

The Dogumentary

30th Year

The Waterdogs Fishing Club

November 2012

Banquet!

We'll see you at the Banquet on Thursday November 1, at the same place as the past few years, the Embassy Suites Hotel in Bloomington. It will be a fun evening of food, events and camaraderie, and feature the Waterdogs 2012 Movie put together by Greenstick and crew.

Make sure to bring your payment for the banquet made out to the Waterdogs, if you have not paid already.

2012-13 Waterdogs Fishing Club Calendar

Nov 1	Banquet!
Dec 6	Monthly Meeting
Jan 3	Monthly Meeting
Feb 7	Monthly Meeting
Mar 7	Monthly Meeting
Apr 4	Monthly Meeting
May 2	Monthly Meeting

See the last page for 2012 Tourney Details

From the Desk of the President, Greenstick – Dave Haberle



If you're anything like me, November is always a bit of a sad time because it marks the end of in-boat fishing. Certainly for our club, our tournament season has ended, and we all know that if leaves aren't in our near future, snow most likely is. But on a wonderfully positive note, I look back at our participation this past year and we had two meetings and two tournaments where 27 of our 34 members were in attendance! That's been a real high point for me!

Speaking of two of the last three tournaments though, I have some observations and theories that I need to mention. While Suzy did a bang-up job this year in securing speakers at our meetings, I think the St. Croix event was, in my opinion, jinxed by the speaker. And the same holds true for the Megatrash event at Lake Pepin – Tackle Terry jinxed us for that one, too. The only evidence I have is the results – there were only 10 teams at St. Croix to duke it out and even fewer at the Pepin. But worse yet, fourteen of the 19 teams in both events

caught only two or fewer species. Being that all of us are, of course, *outstanding anglers*, the only logical theory one can derive from it is that the speakers threw us off.

As you know, Dr. Meat will be taking the helm of the club in January, and I'm sure that he's waiting to hear from you as to committees or tasks where your help can assist him in 2013. The best way to catch his attention is to sit down next to him holding a Guinness and say something like, "Hey Meat, can I get you one of these?" Another good way is to suddenly shout out the word, "*MUSKIE!*"

We're all aware that this is a highly-charged political year. Be sure to exercise your freedom and right to express your choice at the ballot box on November 6th. Perhaps more important, however, is our own election at the December meeting (12/4). There are three fine candidates on the ballot for Vice-President: **Banana Boy**, **Puddin' Man** and **Juan Valdez** and you'll certainly want to hear their stump speeches! We'll have need to elect some board members-at-large, too, and if you haven't served on the board for a few years, it'd be a good time for you to give it a thought. We're a small club and the only way things work is to spread the work around.

On that topic, recently, FD sent out a global email to everyone that after 10+ years, he'd like to turn the newsletter over to someone new. In like fashion, albeit for only 5 years, this marks the last year that I'll be assembling the end-of-year video. It's time for new and fresh ideas on both of these two projects, and it's time for others to step up to the plate. I share FD's optimism that someone will.

See you at the banquet!

Clear Water, Cold Fish Waterdogs Tournament #8

The eighth and final tournament of the year was a largemouth bass tournament on Clearwater Lake on October 6. Despite it being not so late in the year, the weather came in a typical Waterdogs style with the coldest day of the season. The high was in the mid 40's, and with a 10-20 mph wind, it made the fishing challenging. The cold had most members wearing gloves, which cuts down on your

casting skill and accuracy, and the wind made it difficult to feel the action of lighter baits when a big wind-bow was put in your line. As a result of the miserable conditions, every team came in early before the 2:30 tournament finish, with some teams even leaving around noon.



Chainsaw Landed a Nice Largemouth on the way to a Third-Place Finish

The bite was as cold as the weather with four teams getting skunked, and another three catching only one qualifying bass, out of the 13 teams fishing. Shorty described the day as being "extremely challenging" in other words. All together, there were 37 fish "weighed in" for the 27 guys fishing, which may be one of the lowest largemouth counts in tournament history.



