

August a Midsummer Reflection
By Steve Welch

Now that my season is about halfway over. I thought I would take a moment to reflect on what has happened to me. First I changed jobs late last year and started doing new construction in the heating and air field. I used to run service but it always got in the way of my guide service being on call.

With the new job I had the opportunity to work four ten-hour days freeing up my time to guide every Friday, Saturday and Sunday. That is exactly what I did from mid March through the end of June. That really wears on you no time off in four months. Oh well can't sleep in past 5:00 AM anyway.

Luckily I have the perfect wife who encourages me to fish and pursue my passion and believe me you have to have a passion for it to fish as much as I do.

I did however take off some time to fish in the Crappie U.S.A. region three qualifier on Lake Shelbyville and was fortunate enough to win in the semi-pro division. That qualified me to fish in the thirteen state regional held on Lake Decatur. Teams from as far away as New Jersey came to try their luck at winning the Ranger boat package valued at 25,000. I was fortunate enough to win that also. Living right I guess but I put it back on the new job. I had a whole week to prepare fishing most everyday and my partner put in the time as well. We knew we had the size of fish to place all week long if the bite just held up.

The rest of the teams in our area tried to sneak up on these shallow fish and vertically fish a jig. We stayed back and fished a cork with live bait. When the water temps reach mid seventy range and the spawn is over. The fish want live bait to rebuild their strength. This pattern has worked for me and has gotten me many a paycheck in tourneys.

I had a bunch of guide trips this spring at Shelbyville with triple and quadruple limits. Made good on the water decisions and rolled with the flow on this springs fluctuating water levels. I was up in the creeks in mid April fishing the fast current then back on the lake a week later fishing the falling water. Then back up in the creek a week later fishing the dead smartweed that had drifted in and covered the stumps on the channel. Then when it came time to fish the qualifier the current was back in the creek and other teams stayed away from it but I used the knowledge I had gained a few weeks earlier on where the fish would stack up. We actually caught about three limits from just two spots and never saw a boat all day.

Now I am back on the main lake fishing for white bass and walleye. I have had a few very good trips these past few weeks and some very bad ones. The whites just move so much and I have been trying to find walleye a little too much. Once the fish totally leave the shallows and hide on the deep ledges I will back on the white bass with a vengeance. For me this happens about the last week of July and continues on through the entire month of August.

My drop shot rigs and quarter ounce slider grub rig accounts for all my fish during this time frame. It is all done with electronics and knowledge of the lake.

My second half of the season will start with some muskie fishing. I start in about mid September and fish for them for about six weeks. Then it is crappie time again once the water turns over and the fish start to move shallow. I always tell my clients in my winter seminars that the fall trips are better than the spring. Stable weather, no water fluctuating and beautiful scenery.

We fish a cork and jig once we get into mid September and stay with this pattern up through mid November then just take off the cork and move out to about ten foot of water and vertically fish any wood you can find. This lasts until the lake freezes in late December, then it is time to hit the fishing shows and winter seminars.