

Brookville and Smallies

Like a hand a glove

I have heard all the negative comments about Brookville in my lifetime. It's the Dead Sea, Brook-no place. A black hole that fish won't even live in. The lake of 1 million cast, as in how many cast you make before you get a bite. Well all I can say about all the misnomers? There wrong, dead wrong to be exact. I hope through this article I can enlighten you on the art of fishing Brookville for Smallmouth Bass. That's right, I said Smallmouth Bass. The truth be known Brookville is probably the best kept Smallmouth secret in this region.

Brookville is a 5200 acre impoundment that is deep and clear and void of most visible cover. This is where I am sure all the negative comments about Brookville originated. In Indiana fishermen have a mentality that if they can't see it, they can't fish it. Well all those rules go out the window at Brookville. There is sparse cover at best to pitch to. Shallow water? Forget about it. There is no such animal in that lake, unless of course you want to run up lake and fish for largemouth. I don't know why anyone would ever make that choice considering the bounty that awaits them for being patient and paying attention to this article. I consistently catch big Smallmouth @ Brookville every year. I have had countless fish in the 3-5 pound range, I have even had a few tip the scales right @ 6 pounds. So to say the lake is the Dead Sea is mind boggling.

Here goes, you ready?

When going to Brookville for the first time the most important thing you need is patience. The fish and the traffic will test you to no end, so be prepared. We will cover daytime tactics with seasonal movement first. At Brookville when the water starts to warm to high 40's and low 50's it is primetime for the big toads to get up and moving around from their winter haunts. I would break the lake down into a grid. I would start with the dam to the brickyard and concentrate on the Westside of the lake during the early part of the day in the spring time. For example, a March day with air temps hovering in the upper 30's early in the day, water temps somewhere around 45-48 degree's. I would have the following baits attached to the business end of my rod. A tube in natural colors, i.e. green-pumpkin, light brown or sand colors. I would have it rigged on a 3/8oz. insert-head for maximum effectiveness. I would also have a silver-buddy or other type of blade bait tied on. Let's also not forget about the jerk-bait. Now you have your grid on day one and your baits let's put them to work for you.

You arrive at the dam in the far west corner; now move your boat about 50 yards off the bank. This should put you in about 50ft. of water. The first bait I would throw? The silver-buddy. Now throwing the silver-buddy is not a chunk and wind kind of bait. It has a certain application. Make short cast with it, but let it hit the bottom. Once it hit's the bottom tighten your line and hold your rod @ the 9 o'clock position. Give the rod a quick upward yank to the 11 o'clock position and let it fall on a tight line back to the bottom. Watch your line closely for any sudden stops or slack in the line. If you see this, set the

hook! I like the 1/4oz. and 3/8oz. silver buddies for my fishing @ Brookville. I would cover the water on the Westside of the lake in high percentage spots, like points, mouths of coves where the creek channel cuts in and ledges/flats that drop off into deeper water. You can find these areas with a good quality topo map of the lake. If the blade bait fails to produce any fish for you, switch to the jerk-bait in a clown color or shad color. Cover the areas you have already covered and make sure you get the maximum effectiveness out of your jerk-bait. The fish will still be sluggish, yet hungry, so they will eat if presented to them in a fashion that will entice them. I am not one of those guys that reel the bait down to its maximum depth before implying it actions. I immediately start my presentation when it hits the water. I let the water around it settle and then I give it one crank to get it down and three violent jerks and let it set for a second than follow with a couple moderate jerks and let it pause for up to 10 seconds. On my next jerking motion is when I usually get bit. The main reason I start my retrieve as soon as the baits hits the water? There may be fish moving up to feed and I don't want to reel it past them and miss an opportunity to put one in the boat. Now if you have followed these simple methods and still have no fish to show for it, its time to switch to a tube as the day has probably progressed past the lunch-time hour and the sun is high in the sky. I have already told you what I use, so let's put it to work. Now is the time to start hitting the mid to shallower parts of points and secondary points. I always use an insert-head 3/8oz. with my tubes @ Brookville. It does a couple things. It creates a torpedo effect on its way down and keeps the bait in contact with the bottom all the time, which is what we are trying to do since we are mimicking a crawdad. The method I use is a dragging motion and not a jigging motion. I would also recommend a slower presentation than your standard digging up mud with the jig-head. Make it have a scurrying effect like a fleeing crawdad. The rest of my day would most certainly be spent covering the mid depth to shallower depths of the points and secondary points as already outlined. I would begin in 15-20ft. of water and work my way into the 5-7ft. of water depths as the smallies will move up and feed and sun themselves.

I know I said to start on the Westside of the lake, but don't rule out the Eastside for early smallies. My reasoning for the Westside is, it has the best creek channels and isolated cover/structure for the smallies to use as their highway to the dinner table.

This article is the first of a five part series I will be doing for the Gadabout. We will cover every season with tips, techniques and baits as the seasons progress and the final article will be on nighttime fishing for big smallmouth @ Brookville lake.

If you would like a guided smallie trip on Brookville lake you may contact me @ krigby6644@sbcglobal.net or by calling @ 317-788-9167. I hope this first article has been informational for you and helps you on your next trip to "The Dead Sea"

Sincerely, Ray Rigby