

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

New Gear To Use On The Ice

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

Years ago, when my brother A.J. and I first started ice fishing, the gear was pretty basic and mainly homemade, but we thought that we had it figured out.

We "redesigned" our Flexible Flyer sled into a real ice fishing machine by wiring a peach crate to the top of it, rods were made from broken broom handles and a couple of nails.

To get through the ice, we borrowed a spud bar from our neighbor. A spud bar isn't exactly a high tech piece of equipment as it's just a "real" heavy metal bar with one of the ends sharpened.

Add to that long handle underwear, four buckle over-shoes, a stocking cap, brown jersey gloves and we were ready to hit the ice.

Well, it's been fifty some years since that time and things have come a long way.

Every year, there are more and more advancements in ice fishing gear, making it easier to punch holes through the ice and less exhausting for the fishermen when he's hauling his gear out on the ice.

You don't have to look far to find new and updated locators that help you to get on the fish quickly, new lures that helping us to catch then fish as well as clothing helping to us to stay warm in the harshest of conditions.

This year is no exception as I recently found out when I recently attended an Ice Fishing Expo.



Gary HOWEY

Gone are the old days when you either had to spud your way through the ice or chip your way through the ice with a spoon auger as the ice augers now days, make it quick and easy to get a hole dug

Feldmann Manufacturing out of Wisconsin, (jiffyonline.com) the manufacturers of the Jifty augers were the first to manufacture ice augers and each year they come out with new improvements.

Their new Jifty Propane Drill with the 49CC 4 Stroke OHV is the newest auger in their lineup. It's super clean since it's propane powered, there's no gas smell, no smoke as it can be operated indoors and it's quiet. Since there's no gas involved, there's no priming, no choking and no flooding. All of this, and its low maintenance as you won't have to mix fuel. One small canister of propane, the same you'd use on your camping stove or heater allows you to drill up to 100 holes.

All of their augers have the E-Z connect, allowing you to quickly remove and replace the blade from the power unit, making it much easier to transport and their new High Torque Transmission HTT and heavy duty clutch transfers more energy giving the auger additional torque. They cut quickly, giving you more time to fish.

Transporting your gear on and off the ice have never been easier as there are numerous companies out there that are making sleds and houses now that not only allow the ice fishermen to easily haul his gear onto the ice, but once he gets their to fish in comfort.

Otter Outdoors (otteroutdoors.com), a Minnesota based company, has a complete line of ice fishing sleds and houses made for 1 to 4 people.

Their sleds have a raised front allowing the sled to be pulled through snow easily with plenty of room to store and haul your gear.



Casey Weismantel of Aberdeen is pictured with a 20-inch walleye taken during the early ice fishing season last year using new equipment.

The back of the sled is raised higher than the front, which allows you to safely transport all your gear without fear of it falling off on the ice.

Once you get to where you want to fish, the flip up swivel-cushioned seats allow you to fish in comfort.

If the weather turns nasty it takes just a few seconds to flip the house up over you, giving protection from the elements and plenty of room to comfortably fish, no matter what Mother Nature throws at you.

Vexilar, another Minnesota based company (www.vexilar.com) celebrates its 50th year in 2010. I've used Vexilar locators for years and believe they manufacture the finest locator available for not only ice fishermen but also for us soft water anglers.

Their FL-20 is state of the art; it's a

three-color sonar unit allowing you to quickly locate the fish, because of the three colors, allowing you to see your lure, which appears orange as it descends. The unit makes it easy to spot the fish, which appear in red.

Once you spot the fish are above or below your lure, you can watch your lure as you bring it to the depth the fish are feeding, the red color indicating the fish will widen which means that your lure is at the exact depth the fish are, putting the bait right in front of the fish.

The unit also has a night and day mode. The night setting lets you cut the output of the LED display bin in half to avoid getting night blindness when looking at the super bright LEDs.

