

On the Water



Volume 14, Issue 1

JANUARY 2011



A November Fishing Experience

from Eric Bakke

Finally, a weekend off. I had been waiting for this weekend for two months and it was finally here. I hooked up the boat that I had borrowed from my buddy Greg Ide and headed to Bemidji. Ready to spend some time on the water with the dream of catching a giant. Put yourself on the water and good things can happen, I told myself. So off we go, a short stop at Thorne Brothers and the 4 hour trip was underway. Night time fell and I was in the zone, Bemidji would be in my headlights in no time. But then why is this guy in the car next to me waving at me to pull over? "Sparks have been flying out of your trailer for the last couple mile I have been following you." Bearings out of commission. In fact, the bearing buddy and anything resembling something that would hold a tire on an axel were spread somewhere on Highway 10 and I am just short of Rice. Drop the boat off at the mechanics. It will be ready in the morning. Good thing it's Thursday, Bemidji is still 2 plus hours away. Might as well head up and do some hunting in the morning and come get the boat when it's ready. Not the end of the world, but a pretty big bump to start off the trip.

Call comes in at noon, we have the parts and we should have it done by 3. The trek back to Rice is under way. My dad decides this is a perfect time for a captive audience for the next five and a half hours with no escaping or changing the subject. He decides to ride along to keep me company. We make good time, but there is no boat outside. Talk to the man behind the desk and he says, "Why don't you come back and I'll show you what is going on." WHAT IS GOING ON?? The boat is supposed to be ready. I'm supposed to be fishing in the morning!! The wrong parts were ordered. We will not have it ready until Monday. The guy you talked to left after talking to you and he thought it would be done. Sorry for the inconvenience of driving from Bemidji to Rice and back

NOVEMBER FISHING *continued on page 4*

New Officers Elected for 2011, New Board Members

Elections for our chapter's Board of Directors were held at the December meeting. Re-elected to another term are Eric Bakke, Jody Dahms, Jim Doyle, John Newman and Troy Zuelzke. Newly elected to serve their first – we hope of many – term are Peter Janik and Doug Malsom. They will all serve a two-year term starting in January. George Selcke and Tony Sommerfeld chose not to run again.

Board members with one year remaining are Brad Coyne, Scott Crawford, Dianne Dahl, Terry Hanson, Greg Ide, Tom Keith, Stu McIntosh, Shawn Kellett, Jim Kroupa, Joe Mellot, Mike McGrath, Denise Olson, Jeff Redig, and Eric Schultz.

Your new chapter officers are President, Troy Zuelzke; 1st Vice President, Eric Bakke; 2nd Vice President, Shawn Kellett; Treasurer, Dianne Dahl; Secretary, Tom Keith; and RVP, Eric Schultz. Officers of the chapter are elected from among the board members to serve for one year.

Board members are elected to two-year terms. We look forward to having our new members on the board. We also want to thank George Selcke and Tony Sommerfeld for their service to the chapter for the past two years.

From Our President: TROY ZEULZKE

2010 has come to an end – another great year for our Twin Cities Muskies Inc chapter. We started the year out with another successful Sportsman's Banquet, a couple great events with the youth, our Minnesota Veterans Home Opener, the Military Kids/Family fishing event in August and finished with another great Frank Schneider Jr. Tournament followed by a 2nd Annual George Wahl tournament.

I would like to thank all those people involved for their time and dedication in making these event happen. I encourage those that have not been involved to look into getting involved in any one of these events. You will walk away with a great experience and maybe a new fishing buddy. The activities are what support our youth events and stocking of fish. The Minnesota fishery is world-class and our chapter can take great pride that we are being proactive and working with the DNR to ensure the future of our fishery.

We have a lot of activities planned for 2011. Let's find a way to have greater participation from our current members – and new members. Look for the announcement from Scott Crawford about a new program being rolled out for new member recruitment.

Happy New Year

Winter Banquet

Mark your calendars and save the date of March 19th for the chapter's 2011 Twin Cities Sportsman's Banquet. The banquet will be held at Minnesota Valley Country Club in Bloomington.

Last year there was over \$22,000 in high quality prizes including three one week resort stays, St. Croix rods, Gary's custom rods, Shimano reels, Lakewood boxes, shotguns, ice fishing gear, a few fun high value mystery prizes and much more. The event raised a record \$17,000 that was utilized for stocking and rearing. Last year we sold out so don't wait to get your tickets this year. Tickets will go on sale through our web site the first week in January. You may also purchase tickets in person at the January general membership meeting at the Knights of Columbus in Bloomington.

