

For want of nightcrawlers

Vukelich, George JUL 21 1978

"This is it," Steady Eddy was telling the Impassive Captain. "This is the bottom line. We have got to send The Indian up to Canada to do a rain dance."

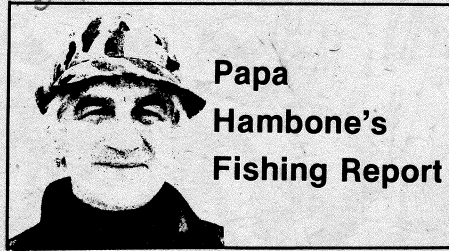
"Science has failed us again," The Captain agreed. "Let's go back to the time-honored quaint Folkways and Superstitions of our forefathers. Canada needs rain."

These two were, as anybody could tell without a program, desperate men planning desperate measures to make it rain on all those Canadian golf courses that produced most of nightcrawlers sold by the American bait shops in these parts.

Without rain, those golf courses now lay as hard and dry as the Cincinnati infield.

The commercial baitshops in the Madison area have reached the bottom of the old coffee can, while at the same time little kids who used to collect deposit bottles and cardboard have now branched out — "diversified" they say — and are now cornering the nightcrawler market, bootlegging them in from such exotic places as Black Hawk, Nakoma and Glenway.

One kid claims that if the drought hangs on up north for two more weeks, he'll have his college paid for



**Papa
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and he hasn't entered high school yet.

Steady and The Captain got up the travel ante and while the Indian was surprised at this latest dealing with The White Eyes, he took the money and split.

"See you at The Cardinal," he whispered on the way out, "The only dance I'm into is disco."

Here's your smoke signal for this week:

● **LAKE MENDOTA:** Catfishing good off the famous Westport Flats. Some bluegills at The Hatch Cover on worms. Many, many thousands of small perch being caught off Governor's Island, but "they ain't worth your time goin' out," says Steady. "Fish Monona."

Northern pike fishing is slow. Bass fishing likewise. Tenney Park

still producing walleyes, but small.

Nice bluegill biting in the Yahara River, from the first bridge all the way down to Monona. Up to pound, on wax worms.

● **LAKE MONONA:** Nice bluegills and crappies at Law Park and The Triangle. Evening hours. Bigger perch off The Triangle in 30-foot water, fish 6-inches off the bottom. Hellgrammites best bait. Wax worms second best. Perch also off The Gas Outlet in 30-feet but running small.

North End, from Law Park to the Yahara, crappies are hitting Pinkys, 1/32 oz., Blue & White or crayfish colored.

Brittingham area producing small walleyes in one-pound class.

The Rock Pile is hot with bluegills and perch, some jumbo. The Captain suggests a chartreuse ice jig, dressed with red or wax worm on the 'gills, you might want hellgrammites on the perch. Lots of perch off Olin Park and Turville Point too. Hellgrammites and wax worms your best shot, then red worms.

● Squaw Bay is producing some nice size crappies — "straight" Pinkys are doing the number.

Bluegills good on the weedbed in center of the Bay. Use garden and leaf worms. Early morning best, like 5:00 a.m. early. Once boat traffic gets out, it's Lockjawsville.

Largemouth bass catches in Olin Park and Turville areas. They're cranking spinner baits on the inside, the shallow side of the weedline. Lots of 2-2½ lb. bass being caught. Jim Thrun of Madison pulled out a 3 lb. 13 oz. largemouth on a spinner bait.

● **UPPER MUD LAKE:** Bluegill fishing pretty fair on worms, wax & garden. Also straight ice jigs.

Some fair bass fishing in the pads. They're not the biggies but up around 2-pounds. It's like fishing in tough spaghetti here so only throw a Johnson Silver Minnow. Or a Mister Twister dressed with pork rind. Otherwise, it's Snag City.

Walleyes have been excellent at The Tresle in the late afternoons and evenings. Using leeches and crawlers.

● **LAKE WAUBESA:** Bluegills super off Brickston Park on red worms and waxies. Hog Island too, but not as hot.

Northern pike real good at The Springs in Brickston Park area, also Rockford Heights. On Daredevles and Mepps. Spoonpluggers taking them off the Heights, but fish only running 6 to 8 pounds. One of the bigger ones was taken by Martin Quinlan, MacFarland on a Daredevil. His fish weighed 9 lbs. 14 oz. and measured 34½ inches.

● **LAKE KEGONSA:** Perch fishing real good off The Country Club. On hellgrammites and wax worms. Hitting in 10 to 13 feet. Bluegills too, lots, in the big weedbed off The C.C.

Fair fishing at Colliday Point, good perch here but not an awful lot. Walleye fishing OK, leeches are No. 1 bait because everybody's using them.

The catfishing is heating up. Lots of Blue Cats — 10, 11, 12 pounders — being caught out of The Inlet to the Yahara and all the way to Sunnyside. They're taking the cats on suckers — live suckers — and liver, all kinds of liver.

"Using live bait," says Steady, "is very creative. It's also cheating."

And a 6-foot sturgeon was caught during the week and naturally, released. That left Loren Mathison of Stoughton with the biggest fish, a walleye that weighed 8 lb. 6 oz., measured 29 inches and hit a nightcrawler.

Overall, the fishing is mostly good. The Big Green Hellgrammites are beginning to take the Big Jumbo Perch. And at last report. The Indian had already washed out every ballgame around — hard, soft and golf — and he still had his street shoes on.