



Blade Baiting for Walleyes

An aggressive approach for catching giant winter walleyes

Timing

➤ February-March

Equipment

- Rod - 6'6"-7' medium-heavy power fast-action spinning rod
- Reel - Small light-weight spinning
- Main line - 6# Berkley Fireline
- Leader - 8' of 8# fluorocarbon
- Lure - Norisada tackle blade bait 1/2oz - 5/8oz depending on depth and current
- Tape - Norisada tackle die-cut blade tape, color to match conditions
- Paint - Red enamel
- Clear fingernail polish
- 60# cross-lok snap
- Hook sharpener
- Attractant - Dr. Juice Tournament Walleye

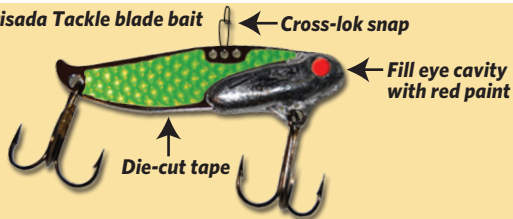
Location

➤ Flats or points where deep water meets shallow.

Seth's angle

➤ Sharp hooks are essential in this technique. Walleyes strike the blade and quickly try to expel it. A fish quickly realizes the blade does not feel natural. Sharp hooks help the blade to hang up in its mouth while you set the hook. If you are missing fish, chances are your hooks have become dull from contacting the bottom.

Norisada Tackle blade bait



Cover blade with fingernail polish to secure tape



Technique

Conventional wisdom calls for fishing slowly during this cold-water season because the fish aren't aggressive. However, at this time the walleyes are moving into their pre-spawn period and can be extremely aggressive. The ripping of a blade bait triggers a reaction strike from the biggest females in the area. The big females must feed in order to brood their eggs for the upcoming spawn.

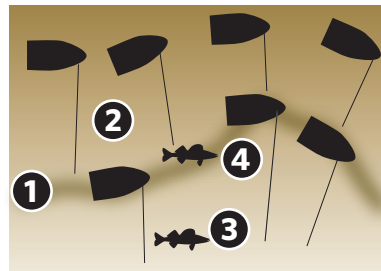
Blading requires discipline to fish the lure properly. Never let the blade free-fall to the bottom. It's imperative to essentially "push" the blade to the bottom because walleye often will hit it on the fall. Strikes can range from a violent jolt to simply having the line go slack on the drop.

Preferred method involves casting the blade out and letting it fall to the bottom on a tight line. Once the blade contacts the bottom, rip it up aggressively and let it fall back to the bottom on a tight line by reeling up the slack as it falls. Repeat this process all the way back to the boat.

It's common to find large walleyes in less than 10 feet sunning during midday. In the morning fish the breaks then move in as the sun gets high. Fish deep-to-shallow then back to deep in order to stay in contact with the walleyes. These fish are light sensitive, but the urge to gain warmth overpowers that discomfort. Remember they are cold-blooded and heat equals energy.

- 1 Break line where major depth change occurs.
- 2 Position boat outside break early and late; inside break at midday
- 3 Walleyes locate shallower on the flat during midday.
- 4 Walleyes overnight in deep water, but big females frequent the shallows at night.

Top view



Side view