If you are planning to attend we need your help. Please consider volunteering to help with check-in or man one of our many prize tables. We are also looking for kids to be runners for prizes. If you can volunteer please contact Joe Mellott, Troy Zuelzke or Jody Dahms or send an email to banquet@twincitiesmuskiesinc.org.

Don't forget to invite a friend. This is a fun night out whether you are "into" muskie fishing or not.

Hugh C. Becker Foundation

The Hugh C. Becker Foundation and Trust were created as a provision in the will of Hugh Becker, one of our club's first members, who passed away in January, 2008. The trust and foundation are administered by a 5-person committee headed by Hugh's friend George Selcke.

Each year the Hugh C. Becker Foundation awards grants of up to \$10,000 to projects having to do with the muskie resource. Grant applications will be accepted through January 31. This year, the foundation will award over \$100,000 in grants. Provisions stipulate that 25% of the money generated each year be returned to the trust, so that Hugh Becker's gift should last in perpetuity to be used for the muskie resource.

According to Hugh's wishes, grant money can be used for: projects or activities that will aid in muskie propagation, stocking (either raised or purchased) fingerlings for public use in designated waters, habitat protection and improvement, research by qualified personnel, or expansion of the current muskie range with special consideration given to the Missouri river system in North and South Dakota.

Volunteer!!!!

Join a chapter committee. Committee members don't have to be on the board. The tournament committee and MN Vet's Home Opener Committees are looking for persons to just work on the specific event.

The Tournament Committee meets the last Tuesday of the month. Volunteers are able to fish at both tournaments, but need to be available at feeds and awards. A volunteer is also needed to head the MN Vet's Home Opener. They will co-ordinate and plan the event with help from the board and the past director.

Contact Denise Olson, 612-866-5369 or olson@3pete.com if you're interested in volunteering for either of the committees.

Members Only Contest

Eric Bakke, Members Only Chair

Another Muskie season has come and gone. Now we are on that 6 month break that gives us a time for all the rest of the stuff in our lives that we put off until the lakes froze. Before you know it this white stuff on the ground will disappear and we will be getting the motors tuned up for the new season. I want to thank each and every one of the people who participated in the Members Only Contest this year. Hope you all got out of the season what you put in! Here are the standings, they become official once the calendar year changes:

JUNIOR DIVISION

- 1ST Zach Weyland - 4 fish - 44 points - 43" longest
- 2ND Gregory Batina - 2 fish - 27 points - 40" longest
- 3RD Thomas Batina - 1 fish - 17 points - 43"

WOMENS DIVISION

- 1ST Carole Janik - 4 fish - 89 points - 51" longest
- 2ND Christine Rein - 1 fish - 7 points - 33"

WOMENS MASTERS

- 1ST Cindy Hegdahl - 14 fish - 204 points - 49.5" longest
- 2ND Linda Knutson - 8 fish - 123 points - 48" longest

MENS DIVISION

- 1ST Dave Knutson - 32 fish - 603 points - 51" longest
- 2ND Pat McAllister - 22 fish - 455 points - 53" longest
- 3RD Marko Brinatte - 20 fish - 345 points - 48.5" longest
- 4TH Peter Janik - 16 fish - 260 points - 51" longest
- 5TH Eric Bakke - 18 fish - 231 points - 52" longest
- 6TH Jeremy Knutsen - 13 fish - 212 points - 49" longest
- 7TH Corey DeZeeuw - 12 fish - 206 points - 47" longest
- 8TH Brent Hirsch - 16 fish - 205 points - 55" longest
- 9TH John Huss - 11 fish - 176 points - 48" longest
- 10TH Matt Olson - 13 fish - 170 points - 46.5" longest

MENS HYBRID DIVISION

(points tabulated with pure-strain releases)

- 1ST Eric Bakke - 2 fish - 38" longest
- 2ND Dave Weyland - 1 fish - 43.5"
- 3RD John Huss - 1 fish - 41.5"

MENS MASTERS DIVISION

- 1ST Kris Astorp - 64 fish - 1158 points - 52.5" longest
- 2ND Dean Roll - 50 fish - 837 points - 49" longest
- 3RD Phil Groth - 21 fish - 294 points - 50" longest

MENS MASTERS HYBRID DIVISION

(POINTS TABULATED WITH PURE-STRAIN RELEASES)

- 1ST Kurt Hostager - 3 fish - 46" longest



A TIE FOR LUNKER OF THE MONTH! Two members turned in 55-inch muskies to the Membres Only Contest this year. Above, Brent Hirsch got this 55-inch beauty July 28 from Lake Vermilion. Below, Larry Maronik, thinking he should check out the lake the day before the Frank Schneider Memorial tournament, boated this 55-incher from Lake Bemidji. During the tournament he had no fish. But, maybe that didn't matter!



