Finally Fall Is Here, That Spells Crappie Time
by Steve Welch

All summer long I am dragging along about twenty rods and tons of tackle to fish for several different species. We have four bait casters rigged with the Slab spoons. Four spinning outfits rigged with the drop-shot rigs and four ten-foot jig rods. To fish for either the white bass slash buffalo or jig for crappie.

Once we get into October all the white bass gear comes out of the boat. You can still catch them but I prefer to crappie fish and actually look forward to it. A second wind if you will as I have already pulled about eighty guide trips so far this year.

September can leave you reeling with the lake turnover period to get through. I have had really good days followed by sub par slow days. Once we get into October the fish become very predictable. Early on in the month right after the turnover which usually occurs once the water temps get into that 61 to 64 degree ranges. The fish will go shallow and you can throw a jig and slip bobber and this pattern is a blast if you haven’t tried it. The fish just slam the jig in shallow water, almost act like a small mouth they hit so hard.

Once the water temps get into the mid fifties too high forty range and even colder. We get into what I call my ten-foot pattern. Just let ten-foot of line out of your reel and go fish. Find any piece of wood and you will catch fish. This pattern is easily my best way to catch fish. My boat is set up for it and I love to tight line a jig. I have two seats that set side by side up on the nose of my boat and I have the biggest Lowrance depth finder/GPS color unit you can get. It is networked with the Lowrance/ GPS unit on my dash and they both share waypoints. Last time I looked I had 498 waypoints on them. Most on Shelbyville. I also have a Humminbird side-imaging unit on my dash so I can shoot 200 foot out both sides as well as shooting everything under the boat. I can really search new water and locate brush.

We now have a new crappie limit on Shelbyville. You can keep five fish under ten inches as well as the ten fish over ten inches. My clients have really benefited from this as we have been fishing for them off and on most of the summer. Once fall hits we get into a lot bigger fish and you should see my clients face when they hook into one. We get many fish over a pound and some pushing two.

Another big draw to Shelbyville in the fall is the annual turning of the trees. Shelbyville is an Army Corp lake and that means no homes on the lake so you have natural surroundings and tens of thousands of beautiful trees all turning shades of red and gold.

October is a busy month for me as I am qualified to fish the Crappie U.S.A. classic over at Patoka Lake in southern Indiana and then come home and fish a big local tourney the very next weekend. Then settle into a bunch of guide trips until mid-December then back to Paris Landing about six or eight times before mid March. Then ready myself for yet another season.

I have a new venture started this year. I am making instructional fishing videos. I am passing on what I have learned through fifteen years of guiding and tournament fishing. I already have a spring crappie video for sale on my web site and I am preparing to put together a white bass/ buffalo jigging spoon video. Then this winter a crappie video on both Shelbyville and Kentucky Lake.

These videos might be a little long winded for the non fisherman but I didn’t want them loaded with adds and commercials just tons of fishing and more importantly catching.

Wish me luck at the Classic and I hope to see some of you there and I hope you all have great success on the water this fall.