



# big water pikes

**Gary R. Soldati, Plugmaker**

## **Construction**

All my pikes are completely hand-constructed. Each plug is turned from northern white or Alaskan yellow cedar, and ranges in size and weight from 6-1/2" and 2-1/2 oz. to 10" and 7-1/2 oz. The glass eyes are from Germany, and I custom-make the lips from stainless steel to get the desired action. The entire unit is through-wired for extra strength, and the hooks are the strongest available – VMS trebles. For a cleaner profile, there are no split rings.

I hand-paint the plugs in more than 20 traditional colors, 25 regular custom colors and 10 premium custom colors. Tails are tailored to the particular coloration – from buck tail, crystal flash, saddle hackle and chenille. The tails are tied longer to give the plug a nice, flowing swimming action.

## **Tuning the Plug**

Tune the plug to your own personal preference and to the water conditions. (I tie direct using 50 lb. fluorocarbon.)

- Tying direct gives the plug tighter action; using a loop knot, snap or break away loosens the action.
- Bending the line tie up swims the plug down. Bending the loop (line tie) down swims the plug up.
- Bending the swim lip down causes the plug to have more side-to-side action, less roll and to swim higher in the water.
- The plug will dig in and dive when it is left in its original position – straight out from the face of the plug. It will also have a combination of side-to-side action and roll which is the trait of pike and BigWater Pikes.
- On rare occasion, the fish have wanted a shortened profile, so I have removed the tied tail.

## **Tips for Fishing Surface Pikes**

Cast the plug and let it sit until the ripples disappear.

1. Give your rod two sharp jerks to pop the plug and start a slow retrieve, swimming the plug on top of the water.
2. Pause the plug from time to time, don't swim it all the way in on a steady retrieve.
3. If a wave comes, swim the plug down in the wave and then float it back up after the wave has passed; then continue the retrieve. It is important to fish the plug all the way in as fish may be holding close to shore.
4. Check your leader frequently. With large plugs, multiple casts can weaken your leader.

## **Conditions That Favor the Divers**

Divers are heavier and have a slower swimming action, so they do well in the heavy current of a breachway or river mouth. The Deep Diver has done well when floated out in a breach way or coastal river, then holding it in the current. It appears that the fish follow the plug out, and then when you hold it swimming in the current, the fish will hit it!

Divers also do well in big wave conditions and in deep coves close to shore where the fish were right on the bottom. I knew the fish were there by observing the success of some bait fisherman.

Finally, I have also used the Diver to get a little more distance in my cast in windy conditions. And, in windy or stormy conditions, you can still use a slow retrieve, keeping under the big waves. Another technique is to swim the Diver down and then let it float up to the surface with that enticing waggle.

## **How to Fish BWP Diving Pikes**

Through a combination of different woods and weights, I've created Giant and SLIM Medium and Deep Divers. How deep they swim depends on conditions, though I have never failed to hit bottom with my Deep Divers whether fishing from shore or far out rock. One customer trolled the Medium and Deep Diver Giants in 15 ft. of water at 3 mph and they both bottomed out. Pretty impressive considering that all BWP Divers float at rest.

### **How to Fish BWP Diving Pikes, con't:**

To fish bottom in deep water, cast your Deep Diver and then reel very quickly, causing the plug to swim right down. When you feel it hit bottom, let it float up a bit and start a slow retrieve. The plug will swim at the depth it is at. If you bump into something, pause, let the plug float up, and continue your retrieve. You can fish the bottom in this way all the way in. In more shallow water, do the same thing with the Medium Diver.

When working the water column, once you are in the spot you want to fish, start fishing with a Surface Giant Pike. Fan cast, working the water in front of you. Then fish both sides, and if you are out on a rock, keep the fish honest by casting behind you. If you are into fish, get the most out of the Surface Pike before going deeper with a Medium Diver, and, if there is enough water, a Deep Diver. A good share of the bigger fish caught on my plugs come from the Divers.

Because these Divers float at rest, if you start your retrieve slowly, you can also fish your plugs nearer the surface which shows the versatility of this plug.

Thanks for purchasing my pikes.

Catch big & release!

***Gary R Soldati***