

Lewis Smith Lake April 3-6, 2008

FLW TOUR #2

Practice

Second tourney practicing w/ pro Craig Dowling went well.

Learned new baits and techniques that will help throughout the year and the rest of my career. Smith Lake has a reputation for being a “tough” fishery and the time of year we were there didn’t make things easy. Trying to nail down a pattern was different in each creek we fished. Finally put something really solid together using Yamamoto Shad Shape Worms on 3/32oz Owner shaky heads off tapering main lake points in one major creek. Hearing all the dock talk at the registration meeting of how tough the fishing was made for some high hopes. What was needed was a partner that was “just going fishing” and not sight fishing for the few largemouth that were spawning in the very backs of the steep pockets.

Day One 0lbs -0oz

Paired w/ a Pro from Nevada that was itching to sight fish left me staring at high cliff walls and deep clear water. Spent most of the day pitching drop shot, Flick Shakes and shakey heads at whatever I could reach with no success. Knowing sight fishing is part of the game and respecting your partners areas is hard to do all day long but it can be done. Learned some western tricks for shy bedded bass that involved a jig and little Basstrix bait that made an impressive “one-two punch”. Didn’t bring a fish to the scales but stayed positive as new stuff is always cool to see.

Day Two 4lbs-3ozs

Needed to make up some ground from the previous day and get a respectable finish was the only thing on my mind. Paired w/ Arkansas pro who said he struggles w/ Spotted bass but would not be sight fishing. Caught two fish from tapering points in an area we had practiced w/ little success. Fished mainly steep main lake bluffs that were loaded w/ small fish but not in the areas that were holding concentrations of big pre and post spawners. Learned a lot this day about adjusting during a tournament. My partner fished the same looking stuff almost all day with no success. If it were a summer tourney he probably would have done quite well.

Summary

When faced with fish that are in all different phases of the spawn you must be a good “junk fisherman” and not be closed minded. Learned more about how good my practice partner is by him never counting anything out as a possibility when trying to find better fish. Never disregard the really ugly sections of bank during those tourneys that have a tough bite, especially when Spotted bass are involved. For some reason “Spots” love to hang around gross looking clay points and banks virtually void of cover at all. Craig picked up on this in practice and expanded on it to a point where he was calling his shots after two days on the water. Lessons learned were definitely lessons earned in this derby. Ended up 81st place with no check but learned some valuable lessons that will always be remembered. Better luck at the next one!