



FLATLANDERS

TAILS

January 2014

MEETINGS: 7:30 P.M. ~ FOURTH THURSDAY ~ LOVES PARK VFW ~ 2018 WINDSOR RD ~ LOVES PARK, ILLINOIS

Happy New Year! Get a big fish in 2014

It's cold and crappy outside and many of us already have a bad case of cabin fever. The fishing shows help us scratch the itch a bit, but nothing beats time on the water. A group of us started the year with breakfast at the Cracker Barrel in Rockford before heading off to the Chicago Musky Show. There was a great lineup of speakers – Steve Heiting, Jim Saric, Joe Bucher and Spence Petros. They shared information that will help us catch more and bigger fish in 2014.

Dick Cholke talked to some of the best musky guides in the country during the show. See the next page for his report.

The trip to the Musky Show was our meeting for January. There won't be a general meeting until Feb. 27. Between now and then we'll have the Rockford Fishing Show and the Milwaukee Musky Expo. They're on the same weekend: Feb. 14-16. The Madison Fishing Expo is Feb. 21-23. We hope to see you at one of the shows. We won't have a booth at the Rockford show this year, but some of us will be working at the Leaders & Lures booth. If you haven't connected with us for awhile, stop by the booth and say hi.

Outings 2014

We should have an idea on what the outings schedule for 2014 will be by the time we send out the next newsletter. Outings have been one area that has seen growing interest among members. So far, the only certain outing is our annual Lake of the Woods trip. We haven't quite filled Bay Store Camp, but we do have 24 anglers who have committed to fish July 12-19.

2014 banquet

The Annual Awards Banquet is scheduled for March 15 and will be a buffet style dinner at the Loves Park VFW. More information will be available later, but for now please reserve the date! And remember you do not have to be receiving an award to attend. All members and guests are invited to attend what will be a fun filled evening. See you there!.



IGFA world record

Flatlander Mark Carlson proudly displays a 56-inch musky he caught on the St. Lawrence River in December. The fish is the modern day International Game Fish Association world record. 2013 was a good year for Flatlanders and big fish. Jeff Gayhart caught a 56-incher on Lac Seul in October. Jerry Oestreich caught a 53¾-inch beauty in June from Mille Lacs. There were numerous other 50-inch-plush fish caught. Let's hope that 2014 produces more and bigger fish.

Madison Muskie School

The 13th Intermediate & Advanced Muskie School will be Saturday, March 15, at Waunakee High School. Doors open at 7:30 and there are a bunch of seminars that will appeal to most anglers. Some of the presenters are familiar to the Flatlanders: Lee Tauchen, Bill Buechner, Jeff Hanson, Greg Fitch and Adam Oberfoell. Topics range from fishing the Madison Chain to fishing the Wisconsin River to fishing Lake of the Woods. You'll probably only be able to make three of the more than 30 seminars available so you might want to bring a buddy and divide and conquer. The cost is \$34 if you sign up before March 10 and \$44 if received on or after March 11. Mail to: Muskie School - CCMI P.O. Box 8862 Madison, WI 53708. PAYABLE TO: CCMI. Questions: Contact Steve (email) at MPD339r@charter.net or call 608-770-7131.

The Chicago Muskie Expo and the "The Question"

By Dick Cholke

A number of the Flatlanders attended the Chicago Muskie Expo Jan. 11. I had the idea to ask a question of some of the top muskie anglers a very simple question.

"What did you learn or do different to start catching muskie on a consistent basis?" Every sport has plateaus and I think certain individuals get past the next plateaus and many of us try to break through those barriers. These are the answers I took away from the show from some well-known experts. **Bruce Shumway** – tackle manufacturer of the marabou feather tail "unbucktails" like the Hot Tail, Flasher and Funky Chicken and the Fuzzy Duzzit Very simply stated "Fish where the fish are"

To build on this statement, **Jim Saric** answered:

First make sure all the mechanical items are in order – all your tackle: rods, reels, hooks etc are ready for a big fish.

Fish lakes that are productive at the right time of the year. He stated some lakes have a great reputation, but not every month of the year. Learn what lakes are hot at certain time frames of the season and schedule your trips around those peak periods.

Mike Mordas of Muskie Train Lures – Guide - Thank you Mike for the large amount time you spent with us.

