



ILLINOIS MUSKIE TOURNAMENT TRAIL
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Fish On

It took a lot of patients but we finally got the 2015 IMTT trail on its way. Mother Nature held on to winter as long as she could. Both tournaments at Kinkaid and Spring Lake were held just days after ice out. Both tournaments were great events with outstanding participation. If this is any sign of the rest of the trail we are looking at the best trail ever. One thing I noticed at both tournaments was the number of new members. Along with the long term members everyone seemed to have a great time. We had great food, a lot of laughs and some of us even caught some nice fish. Some of these NEW STICKS showed off their talents by boating some prize winning fish. Once again, tournament participants stepped up and donated hundreds of non-perishable food items for our food drives. This is a great program the IMTT conducts at each two day tournament and the local food banks and pantries really appreciate the donations in every city we visit. It's hard to say how many families we help with every event. I can't thank the membership enough for participating in this program. Along with the great food drives, we also had two outstanding raffle tables. The funds raised by these raffles go a long way towards covering the operating cost of the organization. This allows other funds to be directed to the Illinois Fishery and other projects. Without your support, it would be impossible to fund all the programs we do each year. If the outstanding participation continues throughout rest of the trail, the IMTT should be able to help the IDNR and fishery more in 2015 than any previous year. This will only be possible with your continued support.

Our youth tournament trail is off to a strong start this year. Ethan Cain and Kyle Kroening have already submitted their first fish. Last year we had more youth than ever submit their Muskies. This program was a huge hit at the winter Muskie Shows. We had a nice awards presentation at the Chicago Muskie Show. Any youth that submits their catch will be awarded a plaque to commemorate their achievement, and will also be entered into a drawing for some real nice Muskie rods and reels at the end of the year. The entry forms can be printed off the IMTT web page. Let's work to get our youth on the water to enjoy the great outdoors.

Don't forget to purchase your IMTT/GLENWOOD LODGE SCHOLARSHIP raffle tickets. We will draw the winner on June 1st. The winners will enjoy a 1 week stay at Glenwood Lodge on Lake Vermillion in the Northwoods of Minnesota. Last year we were able to present two, \$1,000.00 scholarships. Sales so far this year have been a bit light and we are still short of our goal. Please consider helping with this program so we can continue to help these youth with their educational expenses. Tickets can be purchased from me, or online from the IMTT web page. Cash donations will also be accepted.

Our friends with the Shawnee Muskies Hunters will be holding one of their biggest fund raisers on April 25th and 26th. The "Guide For A Day" program helps introduce many fishermen to the sport of Muskie fishing. This year looks to be one of their best years ever and they are in need our help. There are so many people signed up, that they don't have enough guides. You don't have to be a true guide to help out; if you want to have a fun filled day on Lake Kinkaid and help out, please contact Ken Ryder or any other SMH member if you are interested in helping out with this event. The IMTT trail will continue with the Shawnee Muskies Hunters 'Spring Fling' at Lake Kinkaid on May 2nd & 3rd. The club always puts on a great tournament. On May 30th the IMTT will hold the Russ Schaller Memorial Tournament on the Fox Chain. Contact John Kliczko or Tom Shafar for information about the Russ Schaller tournament.

See you on the water,

Howard

2015 IMTT Spring Classic

The IMTT season kicked off with the Spring Classic held on Lake Kinkaid March 14th and 15th. I would say that Spring Classic lived to its name. On Wednesday March 11th, the launches were still iced in but the weather was warming up nicely. As spring goes, the weather quickly changed on Thursday evening to drench the region with heavy rains lasting well into Friday. While the weather conditions improved for the weekend, the lake was muddy with visibility by my account down to zero for most of the lake. This didn't dampen the sprints with 29 teams taking to the water, although most teams would agree that the Muskies found plenty of places to hide in the 2,355 acres of surface area Kinkaid provides. Over the two day tournament, three teams did manage to boat fish. Blake Madden landed the big fish of the tournament at 33 inches, which was also good enough for first place. John Wright and Michelle Hruskovich boated the other Muskies at 31.75 inches and 31 inches respectively. While the conditions may have been some of the toughest I've seen on the lake, I'd say a good time was had, some new friends made, and the Muskies did what they do best by leaving us to scratch our heads and look forward to the next time on the water.

On the positive side of things, I've seen plenty of fish caught since the tournament and the lake looks great. In helping keep the lake looking great, mark your calendars for April 18th and the annual springtime lake clean-up. If you need information on the event feel free to call or email me at (505)252-0693 or kpkroening@yahoo.com

Another big win I'd like to point out is the food drive we do at every two day every event. This was the first time I had the privilege to deliver the food myself. I can personally assure you that this does make a difference in the communities we visit and it is greatly appreciated. So keep up the great efforts supporting the food drive. Maybe we didn't catch a lot of fish this time around, but we continue to make a difference in improving the fisheries and the communities we visit.



As you can see the Muskies were ready for the spring. The photos above and more have been caught in the two first tournaments this year. Looks like we have a good chance at boating a lot of nice fish this year.

Please send your picture in after each tournament and we will try to share them with the gang.

REMEMBER....Illinois Fishing Licenses expire on March 31th. Please do not forget to renew your Illinois Fishing License.

