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ADVENTURES

FEA

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TOP TEN MUSKIES

WHERE are the truly great muskie waters in North America? Here are my picks (in no particular order) after several decades of hardcore chasing.

Lake of the Woods, Minnesota-Ontario Border—This sprawling lake is about as good as it gets for numbers and size. I like the Northwest Angle area north of Warroad, Minnesota. Guide Billy Sandy had 367 muskies in his boat last year, including 15 over 50 inches.

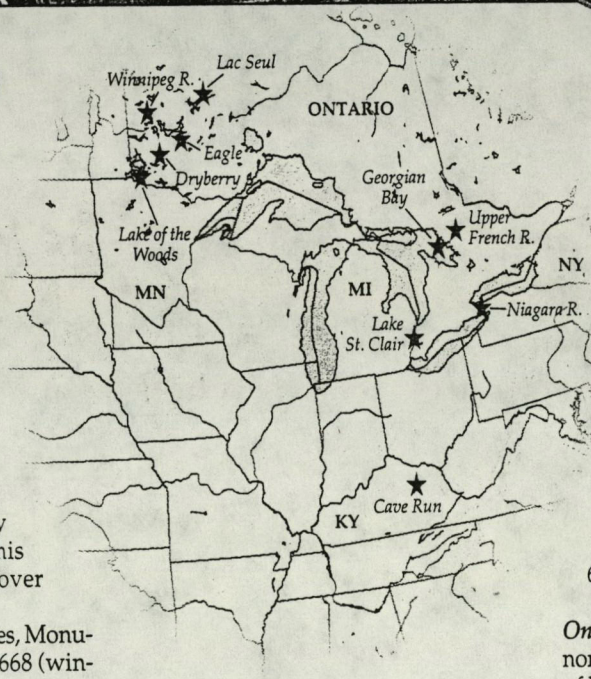
Contact: Lynn or Jim Kayfes, Monument Bay Resort, 612/628-0668 (winter), 807/543-4002 (summer).

Niagara River, New York-Ontario—The 33-mile-long Niagara River is red hot. The upper river is most productive, but the lower river also holds plenty of muskies.

Contact: Mark I. Maghran, 716/649-5528 or Dicks Sporting Goods, 716/685-5720.

Georgian Bay, Ontario—My bet for the next world record. Guide Shawn McCarthy targets Sevren Sound in Southern Georgian Bay during the summer and moves north in fall to Honey Harbor. Most fish McCarthy catches are over 48 inches, and he has released 46- and 48-pounders.

Contact: Shawn McCarthy, 705/435-9357.



Dryberry Lake, Ontario—This gin-clear lake in Northwest Ontario can be oh so good, or it will make you wonder why you ever started fishing for muskies. Thirty-pounders are fairly common, and several 50s have come from the lake.

Contact: Lou Hall, Berry Lake Lodge, 507/534-2031 (winter), 807/226-5158 (summer).

Lake St. Clair, Michigan-Ontario—Guide Don Miller puts over 200 muskies in his boat yearly, 17 of which ran 45 to 53 inches last year. The best fishing occurs from mid-June through the 3rd week of August.

Contact: Don Miller, 313/429-9551.

Eagle Lake, Ontario—Two 60-pounders have been caught here, and last year's biggest, a high 40, came off Swanson Island, just minutes from North Shore Lodge. The three fish I boated on a trip last July weighed 87 pounds.

Contact: Tom Guercio, North Shore Lodge, 800/976-9779.

Cave Run, Kentucky—My pick during March, April, May, and then again after Halloween. Guide "Crash" Mullins had 97 legals to 53½ inches last year.

Contact: Dave Mullins, 606/286-6305.

Winnipeg River, Northwest Ontario—Near Minaki, some 20 miles north of Kenora, the river forms a series of lakes connected by channels. Lots of 45- to 50-inch fish here with 10 to 12 muskies per trip not uncommon.

Contact: John Hazelell, Rough Rock Lodge, 807/224-3403.

Lac Seul, Ontario—Still as good a bet as there is for a monster.

Contacts: Gary Hyslop, Floating Lodges, 807/582-3284, Lac Seul Outposts, 800/576-4775.

Upper French River, Ontario—Another spot for monsters. Art Barefoot, who caught a 59-pound 11-ounce muskie here in 1990, says the best times are during the full-moon periods in August, September, and October.

Contact: Art Barefoot, Bears Den Lodge, 705/857-2757.

Spence Petros