

OF THE OUTDOORS | GARY HOWEY

Pitching The Shallows

BY GARY HOWEY
Hartington, Neb.

When some folks think about using crankbaits, they think it's a trolling method, one where you use leadcore or planer boards to fish deep and away from the boat when temperatures warm up.

Not necessarily so, as some of the best fishing is happening now, up in shallow water, yes I said shallow water just before things freeze.

Just a week ago, Team member Larry Myhre and I fished on several lakes in southeast South Dakota, where we were pitching shallow running crankbaits to-



Gary HOWEY

wards the shoreline into one foot of water and catching "BIG" fish that were up shallow pigging out before the deep freeze.

The key to finding fish shallow during the late fall is to locate a shallow shoreline with the wind blowing into it. You'll want to be fishing an area that has a dark or rocky bottom as they absorb the heat of the sun warming up more quickly than other areas and will retain heat longer, making it ideal for the baitfish and the predators that prey on them to locate.

We weren't doing anything fancy, just pitching cranks shallow and then slowly retrieving them back towards the boat. After a few cranks, we'd stop our retrieve, allowing our crankbaits to slowly drift upwards, resembling a wounded baitfish, then giving the rod a quick jerk, making the bait looking as if it was attempting to escape. After this pause, we'd start with a quick retrieve. One thing you won't want to do is to think that just because you didn't get a bite right away, and become complacent as you never know when you might get a strike as the majority of our strikes coming with the strike coming fairly close to the boat.

In many cases, you're going to find numerous species of fish located along the shoreline, as it's not unusual to take walleyes, smallmouth bass, largemouth bass, northerns and white bass, all in the same area at the same



PHOTO: LARRY MYHRE
Mike Dorris, of Madison, is pictured with a walleye taken pitching crankbaits shallow in South East South Dakota during the late fall.

time, feeding along the same shoreline.

On our last trip where we fished two different bodies of water, one near Madison and another outside of Webster. While casting the shoreline with shallow running crankbaits, we took walleyes from 1.5 to 8 pounds, northern from 3 to 14 pounds as well as bass up to 4 pounds.

If you're going to cast cranks in bodies of water with northerns, you best be spooled up with Fireline or some other superline. The northerns that hit our crankbaits were super aggressive, taking our crankbaits deep and without the Fireline, their sharp teeth and gill plates would have cut monofilament line and we've have lost them.

When I say the fish were aggressive, I mean aggressive as several of the smaller walleyes had deep scars along their side where the pike had tried to make a meal out of them.

Our boat was out over 6' to 8' of water, far enough so we could cast up close to shore, yet far enough away so we weren't spooking the fish.

We were using medium and medium heavy rods, the longer the better as the longer length allowed us to cast the light baits longer distances with less effort.

When fishing these condition where you never know what will be at the end of your lin, you're going to need a good reel, one with several good bearings and a heavy drag as a big walleye, smallmouth bass or northern can put a lot of strain on a reel.

Crankbaits aren't the only bait that will work in the shallows during the late fall, as jigs will also do the trick. The key to pitching jigs is to stay in contact with your line, not allowing any slack line as you retrieve it back to the boat. The easiest way to do this is to hop your jig back across the bottom as you bring it back towards the to the boat. This can be accomplished by raising your rod slowly, to allow the jig to come up off the bottom and then, keeping a tight line lowering the jig back until it ticks the bottom.

If you don't retrieve your jig this way, you're probably not going to feel a light bite and will more than likely end up loosing a lot of jigs in the rocks and the remaining weeds that lie along the shoreline.

As I mentioned earlier, a super line such as Fireline is really a plus with this type of fishing as it's tough, dives and sinks quicker because of it's small diameter, but it may need to be fished a bit differently than mono.

Because super lines have no stretch, if you're using a combination of a heavy rod with a solid tip, superline with jigs, you'll need to fish it differently than you would if using mono.

