

CLAM LAKE REPORT

“3-year Old Cranks in Largest Pike”



3 year old Arianna cranks in a pike on Clam Lake

Clam Lake is a 3 ½ mile long connecting lake between **Lake Belaire and Torch Lake**, northeast of Traverse City, Michigan. August 18-25, 2007 our **family spent a week** in a cottage on this lake where we did a fair amount of fishing. **Water color** is **12-14 foot visibility** and **weeds grow to 16 feet**, which makes for **tough fishing**. That is better than Torch Lake, which is much clearer, so most fishing was done on Clam. In addition, the **lake bottom was very soft**, and lures could not be walked on the bottom. The bottom was even soft and mucky in much of the shallows, and **scattered clams** could be seen in **1-2 foot depths**, indicating the lake is aptly named.

The **weather** for the week was **mostly cloudy** with a fair amount of **wind and rain**. It was the remnants of Hurricane Dean that had caused much damage in the Gulf. **Many areas** of the Midwest were **reporting** very **slow fishing** because of this instability. Clam Lake was **still fishable** in the windy weather because it is quite **narrow**, but fish movements were short and spotty. **Temperatures** averaged in the **high 60s' to the mid 70s'**.

Clam Lakes' **structure** consists **mostly** of **weedlines forming bars**, and the **old river channel** which meanders from side to side and is **mostly silted in**. The **deepest water** in most areas is 22 to 24 feet, with a few spots **26-27 feet**. There are **3 smaller holes in the east portion** of the lake beyond the narrows, but the deepest water there was **only 16 -17 feet**, so this section was not fished as much. The **weedline** ended at 14 to 16 feet and **had a "step"** in it **after 8 feet** where **shorter weeds** were present. This allowed me to **troll** the weedline **with 3 sizes of Spoonplugs**, #250 (6-9 ft), #200 (9-12 ft), and #100 (12-15 ft). It was necessary to **pay close attention** to **markers, line sights, and the depth sounder to stay close to**, but not in **the weeds**. The weedline is fairly **irregular**, so a **smaller boat** (I fish from a 14 foot) **and short line length** (60 feet) is quite **helpful**. Line lengths shorter than 60 feet made it difficult to correct the boat without getting into the weeds. Effective **speeds** were from **1 ½ to 3 ½ mph**, with most fish being caught closer to 2 mph. **Most fish** were caught near the **base of the weedline on #100 Spoonplugs** running about 12 feet, although one day the only fish caught was at 7 feet on a 6-9 Spoonplug, and another day a 9-12 was best. **Always consider both depth and speed** in your daily presentation of lures. They **change frequently**.

On **Thursday**, I spent 3 hours on the water with **David Rose**, a Traverse area guide, writer, and speaker at the Grand Rapids Sport and RV Show. He was interested in how we present Spoonplugs, and I, in turn, received good information about area lakes and his fishing methods. I enjoyed his company very much. David has read the "Green Book" and follows Spoonplugging guidelines closely. If you have questions on Traverse area fishing, you may contact him at 231-276-9874 or check his website at: www.wildfishing.com.

32 pike to 28 inches were caught for the week, although **most** were **less than 24** inches. **4 smallmouth bass** to 17 inches and **2 largemouth bass** to 16 ½ inches were also caught. Although considerable **casting was done**, **all but 2 fish** were caught **trolling**. **If I** was one who **did not like to troll**, the week would have been a **disaster**. **Both trolling and casting skills are necessary to fish thoroughly**. The **biggest thrill** of the week was when my **3 year old granddaughter** Arianna became a bonafied Spoonplugger by **cranking in the largest fish of the week** (the 28 inch pike and 2 smaller ones). **I held the rod while she cranked the Penn 109!** The **catch results** from this weeks' fishing were **acceptable**, but by no means outstanding. When one **takes into consideration** the clear water, deep weeds, shallow depths, soft bottom, and unstable weather, it looks a little better. **Only a few boats** were seen fishing this lake all week, and I **did not hear of or see any pike being caught by others**. I experienced the **satisfaction** from my fishing that Buck Perry talked about with Spoonplugging.

Chase Klinesteker