

YAKIMA BAIT® KNOW-HOW REPORT

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**TROLLING FOR WALLEYE
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It's no secret that "flash" is a powerful fish attractant. When lures and other fishing accessories give off flash in the water, the pulsations of light generated closely replicates natural strobes of light that are created when hungry game fish slash into a school of baitfish. As baitfish violently change directions to elude predators, light reflects off the sides of both the fleeing baitfish and the rapidly maneuvering predators.

To other predators in the immediate area, these pulsations or flashes of light is like ringing the dinner bell. Fish are naturally attracted to flashes of light in the water. Not only does flash attract fish, it puts them in an aggressive and also competitive mood.

When predator fish are feeding upon a school of baitfish, it's survival of the fittest! Not every predator is going to get his or her fill and that sets up a situation that allows anglers to routinely fool these fish into striking artificial lures, cut-bait and live bait rigs.



The 4 inch Big Al Fish Flash® is the author's favorite size for targeting open water walleye. A Tadpole Diver or other weight can be used to get the Fish Flash and Hammer Time Walleye Spinner to depth.

Incorporating flash into trolling presentations is very common among trout and salmon anglers. Commonly called "attractor fishing" a wealth of fishing products including dodgers, cowbells and a host of different styles of rotators are used to replicate the natural flashes of light occurring when predators feed on baitfish.

BIG AL FISH FLASH®

The Big Al Fish Flash is a triangle shaped attractor that is designed to rotate on a central axis. Because Fish Flash spins in the water instead of rotating like other attractors it puts out far more pulsations of light and penetrates water better. The other benefit of an attractor that spins instead of rotating is the Fish Flash creates nearly zero drag in the water. Fish Flash can be added to a host of diving devices without negatively impacting on the diving ability of products like diving planers, keel sinkers, snap weights, mini-disks and tadpole divers.

Because Fish Flash spins it doesn't impart any action to the trailing lures, cut-bait or live bait rigs. As a result Fish Flash works best when used in combination with lures or bait rig combinations that already have lots of natural action. Attractor fishing using the Big Al Fish Flash is wildly popular among trout and salmon trollers, but this obviously effective presentation works for walleye too.

Ironically combining the fish attracting powers of the Fish Flash with the fish catching powers of the Hildebrandt Hammer Time Walleye Spinner™ makes for one of the most effective ways of catching both suspended and bottom hugging walleye.

THE FISH FLASH/HAMMER TIME RIG

The four inch Fish Flash is the perfect size for walleye trolling applications. Attach a Hammer Time Walleye Spinner to the back of the Fish Flash and its ready to go.

This rig as it stands has no means of getting to depth. A host of diving devices like diving planers, mini disks, keel sinkers and snap weights can be used in combination with this rig to get to target depths. The Fishing 411 TV crew has enjoyed tremendous success using a simple diver produced by Off Shore Tackle called the Tadpole Resettable Diver. The Tadpole gets its name because it resembles the shape of a Tadpole as it has a big head and a skinny tail.

Molded of zinc and produced in four different sizes, the Tadpole Diver achieves depth both because it sinks and because it has a diving plane on the front similar to the diving lip of a crankbait. Use it to take attractors, lures and bait rigs to depth.

The Tadpole is supplied with two round nose snaps. One is attached to the main line and then clipped over the tow arm of the Tadpole. The second is attached to the back of the Tadpole and used to attach the Tadpole to the ball bearing swivel on the front of the Fish Flash.

This simple to use set up dives when the round nose snap slides to the elbow of the tow arm. When a fish is hooked the round nose snap slides to the forward position and the Tadpole is no longer diving. This simple, fool proof design enables this diver to achieve depth when needed and when a fish is hooked the angler feels only the resistance of the fighting fish.



Hammer Time Walleye Spinners feature premium components and legendary Hildebrandt® blades.



These Hammer Time Walleye Spinners are among the author's favorite colors.