Even Griz was Bundled Up for the Nasty Weather

In the end, only two teams put together limits of 8 fish, which was a low limit for a bass tournament anyway, and the team of Shatner and Banana Boy were way out in front by more than 8 pounds with their limit. They describe their strategy below.

Clearwater Cold

By Banana Boy

For those that fished the series finale on Clearwater Lake, it was a brisk day fishing resembling early season trout fishing. Having been some time since either Kirk or I fished the lake, he and Dickey headed out the Wednesday before to try their luck. As can imagine, they had some success on...you got it, the jig-and-pig and Senko. As for myself, I made a stop at Joe's Sporting Goods to catch bass pro Roger Ricci. Heard through a friend he fished a tournament at Clearwater a few weeks prior and won the thing, catching five fish weighing 20+ pounds. For anyone that knows Roger, he mostly throws blue/black jig-and-pig tailed with a TriggerX crawfish. Interested in his approach and areas that produced, he told me about a spot on the far northeast corner of the lake. That's where we decided to start our day.

After launching, we navigated our way through darkness, being spotlighted by duck hunters, and even having an occasional warming shot fired in our direction. Feeling was a little uneasy. And that wasn't it – we had to slowly put our way about a quarter mile in a foot of water to get to the bay. Once there, we started fishing a deep reed line Roger had marked. Both throwing the blue/black jig-and-pig with TriggerX trailer, Kirk caught couple on a ½ oz, and then I picked up a couple on ¼ oz jig – including my 19.5-inch pig and Kirk's 18-inch. Given the cold temps and front a few days prior, we were quite surprised by how quick the bite. So much, that by 8:30am we started culling.



After fishing the area for a few hours, we decided to head back to the main body to try a few spots. Battling the wind and waves, and catching only one more bass, we decided to head back to the bay where we started as it was somewhat protected from the wind and produced earlier. Fishing the same stretches, we upgraded a few fish – including another 19-inch. All in, we caught 20 bass and had a great day fishing despite the weather. We found most fish came by casting the deep reed edges, letting the bait sink, and having a slow retrieve. Not to be forgotten, in the craziness of the bite, I stepped off the back platform to help land Kirk's fish. In trying to side-step the net, my rain pants snagged (but what else) the key – breaking it off in the ignition. We both looked at each other in shock. Thankfully, there was enough room to insert the broken key, so we could get leverage to turn. Otherwise, it could've been a long ride home.

2012 Tournament Review

The fun level was high for this year's extreme tournament schedule, and although there were many new challenges to the year, a bunch of fish were caught, including some personal bests along with some other unusual catches.

There were eight tournaments, which seems like a lot, but six club members made all 8, and all were pretty well attended, with an average attendance similar to past years. What this means is that the actual times that many of us got together was more this year than usual, which was the goal of the active schedule. Here's the breakdown of the 2012 tournament participation:

#of Tournaments Fished	# Members
8	6
7	5
6	7
5	6
4	4
3	4
2	1
1	1

Average Tournies Made: 5.4

Here's how the attendance was at each tournament:

Trout 1	24
Trout 2	23
St Louis River	25
Dakota Bass	27
Forest Lake	22
St. Croix	20
Pepin	18
Clearwater	27
Average Tourney Attendance	23.2

2012 A Year of Firsts

The just-finished tournament year saw many new additions and changes to the usual tournament format. Some ideas worked and may be repeated but some also fell flat and may never be seen again. Here is a list of the new things that were tried this year.

