

BUCK TALKS FISHING . . .



“Why Doesn’t This ‘Fishy-looking’ Spot Produce”

“It would be a heck of a note if fishermen had to find the ‘secret’ to every little fishing hole they might encounter.”

by Buck Perry, Education Editor

(Part two of two parts)



The last time we talked we were discussing ways and means whereby fishermen could understand more fully the subjects talked about and be better able to connect this information with the situations encountered on the water. We felt many do not understand a fishing situation because when a fisherman gets a fact now, then later another, and still later another, by the time he gets on the water he has forgotten most of it and then has difficulty coming up with answers to what he faces.

We were also concerned with the fisherman who did not "hear" or did not "believe" our talks had anything to do with his style of fishing; nor had any bearing on his becoming better at the game. It was decided all we could do about these problems was to keep on talking, try to illustrate and explain more fully, and hope for the best.

In our past talks we set forth some easy-to-remember "guidelines" the structure fisherman uses to put the fishing ball of wax together. We said the basic guideline of the structure fisherman goes something like this: "The fish spend the greater part of their time somewhere in the deepest water in the area being fished. (Note: I said somewhere in the deepest water in the area

water, etc.) as my guide to where the fish may be found. Then I must control the depth and speed of my lures (or bait) on and/or around these features to take care of the mood of the fish at that particular time."

Figure 1 illustrates a fishing situation sent in by a fisherman who has been exposed to our talks in the past. I'm not sure whether he is one who can't remember things talked about, or is a person who can't connect or "tie-together" things heard in the past to a situation faced on the water. He could be one who does not "hear" or "believe" we have been talking to him. However, I am confident he is one who does not know how our "guidelines" (knowledge) will enable us to quickly see, or find, satisfactory answers (as far as we are concerned) to not only this particular situation, but to any he might present in the future.

His letter went like this: "The reservoir (man-made lake) I fish was built in a big, wide, river valley. The water covered some good flat farming land on both sides of the river. There are many clay bars along the shoreline. Most of the shoreline has good 'stick-ups' in the shallow water. In the spring or during spawning we catch plenty bass around the stick-ups in the coves and

the term "structure" in your letter. Let's just hope you know that "structure" is a feature or shape of the bottom, and not just some stick or bush located on the bottom in shallow water.

The knowledge (guidelines) required here is no different from that desired in any fishing situation. Our guidelines (knowledge) will hold true no matter where we might fish. As stated before, it would be a heck of a note if we had to find the "secret" to every little fishing

FIGURE 1

This side-feeder stream "cut" produced two "bars" where it enters the main channel. Due to flooding and water run-off before the area was dammed, the bar on the downstream side may be worn off with several breaklines being formed (some being deeper than those on the "up-stream" side). Such bars should not be overlooked.

Some anglers who are unaware might wonder, "What is that fisherman doing such a long way from shore and cover?" The answer is, this fellow knows what to do when the coves and shoreline bars stop producing fish.

being fished, not the deepest water in the lake.) When in deep water the fish may be so deep or so inactive they are almost impossible to catch. We, as fishermen, are saved due to the fact the fish do not stay here or stay dormant all the time. On an average fishing day they will become active, and MAY move toward the shallows. We are saved again because this movement, or migration, is not just in any direction, but is along well-established features of the lake (river, pond, reservoir, etc.) bottom which extends all the way from the deep water to the shallow water. The features of, or on, the bottom the fish use in their migrations from the deep to the shallows, and vice versa, are known as "structure," "breaks," and "breaklines." How active or how far the fish move, and how long they stay, is determined by the weather and water conditions at the time of the movement. Therefore I must use the features (structure, breaks, breaklines, deep