FLAT LINES AND BOARD LINES

The Tadpole/Fish Flash/Hammer Time Walleye Spinner rig can be fished as a flat line straight out the back of the boat or fished in combination with planer boards. The Fishing 411 crew recommends employing both options. "When using Fish Flash in combination with the Hammer Time Walleye Spinners, we are normally fishing a six rod spread," says Jake Romanack the co-host of Fishing 411TV. "Two lines on each side of the boat are set up with in-line planer boards that help to spread out out lines, cover more water and contact more fish. Normally we fish these board lines higher in the water column to target "boat shy" walleye."



Mag Lip®

Because open water walleye are frequently found anywhere from near the surface to bottom, it pays to fish as many lines as allowed by law. "Most Great Lake states allow anglers to fish multiple lines per license," explains Romanack. "So off each corner of the

boat, we run a combination of a flat surface line - often rigged with a Mag Lip diving plug, rigged with no additional weight; and a second line rigged with a Spin-N-Glo® Bottom Walker, Fish Flash and Hammer Time Walleye Spinner."

REPRODUCIBILITY

When trolling for walleye in open water, the ability to reproduce productive lead lengths and lure combinations is critical to success. Line counter reels are the best way to monitor lead lengths and also duplicate what's working.

When buying Fish Flash and Hammer Time Walleye Spinners, it's best to purchase them in pairs of the same color. This way when a productive color pattern is determined, it's easy to "double up" on the most productive color.

COLOR MATCHING

Fish Flash comes in dozens of colors and the Hammer Time Walleye Spinner is available in 18 different color options. "We like to "color match" when fishing Fish Flash in combination with Hammer Time Walleye Spinners," says Romanack. "If I'm fishing a spinner that has a lot of chartreuse and green, I'm going to match that up with a Fish Flash that has similar colors."

Color matching the attractors and the trailing lures or rigs makes it easier to determine the most productive colors and finishes.

LEADER LENGTHS

Fish Flash produces far more pulsations of light than other attractor types. As a result it's important to have some separation between the Fish Flash and the bait.

"In clear water I like to run the Hammer Time Walleye Spinner full length or about 60 inches long," explains Romanack. "When the water has a little color to it, the Hammer Time Walleye Spinner can be shortened up to about 36-48 inches."

DEADLY IN DIRTY WATER

Walleye are known as a fish that thrives in water that is clear to lightly stained in color. Because walleye are sight feeders these water clarity conditions tend to produce the best fishing success.

Unfortunately, weather conditions are often what controls water clarity. When it has rained for several days straight or winds have whipped the lake into a mud bath, fishing success for walleye routinely drops off dramatically. Using Fish Flash in heavily stained to dirty water conditions makes a huge difference triggering strikes in these tough conditions.

"Walleye aren't going to strike at baits they can't see," says Romanack. "Fish Flash does a great job of improving the visibility of trolling gear even when fishing in dirty water conditions."



Jake Romanack of Fishing 411 poses with an exceptional Lake Erie walleye. Using Fish Flash as an attractor in front of Hammer Time Walleye Spinners is a great way to target open water walleye and works exceptionally well in stained to dirty water.

BAIT MATTERS

Hammer Time Walleye Spinners fish best when baited with the largest nightcrawlers available. Hook the nightcrawler through the nose using the first hook on the harness and place the second hook just behind the collar of the nightcrawler. Rigged in this fashion the tail of the crawler is free to wiggle in the water and attract the maximum number of strikes.

Walleye are well known as bait stealers and they often bite off just the tail of the nightcrawler. Check your rigs often and if the crawler is bitten in half, replace it with a fresh crawler.

The most successful walleye anglers rebait with fresh nightcrawlers about every 30 minutes while fishing. Keeping fresh bait in the water sets up a scent stream in the water and helps the Fish Flash/Hammer Time Walleye Spinner combination produce the best success possible.



Spin-N-Glo® Bottom Walker

SUMMING IT UP

Combining Fish Flash with the Hammer Time Walleye Spinner is a great way get the attention of walleye when fishing for suspended and also bottom hugging fish. Most all anglers agree that flash attracts fish and nothing puts out more flash than the Yakima Big Al Fish Flash.



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