LUNKER OF THE MONTH

APRIL - official - James Beheba - 47" - April 24 - Clear Lake, IA

MAY - no fish over 46"

JUNE - official - Pat McAllister - 52" - June 18 - Rush Lake

JULY - official - Brent Hirsch - 55" - July 28 - Vermilion

AUGUST - official - Chris Mueller - 51" - August 23 - Mille Lacs

SEPTEMBER - Official - Larry Maronick - 55" - September 9 - Lake Bemidji

OCTOBER - unofficial - Kris Astorp - 52.5" - October 8 - Detroit Lake

NOVEMBER - unofficial - Mark Frederick - 52.5" - Lake Bemidji - November 4

NOVEMBER FISHING

continued from page 1

for no reason. Well at least my Dad and I got to bond for five and a half hours.

But is this the end before it started? The lake just sitting in front of my parent's house with no way of getting on the water? There has to be a way. But the only thing available is the 16-foot john boat used for duck hunting. Is that big enough for fishing in November in Northern Minnesota? Is it safe? Will it work? Can I take everything I stripped off the boat in the shop and put it in this john boat? Will one electric trolling motor and a 7.5 HP Johnson be sufficient? Am I crazy?

Morning breaks and the creation of my 16-foot Chariot is under way. Motors, check. Rods, check. Lures, check. Lowrance, check. Rod holder, check. Net, check. Camera with tripod, check. Life jacket, check. Mother telling me to call her every hour to make sure I'm not floating, check. Now all I have to do is get out there and get a line wet. It's time to do something awesome. Let's get in the game. Time to hit my favorite spot, just a short run up the short line. Give it the gas. Oh, wait. A top speed of 5 mph won't get you there very fast. Looks like I will be trolling there and everywhere else for the duration of the weekend. Oh, well. 100 percent of the time I will have a line in the water. Things could be worse. I could be stranded in the living room staring at the lake right now.

Day one: 6 other boats on the water. 7 hours of fishing with zero follows or rips. The big goose egg. I didn't see an extended figure eight all day from anyone. Could the fish really be tight lipped right now? They are supposed to be jumping in the boat for all of those who are braving these November days on the



The 16-ft. Chariot – proving that you don't have to be in a \$40K Ranger to catch a muskie, you just have to throw your line in the water and do your time.

water. Tomorrow's a new day.

Day 2: 2 other boats on the lake, both Rangers. I bet they are looking at me and wondering what in the hell was I doing out there. Hit my first spot of the day and wouldn't you know it there is a big shadow coming up after my Medusa on my second cast. Hit it! Hit it! One time! Where the hell are you going? Was I too fast on the eight? Too slow? Sign of life! Now don't give this fish away to the guy 50 yards up the shoreline. Sundown and major are 10 minutes apart. I'll get her then.

Wind is picking up and it is now snowing. Temps drop to 28. Trolling and killing time until the major. Let's stop at one spot before heading to my secret spot. Let's try that Medusa again. All I have to do is reel in my Jake from trolling. Why isn't the level wind working? What's wrong with my reel? I need this rod and reel to throw my Medusa. Reel officially frozen. What else do I have? My jerk bait rod. Let's throw a top-water to make sure this guy is still working. Clip on a Whopper' Plopper. Rear back and a loud grinding noise halts the bait 10 feet out. What the heck! Come on! Break free! I'm a

lefty and these are my only two lefty reels that I have with! Another cast. Same result. Both reels frozen with 50 minutes until prime time. Not only that, but I am a half an hour or so from my spot at the Chariot's top speed of 5 mph! Only rod left is my spare right-handed reel. Feels awkward and I have no confidence in a hook-set, but it's this or go home. Still an hour or so of fishing. You can make it. Find a way.

