

Fish Tales

by Mike Brower

Cold Days/Cold Water

So, by now the temperature has fallen enough to make for some cold mornings and a few cold days on the water. Now, we need to make sure we are prepared for the expected and unexpected as well.

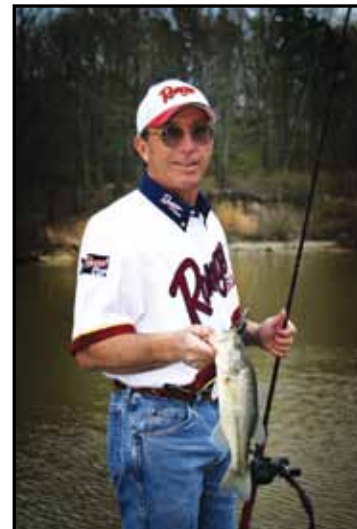
First, let's talk about clothing. You should lean toward the layer system. Layering is wearing stuff on top of stuff. My personal preference is (inside to out) -- Underarmor, jeans, shirt, fleece pants and jacket, topped off with my trusty Guidewear rainsuit. This is good for me down to 12-15 degrees. The layers trap heat and move moisture away from your body. The worst thing you can do is allow moisture to stay next to your skin, which will make you feel "clammy." As the day wears on you can shed a layer and stay comfortable without sweating (yes you can still sweat in the cold).

Next, let's go over a semi-controversial topic -- FOOTWEAR. If your

feet are cold, you are cold. The best advice is to make sure your shoes or boots are not too tight. Too tight and you will disrupt the blood flow to your feet and it's the blood that keeps your feet warm. I found out several years ago that sandals -- yes, sandals -- were great in the winter. A good pair of wool socks and the sandals keep my feet at a very comfortable temp down to about 20 degrees. They weren't tight and any moisture was wicked away from my skin (go figure). Now I wear a pair of Keens that are kinda sorta a cross between shoes and sandals. They work just as well.

Next, "BE PREPARED" for any emergency that involves dance moves or acrobatics on the boat deck which results in falling overboard. Falling in the water when the air temp is hovering around "Damn, it's Cold," and the water is something just short of "breathhtaking" is not fun. Do yourself a favor and always carry a change of clothes. Something along the lines of a pair of sweat pants and hoodie are great, along with a pair of wool socks. These items should be a size or two larger than you would normally wear. (Loose clothes are easy to put on and you don't need to impress anyone.) Lastly you should carry a large towel to dry off with, you don't want to change from wet clothes to wet clothes.

Fishing in the winter can be wonderful, you just need to channel your inner Boy Scout and be prepared.



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