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[00:00:00] **Speaker 1** All right, well you already heard the first question, but give me a sense of when did you first start doing it?

[00:00:05] **Speaker 2** So when I first started fishing, it kind of started off with sucker fishing, actually with my dad and my family. You know, we would go up into the rivers and you know, just catch them by hands. And then eventually it developed from there, you know. As a kid, one of the things we did over summer, which we did almost every single day was we would just go to Lake Winnebago and actually just go off a high cliff. You know we didn't have a boat at that point so it was just fishing from those rocks. Bars there, and we would just pretty much go there every single day and just try to get some white bass off the shoreline there, and that's when I first fell in love with it. It was, you know, some days you would go, you learn, you'll learn patience from that, you know. You'll go and not catch a single fish one day, but the next day you go and you just completely hammer them, and That's when I really started to fall in love with fishing.

[00:00:57] **Speaker 1** So did you live in the Appleton area or where did you live to go to the backside of Winnipeg?

[00:01:03] **Speaker 2** So, I was born and raised in Green Bay, so I lived here my whole life. I only left for a couple years when I went to college at UW-Milwaukee. And then, of course, I came back here and lived here for my whole pretty much.

[00:01:16] **Speaker 1** So you guys would drive from Green Bay down to Highcliff.

[00:01:19] **Speaker 2** Yes, we would drive, drive about 30-45 minutes to High Cliff every single day. I remember every single day over summer, that's what we did. If it wasn't raining or something like that, we'd be at High Cliff.

[00:01:31] **Speaker 1** And so as you got older, did you have like a preference between what species you were going after? And when you're a kid, it's like what's easiest to catch, but at a certain point, you just start, oh, this is what I want to collect.

[00:01:42] **Speaker 2** So yeah, like any little kid, you know, you start off with pan fish, easy fish. And then as I grew up, I went to white bass fishing through Winnebago there. But as I got older, got more experience, I started getting into bass fishing, you know small mouth, large mouth. It was just always so fun to fish on because they were so aggressive. And then from there, you kind of branched two ways. It was either going salmon fishing, especially when I moved to Milwaukee, you know Milwaukee River is. Super underrated for salmon and trout fishing. It's world-class and I love it there. I do miss that kind of fishing, all the salmon fishing there. But as I came back to Green Bay, I got a boat and you know, with Green Bay being in my back door 10 minutes away, I just fell in love walleye fishing and that's kind of one of my big species I always like to chase is walleyes.

[00:02:33] **Speaker 1** What is it about walleye that makes them an apex for what people want to go to?

[00:02:38] **Speaker 2** So in my mind, walleyes is probably one of the best eating fish, fresh water fish in the area, but there's just something about these walleyess. You know, you'll catch eater size walleye, and then there's all of a sudden and you catch the 10 pounders, 30 inchers, and that'll just change your mind, you know. One of the things I always like to tell people is like, especially when it comes to catching big walleyesh through the ice, when you see that big walleye through the Ice Hole, it makes your heart pump like no other.

[00:03:09] **Speaker 1** For you, is it the moment when you feel hit, or is it when it finally gets in the bowie? What's that adrenaline course like for you?

[00:03:17] **Speaker 2** So the first adrenaline would definitely be the thumb when they just smacked your line you know I love that feeling but when they're on the edge of the boat or swimming next to the boat or at the bottom of the hole and you see it's a giant that's when it gets your heart beating it's just a it's, just a feeling you're always chasing when you're chasing walleyes.

[00:03:36] **Speaker 1** I mean, you could go out and catch a lot of fish, but it doesn't get old.

[00:03:40] **Speaker 2** No that's the thing about fishing is like you know you'll one day get your butt completely woofed and then the next thing you go and completely smash them and that's a thing about walleyes is there's such a size variation but when you get one of those big ones that's 25 inches or plus 10 pounders you know that's when you start getting really addicted to walleye fishing

[00:03:59] **Speaker 1** So, talk to me a little bit about the mental game that comes with walleye, because there really are kind of a picky, tricky fish at times, and it's not, I mean, almost anyone can go catch panna fish, which is why you bring kids together, but walleye requires a different approach.

