

Moose Lake News

By Jim Onarheim

Part Two / of my Canadian fishing article. On Monday the 11th of May Mike and I flew to Wabakimi Park to see how many lakes still had ice on them. We need open water to land a Float Plane. Hitting any ice could be life threatening for us. There is no room for error.

Once we got within 50 miles of Mike's camps, we had many lakes still iced up. When we got to Mike's camps we could not land anywhere. From the air it looked like maybe in a few more days things could change for us. Mike had three camps booked for the fishing opener on May 16th and two more booked for the 17th. The pressure was on us. Mike said it was time to fly back to the Base Camp. We flew to a nearby Resort and Bait Store to get fuel for the plane. You always must watch your fuel levels. 15 minutes later we were back in the air heading SW for the Air Base. When we got back to the Air Base, Mike, I, Kelly, and another pilot went for dinner at Baudette MN. One of our favorite restaurants is Sportsman's Lodges. They always serve incredibly good meals.

For the next few days, we stayed near the Air Base and got some work done. Mike kept a close eye on the weather because flying a float plane requires extra caution and is quite different from flying a commercial aircraft. He checked the forecast for Wednesday May 13, the day we planned to fly to Smoothrock and Kenoji Lake. Dangerous weather was expected, and if we could not leave that day, we would be delayed by at least one more day, if not more. We decided to fly out this evening instead, on Wednesday the 13th. If we left by 6 PM, we would still have enough daylight to land on the lake, taxi safely to the dock, and unload our clothes and supplies. When we arrived at Kenoji Lake, getting to the dock was a tight squeeze because the ice we had seen on Monday had shifted. Mike carefully maneuvered the plane around large chunks of ice and into its parking spot at the dock.

The next day the wind started to pick up and the ice in the bay where we parked the plane started to move around a little. Mike and I put a 9 HP Mercury motor on one of his 14-foot boats. We tied the boat tightly to the dock and pointed the discharge area of the motor toward the large ice float. We fired up the motor and let it run causing a good share of water turbulence moving the ice and breaking it up. We had to get rid of this ice in front of the cabin by Saturday at noon. Mike's first guests were scheduled to arrive at that time. We left the motor run all night long Wednesday night. The ice was breaking up which made us happy. By Thursday at noon our ice breaking project was a success. Most of the ice was gone and floating down the lake. With all our work completed, Mike and I had the water turned on, toilet working, and a good fire in the wood stove keeping things nice and warm in the cabin. Mike said to me, let's go

fishing for a few hours. We knew we had to fish for Northern pike because walleye did not open until Saturday May 16th.

We put our rods in the boat and headed up on the Palisade River out of Kenoji Lake. We fished for about three hours with some luck, but it was slow mainly because the water was so cold yet. Our outside air temperature was about 40 degrees with the wind blowing. An extremely uncomfortable day. At around 5 PM we decided to head back to the cabin. We got out of the river and back into the upper main part of the lake when we noticed that a huge ice float had moved into a narrow part of the lake. Our way back to the cabin was blocked by ice. We checked around the west side of an island and found that blocked also. The strong wind had blocked our way back to camp. We were still two miles from the cabin. We did not want to spend the night outside because the temperature was going down to 28 degrees this evening. We checked the conditions of the ice float in a narrow section of the ice. This was about one hundred yards across. This area of ice seemed solid, so we ran the 14-foot boat up on the ice. Mike and I got out carefully holding onto each side of the boat. I said on the count of three let's drag this boat ahead as far as we can. We did this for over one hour finally getting to the other side of the huge ice float. There were a lot of soft spots, but we made it across in about one hour. Yes, our feet got wet and cold, but we made it across and back to the cabin safely. What a relief to be back safe and in a warm cabin.

The next day, Friday the 15th of May, went very well. We left late morning for Wabakimi Cabin. The water level was extremely high compared to normal at this camp. Mike and one of his employees worked extremely hard to get things done so we could leave for Mike's Base camp. We had to get back because Mike had guests that were checking in on Saturday morning. After getting his guests checked in on Saturday Mike and I will head back up to three more cabins that he needs to get ready for the season. Coles Oliver and Rockcliff Lake. The remainder of his work went smooth. On May 22 I left for home. Yes, I did do some walleye fishing after it opened on May 16th. I caught some fish but because of the really freezing weather I was not very aggressive. On Tuesday May 19th we had a snowstorm that dumped seven inches of snow on us. You Never know what to expect when you are in Canada at this time of the year. As you read this, I am back in Canada again fishing in very warm temperatures. 70 and 80 degrees this time. I will be back in one week.

Birthday greetings this week go out to Tom Metcalf on the 5th of May, Kari Slotten on the 8th Bryan Duray and Joel Miller both on the 12th, Sean Kelley on the 16th. Happy Birthday to all of you. Anniversary greetings this week go to Scott and Laura Gilkey on the 1st of June, Daniel & Alisa Marvin on the 4th, Tom & Marion Off on the 8th, Ed & Eileen McKinney on the 14th. Happy Anniversary to all of you.

Stay safe everyone and enjoy our beautiful weather. Please send your items of interest to my e-mail address at emta984@gmail.com or call my landline at 715-462-4448 or my cell at 715-577-8880. Moose Lake Improvement association website is <http://mliahaywardwi.org> The Town of Round Lake Web site is <https://www.townofroundlakewi.org> and the Round Lake Fire Department website is <https://townofroundlakefire-rescue.org>. JO