You won't want to set the hook the way you would when using mono, which has some stretch, you may end up missing fish. If you set the hook when using the combination mentioned above, there's a good chance that you'll pull the jig away from the fish before it has it totally in it's mouth.

This is why I like to use a medium light rod with superline and once a pickup is detected; I'll drop my rod back, allowing the fish to take the jig in. This along with the medium light rod, make up for the lack of stretch in the super line.

Don't be one of those that think because water temps are starting to drop that all fish will be heading deep towards their winter haunts as pitching baits, crankbaits or jigs shallow will work late in the fall, until freeze up and can produce some lunger fish.

Gary Howey, Hartington, Neb., is a former tournament angler, hunting and fishing guide. His award winning Outdoorsmen Adventures can be seen throughout the upper Midwest on Fox affiliates. For more information on the outdoors check out www.outdoorsmenadventures.com.

Coyotes

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"I was afraid that there would be some rust since it was the first game of the year," Williams continued. "After that quick start some of that rust showed. We got tired and sloppy and let them hang around. We made some poor decisions and took some quick shots."

A big emphasis before the game was knowing the Lumberjack's personnel and forcing them away from their tendencies. Against Patton the strategy was working, but the Coyotes lacked the concentration in some other areas.

"The anxiety got to us, we had defensive breakdowns in the first half, and were guarding their posts 25 feet away from the basket," Williams said. "There were also a lot of mistakes that got exposed and turned into points. There was about 23 points that Northern Arizona scored in the first half off of second chance points and turnovers."

In the second half the rust had been knocked off and the Coyotes came out and played a more meticulous game.

To start the half the score in the first four minutes of the second half was only four points for USD and 3 for NAU. This was the point where the experience of USD, who returns all five starters from last year's 20-12 team, began to show.

"Having players that have played in that situation before helped," Roche said. "We played with more poise in the second half."

After the slow start in the second half the Yotes went on an 11-0 run and brought their lead to 17 with 11 minutes left in the half. South Dakota was able to convert on the sustained possessions, while Northern Arizona was not.

Throughout the rest of the second half the Coyotes were able to keep the lead around 15 points the entire time. With around six minutes left, Roche found a hot streak and poured in seven points in a manner of minutes, upping her scoring to 18 points on the night.

With just over two minutes



DAVID LIAS/VERMILLION PLAIN TALK
South Dakota senior Amber Hegge, 22, tries to get around a Northern Arizona defender during their women's basketball game Friday night at the DakotaDome in Vermillion.

left, Hegge hit two free throws to extend the lead to 21, and end her night at 30 points. NAU's star, Patton, was held to only 11 points on 5-14 shooting.

"We improved in the second half in getting to the right spot," Williams said. "The lane became more congested and our players were in better help position."

Hegge looked forward to their next game at Creighton on Tuesday.

"Winning helps, but we have the mentality of 'next game' right now," Hegge said. "We have to play better offensively and defensively next game."

Junior guard Alexis Yackley set a career high in assists as she totaled 12 on the night.

"We want a very tough presence from our point guard, and Alexis did just that," Williams said.

In addition to Hegge's 30 points and Roche's 18, Tempestt Wilson ended with 13 points, going a perfect 3-3 from the three point line. Jodie Boss had 10 rebounds, and Hegge ended with eight rebounds.