[00:04:14] **Speaker 2** So while I would have to admit it is not the easiest fish to catch out there. There's so many different techniques. It's not like panfishing, you put something in front of their face, they're gonna eat it. There's been a couple instances where we went up to Sturgeon Bay and it's crystal clear water there and you drop your lure right in front of their faces and they'll just not care. These fish are lethargic and kind of plays by weather and kind the season they're in. So in the spring run they're not really aggressive because they're You know, they're doing their thing, you know, they're spawning, so you might get a bite here and there, and weather plays a big role, but one thing about walleyes is just, you know when they're on, you're gonna really smash them, and that's one of the reasons why I like them so much.

[00:04:59] **Speaker 1** So when did you start adding YouTube into this?

[00:05:03] **Speaker 2** So when I started out YouTube, you know, there was always this mindset at the back of my mind was like, you know we always had one of those days, you know where it was like so awesome, wish we would have captured that moment. And especially now with my kids, you know it's really nice to have that footage and go back and watch that kind of stuff and watch our little memories together. And you know that's one of the big things why I started filming all my fishing and stuff. It's just a good memory and I actually really enjoy doing it so. Uh, so I think I am in about five years ago now, something around there. I started really getting into it and before that, I'll take my GoPro out and just, you know, film, not really have, you know, anything footage out of it. But about five year ago as I started making a YouTube channel, making some content, pushing it out there and letting the world see as well.

[00:05:55] **Speaker 1** So what kind of feedback do you get from that channel?

[00:05:59] **Speaker 2** So, you know, there's always positive and negative about, you know fishing and stuff, but a majority of it, especially when it comes to like fishing Green Bay for walleyes, you almost anyone who hears about fishing walleyess in Wisconsin, they're going to be thinking about Green Bay because it's has huge walleyas and that's what a lot of people are chasing. And people really do appreciate my videos. They like to see like what I'm using, what I am doing and where I'm fishing, you know, to see what kind of bites going on during the time of season.

[00:06:28] **Speaker 1** So is there a different feeling for you if you catch one while you're filming versus if you catch it when you're not filming?

[00:06:36] **Speaker 2** I swear every time I don't bring my camera I always have one of my best days out there I swear but you know it's There's a little bit of a weird feeling when I don't have my camera these days But you know I always do prefer to have a calling camera just sometimes some really awesome stuff happen on camera And you know, it's it's nice to go back and watch that and laugh about it when you're all done

[00:06:59] **Speaker 1** So talk to me a little bit about the YouTube culture, because there are people that learn from them, there's other people that just enjoy watching, like that's, they don't have the chance to do, but what is the audience you're reaching?

[00:07:12] **Speaker 2** So mainly the audience I'm trying to reach is just people who have similar hobbies with me, like who like to fish and stuff like that, especially in the Wisconsin area, a lot of my videos are going to be mainly focused on fishing Wisconsin and especially Green Basin since it's so close, but most of the audience will pretty much love fishing just like me, and that's why I kind of like doing it, we kind of build a little bit of community, you know, every once in a while now I go out in public, hey, you're that guy that... Films YouTube for Green Bay, and I was like, yup. And then it's kind of nice to meet people and grow as a Waller community.

[00:07:48] **Speaker 1** So, historically, there's all sorts of things surrounding fishermen and the big story, the fish tales. I mean, everyone talks about the lies that fishermen tell people are, or afterwards, about how big it was, and you actually have the evidence. Is that in line with that same storytelling culture around fishing, or is that kind of like putting the truth to that culture?

[00:08:09] **Speaker 2** It's a little bit of both, you know. Some days you still give that little fish tail a lie. You know, we completely smashed them, but you didn't have the camera working or something along the lines of that. But it's definitely adds a lot of evidence to, you know, hey, we really did have a good day out there. We had a lot fun. You know even though we didn't catch that many fish, we still had so much fun out there, you know, and that's kind of why I like filming it too. Because most of the time, or half the time it's not always about catching fish. Sometimes it's. Just about being out there, hanging out with your friends, and just having a good time.

[00:08:41] **Speaker 1** I mean, people have taken fish pics forever. I mean that's always been like, since cameras have been around, people catch a big fish, they want to take a picture of it or, you know, taxidermy, they hang it on the wall. This, that fits definitely in line with what you're, what you were doing. It's just an extension of that history, right?

[00:08:58] **Speaker 2** Yeah for sure I mean like having fish mounted you know there's always a story behind it but with actually having video of it it's like oh man you can almost relive that good time you had out there you know a lot of my videos it's just pretty much hanging out with my friends and We can always have a good laugh together.

