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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

**Lake
Shawn**

**FLW
News**

**DNR
Updates**

Outdoor Photos

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Excellent Ohio Private Pay Lake

By Mark Goudy

Looking for an awesome fishing experience with only a short drive from home? With recent concerns on the high fuel prices, people are seeking recreation closer to home. Located only eight or so miles from the West Virginia border, Lake Shawn, a private pay fishing lake, offers a fishing experience of a lifetime.

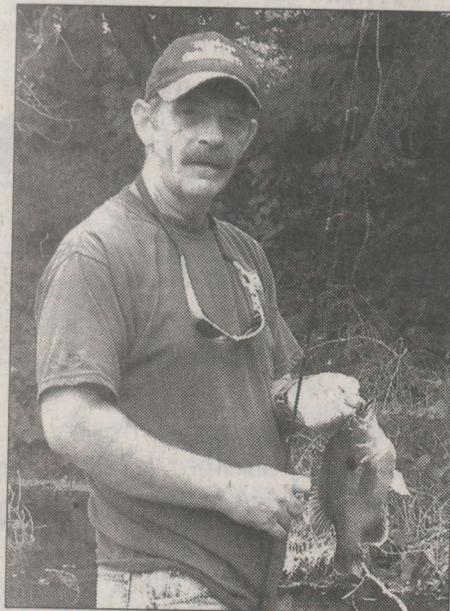
Being involved in the hunting and fishing business, I've heard numerous stories about great fishing

adventures. Generally speaking, fantastic fishing opportunities near West Virginia are limited. Some of the catch-and-release lakes in West Virginia offer anglers the chance of hooking quality fish in some numbers. Large numbers of fish can be taken regularly from the New River. Anglers headed to Lake Erie often report fantastic catches. But if you're looking for a can't lose place to fish nearby, Lake Shawn is second to none.

Located 6 miles west of Powhatan Point, Ohio (across the river from Moundsville, WV), this lake rewards fishermen with numerous species of fish. Large and small-



A large hybrid striped bass was caught by Mark Goudy..



Rick Greathouse landed a whopper bluegill on a Zoom worm at Lake Shawn in Ohio.

June 2007 ~ Page 23

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mouth bass, crappie, giant hybrid bluegill, catfish, perch, trout and large hybrid striped bass can provide line-stretching fun.. The two main lakes have a water area of around thirty acres. Another four rearing ponds are the secret to this lakes success.

Started in 1962 by Ray Brubaker, Lake Shawn has evolved into one of the best sport fishing lakes in the surrounding states. I recently had the good fortune, along with my

continue to the next page

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fishing buddy, Rick Greathouse, to take a fishing adventure.

Starting around 7:30 am, Rick and I pulled away from the dock to have a friendly fishing competition. I decided to go with a baby bass crankbait, a buzz bait - surface lure, and a Berkley 7" sour grape power worm. This worm is mainly junebug colored (purplish and green specked) with a chartreuse stripe. Rick's main offering was to be his favorite 4" Zoom junebug "C"-tail worm.

Having only been on the lake a couple of minutes, Rick boated a good two pound largemouth. I followed quickly with a buzzbait fish. I tried this lure for a while, but Rick was taking off catching fish with his worm.

My power worm offering started to catch fish with more regularity. I missed a four to five pounder within the first ten minutes. We were fishing a high wall that was created in Lake Shawn's prior life as a strip mine. All you had to do was drop your bait along the wall and wait for the pick-up. It seemed like were hooking quality one-and-a-half to two pound largemouth on every two or three casts. After the



Tom and Brad Berga won the two day Pot of Gold bass tournament on the Ohio River. Dan Holden and Cecil Schneider, sponsors from Wright's Riverside Marine, are flanking them..

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first hour, Rick had me down eleven to nine on twelve inch or bigger bass. In a competitive bass tournament, only twelve inch or bigger fish count.

We proceeded down the high wall bank and started to catch fish more frequently. After the first one-hour and-a-half, the two of us had boated twenty keepers. By
continue to the next page

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the way, this is a catch-and-release lake. Anyhow, we had also been supplied with another trick method to catch even more fish.

Earlier, the lake manager had provided us with a big bucket of fish food. It was in our fifteen foot jon boat when we arrived. I had been to this outstanding lake around twelve years ago and knew what to do. Although we were catching bass frequently already, I convinced Rick to take a break for another fishing treat. We used the trolling motor to move back to another area of the lake.