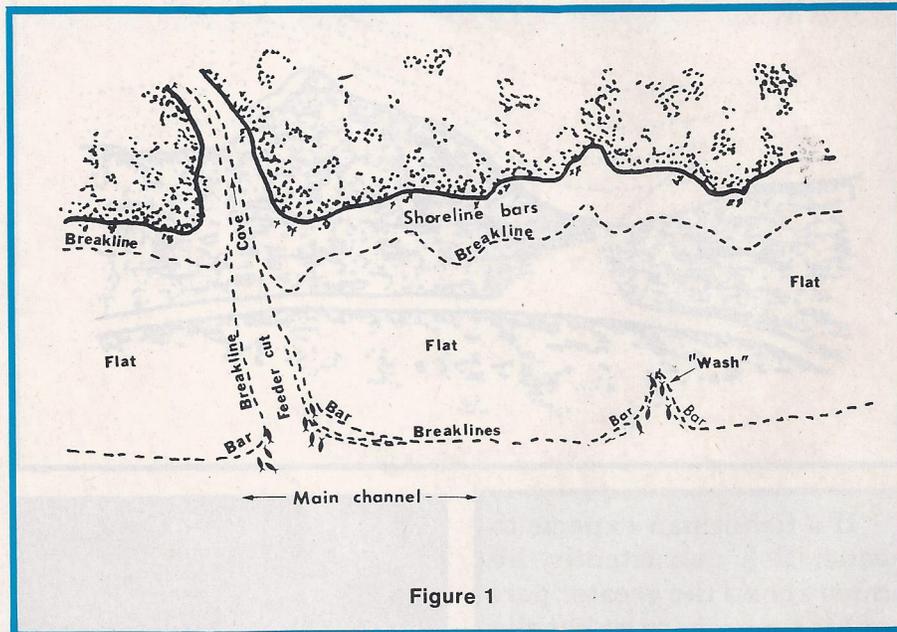


Figure 1

on a few bars. After that we don't have much luck no matter how thoroughly we fish the coves or the 'structures' along the shoreline. It appears the fish just don't bite for most of the year in this lake."

Let us discuss this situation just as if YOU had written the letter.

We should be able to figure out this situation from only the basic guideline as given above. But to better remind you and to better connect things said in the past, we will state some things you should already know — since you used

hole we might encounter.

Structure fishermen (Spoonpluggers) will normally put a reservoir into one of three classifications: (1) Highland, (2) Lowland, or (3) Flatland.

In your letter you are referring to what we call a "Flatland" type reservoir. By classifying reservoirs into different types, we are spelling out just what type structure, breaks, breaklines, deep water, etc., exists; and, where most will be found. One of the most important things this "guideline" does is to indi-

continued

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cate the movement pattern of fish in that particular type body of water.

Let me repeat part of our BASIC guideline but change the words slightly so that you can better understand what has been said: "If I expect to catch fish consistently I must spend the greater part of my time where I have the best chance to catch a fish. This means I must use **STRUCTURE** (bars, humps, etc.) as a guide as to where the fish might be found. Then I must use "breaks" and "breaklines" on, or connected to, the structure to pinpoint the fish. I must control the depth and speed of my lure (or bait) on, and/or as close

to these features as possible to take care of the mood (active or dormant) of the fish at that particular time."

Figure 1 illustrates the fishing situation and shows the bars along the shoreline as referred to in the letter. The large flat (farming land) is shown, as well as the main river channel. The figure also shows a side-feeder stream that has cut a slot (or channel) with breaklines, through the flat "bottom land." This side-feeder stream cut produced two **BARS** where it enters the main channel. These two bars (structure) can be quite similar at times, but in many cases entirely different in

shape, depth, breaklines, etc. Due to flooding and water run-off before the area was dammed, the bar on the "downstream" side may be worn off with several breaklines, with some being deeper than those on the "upstream" side.

Apparently you overlooked these two bars (structure). You also seemed to have forgotten or rejected, an important part of the basic guideline the successful structure fisherman keeps in mind at all times, which is: "The home of the fish (where he spends the greater part of his time) is somewhere in the deepest water in the area being fished" (in this case the main channel). If you forget or reject this, then we are spinning our wheels, no matter what we might say now or talk about in the future.

You apparently forgot another piece of knowledge (guideline) talked about in the past, and it is certainly pointed out in the basic guideline which says the combination of structure, breaks, and breaklines, **MUST GO ALL THE WAY** from the deep water to the shallows and vice versa. Another way we could say this is: The fish do not migrate across a flat void of signposts such as structure, breaks or breaklines (guidelines).

If you look at the drawing, **Figure 1**, it should show you why only "a few" bars along the shoreline are productive — even in the spring.

