait through and around the pads. After about 30 minutes of casting we had nothing to show for our efforts. It was time to try something else. We moved to a nearby stand of reeds and cattails. Eventually I switched to a Senko (smoke with black flake) and Kirk tried the jig and pig (black and blue). After about another 20 minutes of fishing I finally landed our first fish of the day. As we prepared to leave the spot Kirk saw a decent bass protecting a spawning bed and after a few

casts I managed to put that one in the net too. Off to spot number three.

We headed to shallow inside pockets within the cattails that Kirk had found while pre-fishing. As we pulled into the first such area that we wanted to try we saw another bass on a bed and a few others roaming nearby but they would not bite. As we rounded the corner a bit further we also saw that Clinton and Farmboy had already laid claim to the spot and learned that they were off to a good start. We moved up the line of cattails to the next likely looking pocket. In about 30 minutes of fishing the shallows Kirk managed to pick up 4 more bass on the white spinner bait in this spot. Once again we moved up the line and we picked up a few more bass (and a dandy dogfish) at the next spot.

Next we decided to fish the reed bed near the narrows/buoys in the lake. We boated several more bass in that reed bed and watched other anglers boat some too. Chips and Stu stopped to say high and watched us catch a couple of bass. They later said that they fished that area off and on all day to put a lot of fish on their card. At this point we had our ten fish limit on the card and we needed to upgrade, but time was still on our side.

Then we decided to work more reed beds and work our way toward the docks at the restaurant to manage our time. The jig and pig, Senko and white spinner bait all produced fish and we managed to upgrade a few small fish off of our card. Overall we caught another 8-10 fish before lunch. The larger fish were still eluding us though. At lunch we had several 14"-15" fish on the card and our biggest fish was 16.5" at that point.

After a few tacos and a brief strategy discussion we decided to go back to where we (unsuccessfully) started our day and give it one more try. This was a slightly risky move, but we both liked the way the spot looked and figured that it may be a better afternoon spot than a morning spot. We began fishing the outside edges of the pads with a buzz bait and a Senko to no avail. Then we decided to go deep into the pads and fish the center pockets. This proved to be a wise choice. Kirk had several blow ups on the buzz bait in short order. He switched back to the jig and pig and lost a decent fish within a few casts. A few casts later he landed a decent bass. In the next half hour or so we managed to use the Senko and the jig and pig to pluck another 8-10 bass out of that spot (and miss a few more) and most of them were helping to upgrade our card. This is where we caught our

largest fish of the tournament, a 17"er (Kirk and Fluffy had also caught an 18"er there on Friday). As we were wrapping up fishing the spot Fluffy and Little Angel pulled up on the opposite side to give it another try too.

Our card was now looking okay as far as our average size was concerned, but we felt that we still needed another fish or two over 17" to give ourselves a chance at winning. We tried several more spots including more reeds near the buoys and pads in some of the bays closer to the landing. We were down to about an hour to fish and still had not found the larger fish that we were looking for. We decided to fish the reeds near the opening to a big bay close to the landing and then work the docks along that shore. Kirk managed another 16.5"er out of the reeds on the jig and pig to upgrade our card a bit more. Further down the line I set the hook on a decent fish in front of a dock and instantly knew it would help out cause and was likely the one that we were looking for. I could see that the fish was coming up for a jump so I jammed my rod into the water to try to keep him from doing so. Seconds later the 18" class bass broke the surface, shook her head and she was gone. I felt for sure that I had just blown our opportunity at trying to win the tournament by letting that fish get away, especially since we were down to only 40 minutes of fishing time left.

With time running out we tried a few more docks and reed beds on either side of the landing, but with little success. We decided to end our day back in the reed bed near the buoys with our final 15 minutes of fishing time. We arrived to find Chips and Stu fishing there as well. In that last 15 minutes we watched Stu and Chips catch several bass and lose a few and we did the same. I broke one fish off and we landed two or three more, one being our final small upgrade with mere minutes to go. Coming off of the lake we knew that we had a decent 16" or so average on our card but felt that we lacked enough bigger fish to win. Both Kirk and I were truly surprised when the scoring was done and we came out on top.

Overall I'd say that there were several factors that led to this successful day on the water. First of all I'd say that Kirk's ability to pre-fish on Friday certainly helped our efficiency and decision making during the tournament. Secondly I felt that we came up with and more or less followed our game plan while being flexible enough to adapt to what

the fish were telling us. Thirdly we were in constant communication throughout the day, bouncing ideas off of each other regarding lures, colors, depth, cover, etc. which was key. We were always thinking and talking. Fourthly, rarely did we use the same lure as each other at the same time throughout the day. We wanted to give fish different looks and options since multiple lures seemed to be working. There were times where we would both be throwing faster moving lures (a spinner bait and a buzz bait) or slower moving lures (a Senko and a jig and pig) at the same time once a pattern seemed present, but when in search mode we often had one of us throwing something fast and one of us throwing something slow to let the fish tell us what they wanted. Lastly, for us I think that it came down to numbers. Using the strategies above we were able to land a lot of bass, I'd say around 40 for the day. Although we failed to connect with the few larger fish that we were looking for we were able catch enough fish to cull the smaller fish off of our card and come in with a decent overall average.

So there you have it. I really enjoyed fishing this lake. Thanks to Bystrom and Bollig for suggesting it. There were a lot of bass caught on many different lures and in many different types of cover and it was one of the closest tournaments that I can remember in recent Waterdog history with less than 2.5 pounds or one good fish (i.e. upgrading one small bass with a large one) separating the top 7 teams. Another thanks goes out to my partner Kirk for making this a really enjoyable and successful day on the water.



**Jamie Reigle with a 21" from Lotus Lake**

## 2011 Tournament Series Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Dogs in Charge</b>
√ Saturday April 2	Trout	Wisconsin	Janitor - Shatner
√ Saturday April 30	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