

## ***The Right Crappie Pole for the Technique – Part I***

Social media is loaded with questions from users asking what's the best pole for this or that technique. Well sometimes the answer is simple, sometimes it can be a combination of two or more poles. I'm here to shed some light on what specific poles I use for my favorite techniques. I've also interviewed some of the best crappie fishermen in the country.

This is going to be a multi-part article. I don't like to give my readers too much to digest at one time. This is somewhat of a long article, it could be 5 small articles but it is what it is. The only way to grasp what I'm saying is to go out and try it and perfect it.

### ***Spider Rigging – Slow Trolling***

It all depends on what weight sinkers and how fast you want to troll. I prefer ½ oz sinkers and a max speed of .5 mph. I select the Redesigned PST's (Pro Staff Trolling) Poles.

These poles will support weights up to 1.5 oz. This pole comes with Reinforced Hi-Vis Tip. According to B'n'M, these poles have the most championships of any pole on the market. I enjoy being able to control the big MS Crappie. The PST's are for man-handling big crappie and handling the hard bites.

If I'm fishing shallow water with a single jig, I use the BGJP (Bucks Graphite Jig Pole) or the Capps and Coleman Trolling Pole. I can put on a single jig as small as 1/16<sup>th</sup> and as large as 1/4<sup>th</sup>. This is a finesses fishing pole.

With each of these poles, I can see the strike very easily. The length can be up to you, whatever length pole you feel comfortable with. I like 16' poles when I'm fishing open water and 12' to 14' when I'm fishing stumps.

The 8-Time National Champion B'n'M Pro Staff Team of Ronnie Capps and Steve Coleman has set new heights in tournament fishing using the above techniques. "14' BGJP's are excellent for slow trolling in timber. As you get older the longer poles get heavier and harder to see the pole tips. We've perfected our technique to a point where we use the 14's in the grass, stumps, and brush piles." According to Ronnie, "The BGJP poles are superb for pushing one jig or double minnow rigs. With high-vis line we can detect the slightest strike."

### ***Single Pole Jig Fishing***

The BGJP has been on the market over 30 years, it was my first crappie pole. I moved from a Crappie Duster Type Telescopic Pole. It taught me what the "Thump" felt like and caused me to get addicted to crappie fishing. It's for the traditional vertical fishermen, the single pole jig fishermen.



These poles come in 6 sizes, from 8' to 16'. B'n'M just redesigned these poles with new Dynaflo Guides that make the poles lighter and more durable. No more inserts that can pop out. The reel seat is new for a more tighter and balanced feel.

The BGJP telegraphs the hit to your hand as well allowing you to see the hit on the tip. The BGJP has the background to control the fish when lifting one out stumps or brush piles.

If this is your favorite method, I suggest you move up the in price to one of the "Cadillac" premium



series rods, Duck Commander DOUBLE-TOUCH, Sam Heaton Super Sensitive, the Bucks Best Ultra-Lite Bottom Seat Touch System, The Bucks Gold Jig Pole, The Russ Bailey Signature Series, or The Whitey Outlaw DOUBLE-DUTY. These poles are a little costly compared to the BGJP but they come with added features like super-sensitive tips and cork handles that make it worth the price.

### ***Long Line Trolling – Fast Trolling***

Finally, my favorite technique, Long Line Trolling, Pulling Jigs or whatever you call it. I think it's one of the most productive fishing styles for our lakes in the south. It can be deadly when the water temperature reaches the 50-degree mark.

Pre-spawn, spawn, post-spawn, or summer fishing, long-lining is great when the fish are scattered. Long-lining allows you to present your bait to lots of fish by covering more area quicker than slow trolling or vertical jig fishing. It's a reaction bite technique. You can find fish in places where you never expect them to be.



My setup is the following: 2 – 18's PST on the outside, 2 – 14' BGJP's, 2 – 10' Roger Gant Difference, 2 – 8' Roger Gant Difference on the inside. I use Shimano 2500 series reels rigged with 6# BPS or Mr. Crappie Hi-Vis Mono.



If I want to fish 5' to 8' or less I'll use 1 – 1/16<sup>th</sup> oz. FinSpin Jig Heads at 1mph or less. 8' to 12' I'll pull 1 – 1/8<sup>th</sup> FinSpin Jig Heads at 1 to 1.2mph. You can double the 1/16<sup>th</sup>'s between 8' to 12'. I usually double the 1/8<sup>th</sup> for 12' to 15' and increase my speed by .1 - .2 mph. If you see your jigs bouncing off the bottom, increase your speed or shorten your distance. For depths less than 5 feet I'll pull a single 1/32<sup>nd</sup> and vary my speed until I get the bite dialed in.

I cast my jigs as far as possible and then whip off a couple of times and place them in the rod holder. My partner, Don Terry of Jackson, likes to flip the bail and let the line spool off by itself for 30 to 45 seconds. I've seen him fish as far as 125 yards or more behind the boat. His theory is, he wants to fish the quiet water behind the boat. I can't complain, I've seen him catch huge fish back that far. So, if it works, don't knock it.

My favorite baits for pulling is the Fin Commander Slab Curly. This curly tail has tremendous action. They come in 25+ color combinations. I also like the Bobby Garland Stroll-R's they also come in over 40 color combinations.

Longlining is an excellent way to introduce kids to crappie fishing. The fish basically hook themselves. No need to set the hook, simply pick up the rod and start reeling. You must be careful when reeling in the fish to keep them between the line spreads. That's the reason we vary the pole lengths. I'll get into more about making the turns in the next part.

### ***Power Trolling – Fast Trolling***

Power Trolling is kind of a new technique, however, some say it's been around a while. In the old days, it was done with cane poles. Now we use high density, heavy-action graphite rods. B'n'M designed a pole strictly for Power Trolling. It's called the POW-R-TROLLER, it comes in 14', 16', and 18'. I prefer the 16' mainly for the ease of use and it's reach.



Power Trolling allows you almost the same advantages as Long Line Trolling with couple major advantage. You can turn around on the fish much faster. If I'm long line trolling and go thru a school of fish, i.e. if I catch a couple at one time, I got to make a huge sweeping turn and try to come back on the school. If I'm power trolling and run thru a school, I can turn much faster, I can even stay with the school if necessary.

Another advantage is I don't have to reel in a fish from a distance. All I have to do is lift the fish in the boat and I'm right back fishing. The speeds are the about the same and I control the depth with the sinker weight. The POW-R-TROLLER poles are designed to hold up to 3 oz. weights. The collar allows the pole to fit securely in your rod holder.

The POW-R-TROLLER is a specialty pole, it's not designed for anything else but power trolling. It's too heavy for slow trolling. It's ideal for handling rough fish at speeds from 1mph to 2mph.

### ***Pulling Crankbaits – Fast Trolling***

Pulling Cranks have become one of the favorite summer and fall techniques all over the country for crappie. Each year I see more and more boats using this technique. You can utilize this method with any

bass rod but to effectively apply this technique to crappie fishing you've got to have the right pole combination.

Here again, my setup includes 8 PST poles, 2 – 18', 2 – 14', and 4 – 10'. The PST give any crankbait the perfect action. The depth is controlled by line distance. I use line counter reels to accurately measure my distance. I also prefer braided line because it saves my cranks and it takes less line out between the rod and the crankbait.

Crankbaits can be pushed or pulled effectively with the POW-R-TROLLER. If you choose to pull with the POW-R-TROLLER, they can be used as your 4 outside poles.

The key point to effectively pulling crankbaits is to have the correct spread. You want to carry a path at least 40' wide. The wider your path the more fish see your baits.