

## PORTAGE LAKE OUTING SMALLMOUTH



5 pound, 19 inch smallmouth bass from Portage Lake, May, 2019

We stayed in one of the nicest facilities yet, Little Eden Camp on Portage Lake. The cabins were neat, quite new, and spacious. The staff was very helpful, and the food was extraordinary! Included in our stay were 3 breakfasts and one dinner at the main lodge, a real treat. There was no smoking, no alcohol, no television, and no food preparation to distract us from our fishing, so lots of time was spent at our favorite pastime! The weather could have been more cooperative, but that's the way it often is. Air temperatures were mostly in the 50's with water temperatures in the low 50's, leaving the bass in a pre-spawn situation. The wind was a factor in getting to and fishing many areas. Every boat contributed to the delicious fish fry we had Saturday night at John Millers cottage, including one boat bringing in a 13-inch perch. Unfortunately, no walleye and only 1 pike were caught for the weekend, so perch were the target fish for that. Pre-spawn smallmouth bass were the most exciting factor of the weekend, although they all had to be released. Big fish that fought hard, fast, and jumped were quite a thrill! One boat caught a 20 inch 5-pound+ smallmouth casting the channel that looked like a football! Several largemouth bass were caught in the east end of Portage lake in the shallows, and another boat caught a nice one about 4 pounds. Two other lakes were fished, Crystal and Arcadia, where some smallies, perch, and the one pike were caught. Another boat targeted mostly perch Thursday and Friday but Saturday decided to go for smallmouth bass. The best structure in the lake was fished, the North Point bar. It is the longest, narrowest, sharpest, deepest breaking structure to the deepest water by far (Buck Perry's definition of the best). The two deepest holes in the lake are on either side of this bar that extends halfway across the lake. Slow trolling a jerkbait in the shallows was found to be an effective presentation, and 11 good sized smallmouth bass up to 19 inches and 5 pounds were caught and released in just a few hours. Seasonally, the biggest fish are often the first to appear on the best structures. Few smallmouth were caught trolling other structures of Portage Lake that weekend.

Chase Klinesteker [www.chasesfishes.com](http://www.chasesfishes.com),