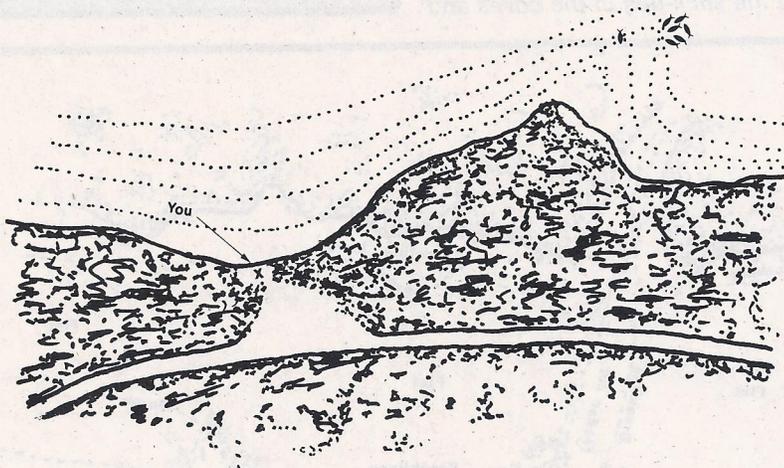
Since we must use **STRUCTURE** as our guide to where the fish might be, we do not have much choice in this case. The only structure we have left (after the shoreline bars) are the two bars where the side-feeder stream cut enters the main channel. These two bars (structure) have breaks or breaklines on, or connected to, them that "go all the way" from the deep water to the shallows and vice versa.

At many periods of the year, the fish in the channel will become active and move toward the shallower water, but with no intention (due to weather and water conditions) of going all the way to the shallows (8-10 feet or less). In other words, they do not move on the bars (structure) and the connected breaklines of the feeder-cut, to the cove or the few bars, as you indicated they did earlier in the season. The extent of the movement is to some section of the bars and breaklines near the main channel.

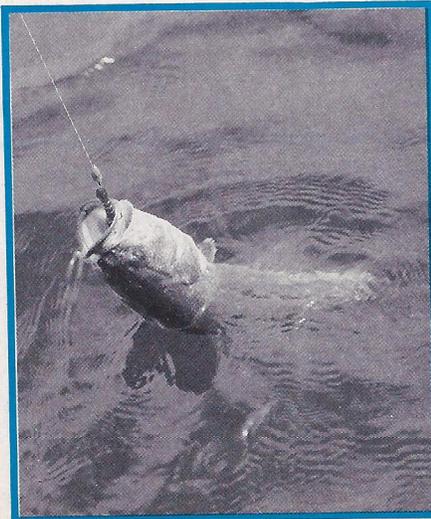
On short movement periods (fish not going shallow, or to shoreline features) the cuts and their features near the main channel are our main targets. However, any "wash" found along the breaklines of the main channel should

FIGURE 2

Can you tell why an angler seated at the spot marked "X" might have trouble catching many fish?



If a fisherman expects to catch fish consistently, he must spend the greater part of his time where he has the best chance to catch a fish (structure such as bars, humps, etc.). Then he must control the depth and speed of his lure (or bait) on, and/or as close to these features as possible to take care of the mood (active or dormant) of the fish at that particular time.



be fished thoroughly. (See "wash" in **Figure 1.**) A short movement from the channel may have the fish move up on the two small bars created by the wash, and if weather and water conditions remain stable, may move to where the wash and breaklines "peter out" on the flat.

The areas where feeder cuts exist, and any pronounced wash, should be referred to as "fishing" water. That is, we should shoot the works in the presentation of lures, both casting and trolling, with a *thorough* check of depths and speeds.

Although in many instances the feeder cuts are few and far between, we do not pass up all the breaklines along the main channel between cuts. However, we should not spend too much time where we do not have well-pronounced "structure" (bars, humps, etc.) and it is better to check out such long breaklines by trolling rather than casting. In some Flatland reservoirs, there will be long stretches of "trolling" water. If you do not troll, then you should look for the "cuts" and "washes" and concentrate your fishing efforts there.

The seasonal movements of bass will not change to any great degree in a situation such as this. A good rule of thumb would say: "There should be more shallow movement to the shoreline features or into coves during spring and fall. In the winter and summer we should expect more movement confined to the bars and breaklines near the main channel."

Next time we will still be thinking about that fisherman who has trouble understanding something he encounters on the water because he can't remember or can't for some reason apply the fishing facts (guidelines) we have talked about in the past. We will try not to forget the fisherman who has never heard our talks before, and it would probably be shortsighted on our part if we forget the person who thinks our talk doesn't apply to his fishing style. There are several categories in this second group around, and we're often reminded of one by something like this: *"I don't have a boat. I prefer to fish from the shoreline. I have wasted time listening to just a part of your (and other writers) chatter about deep holes, bottom shapes, fish moving, bad weather, running around dragging lures through the water, etc., etc. Most of it is just a bunch of nonsense anyhow (as far as I'm concerned)."*

