

Culling Scale Field Test by ABQ Sportfishing



Introduction: From the Berkley website:

Catch and Release Upgrade Kit (culling kit) FS15KT

The new Berkley culling kit makes it easy to keep track of fish weights in tournament situations. The 15lb digital scale is accurate to 7 grams, and will actually store ranks and codes of 8 individual fish in its internal memory.

From the Xtools website:

The XTOOLS® gripNweigh® Pro Series is designed with the tournament angler in mind. This 3-in-1 tool can be used as a fish gripper, a digital scale and is also an automatic culling system that tells you when to cull, what to cull and what your total weight is in the live well.

Having had the Berkley culling scale since May and the Xtools only for a few weeks, the Berkley has already found a new home. The difference between the two units is significant, but then again, so is the price. We have had the opportunity to use a Cul-M-Rite from time-to-time although have not owned one. The Cul-M-Rite is the standard by which most culling systems are measured, it has proven itself and been tested over time.

Impressions: Out of the package, both units appear durable and come with their own clip style cords for the fish. What was attractive about both sets of tags is that they both clip to the fish instead of making an extra hole...a consideration all anglers should think about when utilizing a weigh or cull system, although the Berkley does not clip for weighing. The Xtools, like all their products, floats...which is a big plus.

Field tests: We used the Berkley for multiple tournaments and found the scale to be roughly accurate compared to the Boga Grip we used as a baseline, it was close enough to where we could not tell the difference when weighing fish as the

Boga does not go into ounces, but quarter pounds. Where the Berkley fell a little short was consistency. We found that weighing the same fish more than once would usually show a slightly different weight (this may have been due to the movement of the fish). The Xtools gripNweigh® was consistent and measured the fish quickly with minimal handling due to the grip feature. Having to pierce the lip of a fish vs. gripping it was noticeably worse, gripping seemed to keep the fish calmer.

Reading the screen: Reading the screen on the Berkley, particularly keeping track of the color indicator letters, was difficult at best. The Xtools gripNweigh® was clear and very easy to read even in direct sunlight.

Culling: The Xtools gripNweigh® was superior in ease of use and identifying fish to be culled. We frequently found ourselves weighing fish again on the Berkley as the less than intuitive programming was difficult to follow...especially on the boat when you are trying to decide which fish to cull.

Overall performance: Xtools gripNweigh® is the product for us. It seems to be as intuitive and easy to use as a Cul-M-Rite. We have yet to be able to determine the accuracy of the Xtools vs. the highly rated Cul-M-Rite at .01 pounds. For a savings of \$120 (compared to a Cul-M-Rite) we think the Xtools has enough price savings and adequate features that make it a solid choice amongst its competition.

Xtools gripNweigh® Pro Series

- Floats
- Automatic Normal Mode
Stores 5 Heaviest Fish in Memory
- Automatic Cull Mode
- Can be set to Cull 2 to 15 Fish
Includes 7 Buoys & Fish Clips
- Fish Gripper
- Weighs Fish up to 35 lbs
- Water Tight Electronics Housing
- High Visibility