NORTHERN ARIZONA (2-2)
Amy Patton 5-14 0-0 11; Caty Huntington 4-7 0-0 10; Khrya Conerly 4-11 0-5 8; Amanda Frost 3-9 1-1 8; Shay May 3-8 1-2 7; Aubrey Davis 3-7 0-0 6; Patricia Gortarez 1-1 0-0 3; Katie Pratt 1-1 0-0 2; Paige Haynes 0-1 0-2 1; Raven Anderson 0-0 0-4 0; Erikka Banks 0-0 0-0 0; Chanel Smith 0-1 0-0 0. TOTALS 24-60 3-14 56.
SOUTH DAKOTA (1-0)
Amber Hegge 11-17 5-8 30; Annie Roche 7-9 1-2 18; Tempestt Wilson 4-7 2-2 13; Alexis Yackley 2-6 1-4 6; Jodie Boss 2-5 0-0 4; Pam January 1-3 0-0 2; Lisa Loeffler 0-0 0-0 0; Taylor Moore 0-1 0-0 0; Kelly Stewart 0-2 0-0 0; Sam Mehr 0-1 0-0 0; Ashley Olson 0-0 0-0 0. TOTALS 27-51 9-16 73.
Halftime: USD 43, NAU 34. 3-Pointers: NAU 5-14 (Huntington 2-3; Gortarez 1-1; Frost 1-6; Patton 1-2; Smith 0-1; Conerly 0-1), USD 10-18 (Roche 3-4; Wilson 3-3; Hegge 3-4; Yackley 1-4; Moore 0-1; Stewart 0-1; Mehr 0-1). Fouled Out: None. Rebounds: NAU 34 (Patton 7), USD 35 (Boss 10). Assists: NAU 10 (Conerly 3), USD 18 (Yackley 12). Total Fouls: NAU 13, USD 12. Technical Fouls: None.

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PHOTO: CAPTAIN NORM'S
Dirk DuPlessis caught this 4.5-pound smallmouth bass at Lewis & Clark Lake on Nov. 9.

OSU Women's Coaches Die In Plane Crash

STILLWATER, Okla. (AP) — Kurt Budke turned Oklahoma State's women's basketball team into a winner and hoped he'd found the place where he'd coach until he retired. Miranda Serna had passed up opportunities to leave his side, staying loyal to the man whom she had helped to win a junior college national championship and then rebuild a big-time college program.

Having succeeded together, Budke and Serna died together — perishing in a plane crash on a trip aimed at building their team's future.

Budke, the head coach, and Serna, his assistant, were killed Thursday when the single-engine plane transporting them on a recruiting trip crashed in steep terrain in Arkansas, the university said Friday. The pilot, 82-year-old former Oklahoma state Sen. Olin Branstetter, and his 79-year-old wife, Paula, also died when the plane sputtered, spiraled out of control and nosedived into the Winona Wildlife Management Area near Perryville, about 45 miles west of Little Rock.

There were no survivors.

"This is our worst nightmare. The entire OSU family is very close, very close indeed," OSU President Burns Hargis said at a news conference. "To lose anyone, especially these two individuals who are incredible life forces in our family, it is worse beyond words."

The crash was the second tragedy for the sports program in about a decade. In January 2001, 10 men affiliated with the university's men's basketball team died in a Colorado plane crash.

"When something like this happens and, God forbid it happened again, we have to pull together as a family. We've got to try to do that," Hargis said, as he broke down in tears.

After the 2001 crash, the university required that planes used by the school's sports team undergo safety checks before travel. Hargis said coaches were not bound by the same rules and that the school left such decisions to their discretion.

Hargis called Budke "an exemplary leader and man of character," and credited him with elevating the team in a tough pro-

G&P: Mountain Lion Shot Near Creighton, Neb.

LINCOLN, Neb. — A 15-year-old deer hunter from Wayne killed a mountain lion near Creighton in northeast Nebraska on Nov. 12, according to the Nebraska Game and Parks Commission.

The boy, hunting a shelterbelt in Knox County, spotted the mountain lion 10 feet away before shooting and killing it. The mountain lion was a young male, which has been typical of mountain lions found in Nebraska outside of the Panhandle, according to Sam Wilson, furbearer and carnivore program manager with Game and Parks. The carcass was turned over to Game and Parks, as required by law.

Mountain lions are protected year-round in Nebraska but may be killed if threatening people or attacking livestock. No charges will be filed, as evidence indicated self-defense.

"Game and Parks is interested in documenting observations or game camera photographs of mountain lions," Wilson said. "Please report any observations to your nearest Game and Parks office or call 402-471-0641."

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