

The Dogumentary

29th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

October 2011

Size isn't important....unless you're a fisherman.

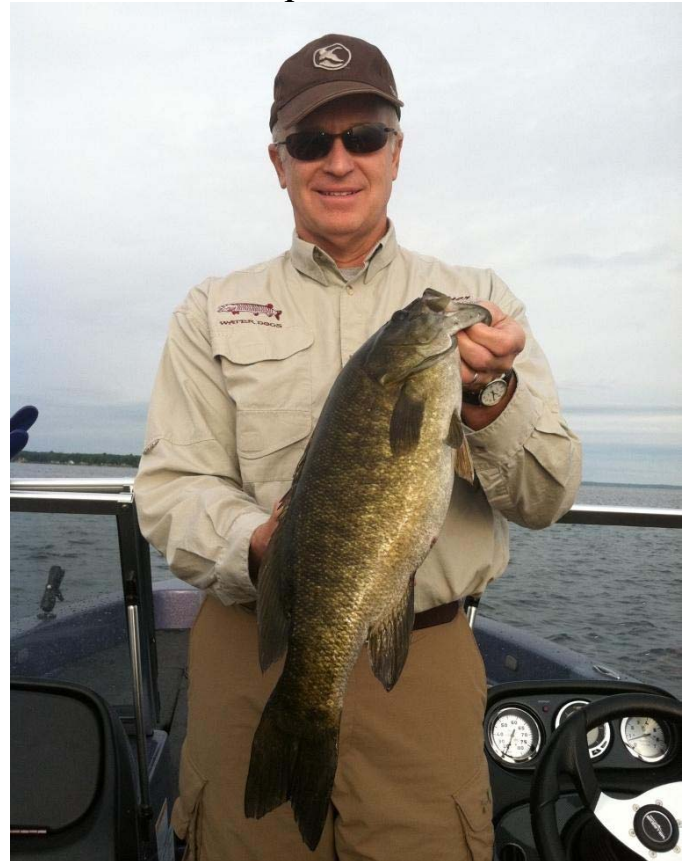
October 2011 Meeting

The October meeting will be at Tuttle's Bowl and Grill on Shady Oak Road in Hopkins. The meeting will start at 7pm with dinner starting at 6. At this meeting we will hear from Steve Wood of Lakemaster. His presentation will include a demo of some new software they are developing. We also are anticipating a short update on fishing conditions on the Rum from Dave "The Rum Guy with the Red Lund". He has become well known to Waterdogs the past few years as we fish in his backyard.

2011 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

Sep 1	Monthly Meeting
Oct 6	Monthly Meeting
Oct 8	Smallmouth Tournament
Nov 3	Banquet!
Dec 1	Monthly Meeting

From the Desk of the President, Captain Kirk



We are down to our final tournament series event on the Rum next Saturday and our annual banquet is just a little over a month away. The banquet usually marks the end of the open water season for me but before that there is still some good fishing to be had for fall bass and trash from Pool 2. So don't winterize those boats too soon.

Although Griz can statistically still be caught for the series championship this year it would take something like a disqualification and win by Nasty

for it to happen. The second and third positions though are still wide open with 9 Dogs in contention for those positions. It should be a close competition when we hit the Rum on the 8th.

Speaking of the Rum I have had a chance to get up there twice over the last couple of weeks. I found the SM to be very active both times with a number of fish in the 17-19" range. It was just a couple of weeks ago that we had a lot of concern for the river conditions. I can report that the Rum is in excellent fall condition with normal levels, slow current and relatively clear water. It would take a pretty substantial Waterdog rainstorm to mess things up at this point.

At our October meeting next week it will be time for nomination of officers for 2012 and also voting for Waterdog of the Year. If you are making a nomination for 2012 VP (2013 President) it would be good to check with that Dog ahead of time to make sure that they are willing and able. I would like to see 3 nominations for this position and then also 3 nominations for Dogs to serve on the Board. The club membership will vote on Waterdog of the Year next Thursday and the Banquet Committee will determine the other awards from your recommendations. So please come prepared with your nominations and recommendations.

Criteria for Waterdog of the Year:

- 1) Participation
- 2) Dedication
- 3) Leadership
- 4) Sportsmanship
- 5) Responsibility
- 6) Camaraderie

See you all at Tuttlles.

