

ANGLER WORKBENCH

Building a Trolling System

by Curtis Niedermier

Ken Schoenecker's boat is like the doctor's office of the Walmart FLW Walleye Tour Presented by Berkley. Everything has a place. Everything is identified. And when the West Bend, Wis., pro goes trolling, he has a system developed to make changing lures simple.

"Time on the water is supposed to be spent fishing with baits in the water, not fixing a reel or fussing with stuff," Schoenecker said.

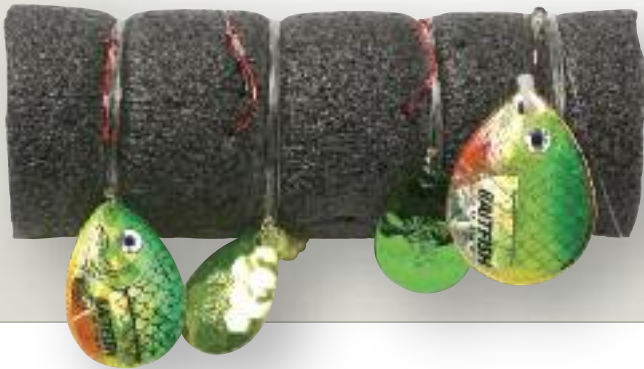
Here are a few things Schoenecker does at home to help manage his trolling operation on the water:

Crankbaits

Schoenecker separates crankbaits not only by model, but by size, into separate Plano organizers. Colors are grouped together and separated with dividers. On the inside of each lid, he tapes a copy of the appropriate dive curve from "Precision Trolling."

Crawler Harnesses

Crawler harnesses are fully assembled prior to fishing. They are wrapped around foam swim noodles he purchased at Walmart. Schoenecker stores the noodles, cut to fit, in large Plano organizers.



Spinner Blades

Spinner blades are removed from their packages and stored in Plano organizers. On the lid, Schoenecker tapes a spinner blade size chart so he can identify blade size quickly.

Rods and Reels

Each rod and reel has a number. If one needs to be re-spooled or repaired, Schoenecker makes a note so he can attend to it off the water. On each reel he also writes the line type and pound test in ink on a piece of tape.

Weights

Sinkers and weights are stored in Plano organizers. Schoenecker identifies the weights on the lid in permanent marker. On large sinkers, he scribbles the weight directly into the lead with a nail.

The Tour Box

If all goes as planned, Schoenecker knows what lures and tackle he needs for a tournament by the end of practice. He then reduces that tackle to a separate Plano organizer.

"I don't like to have a whole bunch of stuff lying around that I don't want to use," he said. "During tournament time I pretty much strip it down to bare bones."

YOUR RIG

Motor Prep

by Sean Ostruszka

Warmer weather means it's time to prep the motor for a long and successful season. Here's a list from Land O'Lakes pro Eric Olson of things to check to keep your motor running on pad.

Prop

Check for dings, nicks, fishing line or anything else that may cut down on performance.

Spark Plugs

Clean and make sure they are appropriately gapped.

Fuel

If fuel treatment was not added before putting the boat away for the winter, remove and throw away any fuel in the tank. Then refill.

If fuel treatment was added, just top off the tank and add a bit more treatment.

If you left the tank empty, fill with fresh fuel and the recommended amount of fuel

stabilizer to dissipate any water left in the tank.

Oil

Make sure there are no leaks or bad seals. Also, if there is even a possibility water may have gotten into the oil, dump it all out and refill with new oil.

Links

All fittings and connections need to be tight.

Batteries

Put a full charge on the batteries, and test to see if there is a surface charge by trimming the motor up and down a few times.

If possible, also check the water levels.