Just about to the spot. Looking like I am going to have this spot to myself. This should be gravy! Now where did you come from? I am 100 yards from the spot and one of the other boats speeds right

around me and drops in on my secret spot! NO! I called it first, but I just can't get there. Now he is going to catch her. Well, I'll start on the drop off here and let him clear off the spot and I'll hit it right at sundown. At least it will get me used to this reel before I get to the spot. Now where did you come from? Ranger number 2 flies around me to my Secret Spot! Ranger one clears and Ranger 2 fills in right behind him. Both starting at the secret spot! What are the odds? Three boats on the water and at sundown we are all within 50 yards of each other. So much for my secret spot. Well, if I slow down they will both hopefully clear and I can fill in at sundown. Come on Medusa, bring me the one I have been looking for all season! On my spot, prime time. Both Rangers cleared off. Five casts down with nothing. Hold here, something has to go. Five more casts and nothing. Well she is the only fish you saw and she was a tanker, keep at it. Five more casts, should I change baits? Should I move down the shore with the wind? A couple more. Let it sink to the bottom and rip it off. They will

continued next page

hit in on the drop, be ready! A couple more. Time to rip it off the bottom again for the 20th time in the same area.

What is that?! Is that bottom or do I have something? It's heavy, but it feels like dead weight. Is it a log or a fish? Logs don't head out to deep water. FISH ON! Steady, constant pressure. Where is the net? She feels big, but I don't care. Sign of life! Don't screw this up. Take your time. Enjoy it, but get her in and keep her head down. Reeling right handed is not good right now. Deep sea maneuvers. Put the rod in your stomach and pump the rod and reel in the slack line, but keep it tight. Here she comes. Get her in the net. One arm, stretch, stretch! Head is in, come on a little more. She is going to turn, get her in the net! Screw this rod. I drop the rod and grab the net and scoop her in.

She's in the net, I got her! She is huge! YES, I yell at the top of my lungs! Quick, get her unhooked and in the net peacefully. Now for the camera, balance the tripod. Hit the timer and in she goes. Time for one picture so make it a good one. Snap. Time for a measure, 52, and right back in the water. Now for a girth, 25.5. Splash! A quick tail slap and I am dowsed with water. I can't believe it. I got her!! How cool was that! That was a big, fat piggy! I did it!! I got her, not one of the guys in one of those Rangers! I got her, in my Chariot!

This season I dedicated myself to fishing all year as hard as I could without losing my job. I fished in 2 countries, 3 states, held 4 fishing licenses, fished 21 different lakes for a total of just over 600 hours. I fished three tournaments and the Chapter Challenge and registered a fish in all but one of the events. Another fun fact I am proud of is that I boated a fish in every lake that I fished more than one day on. I got 24 fish this year and had 68 in the boat total. I broke 2 rods and 3 reels and lost my fair share of lures. I hit a 200+ pound 10-point buck at 1 am with no cell coverage in Ontario heading to Whitefish Bay for the opener. The F-150 kept on ticking and I got there and back with a crater in my truck that would cost \$7500 to fix.

Needless to say, there are many things that will derail your plans and take you off the water, but if you push through and roll with the punches, great things can happen. This November piggy was the crowning jewel of my season. A very fitting end to a long journey. Know that you don't have to be in a \$40k Ranger to catch a Muskie, you just have to throw your line in the water and do your time. I don't even own a boat and I was able to have a great year, fishing with many different friends along the way. That is what this sport is all about anyway. In our world you can't buy a 50-incher, you have to earn it and sometimes you get lucky!

Nominations for Muskie Award

The Muskie Award is presented each year at our Winter Banquet to a deserving chapter member who has constantly and unselfishly devoted time and energy over the years to promoting and improving the goals of Muskies, Inc.

The first Muskie Award was presented to Muskies Inc founder, Gil Hamm in 1974. At that time, our International umbrella had not yet been formed and the award recipient was chosen from among all Muskies Inc members, regardless of chapter affiliation. Once there were a number of chapters, it became too difficult to choose a recipient from the entire organization and the Muskie Award was dropped. The Twin Cities chapter made the decision to continue it for our chapter.

Nominations of an individual for the 2010 Muskie Award must be submitted in writing. Include a history of the person's involvement with the Twin Cities Chapter over the years. Send your nominations to Jim Kroupa at 6311 Steller Circle, Excelsior, MN 55331. Or email them to jkroupa@ties2.net. Call Jim at 952-474-5967 if you have questions. Nominations must be in by January 31. The winner will be selected by secret ballot at the February Board meeting.

