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Demonstration netting of Long Lake,
Alpena and Presque Isle Counties

by

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Long Lake has the reputation of being a good smallmouth bass lake. The Long Lake Improvement Association has operated a smallmouth bass rearing pond for several years. All of the bass produced in this pond have been released in Long Lake. It was agreed that the rearing pond would not be operated during 1946 and that no further plantings of smallmouth bass would be made pending an investigation to determine the success of natural reproduction.

Messrs. Leland Anderson, Kenneth Peterson, Joe Southwick and the writer arrived at Long Lake on August 27. Mr. Orville Murch, Secretary of the Association, had been notified by letter (August 16) to expect us. As soon as we reached Alpena Mr. Murch was contacted by telephone. As not he was able to go with us he suggested that we contact Mr. Ed. J. Bouchard, the president of the Association. Mr. Bouchard was also unable to go with us while we set our nets, but promised to notify all interested sportsmen to be on hand on the morning of August 28 to watch us lift our gill nets and witness seining operations.

Headquarters for our operations were established at Art Brown's Resort. On the afternoon of August 27, six small-meshed gill nets were set out from this resort in water depths ranging from 7 to 15 feet. On the morning of August 28, ten boats (with from two to four persons per boat) accompanied us while the gill nets were being lifted. The following numbers and species of fish were taken by our gill nets: 39 perch (5 to 13.5 inches); 15 common suckers (4 to 13 inches); 4 walleyes (5.6 to 12.7 inches); 3 northern pike (8.2 to 8.5 inches--these were evidently young-of-the-year fish); and 1 rock bass (6 inches).

The gill net catch is considered at least average in comparison with similar netting done in 1946. Perch, northern pike and walleyed pike are reproducing successfully in Long Lake. The hatch of northern pike and walleyes must have been extremely good in 1946 because the young of these species are seldom taken in gill nets and we consider ourselves lucky to obtain one specimen of each species in the same amount of netting. Very few large fish were taken in our gill nets because the size of the mesh used was small and would not take large fish. Smallmouth bass are seldom taken in gill nets. Therefore, their absence in the catch was not unusual.

It was hoped that many of the sportsmen would go around the lake with us to witness our seining operations, but aside from the few people who watched the four seine hauls made in the cove at Art Brown's Resort, no one was sufficiently interested to accompany us to other parts of the lake. A total of 14 seine hauls (25-foot bag seine) was made at Long Lake. Each haul covered approximately 30 by 15 feet. Smallmouth bass young-of-the-

year were taken in every seine haul; the number per haul varied from 1 to 4 fish. Seining on other excellent smallmouth bass lakes seldom produces any more bass per seine haul. Netting with a larger seine was not attempted because of the soft bottom.

Observations that were made from the boat and from the many docks that we stopped at on Long Lake indicated that young-of-the-year smallmouth bass were present everywhere. As many as 7 or 8 bass were frequently seen near some docks. From the observations that were made, and from our seining operations it is evident that smallmouth bass are reproducing successfully and that young-of-the-year fish are present in sufficient numbers to provide an ample stock of legal fish in future years.

Mr. Art Brown and several other people that we talked to told us that they had seen smallmouth bass spawning in Long Lake. Mr. Brown even remarked that he was satisfied that there were enough smallmouth bass produced naturally in the lake each year to adequately stock the lake.

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