Stopping along the dam wall, we tied on small salmon hooks and a clear bobber. We applied a small fish pellet to the hook. Now the rapid action began! I reached into the bucket and scooped up some fish pellets. Slinging them away from the boat, the hoard of fish began to churn up the water. We both threw out our baits to the area of the fishing frenzy.

Many types of fish surfaced to feed on the pellets. There were giant hybrid bluegills, small and large mouth bass, brown trout and large hybrid bass all involved in gorging on fish pellets. We both hooked a couple of largemouth immediately.

We kept this up for some time until I hooked a real large hybrid

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striped bass. It pulled my drag on five different occasions. If you like to fish, you know how much fun it is to have a powerful fish fight like this. Rick finally grabbed it by the side of the boat. I'm guessing it was in the seven to eight pound range.

Soon after, Rick hooked a three pound or so largemouth bass that pulled him around the boat. Then he hooked a fish that he was not familiar with. He said he had a trout on and made the mistake to try to lip it. Turns out that it was a big

twenty inch brown trout with an unfriendly couple of rows of sharp teeth. We did not really count these fish on our informal tournament.

We started back to conventional artificial lure fishing. It was only a couple of minutes and we were hooking keeper fish again. Eventually by a beaver hut, Rick hooked the big bass of the day. His Zoom worm encountered a four pound large-

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mouth. This strong fish pulled drag and went under the boat more than once during the fight.

One other side show to the day was the giant hybrid bluegills. They constantly were after Rick's worm and sometimes mine. Some of them must have been close to a couple of pounds. They fought as hard as the bass. I even had one at the end of the day bite on a 3/8 ounce buzzbait. I guess we probably landed close to fifty of these fish during the day.

Back to the fish story, we met the lake manager near the dock again around noon. He wanted to throw some pellets for us to catch more fish in that area. We obliged. Well, after about one-half hour of catching bass and big hybrids along with a big carp, I told him them that we were taking off to the other area to catch more bass on artificial lures. Basically I needed a little break from catching so many fish.

Along the high wall again, I noticed that my bite was getting a little slow. Rick had me down a couple of fish. I think on artificial baits

it was around twenty for him and eighteen for me. I reached for old faithful. I grabbed my Yum three inch wooly hog tails. I selected the pumpkin green speck color. The sun was a little brighter and the reflections from this lure entice bass to gobble it up.

I got into a rhythm and started to "smoke" Rick with keeper fish. He was hanging in there with his junebug but started to lose ground. I was catching twelve to sixteen inch bass rapidly. You could see bass swimming around all day long. The smallmouth were there, too, but never did bite.

Eventually we headed back to the dock. I had him down thirty-four to twenty-five. In a regular bass tournament, we would have had fifty-nine keepers. This does not include the twenty or so other keeper sized bass we landed on the "chum" trick. As I mentioned,

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Larry Little shot a 21 pound gobbler. Photo courtesy of Crossroads General Store near Newark.

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we had countless big bluegills and numerous hybrid bass. I think we also caught around six big brown trout as well.

I'm telling you, I was tired by 4 pm when we left. I can't recall catching that many fish with the exception of my trip there several years ago.

We actually had hit a cold front that day. The temperature had dropped around fifteen degrees from the day before. I did notice that the surface fishing that day was poor. Top-water plugs did not work well as they did on my prior trip. Worm fishing action was red-hot. Usually I would have tried some stick baits or spinnerbaits. When you're having the action we had, you don't want to switch lures.

You don't have to be a fishing expert to catch numerous fish on this lake. With the chumming trick, numerous fish can be caught by anyone. Plus, this lake offers advanced fishermen an opportunity to practice their skills.

The fishing rate is only \$100 per fisherman for a 7 am to 4 pm day. An overnight rate at one of their cabins is offered for \$325 for two people mid-week (more on the weekends). This includes fishing by boat from 4 pm to dark and also

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back on the water at day break to 4 pm the next day. Good luck on that one. You would have to pace yourself to do that.

Does anyone know a better place to catch numbers of quality fish like this within three hundred miles? Probably not. If you want some arm jerking fun this year, contact Lake Shawn at 1-800-856-6098. Tell them that you read a big fishing story about the lake in this magazine. Believe me, this lake's

for REAL! Also check online for more info and fishing photos at www.lakeshawn.com



Porter Bennett caught a 9 1/2 pound striper. Photo courtesy of Three River's Edge in Hinton.



Kerry Hatcher hooked two nice 4 pound smallmouth. Photo courtesy of Richmond's Store in Sandstone.

June 2007 ~ Page 27

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