Share your "Muskie Tale" – a story about something that happened while fishing, on the way to fishing; on the way back from fishing; finding something interesting on the end of your line; having trouble staying in the boat; some kind of mishap that happened while you were fishing. We hear lots of big fish stories, we want to hear something unusual. Send your "tale" to last year's winner Dave Rouse (1089 Stryker Ave., West St. Paul, MN 55118 or e-mail to olson@3pete.com) by January 15. The person with the best tale will have the honor of keeping the Muskie Tale Award for a year, and choosing the next winner.

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— this 'n that —

TC CHAPTER YOUTH PROJECT

All of us have bucktails, spinner-baits, or buzzbaits that are not getting used. We also need to get more youth involved with musky fishing and attending our MI meetings. Tom Keith proposed to the Board of Directors to combine the two issues. If members would bring in old lures to the meetings, he will either refurbish them or take the usable components and rebuild them. The plan is to give one away to each child under the age of 18 at each meeting. That might help encourage them to attend more meetings. If the response is good from the Chapter, there might be enough to also distribute them during our chapter sponsored Military Family Fishing Day. If you have bucktail, flashabou, beads, blades, clevises, or bodies that you are not going to use, we

could use them to expand this program. Please bring anything you would be willing to give to the next chapter meeting you attend. If you want to get involved with the making of the lures, please contact Tom Keith at tomk@usewireless.com. Thanks for your support.

SEEKING NEW CHAPTER MEMBERS

Sign up your muskie-fishing friends for membership in the Twin Cities chapter. Any chapter member who signs up a new member has a chance to win a St. Croix rod or a Fenwick/Abu Garcia combo. Every time you sign up a new member, your name will go into a drawing for the prizes. Email Scott Crawford at fat55incher@yahoo.com when you sign up another person to get credit for the new member.

RED WING LODGE, LOW, CHAPTER OUTING

August 13-20

Dates have been announced for the joint outing with North Metro. Red Wing is the site of several Chapter Challenges and has been chosen again for the 2011 Chapter Challenge. The cost is \$300 per person with a \$50 non-refundable deposit. Contact John van Ingen (maxjo@mac.com, 651-699-5172) or Pat Miller (donnagmiller@comcast.net, 651-429-1629) to make your reservation.

RESCHEDULED

Bob Strand, who was scheduled as a speaker at our December meeting, will be re-scheduled. Thanks to Luke Ronnestrand who showed up on short notice to talk about muskie fishing.



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Place a classified ad in *On the Water*. Classified ads may be submitted by Twin Cities Chapter members. Charges are \$5.00 per month per ad. Send ad information and check made out to *Muskies, Inc.* by the 15th of each month for insertion into the following month's publication to: Graphic Works, 7125 17th Avenue South, Richfield, MN 55423.

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A big thank you to all the manufacturers, retailers and resorts that have helped the Twin Cities chapter in the past year by donating merchandise and trips used for incentives and prizes for our fundraising events as well as the prizes for the Banquet and the welcome table at each meeting.

Please make an effort to support our sponsors so they have an incentive to keep on supporting us. Without them this chapter could not do what it does for the resource and its members.

If you're looking for a new bait, remember that manufacturers of some of the most productive baits ever designed are among our sponsors. And remember to buy them from sponsoring retailers. If you're looking for a muskie trip, keep the sponsoring resorts in mind.

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Kevin Cochran's Musky Guide Service	Lee Lures	Red Wing Lodge - Lake of the Woods	Wades Custom Tackle
Dockside Marine & SnoPro	Marcum		Walker Wireless
	Mighty Muskie Guide Service – Josh Stevenson		Whitefish Bay Camp

next meeting

JANUARY 11

**SPEAKER:
GREGG THOMAS**

Gregg owns and operates Battle the Beast Guide Service service that operates in the south on Cave Run and Green River lakes and in the north on a vast array of Minnesota lakes. Gregg has an impressive list of accomplishments including winning the Professional Musky Tournament Trail Championship twice, being a member of PMTT "Top Gun" Team twice, fifteen other top 10 finishes in PMTT events, producing and starring in many musky fishing videos, having published articles in various fishing magazines (Musky Hunter, Midwest Outdoors and Fishing Facts). Gregg has been the keynote speaker at dozens of sports shows, seminars and chapter banquets, and along with Tony Grant formed Musky Road Rules Schools and Clinics.

Muskies Inc. Twin Cities Chapter General Meetings are held at 7:00 pm the second Tuesday of every month at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1114 American Boulevard West, Bloomington, MN (just off I-494 & Lyndale Ave.).



MUSKIES INC.

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