



RELEASE JOURNAL

December 2008



Oh What A Lucky Man...
The MacNair Monster!

MCI Membership Renewal Time

Renew your Muskies Canada membership by January 31st, 2009, to be eligible for 1 of 3 incentive prizes. Each prize package includes a handpicked selection of 10 Muskie lures.

Renew online at

http://www.muskiescanada.ca/stores/membership_form.htm

Or fill out the membership form and mail it or hand it in to your membership director by January 31st, 2009, to qualify.

Names will be drawn at the 2009 Board of Directors meeting in February

2009 MUSKIE

ODYSSEY

APRIL 25th, 2009

ST. CATHARINES, ONT



All Proceeds Support Muskie Research, Education & Conservation

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DOORS OPEN @ 8 AM

MUSKIE TACKLE!! SUPER PRIZE TABLE!! SILENT AUCTION!!
Early Bird Draws & Door Prizes

SPEAKERS:

IAN YOUNG	<i>President of Muskies Canada Inc. Opening Remarks</i>
AARON SHIRLEY :	<i>Getting Hooked Television Show</i>
LARRY RAMSELL :	<i>Muskellunge Historian</i>
JASON BORWICK & : ARUNAS LISKAUSKAS	<i>OMNR Biologists, Lake Simcoe Restoration Project</i>
BOB MEHSIKOMER :	<i>Simply Fishing Television Show</i>

EXHIBITORS:

Double D Tails/FrankyBait, Trojan Tackle, Wild Canuck, Brett's Baits, Curtis Atwater Fine Prints, Charles Weiss Art, Joe Flo's Musky Tackle, Grimsby Tackle, St. Croix Rods, Hi Line Enterprises, Pro Tackle, Shimano Canada, Red October Baits, JB's Fishing Depot, Sand Beach Lodge, O.M.N.R, Manitou Weather Station, Pure Fishing, Advanced Taxidermy, Loomis and more...

ADVANCE TICKET SALES CONTACT:

Vince Giuliani Home: 1-519-886-5797 E-Mail: vinceoutdoors54@hotmail.com
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LOCATION: Quality Hotel & Parkway Convention Centre, St. Catharines, Ontario. Queen Elizabeth Highway, Exit #47 Ontario St. South, 2 Blocks
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From The Editor

Breaking News December 2008

What can you say about a fish that is so special it causes a hush over the whole muskie fishing community? Really you can't say anything.

Looking at the pictures of this giant fish results in the same response from everyone I show it to. Stunned, jaw dropping silence. Knowing that Dale is 5'11" tall and a touch over 300lbs really puts the pictures into perspective.

In 13 years or so of muskie fishing I have never known the news of a big fish being captured to travel so fast. Friday November 28th was a busy night on the muskie message boards. It wasn't very long before the phone started to ring as people heard of the "Big Fish from the Larry" and wanted details. They thought for some reason I would have them. Some folks think I have all the muskie dirt, being the MCI Editor and all...

A quick check with some of my sources and sure enough I could verify that a huge fish had been caught and released by one of our Ottawa Chapter members. It was Dale MacNair and his girlfriend Julie who were fishing with Sal Rotolo.

When I found out who the lucky angler was, I was very happy, as I know Dale and Julie. They are one of the rare muskie fishing couples. I know them to be friendly folks who are always at the meetings, willing to share a fishing story or their winnings on the prize table with a new member.

The downside of the message boards quickly reared it's ugly head as usual. When muskie fishermen start talking World Records you can bet there will be some stone throwing and jealous comments.

Nobody specifically called it a "World Record" exactly but the size of the fish was mentioned at 57" x 33". Standard L x G formulas put the fish almost 12lbs heavier than the current Canadian Record. Then things really heated up.

When the news came out that it was released, there were a lot of armchair fisherman saying "oh sure it was that big, let's see the pictures with a measuring tape!" The record hunters wanted to see a carcass before they would believe it was even possible for a fish to get that big. Some sites had to lock down the threads due to fighting. One site I visited had 6 pages of discussion that ended up locked. I think that might have been a record in itself for some sites.

The pictures hit the Internet Monday morning. Fueling the discussion boards once again but this time the tone had changed. Folks were quick to say "CONGRATULATIONS!!, Thanks for releasing it!! Now we can have an opportunity to catch that beast!" Even the negative folks had nothing but good things to say. Rarely have I seen so many kind words and congratulations given on a message board.

And then there was a deafening silence, one that I never experienced before. I can only explain it as stunned silence... Things were quiet for a few days.

I spoke with Dale on Monday afternoon and he gave me all the details. As a proud member of Muskies Canada, he wanted the story to be in the Release Journal first. I am very happy to be able to bring you the full story in this Breaking News Edition of the Release Journal. I am sure you will enjoy it. +



Ken Taggart

A Legend Continues...

The 1000 Islands region of the St. Lawrence River is steeped in muskie history going back more than a century. Muskie fishing in the area has attracted many famous anglers and the giant fish that came from these waters were no secret. They were the fuel for many books and newspaper articles along the way.

Fast forward 100 years and the River amazingly still flourishes. Enduring time and all of the things that man has done to it; changing the natural flow, creating power dams and using it as our chemical and sewage dumping ground and of course the constant shoreline development.

The face of the river has changed drastically over the years. It remains a mysterious place. You can still feel the history as you travel and fish these waters and think of the early days.