TOW – time on the water - you have to pay your dues

Mike trolls Ohio reservoirs and Lake St. Claire predominately.

Mike indicated you should pick three trolling crank baits with a tight wobble, medium wobble and wide wobble. Make a chart to know what exact depth each lure is at with a specified length of line out from the rod. Learn how to read your electronics for bait fish activity. He stated when you see scattered schools of bait fish and with occasional humps these are not catchable fish. Feeding fish whether walleye, bass or muskie tend to make schools of bait fish ball up into tight pods. Troll around the pod with the bait slightly above the large arches. If you catch small muskies on one side of the pod, go to the opposite side of the pod to catch the larger fish. These fish will probably not show up on your electronics. Big fish are lazy and the small muskies will push the bait fish to the larger muskies.

Mike also indicated, on inland waters, that it is important to learn the seasonal movements of muskies. At times he will troll with only six foot of line out on his reel/rod when he is fishing three to six foot of water. The fish are not boat shy. Trolling patterns change throughout the season and you need to adjust for these changes.

Justin Gaudry of Mylies Resort LOTW – Presenter at the 1/13/14 Capital City Chapter Meeting

Justin stated: learning your electronics and good boat control were the two things that made him catch muskies more consistently. He enjoys casting but his passion is fall trolling. In the fall, he is trolling in 8-10' foot of water and sometimes within a rod length away from hard structure. Other times he indicated that many fishermen get too close to structure and position the boat in the water that they should be fishing. He stressed when you see bait fish and the proper structure to stay in that area and make multiple passes with varying angles, lures, depths etc. The fish are there and you should take the time to get them to hit. He stressed marking waypoints on good structure.

Side note: Check out Mylie's Place Resort facebook page on 2013 Fall Muskie Trolling Report Sabaskong and Area – some good information:

<https://www.facebook.com/notes/mylies-place-resort/2013-fall-muskie-trolling-report-sabaskong-area/588838284504092>

I thought these were great inputs. I would like to do a follow-up article from the input of our top Flatlanders anglers. **"What did you learn or do different to start catching muskie on a consistent basis?"**

Please send your response to cholke@mchsi.com

You guys have done something different, let us know what it is!

Being a new member of the club I do agree with Jim Saric. Flatlanders have learned what lakes are hot during different periods of the season. Let's get some more input on other things that make a difference.

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From the speakers the big take away was:

Steve Hettiing - during pre-front, rain and post front weather, fish fast (bucktails etc.) and cover a lot of water – fish are active, and fish known locations of big fish. When the front clears and you are left with blue bird skies you need to finesse fish the weeds and structure to trigger a strike.

Orange bellied baits work well on Canadian lakes.

Joe Bucher – pay attention to detail

Sharpen your hooks

Do everything right all the time – especially the figure 8's

Do something different in your retrieve to trigger a strike. He is a proponent of long casts and parallel cast to structure.

Fish into the wind for better boat control and to better placed casts to specific structure.

Message from Muskies Inc.

January 2014 the new member ID card process will be implemented, but it will be ready to roll within the next few weeks for all members. ON LINE MEMBER ID CARD PRINTING All member ID's will be printed by members once accessing their account User Profile. There will be a link on the user profile page (upper right hand corner)

that will allow them to print and retain their own ID Cards at ANY TIME. For family members the family head will be able to print the entire families ID's.

Print Membership ID Card

Print All Family ID Cards

We will be eliminating MI supplying and ID cards effective 1/1/2014. This will save the organization dollars in monthly expenditures for the imprinting and managing of the ID cards.

We understand some of our members will not have access to computers or be able to print their own ID cards, in these cases they can contact the Secretary to have them produced and mailed to them, but this will be by request only. We will advise members of this in the January Issue of Muskie Magazine.

We understand change is difficult but we also have an obligation to the organization to remain fiscally responsible and to become part of the new wave of technology.

Chapter Challenge update

It looks like we'll have at least two teams (three boats per team) for the 2014 Gil Hamm Chapter Challenge on Aug. 20-22 at Red Wing Lodge, Lake of the Woods. It's not too late to sign up, but if you want to do so you need to do it soon because lodging may be hard to come by. If you're interested, call one of the EC members. They're listed on the right.

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