

trailblazers
OUTDOORS WITH
Alex Eberspaecher

Bass season opened Saturday over most of Ontario. This is quite late, in the opinion of many anglers, as the bass have spawned weeks ago.

This might be true, but we must remember that the bass, unlike other game fish, protects its nest and young fry. Most people are aware of how easily a bass can be taken before the season opens. The reason is that your bait travelled too close to the nest. Remember this in the future, because if you take one out of season, you don't just kill one fish, you kill a whole brood.

The proper identification of the bass is a problem to some fishermen as the largemouth bass and the scrappy smallmouth bass look very much alike. I have found that the best way to identify them is to draw a line straight down from the eye. If the mouth extends beyond the line of the eye, you have a largemouth, and if it ends before the eyeline it is a smallmouth.

Bass fishing is too much of a sport to be covered in a few lines. This week we will take a look at how to fish for bass and what bait to use. Next week I will attempt to give you a few hints on some very good bass waters in Ontario.

Smallmouth bass prefer cool clean water near rocky shorelines and drop-offs. The best water temperature is between 65 and 70 degrees. Almost any method, from fly fishing to deep-water trolling will take bass, but remember, smallmouth prefer rocky clear waters and feed on live creatures found in this particular area.

No doubt leeches have taken more and larger fish for me than all the other lures and bait combined. On a small hook, the leech is dropped, without a sinker, into a likely looking rock pile or floated over a gravel shoal. Almost as successful as leeches is a small silver spinner such as a No. 2 or 3 Mepps.

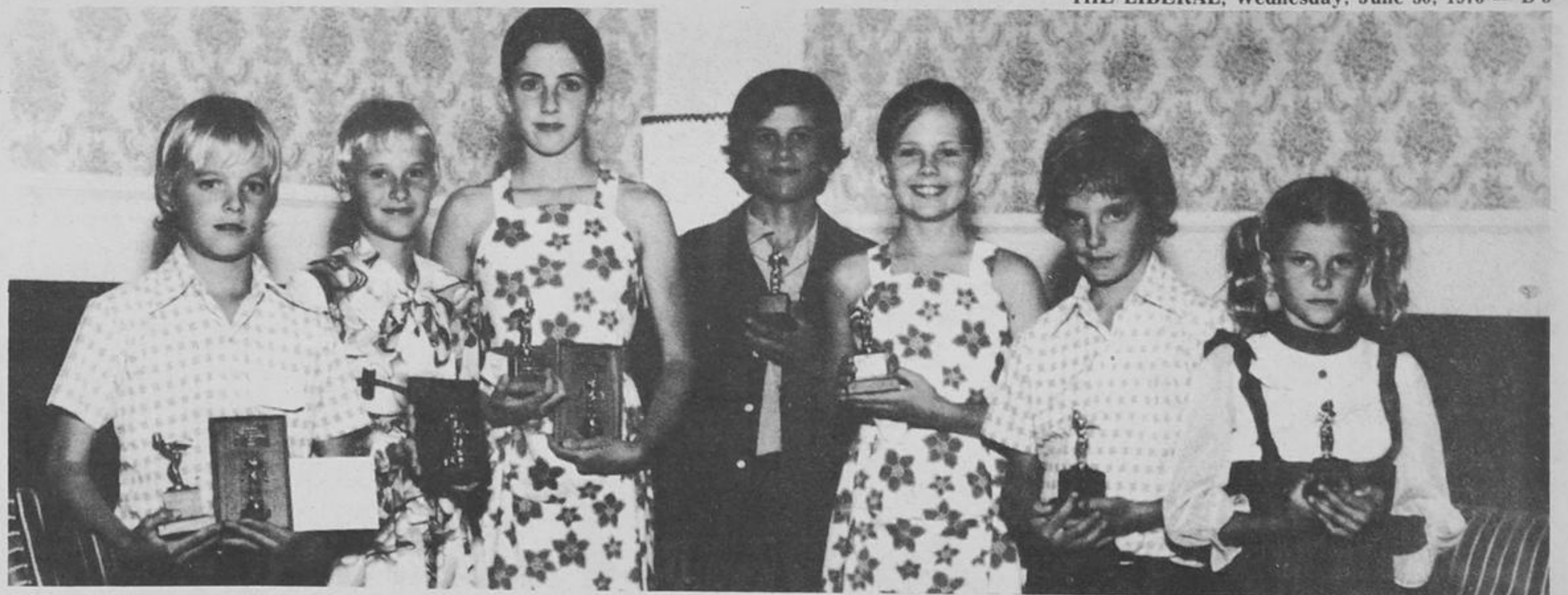
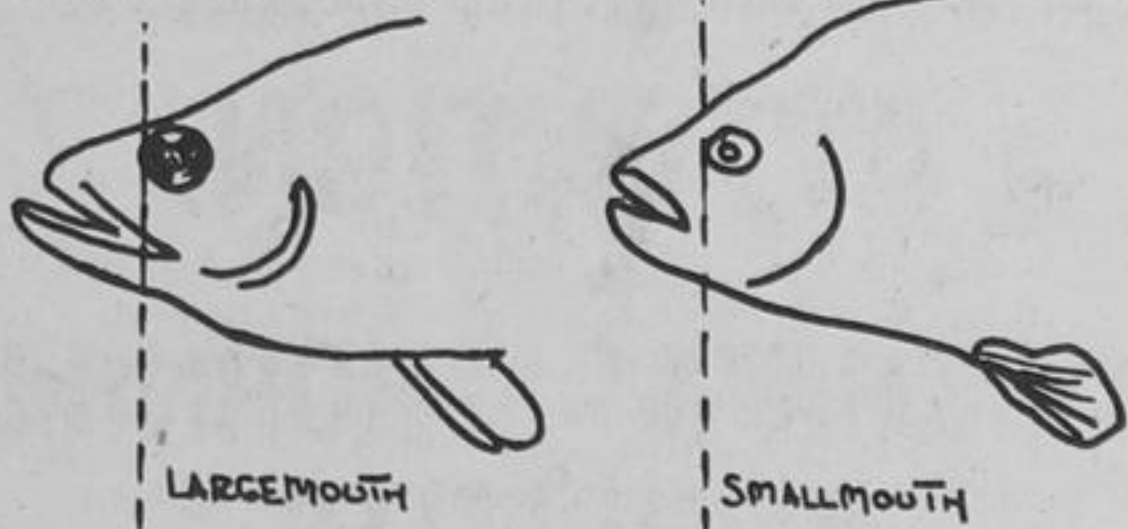
Crayfish, small frogs and minnows are often successful, but you must develop some sort of method. When the bass takes your lure, make certain your line flows off your reel without obstruction, as the slightest pull will cause him to spit out the bait. After a few seconds the fish will stop. Wait a few seconds longer and then pull slowly until all the slack is taken up. Now is the time to set the hook, and the fight is on!