Now we have a new legend to add to the history of the area. For we all know she swims the depths to be captured another day... by another lucky angler.

Thanks Dale... +



A picturesque scene from a downtown Ottawa trolling run.

Muskie fisherman dream of the day they might catch a truly giant muskie. They go through everything in their minds over and over. What would I do if it was a record fish? Would I keep it for the notoriety and possible money it would bring? Would I release it and watch it swim away hoping that the giant would spawn again and another angler may have the opportunity to catch a fish of a lifetime. It's a tough decision, a decision that most of us will never have to make.

Having only started muskie fishing just 1 year ago, Dale MacNair and Julie Cashaback are relative newcomers to the sport. They joined Muskies Canada in October 2007 and have since made a lot of friends in the club. This year has been a spectacular year for the couple, with both of them catching ever increasing personal bests.

On a recent trip to the St. Lawrence River, while fishing with Sal Rotolo, Dale and Julie, experienced a muskie fisherman's dream... Actually it was Dale's recurring nightmare. For the past couple of months Dale would wake up from a dream where they were on a boat and it was drifting into the rocks in stormy waters. That turned out to be the exact conditions they were in on November 28th 2008, when they landed a monster sized muskie which measured 57" x 33".

At 4:00pm, after a long day of trolling in 3.5ft waves and with nothing to show for their efforts, a change was in order. They decided to run similar colored Black Perch Jake's in 3 different sizes, on long lines with varying lengths out. The location of choice was an area where they had marked a large fish while fishing with Sal on a previous trip 4 weeks earlier.

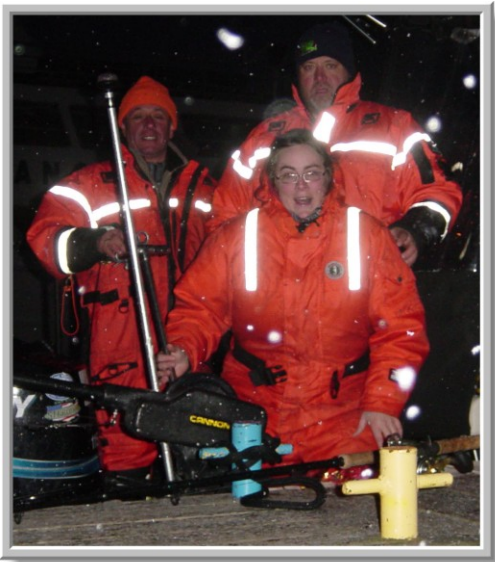
It wasn't very much later when they saw a huge fish on the graph. The fish was 20ft down and only about 200yds from where they had marked the large fish weeks earlier. It took a few minutes for the lures to pass over the fish and then Dale's rod went off. He quickly grabbed the rod from the holder while Sal and Julie cleared the other 2 lines. Dale set the hook hard and felt some really strong head shakes and what seemed to be a lot of weight. As he was reeling in, the line suddenly went limp and he thought the fish was off. He kept reeling, discouraged and thinking the fish had gotten away.

Suddenly he felt a head shake and realized the fish was swimming towards the boat. He looks at the line counter and sees that he still has 130 feet of line out. The next thing they see is the monster completely clearing the water behind the boat. The fish then peels off a bunch of line as Dale fight's to maintain the tension on the fish.

The wind was howling at around 20mph and the waves were getting bigger. All the while Sal is fighting to keep the boat off of the rocks. Dale's nightmare is suddenly reality... After a few more runs the fish is finally at the boat. It thrashes a couple of times and then Sal get's it in the net. Only the middle treble is holding the fish. Hooks are quickly cut to free the lure. After an impressive length measurement at 57", they measure the girth at 33". Then the realization of what they have starts to sink in. The fish is truly a monster.

Without hesitation pictures were quickly taken and the giant was returned to the water. The fish had some trouble staying upright so they worked with the fish for a short time. It regained its strength and swam off strongly. They stayed in the area for a while to make sure the fish was ok.

There was never a question that the fish would be released. Thoughts of world records never even crossed their minds. Congratulations Dale, Julie and Sal, for a great team effort and sharing this very memorable, once in a lifetime experience with us. †



Julie, Dale and Sal coming off the water.

For The Record...

It's important to note just how rare and special this fish is. This muskie would be anywhere between 25-30 years old. A rare specimen indeed given the recent events in the 1000 Islands Region. While the St. Lawrence River has given up it's share of big fish in the past, recently the muskellunge population has suffered a great loss. The VHS outbreak had a decimating effect on the muskie population. Estimates put the losses at roughly 50% of the mature spawning fish. Well over 200 mature muskellunge were recovered from the river between 2005 and 2007. Countless others perished and decayed or sank to the bottom before they could be recovered. Only a handful came close to being the size of this fish. With a CUE (Catch per Unit of Effort) of roughly 8 hours per fish in the heyday, to it's current level of approximately 3 times that, or about 25 hours per fish (if your are really lucky), it's no easy task to catch one. Never mind a muskie of these proportions. So before you pack up the boat and head to the 1000 Islands looking for an easy record, better buy a lottery ticket as well. Your chances will be just about the same... †



It's hard to say which picture is more impressive. I like them both. I would bet that the release shot is the one that Dale is most proud of.


Muskies Canada

