

## Don't Look Back

(Posted 2-16-2008)

I wanted to share more of last year's experiences. I want to tell you about my second (Yes, Second!) trip to Boreal Bay last summer (when I caught another musky), but time seems to be passing by faster than expected, and we've reached the point where it is time to look forward, not back.

I'm expecting fishing in 2008 to be even better than 2007. Truth be told, I spend most of my time fishing for Smallmouths, but am happy to have anything at the far end of my string, which makes Crow Lake a good place for me to fish. If the Smallie bite is slow, there are Lake Trout, Musky, and Northern Pike (seasons permitting) that each have their own personalities, and require different techniques and equipment.

If that isn't enough, Lake of The Woods is virtually across the street and is a good place to fish all of the above plus Walleye. What also makes Boreal Bay Lodge stand out is their portage lakes like Cedartree Lake for walleye, bass, and northern pike, and Jessie Lake for bass and northern. If that isn't enough there are some nearby drive-to lakes, like South Narrows, where I have personally caught my share of smallies, plus a few of Jim's. With all of these choices, there has just got to be something biting somewhere.

Last year I employed the wacky rig almost exclusively for smallies, and did pretty well as far as numbers go, but I'm thinking that this year I'm going to go for size. I'm thinking that this year will be the time I catch a 5 pound Smallmouth and get my picture in BassMaster magazine. I'll let you know how I did after my visit this June.

If I'm going in June, it's time to start getting ready. Like a lot of folks that don't ice fish, I haven't opened my tackle box for a few months, and am hoping that it isn't filled with rusty hooks and green slime. So this weekend, or maybe next, I'll crack it open and take stock of what I've got, and what I may want to add. One of the things I want to accomplish this year is to cut back on the amount of stuff I carry in my tacklebox. Just because it holds seven 3700 boxes, a spinnerbait box, two 3500 boxes, and has seven other pockets, doesn't mean that every nook and cranny has to be stuffed to overflowing. Some of you may disagree with me, but I find it hard to believe that I need 40 pounds of stuff just to go fishing for a week. Then again, the wife can't believe I need 40 pounds of stuff to go fishing for a lifetime.

It appears this year that my circle of friends is shrinking. I was hoping to go with a group of 6 or 8. Unfortunately, the group looks more and more like 2 1/2. Yeah, 2 1/2. After I explain the PITA you'll understand. But before I get into that, the upside is that Jim is going again. I know he's had to put up with a lot of family pressures to get a free week every year, but he's tough, and when it comes down to it, Linda really does love him and likes to keep him happy. So Jim is definitely going this year. I'm definitely going this year. So now you're probably asking who, or what is the PITA (as in Pain In The A\*\*) and how come he only counts as a half? It's certainly not his size (he's big-boned, whereas Jim and I are fluffy), or his appetite (he eats like a bird, 3 times his weight daily). This year the PITA (real name Andrew) is planning on going, but he has a bait bucket full of ifs, buts, and maybes, so right now he's counted as a half. Jim and I both hope he'll make it because he's fun to watch, but we'll understand if things don't work out. There's always 2009.

That leaves us starting to get ready. Why not join me and go get your tacklebox and start your

inventory. Try to remember what always seems to work for you, and what never seems to work, then put your plan together to get more of the former, and lose/sell/give away some of the latter. If you know a kid who is just getting into fishing, make it point to hand down some of your used fishing gear to him/her. Besides being a nice thing to do, it gives you an excuse to go buy yourself some new stuff.

One more thing before I have to go feed the dog. Take this advice to bite the bullet this year, and replace all of the line on all of your reels. You'll be happy you did.

Tom