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

Tonka Tournament

Twelve teams fished the Minnetonka tournament on Sept 10 and by now you've heard the results. Winners Tom Keller and Father Bertha tell their story after this summary. Here we highlight some of the statistics from the tournament:

With 12 teams fishing, the scorecards could have shown a maximum of 12 fish for each eligible

species. Here's how many were caught, with no real surprises in the species count:

Fish Entered:

Largemouth	11
Northerns	7
Smallmouth	6
Walleyes	2
Crappies	1
Muskies	0

The largest fish caught for each specie were:

Largemouth	19"
Northern	26.5"
Smallmouth	18"
Walleye	16"
Crappie	10.5"

The second-place team of Sticky and Banana Boy caught the biggest northern and smallie, while the winners Helen and Bertha got the biggest walleye. The largest largemouth was caught by the Janitor and OJ, while Nasty and Griz got the one and only crappie.



It was an unusually nice day for a Waterdog tournament with calm winds and clear skies, but the boat wakes really kicked up after lunch for some bouncy boat rides back to the landing at the end of the tournament.

A Hail Mary and a Fish

By Helen

For those of us that work, it's rare to get the chance to pre-fish for a tournament. Betha's urge to get out and pre-fish was inspiring, so we made time to fish the Friday before the multispecies tournament. Our main goal was to find crappie and walleye

locations. Even without pre-fishing success, it allowed us to eliminate a lot of water for Saturday. We did however find smallmouth, boating a 19" off a dock near the same place where we filled our card on Saturday.

With the pre-fishing under our belt, we formulated our strategy. It was pretty simple; put off the search for crappie and walleye until we have our bass and pike spots filled. There have been too many times that I've wasted the mornings looking for the "low light" or "harder to find" fish, then scramble in the afternoon when the fishing seems to shut down.

Our first prey was Pike. We went to a consistent "go-to spot" I know, feeling confident about filling that spot on the card quickly. As we rolled into the area, we notice bait fish jumping. It appeared something was feeding and pushing the minnows hard. We tossed white buzz baits and white spinner bait with a swim bait trailers. This worked quickly, as we caught our first fish within 5 minutes. Thing was, it was not a pike, but a 16" walleye in 4.5 FOW. We quickly followed up with a counter pike, so we moved on.

Knowing we had a Smallmouth dialed in, we moved to look for a Largemouth and a possible pike upgrade. Well, the same thing happened on our second spot. As we fished, we noticed bait fish scattering, so I pitched a crawdad colored wacky rigged worm to the area the bait had busted the surface, and pow we boated an 18" LM.

With 3 down, we decided to look for a crappie. We headed to the Maynard's docks. There was an antique boat show going on, making for an interesting few minutes of fishing. We caught a lot of sunfish, but could not come up with a crappie, although I thought I had one on that I lost on the surface, but I am not really sure.

Bertha got a great strike by a boats lower unit as we trolled out of the area. A boat "scooted" around us and right over Bertha line - that was exciting, and I learned Bertha is quick to forgive.

With about 45 minutes left before lunched we decided to concentrate on our Smallmouth. It took us about ten minute to fill that spot. Fish were very active and easy to find and sight fish.

After lunch we decide to troll cranks for a larger pike, but actually up-graded our Smallmouth.

With about an hour to go, and being near some nice sandy points, we decided to stop and cast cabbage beds that lined the area. It was not soon after we raised a musky twice, but the fish would not commit.

Over all it was a great day and I think concentrating of the core fish before lunch was key. It seemed after lunch the bite slowed. The lake was so busy it was getting hard to fish.

Most of all, thanks to Father Bertha and his special connections, ultimately prayer was our best strategy.

Red River Adventure:

By the Analyst

My latest adventure began last winter while ice fishing at LOTW after hearing from two separate individuals that the place to catch MONSTER walleyes—12-18 lbs—is Lake Winnipeg in Manitoba. So I started doing a little research. And in talking with a Walleye guide over the phone I asked about Cat fishing—as the name of his guide service is "Cats on the Red". He made one comment to me that stuck in my craw: he said "it's definitely something everyone should at least do once in their life."

Fast forward to August of this year I was attending the Game Fair and saw a booth with a banner that read "Red River Cats". I had seen their name while researching my Winnipeg quest and decided to stop by. Turns out the guides had previously worked for the owner of Cats on The Red and they seemed like real good guys. In talking with them they stated that while the water was high on the Red, the Cat fishing had been on fire. And so it was on the following week I booked a ½ day trip, packed up the boat, and off the three of us went: myself, my dog, and my son.

