

# TORPEDOES PART II

# SPEED TROLLING

Spoons, flashers and Torpedoes to cover water. *By Dave Mull*

**S**peeds of 3.0 mph seem fast to some salmon trollers, but last season, we experimented with faster speeds, pushing our project Starcraft center console from 3.5 to 4.0—sometimes higher. It reaped results in Southern Lake Michigan, catching cohos, steelhead and kings—even some lake trout. It appears to be a solid tactic for fish when they're scattered, especially in the top 50 feet of the water column.

This is mainly a spoon game, with a spread of thicker spoons more commonly cast or jigged. We also tested the Tamiron Optimizer, a thin gauge spoon with an unusual shape. Drop this spoon in the water at 4 mph and its wide, slow wobble might make you think your speedometer is malfunctioning. The

Northport Nailer, hook switched to the nose of the spoon, is another good speedy spoon. Tamiron's Rocket Flasher is built for speed, thick, with six different holes to attach your main line.

Jim Martino, owner of Tamiron, had been bugging me to try his products at high speeds, but like most trollers whose eyes water at 2.6, I had a hard time pushing the throttle far enough forward to see the Optimizers' and Rocket Flashers' optimal performance. Finally we dedicated a day to speed with my two favorite adolescents, Josh "Big Hurt" Crosby, a long-time fishing buddy, and Jesse Boven, aka "Thunder Teen," my stepson who is an excellent boat driver.

We got a late start on a cloudy, late August day out of New Buffalo, Michigan. Steady, though light, southeast winds had



Bumping up the speed helps cover water to increase chances of fish contact. Here, Josh Crosby shows a king that hit a downrigged Rocket Flasher.



Spoons for speed include (from top) a Moonshine Jigging Spoon, Tamiron Optimizer, Lindy Viking, Magna Dyne Northport Nailer (hook switched to nose end) and Luhr Jensen Krocodile.



Upgrading Church Walleye Boards with the Vise Clip allows fast trolling with lead-core or copper without any risk of the board popping off.

brought in unusually cold water with surface temps in the low 50s and high 40s just 20 feet down according to the Depth Raider. We marked fish sporadically in the 20- to 30-foot levels.

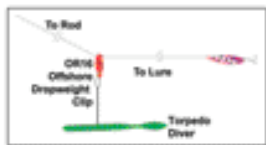
The eight-rod spread for our high-speed assault included downriggers, four Torpedo snap-on weights (two different sizes) and copper lines on planer boards.

We set the 300-foot coppers first to avoid unwanted contact with the chute Torpedoes. The Church Boards had been upgraded with the company's Vise Clip to ensure the line would stay in place at higher speeds. We guessed the copper would be in the 40-foot range from 3.5 to 4 mph.

Then we set the boat's two Cannon downriggers. One had the 11-pound Ridgeback Rattler weight, the other had a 15-pound Tru-Trac ball. To add attraction to the spread, we put a set of Hammerhead vertical spinners above the Ridgeback, a set of Tamiron vertical spinners above the cannonball. These are three blades attached to cable where they spin one above the other. This vertical spinner cable clips in between the downrigger release and the ball.

We cranked the Du-Bro release tight and clipped the 20-pound test in, trailing the Rocket Flasher green/glow Action Fly about 20 feet behind. It went 30 feet down. A spoon on 12-pound test went on the other rigger. The

spoon stretched 100 feet behind the ball, which we set at 35 feet down. Blow-back, it appeared, raised the balls about five feet.



3.5mph with OR16 Clip								
Depth	Snapper Orange		Shark Blue		Musky Green		Cuda Chartreuse	
	Line out	Angle	Line out	Angle	Line out	Angle	Line out	Angle
5	10	1.9	5	1.0	5	1.0	5	1.0
10	39	3.9	21	2.1	10	1.0	10	1.0
15	87	5.8	47	3.1	23	1.6	17	1.1
20	154	7.7	83	4.2	41	2.1	30	1.5
25	241	9.6	130	5.2	65	2.6	46	1.9
30	347	11.6	188	6.3	93	3.1	67	2.2
35			255	7.3	127	3.6	91	2.6
40			333	8.3	166	4.1	119	3.0
45					210	4.7	151	3.3
50					259	5.2	186	3.7
55					313	5.7	225	4.1
60					373	6.2	268	4.5
65							314	4.8
70							364	5.2

Torpedoes on 30-pound test braid or braided wire can take your presentations

deep at higher speeds. Here's a

comparison of different sizes and amount of line needed to get progressively deeper when trolling at 3.5 mph.

Down the chute we ran two rods, depth on each controlled by 5-ounce Torpedo Shark weights on 15-pound test Stren braided line. One rod took a Tamiron Optimizer spoon; the other had a 3/8-ounce Lindy Viking spoon. We set one Shark 130 feet behind the boat; the other 150 feet back, relying on the line counters on 6-foot Fenwick walleye trolling rods (fun reeling in salmon on these!). Abu 6500 reels matched nicely with the little rods. According to the Torpedo charts, 150 feet out put the lures down a bit deeper than 25 feet at 3.5 mph, raising them to about 22 feet at 4.0 mph. The Torpedo set out 130 feet ran a couple feet higher.

Then we added two Shimano Talora/Tekota wire combos with 8-ounce Torpedo Musky weights out on each side of the boat. These were roller-guide rods spooled with 30-pound test, seven-strand stainless steel on Tekota 600 LC reels. The Torpedoes are directional, so we bent the vertical fin to take one flasher and fly combo a bit out from the side of the boat. We set both of these out 150 feet, which the Musky chart says would put it between 40 and 45 feet at 3.5, up to about 30 feet at 4.0 mph. The other had a 3/8-ounce Viking spoon, stretched on a mono leader 25 feet behind the Torpedo.

Action that first day consisted of cohos, kings and steelhead. A challenge was keeping hooked fish out of the chute rods. We had no problems, with Jesse steering the boat like a pro and the knowledgeable Josh either clearing lines or steering fish. When a fish hit the copper, side Torpedo or downrigger rod on one side, one of us took the fish, the other quickly reeled in the chute rod from that side.

Resetting the copper was a bit of a trick. We simply took the chute rod from the side where the copper would go, reeled in about 50 feet and put it in a holder so this Torpedo line ran right over the outboard and provided room on one side of the chute to let out the copper line.

This faster trolling definitely works with the right lures. We'll keep you posted on what we learn in future experiments. [GLA](#)

