

LUNKER HUNTER SPOONPLUGGERS MEETING OCT. 1st 2009

“SEMINAR BY JOHN BALES”



John Bales speaking to Lunker Hunters

We were very fortunate to have the October meeting as a **special seminar and question-answer time delivered by John Bales**. John had come to Grand Rapids to give on-the-water Spoonplugging lessons to students, and agreed to give a seminar on our meeting night of October 1. **17 attended** the seminar and all felt it was very much worthwhile. The subject of the seminar was about training **what was taught and learned at the on the water that day**. Charlie Myers and Roger Bouwkamp were very generous and open to allowing John to share that information with us.

John began his seminar describing how **weather, temperatures, and other conditions affect fish behavior in the fall**. The fall turnover is an **unstable** time for the fish because water **temperatures are changing rapidly**. Once the **turnover is finished** and **temperatures stabilize**, **fishing can be very good**. Mr Perry had indicated to John that this occurs about **the time all the leaves are gone from the trees**. At this time, much of John's **lure presentation involves casting** because of the **slower speeds** indicated. During fall turnover, when the fish are deep and inactive, **deep breaklines** (down 30, 40, and more feet) **should be checked by trolling 700 and 800 Spoonplugs on wire**. This can involve **20 or more layers of wire** and requires **considerable experience** using Spoonplugs. **Casting can be done on turns, points, and breaks on these deep breaklines** that may hold fish. **Mapping and interpretation** is as much, if not more **important on these deep structures** as on shallower ones. John emphasized that we **don't just start fishing deep**, but check the shallows and weedline

first, then **work deeper**. The **base breakline is often the key** this time of year. Basic Spoonplugging guidelines apply here just like at any other time of year.

One of the more dramatic lessons the students learned was the **method of reading a flasher to find subtle deep breaklines that hold fish**. A flasher depth sounder, if read properly, can locate and map deep structure far **more accurately than a graph**. All 4 students that took the on the water training from John felt that this skill was one of the main highlights of their training. This method is difficult to describe in words, but John did an excellent job in demonstrating how this is done on the water. **Deep muck or transition lines were shown** and followed to demonstrate their form also. An **8 degree cone is better** at reading deep breaklines, and often they can be **located more easily running from shallow to deep**. In trolling a weedline, a 20 degree cone angle is better, so ideally, both should be used. **John prefers** to have the **transducer located in the rear of the boat**, preferably on the side that the driver is fishing off of.

John trained Charlie Myers and Roger Bouwkamp Thursday October 1 on Murry Lake, and much time was spent reading deep breaklines and structure where John pointed out the best structures and why and how to fish them. Friday October 2 he trained Mike Dordan and Bob Terpstra on Wabasis Lake. They preferred to do more fishing along with the training, and some nice pike were caught on deep breaklines where neither of them had fished before. **All 4 students were very excited about what they had learned**. Just ask them!!

Chase Klinesteker