The shoreline of the river reminded me of the Mississippi, but the water resembled chocolate milk—visibility negative. I brought along my 8 ft. extra heavy Muskie rods loaded with 80 lb test braided line & a 60 lb fluorocarbon leader. Due to the heavy current we used 5 & 6 oz flat weights. For bait we used a combination of cut Goldeneye (which the guides catch earlier in the year and freeze) & live leopard frogs (that they purchase from the local Hutterite colonies—which are similar to the Amish).



anything. They said they would put in the call to the local Hutterite girls for an additional 30 frogs.

The following morning we struggled to catch fish without any frogs and gained a greater respect for our whiskered adversary: while certainly not the most attractive, they had discriminating palettes! Around 11 am with six fish to the boat we got the call that the frogs had been apprehended. 30 frogs and \$50 well spent dollars later we were back on the water by 2pm. With slight alterations to our technique we were really dialed in, boating 26 more Cats by the end of the day. To top it off several guys in another boat gave us their leftover frogs (they must have had 20 of them); bait dilemma was solved.

The catching was outstanding; we boated a total of 14 Cats during the initial 4-hour trip, eight of which were more than 34" (approximately 17 lbs)—which is considered a trophy in both Manitoba as well as In-Fisherman's Master Angler Program. Further, if an angler catches 5 trophies in a given year they are issued a "Specialist" award, which my son got in the first 4 hours alone. Not only are the fish tough, but the heavy current accentuated their battle. Without the use of the guide's fighting belt my 13-year old would not have been able to get them in. Fortunately the guides allowed us to use the belt throughout our stay and asked that we leave it at the front desk of the hotel upon departure. They were great guys.



On the final morning, facing a long drive ahead (8 ½ hours), we fished 'til about noon boating an additional 19 Cats. My son got the largest of the trip today—a 38" x 25" toad which tipped the scale at 28.75 lbs. The fight lasted about 10 minutes with the last several minutes in a stand-off—the fish was exhausted and simply rolling on the surface about 20 feet behind the boat, and my son was similarly exhausted and couldn't gain any ground. I offered to help (as I was concerned about the health of the fish), but was turned down. I went to pull the anchors and drift with the fish and my son said to give him one last chance. With a series of long hard pulls (combined with lots of grunting) my boy got the fish to the net. It was a battle we shall long remember.

After completing the guide trip we took a quick lunch, purchased a second 25 lb anchor, and headed out on our own. We were on fish from the get go and ended up getting 15 more Cats by nightfall. The bad news was most of the Cats came on frogs, and we were running out of bait. So I placed a call to our guides and informed them of our situation—they had told us to call if we needed



While I am sure many of you are thinking—why drive all that way for some rotten overgrown bullheads (similar to my thought prior the trip) I shall only echo the motivating comment that started this all--- It's a trip EVERYONE should take at least once in their lifetime.

If you plan to go:

If you are interested in all about this trip here's my suggestions:

Stay in the town of Selkirk. There is a public landing just north of town—2 miles or so. We stayed at the Selkirk Inn, the more respectable of the two Motels in town. We fished with Terry Belhuemer with Red River Cats www.redrivercats.com. They were reasonably priced and more importantly just great guys. The bait is the key. Plan ahead and ask the guides if they will get you the necessary bait for the duration of the trip. An even better place to stay would be with Stu at Cats on The Red www.catsonthered.com. He has a little fishing lodge only 300 yards below the dam (where many of the fish congregate) with a private access. If we had stayed here we would have fished a bit later into the evening—the time the majority of locals hit the water. I was not comfortable staying until after dark with a 5 mile ride to the landing, as it was only my son and I. So there you go. Give it a try and I guarantee you will not regret it.

In summary it was an incredible trip. I have seen shows done on the river before, but never had a strong desire to go that far for Catfish. I have changed my opinion on this now. In total we boated 81 Cats—of which only 8 were less than 30 inches. While my initial thoughts were that the Muskie rods were overkill, we needed every bit of them. The fish are powerful and the current is strong. Subtracting the downtime to reel in a fish and get the baits back in the water I estimated we waited approximately 17 minutes between bites. And, had we been armed with frogs the second morning, that number would have surely improved.

2011 Tournament Series Schedule

Date	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
√ 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