

Baltimore is probably more noted for its Orioles and its Colts, but within a 40-minute drive of the city are five lakes that might make Baltimore noted for its smallmouth bass.

Bassin' is good in all five of the water supply reservoirs where only electric motors are used to propel the angler to his favorite "honey hole."

Largemouths in the five to nine-pound range are caught in the lakes, but it is the smallmouth that is really the king. And, why not? You have five lakes that produce them up to, and exceeding, eight pounds.

First choice for the visiting bassman should be the Loch Raven Reservoir, located just north of Baltimore on State Rt. 146. Loch Raven gained recognition by the fact that until last year it held the state record for both the largemouth (10 lbs., 1 oz.) and smallmouth (8 lbs.).

Then there's Liberty Reservoir on State Rt. 26, Prettyboy Reservoir on State Rt. 31 off I-83, and Tridelphia and Rocky Gorge reservoirs on State Rt. 195 and 650.

Liberty, a good-sized 3,100-acre impoundment, is the current record holder for the smallmouth bass. An 8 lbs. 3 oz. bronzeback was pulled from its waters this past spring.

Unfortunately, both Liberty and Prettyboy can only be fished by obtaining a \$20.00 season permit from the Baltimore Bureau of Water Supply, but the bureau is considering selling daily permits in 1975. Tridelphia and Rocky Gorge are both 800-acre impoundments and may be fished on a daily basis.

Best time for battling the wily smallmouths of Baltimore is the spring and summer. There's some action in the fall, but only briefly.

In the spring, plugging the banks is an effective way of luring the smallmouths. Year after year, large shiner minnows fished right on the bottom catch largemouths in the 7 to 9-pound range during the brief pre-spawn period.

The smallmouth fishing comes into its own in the summer. That's when things really get going. The best bait is a live crawfish from two to three inches long. Fish the crawdad (or "dad" as we call them) off the points in 20 to 40 feet of water. The depth finder is a fish producer in the summer.

The cold weather of the fall limits the fishing to deep trolling live baits

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Baltimore's DRINKING WATER BASS

By CHRIS DUFFY

and artificials.

Wintertime fishing is prohibited on the reservoirs, so we either sit and dream by the fire or we fish the coastal rivers and estuaries.

Ranging in size from 800 to 3,100 acres, the reservoirs aren't big according to southern standards, but if you have to row, they compare favorably to the Great Lakes.

And, row you must unless you have an electric motor. Outboard motors are restricted.

Necessity, the mother of invention, created the "Baltimore Style Bass Boat" which answered the question, "How do you fish a good size lake without an outboard?"

That's what makes our bass boats so different, we have to rely on electric power to carry us to our honey holes.

Now, that might sound simple if you only have one little electric motor and a battery, but it is a different ball game if you are driving your boat with three 24-volt electric motors and horsing around 500 to 600 pounds of batteries.