- Eight Tournaments
- Six Scoring Tournament
- No Crappie Tournament
- Two Trout Tournaments
- Unlimited Trout Card
- Only 4 Largest Trout Card
- Afternoon/Evening Walleye Tourney
- Afternoon Local Bass Tourney
- Partners Picked at Landing Tournament

- Social Drifting Lunch
- Two Multispecies Tourneys with Rough Fish Included

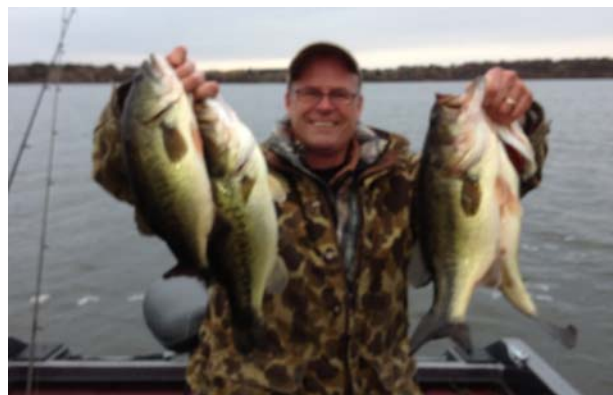
Despite all the changes and new ideas, the same old guys were in the hunt for the top spots this year as in previous years, as the new formats did not throw them off at all. What's their secret? They practice fishing a lot, which is really what it takes to get good at anything.

We will be sending out a separate survey after the banquet so that you can contribute your opinion on how next year's tournament schedule should look.

Not all "Shallow Water" is the Same...

By the Analyst

After bombing miserably at the final tourney of the year my appetite for more Largemouth Bass fishing was nil. So when asked by Todd Bollig (he really needs a handle!!) to go out again for them the Tuesday following the tourney I gave tentative yes. Todd wanted to try one of his local favorites (aka Johnson Lake). We got on the lake mid-morning and it took about 45 minutes to get our first bite. After that it was Katy bar the door. Over the remainder of the day we loaded the boat with mostly 17-19 inch fish, all fattened up for the winter. By end of day we estimated we must have boated north of 50 fish. While my best overall day was 200 fish (which my son & I accomplished a few years ago on our cabin lake), never have I caught this number of giant LM's.



Four in One Blow

While Todd (and many others) had informed me that the fish were still shallow at the time of the tournament, apparently this does not mean the shore line shallows. After consulting my In-Fisherman Largemouth Bible (*albeit after the tourney*) it explains that in the fall the bait fish (and hence all the predators) move out of the extreme shallows and large flats and stage on the edge of steep breaklines (still in shallow water, 3'-5') but near deep water. This was the missing link which led to my collapse during the tourney! Interestingly this happened to be the exact locations the top two boats during the Clearwater tourney found there fish.

Back to Johnson Lake; while the lake apparently holds a lot of weeds during the summer, the vast majority of them had died off. The fish were concentrated in any pockets of remaining weeds. Once located we would hold on these spots (as best Todd could in light of the gale force winds) and catch fish after fish; oftentimes catching 3-7 fish from the same small area. By the end of the day our milk-run was basically 4 weed patches—eliminating a lot of dead water and thereby making the job of catching a lot easier. While the majority of the fish succumbed to the jig & pig, several were also caught on spinnerbaits, crankbaits & swim baits.



This is the second time I have fished with Todd this year and both times our trips have been my all-time best (earlier this year he took me to Mille Lacs where he, his brother & I proceeded to boat an estimated 120 smallmouth). I guess that's what happens when you're the prodigy of a father whom is in the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame... If any of you guys get a chance to fish with him, I would highly recommend a resounding YES.

2012 Tournament Schedule – It's a Wrap!

Date (Saturdays)	Hours	Species	Location	Dogs in Charge
√ Mar 17	7:30-2pm	Trout	Wisconsin	Fluffee – Shatner
√ Apr 14	6:30-1pm	Trout	Wisconsin	Fluffee – Shatner
√ May 19	2-9pm	Walleye	St Louis River	Little Angel – Chips
√ June 1	1-9pm	Bass	Scott/Dakota Cos.	Felix – Banana
√ June 23	5:30-noon	Multi	Forest Lake	Perp – Carmen
√ Aug 17 (Fri)	7:00-2:30pm	Multi	St Croix	OF - Janitor
√ Sep 8	7:16-2:38pm	Multi	Pepin	Suzy - Hillary
√ Oct 6	7:15-2:30	Bass	Clearwater	Griz - Nasty