The largemouth bass makes his home in a different type of surroundings. He prefers warmer waters (68-74) which are usually quite shallow and have plenty of hiding spots, such as logs, brush, or water lilies.

There is no doubt in my mind that the most exciting way to take a largemouth is with a surface lure. Fishing with lures such as a hula popper during the night is an art, and will be covered in my column in a couple of weeks time.

Strictly a predator, the largemouth feeds mostly on smaller fish, frogs and crayfish. It is true that he will eat worms as well, but I have seen days when only a lively frog aroused any interest at all.

Lures such as rapalas, flatfish and spinners are taken regularly, but fishing with lures in weedy waters can be quite an experience. Weedless hooks are a must for the bass angler, especially in some of the waters I will cover in next week's column.



Markham swimmers win awards

Seven top swimmers, pictured above, were honored with trophies last week when Markham Aquatic Club held its awards banquet at Heintzman House community

centre in Thornhill. Gaining recognition were (left to right) Steven Smith, Karen Stevens, Mary Shephard, Lance Ross, Suzanne Shephard, Kent Smith and

Camilla Ross. Apart from trophy presentations, the club also enjoyed a buffet dinner and dance.

Photo by Doyle

Local golfers in running

TORONTO — Four York region men are in the running for the Peter Jackson Cup, the newly-created competition for Canadian golfers on tour.

They are Greg Pidlaski of King, Bill Tape of King City; and Dave Garner and Ben Kern of Woodbridge.

Total purse for the cup will be \$5,000, to be disbursed through the accumulation of points awarded for tournament-to-tournament performance.

So far, veteran pro, George Knudson, who just won the Ontario and the Atlantic opens, is leading with 70,000 points.

In second place is Ken Fulton of Scarboro with 42,000 points, while Pidlaski is third with 28,000.

Tied for fourth are Tape and Moe Norman of Gilford, Ontario.

Garner, Kern and Don Halldorson of Brandon, Bob Panasiuk of Windsor and Roger Klatt of Edmonton, are next with 9,800 points.

First place winner will receive \$2,500, plus a place on Canada's world cup team, with the winner of the CPGA championship as a partner.

The second and third place finishers will receive \$1,500 and \$1,000, respectively.

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"Superstars" events open to everybody

DOWNSVIEW — At last. A "superstars" competition which anyone may enter.

That is the event being offered by York University Track Club, at the university's Tait McKenzie building, July 11.

Contests will be based on fitness rather than athletic skill, and those competing will win prizes such as track and field clothing.

Events include a two-mile run, two-mile bicycle ride, 50-metre swim and an obstacle course. Prizes will go to the top 10 competitors in five age categories.

In addition to offering the contest as a public service in aid of physical fitness, the track club hopes to raise funds for its work in developing athletes.

Entry fee is \$2 per person. For more information contact Rita McMinn at 439-2646.

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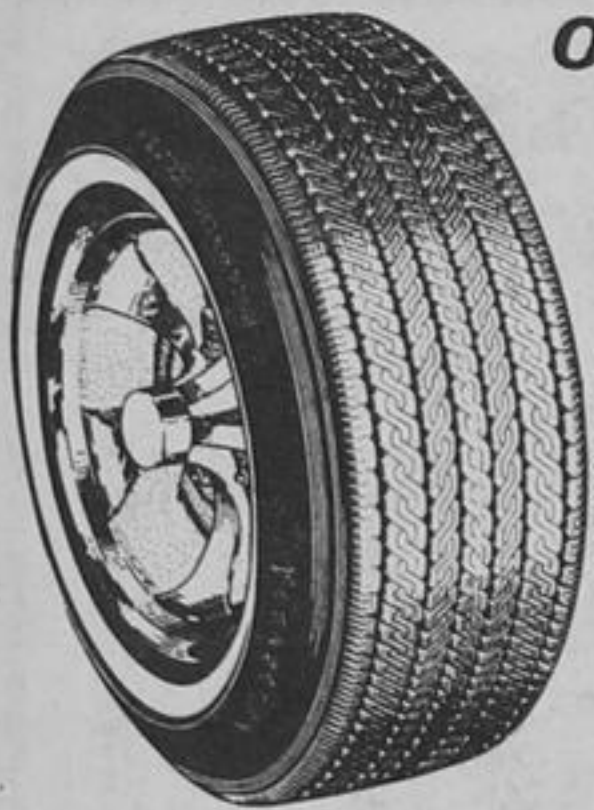
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