

# MICHIGAN OUTDOORS

WITH MORT NEFF

## COMMERCIAL FISHING OUTLOOK

Commercial fishing in Michigan has changed a lot in the last decade and may be due for even more drastic changes in the future. Few individuals outside the industry itself realize the significance of that day back in the late 20's when sea lamprey first appeared in Great Lakes waters after their long migration from salt water.

Slowly at first, and then with unbelievable speed, lake trout began to disappear from all waters in the lower lakes. From a commercial catch of better than five million pounds a year, the trout lake fell to a mere few thousand pounds back in 1949 and today this highly prized fish has become all but extinct in both Lake Huron and Lake Michigan. The lamprey, a vampire of our inland seas—is held responsible.

In the dry craft that are one-tenth cabin and engine, and nine-tenths cargo space for up to 5 tons of slippery herring. And day after day, unless a whopping gale is blowing, you'll find them easing into the anchor bays that mark their nets, making fast and hauling away at the enormous nets that stretch for 800 feet along the lake bottom.

**Key Job**

Often the net lines are coated with ice as soon as the air strikes them. Light rubber gloves don't take the sting from the job. Soon, with spray blown across the deck, a slick coating of ice forms underneath, and in the pitching seas disaster could strike at the man who isn't fast to a line or rail.

The voyage begins before dawn, and if luck is good and nets are full the fleet may be back by noon. Then the three-man crew unloads their catch, and move indoors to help pack and ship the fish. Automatic scales go to work on herring for the local market. Dressing out is done by hand with lightning-like speed. Bones are stripped from the meat, leaving delicious filets in an operation that only human fingers could do. And when deep-fat fried fresh from the lakes, the flavor of Michigan herring leaves nothing to be desired! Underrated on too many menus today, the lowly herring must soon come into its own as another valued resource to be found in Michigan Outdoors.

## Herring Becomes King

Now fisheries along the lower lakes have turned to the herring to make up, at least partially, for the severe loss suffered with the passing of the lake trout. Until winter ice makes their work impossible, the fishing fleets put out daily from three and four miles out into the wind-swept rough waters of the big lakes, tossed about like corks.

A Birmingham resident, Mort Neff's "Michigan Outdoors" television show appears every Thursday at 7:00 p.m. over station WWJ-TV.

## Three Team Tie In Church League

First Methodist, Lutheran Redeemer and First Presbyterian churches emerged in a three-way tie for first place in the Birmingham YMCA Church Basketball league at the conclusion of play last Thursday.

Each quieted won its second game.

First Methodist topped Christ church 50 to 15 and Bud Snyder, Clark Hallas, Al Fawcett and Dick Snell led both teams in scoring 21 baskets and 3 foul shots between them. First quarter score was 8 to 5 and 24 to 10 at the half. Jim Krav's 6 points were high for Christ Church.

Lutheran Redeemer found little opposition in its game against First Baptist as the Maple Avenue boys ran up the high total of 63 points against 11 for First Baptist. Church, Jack Strub tossed in 29 points for the Lutheran church. Earl Brindley made 10 of the 12 backboards featured First Baptist's play.

FIRST PRESBYTERIAN ran into quite a bit of opposition in a scrappy Southfield T. P. church and were behind at the half 24 to 23 as both teams exchanged baskets. The score saw-sawed back and forth with First Presbyterian in front 37 to 36 at the end of the third quarter. When Dick Karch of the Presbyterian and Bud Barrett of Southfield left the floor after committing five fouls, First Presbyterian jumped into five-man close pressing offensive and stayed in front of the Southfield boys for the remainder of the game.

Gordon Mutch with fifteen markers led the Presbyterians in scoring while Bud Matheson marked up 14 points for Southfield.

Church league games are played each Wednesday and Thursday nights at Baldwin Elementary and First Baptist Church. The public is invited.

Newspaper copy submitted early necessarily is given preference over late items. So the "Early Bird" usually gets the space.

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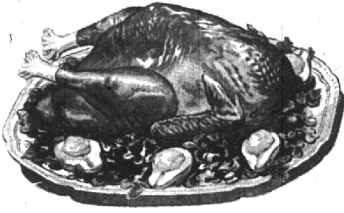
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