



MUSKIE Advertiser Spotlight

Naze Baits

Corey Nazer contacted MUSKIE back in April about advertising the wooden baits which are hand made by the company he started with his fishing partner Josh Sedlacek. Cory, a teacher by day, was excited about working with MUSKIE. In fact, Corey was excited about everything related to muskies, especially fishing for them with his own baits.

As Corey told us, "Catching a 47-inch musky constitutes a great day on the water for any esox angler. Catching it on a brand new bait within the first half-dozen casts is even better!" When Corey Nazer and Josh Sedlacek of Naze Baits hoisted the heavy fish into the air for a quick picture they realized they had accomplished a special feat. Corey had landed the biggest fish of his musky fishing career on the prototype of their Livid Fish. At that time there were only two Livid Fish baits in existence; one in Corey's tackle box and the other in Josh's. Both with a quick perch pattern spray painted on, both with experimental components. "They didn't even have hook rash on them and we already knew we had crafted something special", said Corey of their earliest lure.

Josh, the brains behind the design of the Livid Fish is responsible for the wood-working end of Naze Baits. Picking through piles of white pine, Josh finds clear (knot-less) boards. Inconsistencies in the wood grain can cause variances in how a lure functions below the surface of the water. He then traces, cuts, pre-drills, sands, routers and sands again until every wood blank (as Josh and Corey call them) is as consistent as possible. Josh does admit though, "Doing the cutting and shaping by hand is tedious, but there is a great deal of satisfaction when you see the finished product, especially when the finished product is in a fish's mouth."

Josh delivers the blanks to Corey, where he soaks them in an industrial grade deck sealer, before applying two coats of Du-Pont automotive primer. "We invested a lot up front in high quality paints and wood-working equipment; not even knowing how far we wanted to go with lure making." The

next step, for Corey, is where the real exhilaration begins.

"I get to try to put my own spin on some really classic patterns like Perch and Fire Tiger, but I also get to create new ones like Sunburst," which is their best selling color pattern to date. "I'm most proud of that one (Sunburst). Josh and I both knew right away that it would put fish in the boat." Naze Baits carries 12 color patterns, ranging from timeless to imaginative. "I'll guarantee you find something that suits the waters you fish," Corey says of the spectrum of colors available. Naze Baits also offers special order patterns.

Because they both have full-time jobs, Josh and Corey have to strike a balance between work, family, fishing and lure making. "What started out as a hobby for both of us, has grown to exceed our expectations," says Josh of the continued expansion of Naze Baits.

In 2009 Naze Baits unveiled a new line of lures - the Tin Head. A top water lure, the Tin Head is nine inches long with a large jitterbug-style lip. There has been some genuine excitement about this lure from the Naze Baits customers, who like the bait for its ease of use and tantalizing surface disruption. For those that wish to see both the Livid Fish and Tin Head in action, they should visit www.nazebaits.com and click on "Pool Demo" on the LURES page. "I think one of the most memorable moments for me", Corey says, "was the day we shot the pool demos." Using a homemade underwater camera box, the Naze Baits crew shot hours of underwater footage. The demos, which have assisted the small-scale lure company in getting the word out via the internet, rivals professional quality and puts the viewer up-close and personal with these wood lures.

Naze Baits has been making musky lures since 2004. In the early years, they were content with filling their own tackle boxes and having a few Livid Fish in the local sports shop. Josh jokes, "I wanted two of every color." The company's growth was slow and steady, which is how Josh and Corey wanted it. "The first international sale, the first musky pictures sent from cus-



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tomers, the first musky show—these are all things we really enjoyed as we have grown.” In the last two years, the company has substantially expanded. Their Internet sales have picked up, more big name musky shops are taking on the Livid Fish and the Tin Head and the feedback from customers is on the rise. “Josh and I have fished most of our lives; making, selling and using our own lures is just one more way we can show our enthusiasm for the sport of musky fishing. As a testament to their modesty, both claim to have a great deal more to learn about the sport—but both also acknowledge the addiction to musky fishing grows with each season logged. “We never want to see ice on our favorite lakes; we never want to put the rods away for another year. Make no mistake about it; December through May is not the off-season for these two anglers, but rather their busy season.

Josh and Corey are currently testing countless buck tail prototypes in hopes of completing their lineup of lures. When completed, Josh and Corey will, in their minds have a diverse collection of baits able to fit any fishing situation. Corey boasts, “Our greatest compliment so far has been the uniqueness of our lures. Our hopes for Naze Baits are threefold, “Stay small scale, stay unique and never let lure making get in the way of fishing.”

MUSKIE Magazine is pleased to welcome Naze Baits to the list of fine advertisers who support Muskies, Inc. ❖



Naze Baits Livid Fish

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