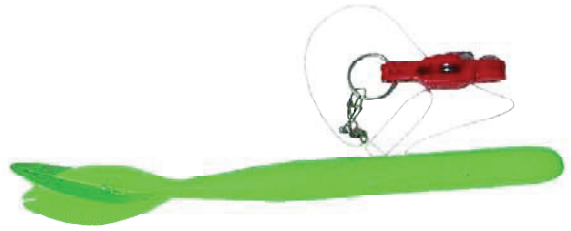




# SUPER EFFICIENT WEIGHTS



Simple to use, Torpedoes can blast the mid-day blahs. *By Dan Keating*

**R**emember the old TV show “McHale’s Navy?” I was fascinated every time lieutenant commander Quinton McHale launched a torpedo over the side of the PT 73. For McHale, the torpedo usually bubbled off only to miss its mark, but last year a new torpedo hit the Great Lakes fishing scene. These new directional sinkers, known as Torpedo Divers, efficiently and easily hit their targets more times than not.

Torpedo Divers have a variety of applications but really shine on calm days during the dreaded midday bite. Essentially, Torpedoes are not divers, but sinkers, shaped like a torpedo that attach to your fishing line via a clip and an 18-inch leader. Their hydrodynamic design allows them to penetrate deeper in the water column than traditional sinkers. They come in four sizes ranging from the 2½-ounce Snapper to the 13-ounce Musky.

The directional Torpedoes have a fin that you can adjust to make the sinker run out to the port or starboard side and are great alternative to the aggressive presentation of Dipsies or Walker Divers when the early bite shuts off. The directional Torpedo allows you to turn the same rig, minus the Dipsy, into a stealth presentation. And yes, you can use the same rod and reel that your braided diver was on.

On the business end I like to run spoons with a small, 30-

pound ball bearing swivel from Sampo or Dreamweaver and a 10-foot, 8- to 20-pound fluorocarbon leader. I tie the leader onto a swivel, and that is tied to 30-pound test braided line—the same line that Torpedo inventor Matthew Sawrie used to put together the company’s intricate charts.

The same spoons that work on leadcores and light line riggers seem to work great on the Torpedoes, too.

The rig is easy to set. Simply let the spoon (or flasher/fly or body bait) out 10 to 100 feet and attach the Torpedo to the main line with the clip. Next, make sure the Torpedo clears any rigger lines you have in the water and then let the rig out until you hit your target depth—easy to do with the charts that come with the weights. When a fish strikes, you will be amazed at how little drag the rig puts on your rod or the fish. This results in a much better catch rate. The minimal drag is due to the sinker’s design and the angle of the dropper line. As the fish approaches the boat, you simply and quickly pull the clip and sinker off of your line and finish the fight.

The Torpedo website has depth charts for the various sizes of sinkers, but the actual running depth will vary depending on trolling speed, current, wave texture and lure selection. My advice is to spend a little time experimenting with these rigs when you first run them. Honestly, it took me a few trips on the water until



A Torpedo (left) can replace an inside diver disk when the sun gets high and the bite turns off. Stretching a favorite leadcore spoon (in this case a Stinger) 100 feet behind the Torpedo provides a stealthy presentation that can keep picking fish. Note how the fin is bent on the Torpedo so it planes away from the boat.



Torpedoes come in four sizes (from top right): 2½-ounce Snapper, 5-ounce Shark, 8-ounce Musky and 13-ounce Cuda. Charts compiled by inventor and company owner Matthew Sawrie show the weights are highly speed dependent. For instance, the big Cuda will go 55 feet deep with 55 feet of 30-pound test braided line out at 1.7 mph. Speed up to 3.4 mph and you'll need 304 feet of line out to get down 55 feet. See complete charts at [torpedodivers.com](http://torpedodivers.com).



I figured out how and when to incorporate them into my spread, but it was worth the effort.

When running the angled sinkers in place of divers, remember that you are putting a line into your spread slightly out to the side of the boat, but your lure can be adjusted to run further behind the boat than a traditional Dipsy. The Torpedo is also very quiet as it moves through the water, resulting in a very stealthy presentation.

Torpedoes have another practical application; they can help extend the reach of anglers with a limited budget or rod selection. You can simply add a Torpedo to a lead core or copper rig and sink the entire rig deeper in the water column. For example, maybe your longest leadcore rig is a six-color (60 yards of leadcore line). Let all the leadcore into the water and attach the Torpedo of choice to the backing. Then, let out enough backing to take the leadcore as deep as you want your lure to go. For example, if you figure 5 feet deep per color, six colors of leadcore is already taking your lure 30 feet deep. Add an 8-ounce Muskie Torpedo, let out 100 feet more backing, and at 2.4 mph the Torpedo will get



Jesse Boven weighs a late-summer coho that hit a Viking Spoon pulled at 4 mph behind the Shark that Josh Crosby holds. Torpedoes are great in speed spreads (see next story).

down 45 feet—the lure behind your six color is now down into the 75-foot range. Snap on the 13-ounce Cuda (the biggest), let 100 feet of line at 2.4 mph and you will achieve 55 feet more depth, putting your lure about 85 feet deep.

You can also use Torpedoes with shorter segments of copper. For example, you can run 75 or 150 feet of copper with braided line backing. The larger Torpedo can easily sink your lures past 100 feet deep. Sawrie says you can reach 150-foot depths with Torpedoes and copper.

You don't diminish the hypnotic effect of leadcore as the Torpedo is in front of the dancing leadcore. You can also run these versatile tools with a side planer (I like Church Walleye Boards), which adds a surge-and-pause motion and takes the line to the side of the boat.

If you're serious about Great Lakes trolling, you might want to try Torpedoes this year. While Torpedoes catch fish all day long, these directional sinkers really sparkled during the tough mid-day bite last year. I look forward to hearing how creative anglers incorporate these new sinkers into their spreads this season. Post your results on [GLAngler.com](http://GLAngler.com). **GLA**