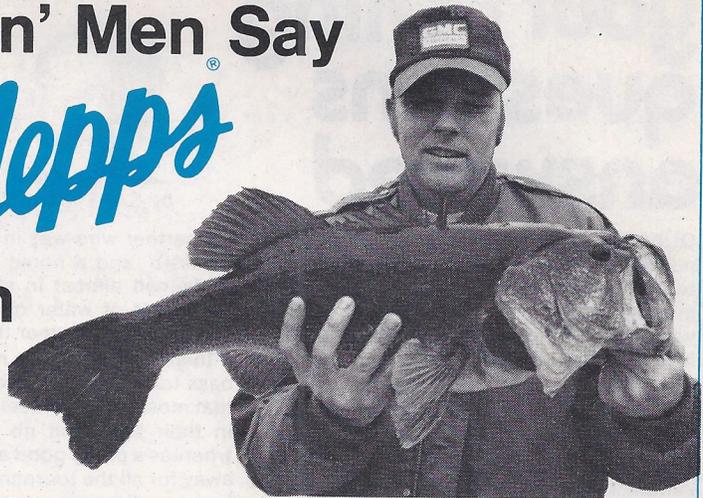
We wouldn't want anyone to "waste time," so about the only reply he gets is a sketch, such as **Figure 2**, with the comment, "We suppose you are at the spot marked X because the road and parking is close; and there exists a nice worn spot where other fishermen have been before."



Bassin' Men Say

Mepps

Catch More Bass



Stringers of Bass on Mepps

I overheard several Bassmen following the event say they finally went to Mepps on the second day "out of desperation" and finally caught Bass. It seems to me that this desperation attitude is something Bass men should try to change. Bassin' men should be just as proud to catch stringers of Bass on a Mepps as they would any other lure. They shouldn't hide the fact nor should they make excuses. Hey, the truth is Mepps catch big stringers of Bass and big Bass, too. That should be enough justification for any man. **Chris Duffy, Outdoor Writer, Baltimore, MD**

Mepps Spoons Resemble Shad

I took some White Bass and a Smallmouth Bass last week on Mepps Spoons, the Bass took them without any trouble at all. In the water the action resembles a shad minnow, when fished in a reel in and stop method. Very effective I would say. **T. Wayne Biehl, Outdoor Writer, Tonica, IL**

Exciting Night Fishing

I can now say beyond a shadow of a doubt that Mepps work at night as good as they do in the day. I took the advice of Bass pros; top water lures. I was wrong. After hours of fishing surface plugs without any action, I switched back to Mepps and caught one immediately! A 3 pound Bass from this pond is a good one. It took Mepps to do it. **Bruce Vetre, Guilford, CT**

Mepps Save the Day

While fishing for Black Bass in Rodman Reservoir (central Florida), I had fished the morning out using most all the common lures and plugs in my box. Nothing seemed to do any good. I changed my tactics and tried trolling, using a Mepps Mino #2. By that afternoon I had boated way over my limit on Black Bass and about 40 Panfish. **Bob Leslie, Field Tester, Altha, Florida**

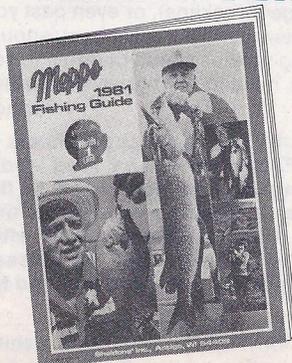
Don't Waste Time, Fish Mepps!

I was much like the typical Bass fisherman, buying every new bait that came along. But not any more. Mepps is my spinner bait. **THEY CATCH FISH!** If a bait cannot do it, what use is it in my tackle box and why should I waste my time casting them? **Bernie Lyle Bresee, University Park, IA**

Mepps Does The Job

Five years ago, I was just beginning to get into Bass fishing. Since then, I mounted a Bass over 10 pounds, two Crappies of 3 pounds 5 ounces each, and have another Bass being mounted at this time. I now fish with the Roswell Bass Club in Georgia, and I think those wonderful Mepps spinners are creating some concern with the other members. **Charles Baker, Alpharetta, GA**

New '81 Mepps Fishing Guide



Learn how to catch more Bass. Mepps complete Fishing Guide is packed with tips, photos, new ideas and proven methods so you can catch Largemouth, Smallmouth and Striped Bass. Clip coupon and send 50¢ if you want to learn more about Bass. The Guide is loaded with lots more fishin' stuff, too. Order today!

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