



This time Kentucky yields plenty of stripers

by Lee Keck
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If I had a favorite place to go fishing, I suspect it would be someplace like the Kentucky Lake Dam area. Not only does this place offer world-class fishing for big catfish, but this area is also rich in striped bass fishing opportunities.

I suspect my two grandsons, Jack and Nick, also feel this way, as does their father Brian Ruffini of Highland. They've not missed a trip since our first outing here some two years ago.

After a brief hiatus from the regular stockings by the Kentucky Fish and Wildlife, resulting in less than ideal striper fishing. The striper stockings have returned and so has the good striped bass populations.

Interesting enough, I had good luck at this location several years earlier and hoped we could duplicate this effort.

Those who regularly follow our escapades realize our first few attempts in recent years ended in something of a failure. While we did catch plenty of big catfish and quality white bass, Jack and Nick still returned home without catching many Kentucky striped bass. It was also among my first trips for Kentucky stripers that failed to produce any of these big fish.

This time our crew included grandsons Jack and Nick, their father Brian, and, of course, me. And, we were led by noted Kentucky fishing guide Jim Doom. Our watercraft this day was a huge Jon boat - ideal for fishing these fast-moving river waters.

Before fishing, however, came the effort to net some bait. Doom used a cast net and tried searching certain areas of this tailwater area. Our goal was to fill the net with threadfin shad and little Asian carp. While these efforts produced a few baitfish, it was quickly becoming obvious that netting bait was going to be difficult.

After boating less than a dozen baitfish, Doom decided it was time to head out fishing. We quickly learned that our heavy weights were not enough to keep the bait near the bottom. The waters were simply too fast and it required one's full attention to keep our baits in the deeper productive waters.

First to strike gold was Nick. He was soon struggling to gain control of a sizeable striper.

The second catch came to Jack. He was soon fighting a nice three- to four-pound striper.

Then, Brian struck paydirt. His six-pound hybrid really put up a battle. This hybrid fighter is a cross between a white bass and pure striped bass. Kentucky stocks these by the thousands. They typically run a bit smaller than the pure striper, but fight like a fish twice their size.

Much of our five-hour trip was devoted to fishing this area for stripers. We would first go and find a few baitfish, then return and catch a few more fish. Still, I remained striperless. It almost seemed like I was jinxed when it came to hooking fish.

Finally we had just enough remaining time to net a few more baitfish and head to the main dam for a couple of drifts. This is when the tide finally changed.

On the next to the last drift, I hooked a fish. In the swift water, it provided a good fight. Finally, Doom netted the fish and it was a big striper.

Still, we were not done yet. With one more drift remaining, it was time for all of us to concentrate our angling efforts. However, Jack was the only one to answer this call. He successfully landed the last fish of the day – this time it was a three-pound catfish.

Anyone interested in trying their hand at fishing these rivers, may wish to contact Jim Doom at (270)703-7337, or see his website at [Between the Rivers Guide Service](#).