

Some hut operators get jump

While the early arrival of Old Man Winter has upset a lot of people who normally yearn for warmer climes, it has been a blessing for ice hut operators on certain areas of Lake Simcoe.

The Arctic air that's descended upon the area has given the operators along the lake's eastern shoreline a jump start to their season.

Although lake trout and whitefish did not become fair game until Jan. 1, that did not stop some operators from placing huts in close to shore for yellow perch, which are open all year and are considered a delicacy by many piscators.

Casey Creber, who operates Casey's Huts in Port Bolster (705-437-1560), notes this season is one of the earliest that he's put out huts since five years ago.

"We've got 12 inches of ice now," said Creber, who began putting his huts out on the frozen surface back on Dec. 22. Last year, Creber recalled he did not start putting huts out until the start of the new year.

"I've got huts out about two miles out and in 24-to-35-foot



Mike Hayakawa

depths."

To date, Creber says the perch fishing has been excellent with catches coming off live minnows and jigging small midget Williams Whitefish spoons.

"Most of the guys that are going out are getting their limit," he said.

Creber will also be putting out huts for those interested in catching whitefish. Last year, Creber noted there were days when anglers in pursuit of whitefish would have their two-fish limit well before noon when the fish were on the feed.

While the ice conditions are good inshore, Creber warns anglers who want to venture into

deeper depths for lake trout must respect Mother Nature. He notes that because the lake's size, it takes a little longer than smaller lakes to cool down. He pointed out that while there might be solid ice in an area between Virginia Beach to Beaverton, which is fairly shallow, there are areas on the other side of the lake that have less ice since the lake is deeper.

A spokesperson from Dave's Fish Huts in Jackson's Point estimated just prior to Jan. 1 that it might be another two weeks of cold weather before huts are placed. "Lake Simcoe is like two lakes in one," Creber said. "You've got to learn to play with Mother Nature."

Those wishing to make a trip to Lake Simcoe and would like information on hut rentals can call the following operators: Pefferlaw Fish Huts 1-800-565-5253; Dave's Fish Huts, Jackson's Point 905-989-1112; Bonnie Boats, Jackson's Point 905-722-3862; Dan Hales Fish Huts, Pefferlaw 705-437-1013; Floyd Hales Fish Huts 1-800-363-4704 or 705-426-7415.

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