Their new Fish Scout Double Vision is an amazing piece of equipment as it gives the angler the FL-20 Flasher on top with a 16:9 wide-screen color monitor, 80 foot of cable, a color/black and white camera system that automatically shifts from color to black and white mode in low light conditions. We used the unit on ice fishing trips to Deerfield Lake in the Black Hills and on Bitter Lake in Northeast South Dakota and couldn't believe he fish we saw and because of the unit were able to catch.

There are also numerous new lures on the market including those manufactured by Lindy, another Minnesota based company (www.lindyfishingtackle.com).

The first time I had the opportunity to experience the Darter in Action, Team Outdoorsmen Adventures member was using it on a slough near Webster when he caught and release a beautiful 9 pound 2 ounce walleye, from that point I was convinced. The Darter has an enticing action, resembling the lipless crankbait used by anglers during the open water season. It's rattle chamber mimics the sounds of a distressed baitfish, attracting fish from a distance. Worked much like you'd fish a jig,

using the standard lift drop method causing the Darter to vibrate while darting from side to side as it drops. It's available in three sizes and numerous different holographic patterns. Some of the most productive colors in our area seem to be the 1/3" Bluegill for perch and the 1 3/4" Shiner and Perch pattern for walleyes

Arctic Armor a Pennsylvania based company (idigear.com/arcticarmor.php) has been keeping us warm for several years and once again this year, they've come out with several new styles of ice fishing clothing that; not only will keep you warm, it will also keep you afloat if you happen to end up in the water.

Insulated with lightweight Insultex™ you'll keep you warm without the old bulky type insulating material that you'd find on some cold weather clothing. This along with its Internal Tightening System keeps your body heat in while keeping snow out.

Their super padded knees with Insultex™ keep you warm and dry when kneeling on the ice to dip or while landing that big fish.

These are just a few of the new and updated products that will help to make you a more efficient and a much more comfortable and warm ice fisherman.

Be safe, keep warm and we'll see you on the ice this winter.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, fishing and hunting guide, the Producer/Host of the award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures television series which can be seen on Fox affiliates in the upper Midwest. He and Simon Fuller are the hosts of the Outdoor Adventures radio program on Classic Hits 106.3 and ESPN Sports Radio 1570. If you're looking for more outdoor information, it can be found at www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

TROPHY SPOTLIGHT

SUBMITTED PHOTO
Cross one item off the bucket list. Helen Simpson of Yankton shot this deer, her first buck, on Nov. 25. It has always been her goal to do so.

Do You Have A Photo?

If you would like to submit a photo for the Outdoors page, send it to jeremy.hoeck@yankton.net. Please include all relevant information, including name and location.



OUTDOORS DIGEST

SD Man Sentenced For Illegally Shooting Wildlife

FORT THOMPSON (AP) — A Fort Thompson man accused of illegally shooting wildlife has been sentenced to serve a year and a day in prison.

Twenty-five-year-old Richard Coleman also was ordered to pay \$11,750 in restitution.

U.S. Attorney Brendan Johnson says Coleman illegally shot a bald eagle, a snowy owl and deer late last year and early this year. Coleman also faced a weapons charge. He pleaded guilty in August.

GFP Reminds Hunters Of Upcoming Bobcat Seasons

PIERRE — With the 2012-13 bobcat season beginning on Dec. 8, Game, Fish and Parks officials remind hunters and trappers of several new requirements and opportunities.

The first-ever bobcat season east of the Missouri River will run from Dec. 8 through Dec. 30, 2012. Only the counties of Buffalo, Brule, Charles Mix, Bon Homme, and Yankton are open. Hunters and trappers are restricted to one bobcat per person in those open counties.

The bobcat season in all counties west of the Missouri River will open Dec. 8, 2012, and close

on Feb. 15, 2013. There is no limit on bobcats in West River counties. A South Dakota Furbearer License is required to hunt or trap bobcats and all bobcats must be checked and tagged by GFP personnel.

