

No Need to Strikeout at Strikers

When Alan asked me to write a story about our recent fishing at Strikers Point Lodge on Whitewater Lake, I cringed a little. No, not because I didn't want to write for him but because my wrists still ache from catching walleye after walleye! I've never seen as many 15 to 19 inch walleye landed in my life. These fish were hitting just about everything we dropped down to them, including plain ball-head jigs with no live bait or plastic tail. We've been on some pretty darn good walleye trips in the past but never one where we could hardly stand to set the hook any longer. This trip was unbelievable.

Whitewater Lake is a large, 26 mile long, 26, 000 acre lake nestled within the beautiful boreal forests of the Wabakimi Provincial Park. Some anglers, including me, might get a little intimidated by a lake of this size but, believe me, Whitewater actually fishes quite small. In other words, you can stay within five miles of camp and catch all the fish you ever dreamed of, including some trophies. Let's put it into perspective.

There is a spot, approximately 1.5 miles east of Strikers that we coined "On-Demand." This spot is located at the entrance of the outflow of the Ogoki River. There is a rock pile that rises to the surface from 30 feet on two sides. You can't miss this spot because it's marked with a white jug to warn boaters of the shallow rocks. This spot usually produces best in the morning and in the evening but is pretty consistent all day long. We like to start fishing 3/8 oz jigs and twisters in about 25 feet of water and work our way up to the top of the rock pile. When the wind is calm or the sun is bright, it seems that most of the fish will be concentrated in 18 to 25 FOW. However, at dawn and dusk, or if the wind is blowing you can expect to find the fish right next to the jug, in 5 to 10 FOW. We caught hundreds of walleye at this spot including several 23 inchers, a few over 24 inches and Tom Kaltenecker's 30-inch beauty. This is also a good spot to chase master angle pike. We've seen some huge pike in this area and have landed a few master angler pike in the past. There is also a massive 10 foot flat, that starts on the south side of the jug and runs south and west of the jug. We were at Strikers a little early this year but I've heard of some historic catches of massive pike being caught off this flat in July and August. If you have a trip scheduled this summer, try casting Silver Minnows and various spoons across the flat or even long-line troll a J-13 or Husky Jerk across the flat. "On-Demand" and the adjacent flat has all the right elements for attracting and holding lots of fish and big ones all summer long. This spot has deep water, rocks piles, shallow flats and a bit of current flow - the perfect ingredient for summertime action.

There are also five islands that begin about 1.5 miles directly out from camp, run westward and circle back towards camp. These islands are fantastic summer spots, especially when a little wind is blowing. Starting with the small island directly out from camp, there is a small rock protrusion that comes off the island and faces north towards camp. Deep water butts right up against the sharp tapering rock and this seems to be the contact point the fish use when they move up to feed. You can almost always catch a few fish off this rock no matter what the conditions are, but if you have some wind, use it to your advantage to locate the school of fish. In other words, fish the windy side of the island because the fish will load up against the rocks where the wind and waves are

crashing in. The best way to approach these conditions is to point the transom of your boat into the wind and use your 25 HP Yamaha in reverse to hold the boat stationary. Vertical jig in 12 -18 FOW or cast jigs up close to the rocks. You'll find that lots of better-than-average walleye come to this area when the wind is blowing, such as the 28-incher we caught directly in front of the rock protrusion one windy day last season. Don't avoid the wind. Understand that wind pushes micro organisms into shore. Minnows will follow these organisms to feed and the walleyes will soon follow the minnows. Look for these windblown island points and shorelines. Nine times out of ten, you think you're in walleye heaven.

Trophy pike also frequent these islands in search of the walleye. Just ask my buddy Dale. Dale, my brother, Brad, and I were fishing the island straight out from camp, in the exact conditions I just described. The wind was blowing from the east, 15 to 20 MPH. We started a slow back-troll at the rock protrusion and worked east and then maneuvered south around the rocks in 16 FOW. I vertical jigged a 3/8 oz pink jig with a half section of a white Slug-go. Brad and Dale cast 1/4 oz jigs & twister tails and Saltwater Assassins towards the rocky shoreline. It didn't take long for us to make contact with the school of walleyes and, once we found them, we held our position and proceeded to slay the fish. Walleye after walleye came to the boat and then as Dale was reeling in a hefty 19 inch walleye, a massive pike charged out from under the boat and snapped the walleye and jig from Dale's line. Amidst the exhilaration of what we had just witnessed, I told Brad and Dale to "throw a spoon to her, while I hold our position." Dale tossed a Johnson Gold Minnow to the area and before the spoon had a chance to settle, the aggressive trophy pike was all over it. Dale immediately set the hook and played the pike perfectly. After a five minute battle and a broken net, Dale's girthy 43.5 inch, Master Angler fish was boated, photographed and released.

The other four islands just southwest of the island described above are just as productive. Anglers can make a virtual milk-run around these islands and hardly lose sight of camp. Just start at the small island straight out from camp and work the circuit of islands back to camp. As you circle back towards Strikers Point, don't forget to fish the southwest point of the large island one mile southwest of camp. This was one of our top producers for walleye and northern. Use the back troll technique to find the school of fish, than hang around and rip-some-lip. I hooked a fish on this last trip that seemed like its head shakes spanned two feet. When I set the hook, the huge fish just stayed in-place straight down below the boat and gave my lure massive wide thrashes, back and forth. I could almost visualize a fifty plus incher, with its mouth wide open trying to shake my jig. Unfortunately, it did.



No matter how you slice it, there are some huge fish roaming Whitewater Lake and some trophy action to be had within a comfortable distance from Strikers Point Lodge. Yes, we ventured to the narrows and behind Best Island on a couple of occasions but as the finality of our week drew closer and we became more serious about catching our last couple hundred fish of the trip, our path always led back to the islands and the honey-hole we call “On-Demand.”

I’d also like to mention another great resource that can help you catch more and bigger fish at Strikers Point Lodge. Besides their 5-star professionalism in taking care of their guests, the Strikers staff - Bill, Marg’, Katie and Tyler all have a great understanding of the week-to-week hotspots on Whitewater, especially Tyler, who guides on the lake almost every day. If you’re not sure about where to begin fishing on a lake as large as Whitewater, or if you just want to relax and learn some new fishing techniques from a professional guide. I would highly recommend hiring Tyler for a day or two. I’ve seen some of the catches this knowledgeable young man has put his clients onto and they’re truly outstanding.



This document has been brought to you by the fly-in fishing experts
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