



## **Novice Angler Finds Teamwork on Charter**

By Bill Gosse

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Teamwork and sportsmanship were on display during the recently concluded Beijing Olympics. Mostly, the sportsmanship was good, and a great example for all to witness. Where applicable, the best teamwork leads to gold medals.

Recently, I experienced teamwork and sportsmanship in a totally new environment. It was unexpected and it was pretty cool.

I was invited by a friend to join a party of four others as a guest for a chartered Lake Michigan fishing trip. I had been on Lake Michigan before – for a sailboat ride with my uncle many years ago.

I vaguely knew what to expect.

To be honest, I am a novice fisherman. My limited experience includes inland lakes and stream fishing and one time getting skunked while deep-sea fishing with my college baseball teammates. My dad and brother taught me how to look for lily pads or fallen logs – great hiding places for fish. When I'm fishing, if I catch something within the first thirty minutes – even a snag – it keeps my attention for a couple of hours.

My first surprise was the trip was for six hours. Six hours? I didn't remember our fishing trips lasting that long.

The sun was shining and the breeze was blowing just right, making for gorgeous weather. It sure was a treat being on a boat chugging out of the Manitowoc harbor. Match all this with great company, and you have a relaxing afternoon, right?

As we cruised past the lighthouse, the questions flowed through my head.

Should I have taken the Dramamine? How were we going to find fish out on “the big pond” without lily pads and fallen logs? How far out were we really going?

As we reached our destination several miles from shore, it hit me how big Lake Michigan really is.

Watching the crew get ten poles ready got me pretty excited. I remembered some of the sizes of fish caught on Lake Michigan during tournaments. The zing of the line leaving the reel created anticipation all its own. It felt like we were getting ready for a big game.

Fishing boats have some expensive equipment, and we were utilizing all of it – fish finders, drawers of multi-colored lures, a huge net, one big cooler for our catch, and the radio.

We were looking for kings, browns, and lakers. The captain interacted with other chartered boats to discuss fish location and bait strategy. Aren't those other boats competition?

It didn't matter. We all were working together on our boat, as well as with the other boats to provide the most enjoyable experience possible.

Isn't that the way it should be? Fish on!