

Backcountry Walleye



Written by

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OUTDOORS GUIDE

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A screeching alarm sounding in my ear was not the most welcoming noise I could think of at 4:30 in the morning, especially after getting off work at midnight the night before. After a bit of a battle with the snooze button, and nearly making myself late, I managed to scramble and get myself together, collect my gear and head out the door. Thankfully the truck was loaded and the boat was in the box of the truck, ready to go.

I made my way across town, collected my four fishing partners for the day, hooked a second aluminum boat up to the truck, and off we went for a bit of a backcountry walleye fishing adventure. We travelled about 130km on pavement, and then made a turn, continuing on for another 60 some odd bumpy, gravel road kilometers. After about two hours, we finally reached

our destination or at least our launching point, with several more legs to make in the journey. We were headed to a back country walleye lake, part of a chain of lakes, requiring a bit of effort to get into, but the visions of a lake full of nearly untouched walleye was motivation enough.

We got the boats unloaded and in the water, got our gear loaded up and headed across the first small lake, taking about 5 minutes to get to our first obstacle; a rather threatening set of rapids. Our friend and guide for the day had assured us that it was a minor creek that required you to step out of the boat to help the boat through some shallow spots to get to the next lake. This may have been true in a normal spring, but with the high volume of rain may have caused a bit of an increase in water flow, just enough to make it interesting.

After bouncing the motor off a couple rocks approaching the rapids, we got in shallow, and exited the boats (all but one of us who conveniently didn't bring shorts and sandals), and proceeded to slip and slide on rocks, slowly making our way up several hundred feet of rapidly moving water. After countless bruises to our shins and stubbed toes, with the boat relieved of a bit of aluminum from the bottom, we made it into the next lake relatively unscathed. This brought us into a small little lake, and soon led us to another interesting set of rapids, requiring us to attempt to drag the boat across a roaring sheet of water covering a smooth, and very slippery piece of Canadian shield.

After slipping, sliding, and falling our way up this obstacle, we were almost there, and the next creek was another interesting obstacle, as it required you to run the motor at about 80% throttle to get through the rapids, while trying to keep the boat between jagged boulders just wide enough to get the boat through. After successfully navigating this set of rapids, and dodging a few more hidden rocks, and at about the three hour travel time mark, we finally arrived at our destination, a picture perfect little walleye lake.

It didn't take long to connect and start finding fish, and with the weather cooperating, it was hard to beat; the sun was shining, there was a nice breeze to keep you cool and add the perfect walleye chop to the water. We slowly made our way around the lake, picking up fish as we went, and

exploring new areas. The fish were more than happy to oblige, and in what seemed like no time at all, we had a nice limit of eaters. After catching all sorts of smaller fish, and releasing a couple large breeders, we had rounded out a great limit, and headed to shore, finding a perfect piece of Canadian Shield to pull up on for a lunch break.

After catching dozens of walleye, and filling out a great looking limit, we decided to start making the trek home. Now going up some of these creek and rapids was a bit of a challenge, and one may think going down would be easy, but it proved to be interesting. We managed to make it out with our boats, motors and bodies intact, and make it back to the truck. We loaded the boats up, getting one on the box of the truck, and the second on the trailer, loaded our gear, and started the long journey home (made longer by the snoring passengers on board after a day on the water). All in all it was a great day; getting out with friends, enjoying the outdoor and what Northwestern Ontario has to offer, and catching a dandy limit of walleyes is hard to beat. Added to it the adventure of going somewhere a bit different and turning the trip itself into a bit of an adventure makes an already great day even better.



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