

## A Summer Day On The River

John & Ed booked with me several times over the past 10 years experiencing quality smallmouth bass fishing on the Menominee River. It was mid-July, and the guys were hoping for hot topwater bite just like they enjoyed the previous summer.

John began with a prop bait and Ed used a popper. When fishing topwater lures I never have my clients use the same kind of bait until we can establish a pattern. It started off great, and John caught 3 respectable smallmouth in the first 15 minutes. Everything was pointing to a good topwater bite. However, for the next 20 minutes neither of my clients had a strike.

I knew we were on fish, and I also knew it was time to mix it up. I handed John a Grandt rod rigged with a 1/0 Spearpoint hook and a watermelon/red Case Magic Stik. John caught many smallmouth on a wacky worm, so he knew what to do. After making about a half dozen casts he was rewarded with a dandy 18-inch smallmouth. After netting the smallmouth I showed my clients how the VGrip on the Spearpoint hook holds the smallmouth in place. The VGrip makes it difficult for a bass to eject the hook.

After John caught a couple more smallmouth it was obvious Ed should also change his plan of attack. Ed was no fan of the wacky worm, and I could sense from the expression on his face that he was not eager to switch to a wacky worm. John and Ed had fished with me the previous summer and John had a banner day while Ed did not do so well. John caught about 25 smallmouth while Ed caught five. They were both using comparable rods and line and the same Case Magic Stik. Ed would get a strike, set the hook and most of the time the smallmouth won. I tried to coach Ed as I tried to figure out what if anything he was doing wrong. To Eds' defense smallmouth were not aggressively hitting that day which makes it difficult to get a good hookset.

Ed came prepared to fish a wacky worm and had an Octopus hook tied on his line. He said he had good success with that hook the last time he was on the water. I offered to give him a 1/0 Spearpoint Finesse hook to tie on but he told me he had confidence in the Octopus hook. I did not want him to lose confidence since I knew he was not fond of fishing with a wacky worm. I felt confident that he would catch fish since the smallmouth were aggressive.

About five minutes later Ed and John simultaneously set the hook and they both yelled, "Fish On!"

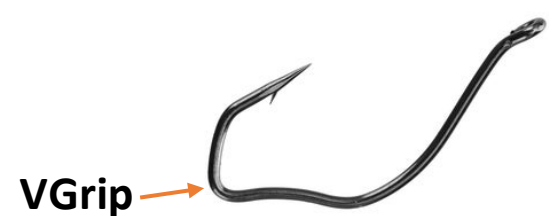
Everything was going well until Eds' fish broke water and threw the hook. Ed looked at me and said, "That was the biggest smallmouth I have ever had on my line."

John landed another 18-inch smallmouth and after it was released he made another cast and caught another smallmouth. Ed also made another cast and set the hook on another smallmouth. This smallmouth also decided to fly three foot out of the water and rejected the hook. I told Ed to give me the rod and I tied on a 1/0 Spearpoint Hook and rigged a Case Magic Stik.

It did not take long for Ed to get into the action. After he caught the third smallmouth Ed smiled and said, "I have to get me some Spearpoint Hooks."

We continued to fish mid-river rocks and shoreline wood and the wacky worm with its horizontal drop remained the ticket. Occasionally I would have one of my clients cast a topwater bait. I always tell them to never give up on casting a topwater for river smallmouth as the bite can change at anytime, especially when smallmouth aggressively hit other presentations. John caught two more smallmouth with a prop bait and had a couple of short strikes.

The final tally for the day was 49 smallmouth. We had hoped to hit 50 smallmouth but those lost fish came back to haunt us. Ed only lost two smallmouth on this trip. After I tied on 1/0 Spearpoint Finesse hook he never stuck out. We all wondered that if Ed had a Spearpoint hook on from the start if he would have caught that big smallmouth. They are returning next year and this time the big fish will make it into the boat.



**Spearpoint Finesse Hook**