

Brook trout adventure

As many adventures do, this day started out as a great and simple plan; 1. Head to a stocked brook trout lake, 2. Catch pile of brook trout, 3. Go home, sounds easy! We planned on fishing a lake we had fished several years ago, and done quite well on. This is a fairly remote lake, one that required a bit of effort to get in the last time, and we planned to bring two sleds and sleights and break our way in.

Our first issue was our transportation; my friend Neal was planning on bringing his truck, which ended up with a flat that morning, so we decided to use mine. After driving across town, driving through multiple lots looking for it, and retrieving it from my wife's work, I headed home, loaded my machine on the trailer, and headed to his house to load up his sled. The next issue that arose was one not unknown to many ice anglers...snow machine issues. When he went to load it up, he was apparently too powerful and when pulling on it to start it, yanked the cord right out of it!

We were now down to one machine, with a dog sled type sleigh setup for a passenger, for our back country expedition with my friend and I, and his five year old daughter! We eventually got the truck, gear and people loaded up and going, not quite the crack of dawn, but a leisurely late morning start. We drove out of town, and eventually got to the end of the trail off a bush road, unloaded the sled, which of course took a bit to start with the polar vortex we were experiencing, but we eventually got it going, loaded up and got moving.

I rode on the sled with my friend's daughter, and he hitched a ride on the sleigh. We rode down the first trail through the woods, across a lake, through another portage, and made a few wrong turns while trying to find trails between lakes. Noone else had

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been through this way that we could tell, so were looking for the trail, and breaking trail the whole way in.

We finally got to the last lake before our destination, located the last portage, but unfortunately it was on the other side of some open swampy water, followed by a trail covered in blowdown. After some debate, we decided going through that with one sled, and spending an hour clearing trails with the chainsaw may not be best choice, especially with a 5 year old involved, and decided we may be pushing our luck already with all that had transpired!

We decided to turn and head out, and head to different lake. We headed out, and drove the truck and sled a few miles down the road to the access point to another spec lake, loaded everyone back up, and headed into the lake. We found a corner we liked the looks of, and hit a bit of slush on the way in,

but parked near shore, and got things setup. At this point, my friends daughter had been a serious trooper, but was growing a little tired of the production, so while I set to getting holes drilled and lines setup, he setup the shelter and got the heater and a bonfire going. It took me about two minutes before I stepped in an old, unfrozen hole, covered in fresh powder, sufficiently soaking my boots within minutes of arrival!

I got holes drilled and lines setup, and it didn't take long before lines started getting hit, and within about ten minutes I had a beautiful stocked brook trout on the ice! I had setup some set lines, with the producer being a dew worm coupled with a ball of Pautzke Fire Bait, a garlic flavoured dough bait balled up on the hook with the worm, adding some colour and scent to my bait. This appeared to be the ticket, as the brookies were all over it. After missing several fish, falling in another ice hole, and landing face first in slush, we ended up with some beautiful brook trout. The slush and cold somewhat limited us, as once we had the little one warmed up and content in the shelter, we weren't moving even after the fishing slowed, but all in all, the day was quite an adventure, and although we had issue after issue, we still had a great day. It's hard to beat a day afield with friends, and to top it all off we caught some gorgeous stocked brookies, taking advantage of the OMNR's stocked lakes program.



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