

Brookville and Smallies

THE FALL BITE

Fall fishing on Brookville, well it can be tough and rewarding, all in the same day!

In the Fall the fish scatter about in the entire water column and become difficult to locate, but once found you can have the trip of a lifetime. So let's see if we can catch a few.

When fishing Brookville in the fall it is always good to prepare yourself for very few bites and not have unrealistic expectations. What I am talking about is this. The water is in transition from summer temps to fall temps. Late summer the water temp will read low 80's and fall, low 70's and any sudden drop in temps will send the smallies into lockjaw mode. So keeping an eye on approaching weather fronts can be extremely important in dictating your success. If a high pressure system moves in and barometer rises sharply I concentrate my efforts on suspending fish. The smallies will suspend out over deeper points about 15-20 feet down and coaxing them into biting will be akin to pulling teeth, but it can be done. Look in your tackle bag and find the deepest diving bait you have. Color is unimportant. Add some suspend dots to it on the underneath of the bait between the front and rear treble hooks. Why you ask? To help keep the bait in the strike zone longer and increase your odds of winning the battle.

Now we have our bait and have it setup for our presentation the question becomes, where to look? A good starting point for a beginner at Brookville is the causeway and the dam. Why? This is the easiest place to locate the main river channel and the suspending smallies. I would start at the causeway first. Pull up to the Fairfield causeway and turn on your depth finder. Now work your way out of the main channel until you locate your first noticeable rise. Position your boat to where you're setting in the deepest water where you can reach the magical depths of 15-20 feet with your crank bait. Throw it as far as you can towards the point of the causeway and reel it down till you hit bottom and start working it to you in erratic motions with slight pauses to let the suspend dots do their trick. Once you lose contact with the bottom start working it like a jerk bait without the long pauses. This should produce a few fish. If not, opt for plan B.

Now if the causeway fails you, try the dam with a different approach. Go to the far right hand corner of the dam (Southwest) and position your boat to work the dam in a parallel fashion. Start your search in the depths of 10-15ft. and work your way out to water in the depths of 20-25ft. and work the crank bait like a jerk bait but again don't let it suspend too long, just short pauses. If this method fails as well try a little technique my grandfather taught me. Head to the mouths of the coves and look for bait pods. Once you locate the pods tie on a Fluke with a 1/8oz. ball-head jig, drop it below the bait pod and work it in short erratic pulls. This little technique has saved many of days for me at Brookville and can also lead to some surprises. I have caught giant stripers and walleye's doing this. I know they aren't smallies but they are swimming and it sure beats the heck out of a fishless day.

The old adage patience is a virtue will be truly tested at Brookville in the fall but your patience can be rewarded if you're willing to stick it out long enough to pay dividends. Brookville is truly a diamond in the rough if you take a different approach to fishing it. With most of Indiana's southern impoundments they are shallow and dingy and most fishermen have taken the approach of one foot two foot to deep. Fishing shoreline cover at Brookville will just get you mad and frustrated. It is totally different from the other impoundments in Indiana and should be fished as a different animal.

I truly hope this series on Brookville will enlighten you to other ways of chasing smallies on one of our most hated reservoirs. I say hated tongue in cheek as most people are just intimidated by its clear and deep water with sparse visible cover to fish. It truly is one of our best kept secrets for chasing big smallies.

If you would like more information on fishing Brookville please contact me at 317-788-9167 or by e-mail at; krigby6644@sbcglobal.net You can also find Ray hanging out at www.indianasmallmouth.com A web site for Hoosier Bronzeback chasers.