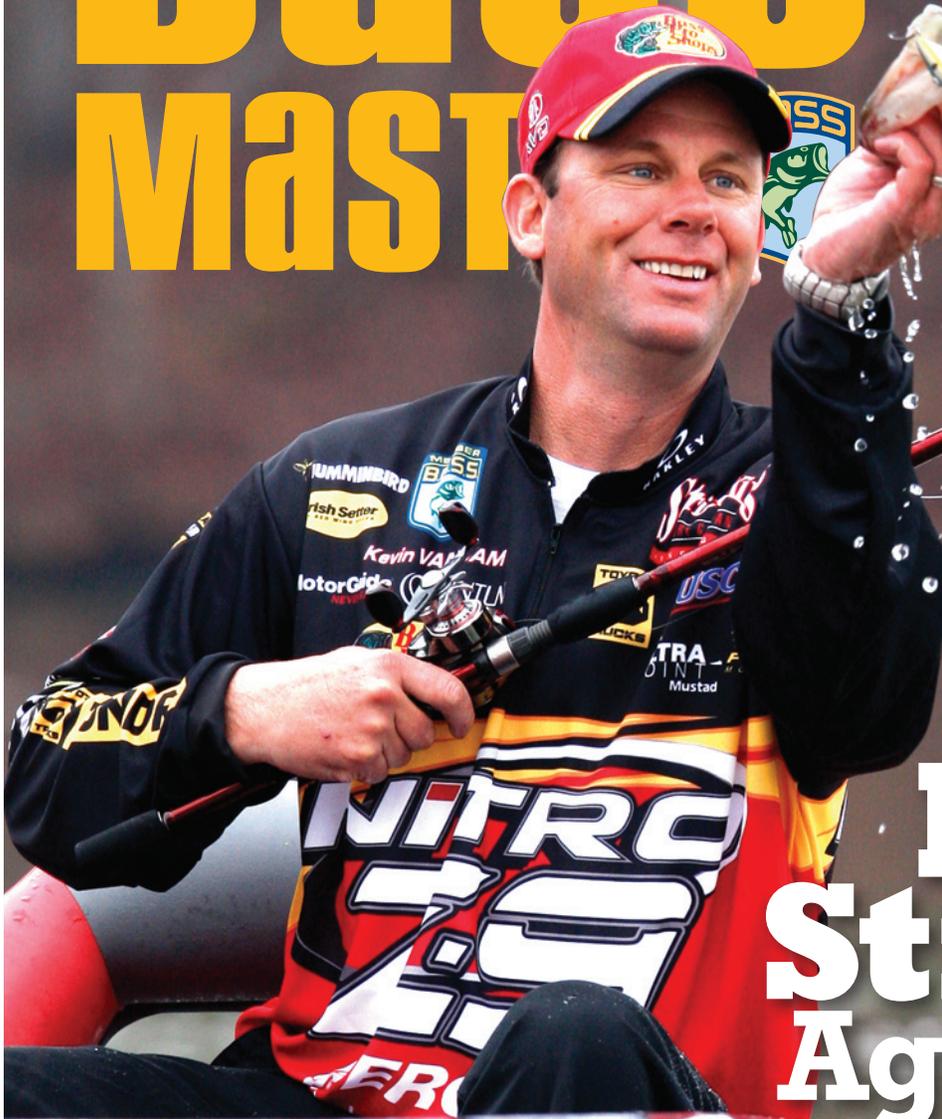


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Elite Series angler Gerald Swindle illustrates how a tiny buzzbait can produce giant results. **BY LOUIE STOUT**



The Smack-N-Shad: Versatility on Top

By DON WIRTH
Senior Writer

This newly introduced plug
has been refined during
the past 20 years.
Good luck trying to fish it
the wrong way

I'VE TESTED PLENTY of topwater lures in my four decades as a *Bassmaster* correspondent, but I must admit the new Smack-N-Shad from Redemption Outdoors absolutely blew me away when I tried it. While most surface plugs are one-trick ponies, this unassuming-looking minnow mimic is so versatile, it could replace every other surface bait in your tackle arsenal. It's both a finesse lure *and* a reaction strike lure, depending on how you fish it. *(Continued)*

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The Smack-N-Shad: Versatility on Top

The Smack-N-Shad is the brainchild of Crossville, Tenn., angler Ferlin Wynacht, who spent 20 years refining its design. "It always frustrated me to see bass breaking on top beyond the casting range of standard surface plugs," Wynacht told *Bassmaster*. "This is common in our clear Tennessee lakes, where schooling bass pull a disappearing act when you get too close to them with your boat. I designed the Smack-N-Shad with a slim profile, flat sides and an internal weight, so it's extremely wind-resistant and casts like a bullet. You can easily cast it 40 yards on 10-pound mono."

The 3 1/2-inch, 3/8-ounce Smack-N-Shad looks like a wide-eyed minnow with its mouth open. It's crafted of cedar, a wood prized by lure artisans for its extreme buoyancy and sensitivity to subtle rod movements. "Bass in the clearest lakes will swim up from deep water to inhale it when you barely twitch it on the surface," Wynacht promised, "yet it's also capable of creating enough noise and commotion to attract bass in murky water when you work it more aggressively. Depending on how you manipulate your rod, you can make it pop, spit, sputter, roll, chug, jerk, dart, skip, wobble, walk the dog, create a wake or just quiver on top like a nervous minnow. I've been fishing it for 20 years and I'm still discovering new ways to retrieve it."

In 2002, Wynacht showed prototypes of the Smack-N-Shad to legendary Tennessee smallmouth bass expert Billy Westmorland. "Billy tested the lure and was so excited about it, he offered to endorse it," he recalled. Unfortunately, Westmorland died before they came to an agreement. "But it was Westmorland's enthusiasm for the Smack-N-Shad that prompted me to continue refining it and eventually produce it commercially."



THE SMACK-N-SHAD has an internal weight, so you can cast it a very long way to reach schooling bass.

Photo: Laurie Tisdale

Reinforced hardware is an unseen advantage of the Smack-N-Shad. "We've all had hooks pull out of wood bass plugs, either when battling a big fish or when trying to pull the bait free when it hangs up," Wynacht said. "But the Smack-N-Shad features a specially designed stainless steel line tie and hook hangers reinforced with high-strength epoxy. We've also equipped the lure with premium Gamakatsu trebles that are so sharp, even bass that swipe at it lazily will usually get hooked — a real plus for tournament competitors."

The Smack-N-Shad is available directly from the manufacturer in four hand-painted color schemes: brushy mountain shad (blue-gray back with gray sides), roadkill (like brushy mountain shad with red blotches added), trailer trash (dark green back with light green sides) and cutie pie (dark gray back with yellow side stripe). All plugs have a pearl belly and a deep, durable epoxy clear coat. The lures cost \$17.95 each plus \$5 shipping and handling; add \$1 s/h for each additional lure ordered. Order lures online at www.smacknshad.com or call 931-260-7502.