All hunters and trappers who take bobcats are required to remove the pelts from the carcasses and surrender the entire carcasses within five days of harvest to GFP personnel for registration and tagging. Once the season is closed, an individual has 24 hours to notify GFP personnel of any untagged bobcats harvested during the season. No person may possess, purchase, or sell raw bobcat pelts that are not legally tagged.

WHEN THE RAIN DOESN'T FALL, IT'S GOOD TO KNOW A LENDER THAT STANDS WITH YOU.

Crop and livestock producers understand the risks and challenges that are part of their business, but a rain gauge is not a fair way to measure their future.

During this time of severe drought, we are working with every resource, from risk management tools to our financial capacity, to support our customers when they need it most.

Our job isn't just to finance crop and livestock producers each year, but to help them be here in the future. When you're in agriculture for keeps, it pays to work with a lender that is, too.



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MUSICAL PRODUCTION STAGED NIGHTLY

Presented by the Freeman Community

"Fiddler on the Roof"

Music by Jerry Brock; Lyrics by Sheldon Hamick; Book by Joseph Stein; Licensing agent: Music Theatre International

Ethnic Handicraft and Culinary Arts Displays and the Schmeckfest Country Kitchen are open 1:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. The Museum Complex is open 1:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Order Tickets Now With This Form

MEAL TICKETS

Date	Quantity	Total Amt.
Friday, March 15		
Adult Tickets	_____ @ 20.00	
Children (Ages 2-10)	_____ @ 8.00	
Saturday, March 16		
Adult Tickets	_____ @ 20.00	
Children (Ages 2-10)	_____ @ 8.00	
Friday, March 22		
Adult Tickets	_____ @ 20.00	
Children (Ages 2-10)	_____ @ 8.00	
Saturday, March 23		
Adult Tickets	_____ @ 20.00	
Children (Ages 2-10)	_____ @ 8.00	

If your first choice of days is unavailable, please indicate a 2nd & 3rd choice
 ___/3/15 ___/3/16 ___/3/22 ___/3/23 ___None

Tickets for meal and reserved musical seats will be mailed

Please check ticket dates when received

Orders received prior to Dec. 10

Filled by random drawing on Dec. 10

Orders received after Dec. 10 filled as received.

First-choice preference given when available

NO REFUNDS OR RETURNS

For ticket information only call 605-925-4542

or email schmeckfest@gmail.com

MUSICAL TICKETS

Date	Quantity	Total Amount
Friday, March 15 — 8 p.m.		
Front Floor Tickets	_____ @16.00	
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Bleacher Tickets	_____ @10.00	
Saturday, March 16 — 8 p.m.		
Front Floor Tickets	_____ @16.00	
Rear Floor Tickets	_____ @12.00	
Bleacher Tickets	_____ @10.00	
Thursday, March 21 — 8 p.m.		
<i>(NO OTHER SCHMECKFEST ACTIVITIES MARCH 21)</i>		
Front Floor Tickets	_____ @16.00	
Rear Floor Tickets	_____ @12.00	
Bleacher Tickets	_____ @10.00	
Friday, March 22 — 8 p.m.		
Front Floor Tickets	_____ @16.00	
Rear Floor Tickets	_____ @12.00	
Bleacher Tickets	_____ @10.00	
Saturday, March 23 — 8 p.m.		
Front Floor Tickets	_____ @16.00	
Rear Floor Tickets	_____ @12.00	
Bleacher Tickets	_____ @10.00	
Please indicate a 2nd & 3rd choice ___/3/15 ___/3/16 ___/3/21 ___/3/22 ___/3/23 ___None		
GENERAL ADMISSION TICKETS available at the door prior to each performance Adults - \$6.00 Children (10 & under) - \$3.00		

Online credit card orders available at www.schmeckfest.com

For mail orders, please send this order form, payment and self-addressed stamped envelope to:
Schmeckfest, PO Box S, Freeman, SD 57029.

Total enclosed for Schmeckfest meal and musical: \$ _____

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