2015 IMTT Jake Wolf Tournament

The 2015 IMTT Jake Wolf tournament is in the books. Like the Spring Classic Tournament at Lake Kinkaid the week before, Mother Nature and Spring Lake held on to the ice as long as possible. Fortunately the ice was gone by tournament time and 64 enthusiastic Muskie anglers set out in search of the prized Muskie. For many Muskie anglers, the IMTT event at Spring Lake North is their first time on open water for the new year. Since Spring Lake North is the Muskie brood stock lake for the state, as well as one of the best lakes in Illinois for a multiple fish day, everyone who comes to this event is filled with high hopes of starting their Muskie season on a positive note. This year's tournament field consisted of 32 (two person) teams. This made for one of the biggest IMTT tournament fields in recent memory. The IMTT would like to welcome nine new members and first time IMTT tournament anglers to the 'family'. WELCOME - Ken Sowizrol, Michael Steubinger, Aaron Goewey, Robert Hawbaker, Kenn Blair, Rick Albers, Chris Taurisano, Ryan Gottschalk & Gary Vilcek. Thank you all and we hope to see you at upcoming events.

There we 17 fish caught during the 2 day tournament, with 15 caught on day 1. Some would suggest this is a low number for fish caught during a 2 day Spring Lake North event. However, considering the Muskies were in full spawn, even IDNR biologists were surprised not only by the numbers of fish caught, but also by the sizes of fish that were caught.

Fishing went well for several teams on Saturday. Brandon Schorle (42, 40, 36.5 & 36) & Kenny Sowizrol were on a hot streak by the conclusion of day one and considered the 'favorites' to win it all. However, several other teams put themselves in a good position to vie for the lead on day 2. The father-son (or should we say son-father) team of Lucas Kroening (38, 38.5 & 33.5) & Kyle Kroening were looking for that one opportunity for a good fish on day 2 to take over the lead. The Muskies however, had other ideas. The team of Ryan Gottschalk (40) & Nick Camaratta (35) were the only other team at the end of day 1 to record multiple fish on the leader board. There were 6 other teams with fish on Saturday. Sunday proved to be a little tougher on the anglers than the day before. After fishing hard for 7 hours, only 2 teams managed fish on Sunday.

The Saturday night dinner provided by McCritter's Grill in Pekin was a huge success again this year. "Thank you Angie and your staff for another excellent dinner." As many of you know, at all 2 day events, the IMTT conducts a nonperishable (canned) food drive to collect food items for those in need and for communities in the area of the tournaments. This year over 900 food items were donated by tournament anglers at the Jake Wolf Tournament alone, and subsequently donated to the local area food pantries.

Teams with fish were:

1st place - .Brandon Schorle (42, 40, 36.5 & 36) & Kenny Sowizrol

2nd place - Lucas Kroening (38, 38.5 & 33.5) & Kyle Kroening

3rd place - Ryan Gottschalk (40) & Nick Cammarata (35)

4th place - Anthony Fazio (38) & John Hauslein (35.75)

Phil Gutman 39.5

Jim Weigel 39

Robert Hawbaker 38

Jakub Brewer 35.75

Mike Bolt 35.25

Chris Taurisano 35



A few things to keep in mind when fishing an IMTT event.

1. IMTT tournament entrants must follow ALL tournament, site, local and state laws, rules and regulations. Each tournament packet will have a complete list of IMTT rules and regulations. Please take a few minutes to familiarize yourself with these rules.
- 2, YOU as the angler are responsible to learn and understand all tournament, site, local and state laws, rules and regulations regarding fishing and fishing tournaments.
3. There is to be no alcohol consumed during tournament hours.
4. **ALL 'FISH RELEASE' forms must be turned in by the end of fishing hours each day. This means the completed forms must be in the hands of the tournament official at the dock no later than 4pm on Saturday (for 1 and 2 day tournaments) and 2 pm on Sunday (for 2 day tournaments).**
5. There can only be 2 persons in any tournament boat during tournament hours. Both persons must be current IMTT members and must be paid entrants to the tournament.
6. If for any reason you are unclear about any rules or regulations, or just have a general question, comment or concern, please feel free to contact any of the IMTT officials.

For a complete list of 2015 IMTT Rules and Regulations please visit: <http://www.illmuskie.com/trail-schedule/>





Raffle

\$5 each or 5 for \$20



IMTT/Glenwood Lodge
Fishery Scholarship Fund

One Week / Four Person Stay
Glenwood Lodge
(info@glenwoodlodge.com)

Located on the shores of
Lake Vermillion; Tower, Minnesota

Raffle dates.
09/01/14 thru 5/31/15



1. Two bedroom cabin.. Four people..... Valued at \$1,350.00
2. Selected week to be mutually agreed on between winning bidder and Glenwood Lodge personal
3. Does not include boat gas, boat/motor rental or bait

2015 IMTT TRAIL TOP TEN

1. Brandon Schorle 178.25
2. Lucas Kroening 145
3. Mike Bolt 76.25
4. Blake Madden 74
5. Anthony Fazio 71
6. Jakub Brewer 65.75
7. John Wright 64.75
8. Ryan Gottschalk 59
9. Jim Wiegel 58
10. Phil Gutman 54.5

BIG FISH Brandon Schorle 42 inches

Please check your points after each tournament.

Contact Howard Chambliss regarding any errors in Trail Points