

With everything being shut down and completely different with school and social distancing this past year, it made working towards Master Angler even more fun. I spent tons of hours and have probably cast my line over a million times to get the Master Angler catches I have. I had some really unbelievable catches, and many heartbreaking just a bit too small catches. I've literally caught a dozen just under 19 inch smallmouth bass, a few 34 inch pike, and even a 58 inch sturgeon, all being just a tad too small! Do you know how frustrating that is? I've broke more poles and reels than any one person I know, and my family can attest to that.

My experience with Master Angler is different than most of my competition, as I don't always have the opportunity to get out on the boat and go fishing. I took this as a challenge and spent as much time fishing as possible, even if it meant fishing from shore. I'm proof that you can achieve the Master Angler Hall of Fame by catching all 14 fish from shore, or on the ice. There were many days of long walks carrying tons of equipment, sliding down the side of riverbanks, and many ruined muddy wet shoes to show for it. I did tons of research, studied fish movements, and spawning habits to know the best time to catch specific species. My favorite type of fishing is for crappie, bluegill, and smallmouth. I spent countless hours in the cold, wind, and rain to catch my crappie this year. I really enjoy scoping out new lakes in the winter and finding giant hidden pan-fish.

I'd like to say thank you to my parents for supporting me and my many adventures in fishing. I know my Mom has spent an unimaginable amount of time driving me to locations and hanging out till I catch that one fish! I have many adult mentors that I really enjoy fishing with and that are always teaching me new things. I consider myself lucky to have these mentors in my life. I also want to thank my friends for always being down to spend the day fishing with me, I know I can be hard to keep up with at times. Looking back this year has been especially memorable because with hard work and determination I was able to achieve Hall of Fame recognition. I truly love being outdoors and spending my time fishing, I feel very lucky to have the opportunity to participate in this program and be part of WIFA and the Menasha High School Fishing Team.

-Marcus Schultz