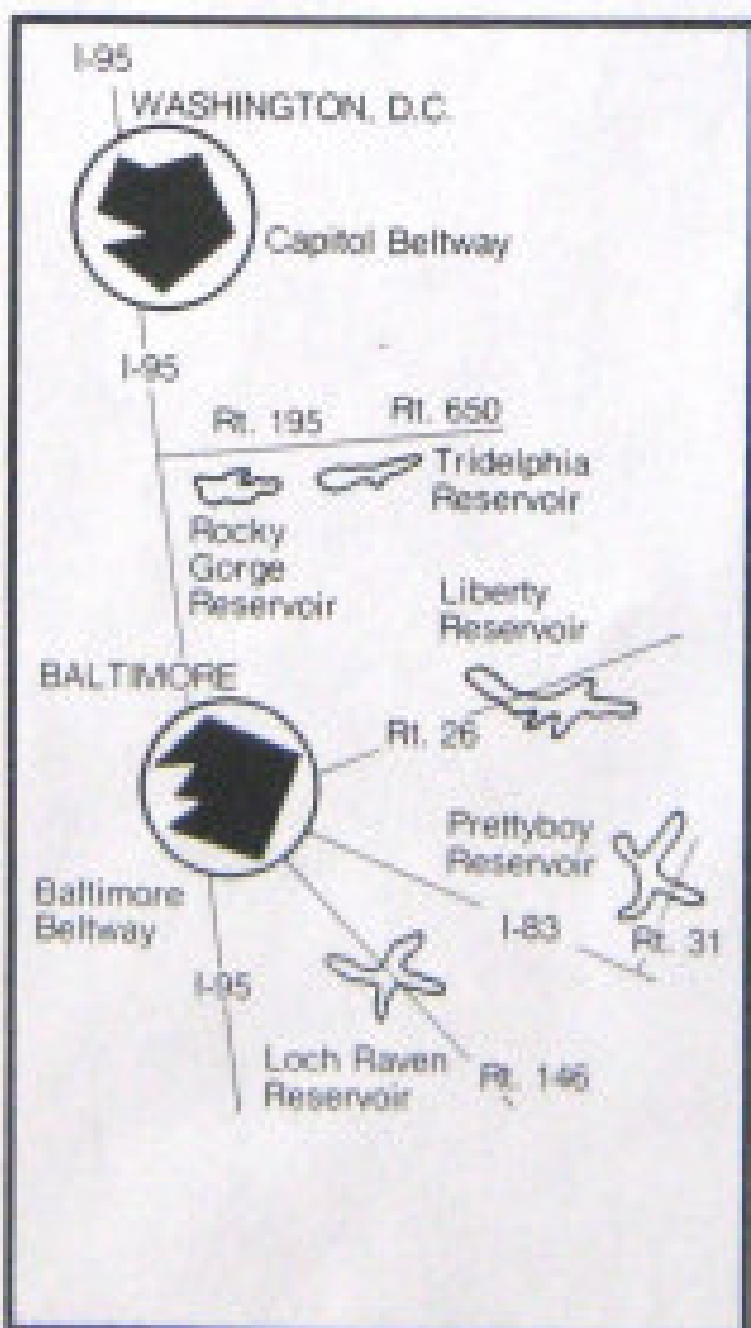
That's why I'm writing this article. There are many other areas in our country from Pennsylvania to California where good bassin' water can only be fished by electric powered boats. Bassin' men from other areas can benefit from the "Baltimore Bass Boat."

First thing you need is a boat. It must be well made, light weight, and roomy. Quachita aluminum johnboats are by far the top choice of the bass brigade in the Baltimore area because they are a little wider, a little deeper at the gunwale and are made of a little heavier gauge aluminum than the average flat-bottomed model.

The minimum comfortable length is 14 feet for a reservoir rig, but many of the pros like the 16-foot model because of the extra room and the safety factor of a larger boat.

To power the boat you need at least one powerful 24-volt electric motor. Two motors are better and safer in case one quits, but many have three motors for tournament competition when getting there the firstest and the fastest means the mostest.

For many years the motor most bassin' men used was the My-Te motor manufactured by City Engineering Co. Inc., 3547 Massachusetts Ave., Indianapolis, Ind. 46218. Although not made for 24-volt operation most everyone runs it on 24 volts because it is very fast for an electric. The major drawback is its 35-40 amps per hour draw at high speed. Recently, the 24-volt Minn-Kota motor has been gaining in popularity. It is slower than My-Te, but draws only half as much



Don't laugh. This isn't a gag. It's a special "Baltimore Style Bass Boat." Outboard motors aren't allowed on water supply reservoirs, and these super electrics are used to get Bassmasters to the honey holes.



The Orioles and Colts are better known, but excellent bass fishing draws crowds to five Baltimore area reservoirs. The fun really begins with an all-electric motor tournament. That's when the multi-motor rigs come in handy.



Good strings of largemouth bass are taken, but its braggin' size smallmouths like this lunker that gets the notices. Liberty, a 3,100-acre impoundment, and Loch Raven have produced 8-lb. smallmouth in the past.

juice.

For each motor you need two big 12-volt storage batteries. Big means anywhere from 80 to 135 amps.

The more batteries, the better — up to a point. Don't overload the boat, else you may go out and never come back. To charge the batteries, 10 amp chargers are used.

Batteries sliding all over the boat can be a problem. To alleviate that, a

battery box made of wood should be located in the middle of the boat. The box needs to be vented in some way because a buildup of battery gas can and will cause an explosion. Fasten the box to the floor to prevent shifting during trailering.

The motors are connected either directly to the batteries with long leads running from the motors to the battery box, or some kind of terminal.

That's the basic rig. Extra goodies such as remote control motor, carpeting, depthfinder, oxygen-temperature-light intensity analyzers, anchoring devices, rod racks and the like complete the package.

Together they beat rowing by a mile, although you'd probably row a mile to catch one of these big Baltimore smallmouths.