[00:09:20] **Speaker 1** So a lot of the walleye fishing culture is dominated by older white men. What's it like to be younger and to bring in a different audience or bring a different perspective into that? Like are you trying to bring more people into it or what would you say to people who are like, I don't know if that space is for me.

[00:09:37] **Speaker 2** I definitely think that yes, it is pretty segregated now. There's definitely a lot more older white guys out there while they're fishing. And that's kind of why I started this content. No, I can kind of see it in the younger generations. You know, they are all about social media these days. And I feel like the fishing industry or just going out, going fishing, enjoying the outdoor is dying. And that kind of one of the reasons why I like doing this YouTube stuff. You know I want to show that, hey, you know I'm out there, I'm filming and I'm having fun. In order to be. Out there doing it yourself and you don't have to be stuck inside just scrolling through Facebook or social media like that, you know, there's a life outside electronic.

[00:10:17] **Speaker 1** Do you think that's important for people to hear that there is room for them out there on the lake or on the ice?

[00:10:22] **Speaker 2** Yeah, for sure. I mean, there's so much opportunity to go out fishing. You don't need a big, expensive boat. You just need a pole and a line and some worms, and you're still going to have a good time out there. So that's the thing is, fishing can be so expensive, but it can be cheap as well at the same time, and you can still have such an awesome time out.

[00:10:42] **Speaker 1** Yeah, your story starts with you being a kid just right off the shoreline, right? Sure you weren't using $80 rods and fancy gear back then.

[00:10:51] **Speaker 2** Yeah, my family, my parents were a refuge from the Vietnam War. So they came here not much, and then we made do with what we had growing up. And fishing was fun, but it was also putting food on the table. So that's why it doesn't take too much to get out there. You know?

[00:11:11] **Speaker 1** So, as far as food on the table, you talk about how good walleye is. Do you like to do fish fries? I mean, it's stock in the freezer and having family over, is that a big part of it?

[00:11:22] **Speaker 2** So yeah, I love having fish fried, but lately I've been going on a diet, so I've not been doing as much fish fry as I usually do, but there's nothing that can beat a fresh fish right off the river and just cooking it right there. I'm always a big guy of not storing it in the freezer just because it's just not as good as when it is fresh.

[00:11:41] **Speaker 1** So obviously, you've got a couple of young kids. They had a chance to come in. Obviously, your son's very young, but have they been out in the boat with you? Is that something that you can't wait to share with them?

[00:11:52] **Speaker 2** Yeah, my daughter's been going out with me lately and she really enjoys it. She kind of wants to go fast on the boat right now, but she does like to reel in the fish here and there every once in a while.

[00:12:03] **Speaker 1** I mean, what is that element of, you know, that family part of this? I mean you talked about fishing with your dad, or your brothers, your siblings, and like, how important is fishing culture to having friends and family around you?

[00:12:17] **Speaker 2** I think fishing is fun, but when you're all alone, all by yourself all the time, it's not as fun as having a group or your family or your kids with you. Even if it's easier to have more fun not catching fish with your friends and family than it is when you are by yourself. So like I always say, if I'm going out there I usually invite a whole mess of people. If they can come they can, and it's always just more fun if you have more people with you, no matter what you catch. Catching fish is always just a bonus.

[00:12:50] **Speaker 1** So what's it going to be like for you the first time you see your kids reel in their own big walleye?

[00:12:56] **Speaker 2** Oh man, the first time my daughter, hopefully the first time she catches it. Hopefully it's a 10 pounder so I can put it on the wall, but I'm going to be ecstatic, you know. She is just on the borderline of like, really in her own fish for now, casting her own line. So it's coming up soon, but I just can't wait.

[00:13:13] **Speaker 1** And I saw you got your son in a onesie about fishing. I mean, part of that is important. What you teach your kids when they're even that young, like that is part, I'm sure you were introduced to fishing at a young enough age that it's just what you did, right?

[00:13:28] **Speaker 2** Yeah, as a parent now, you know, that's one big thing I'm trying to push, you know, try to get away from electronics, tea as much as you can, and, you know, spending more time with them, especially quality time outside doing the things I love because I want them to be doing what I love to in the future.

[00:13:44] **Speaker 1** So another element of this story that we're looking at looks at all of the research and all the money that's pumped into groups that raise walleye fry to stock his fingerlings or the amount of money that's spent to do these studies on walleye, why in some places they're not doing as well and how to boost populations. And it's a lot of money. It's a lotta hours and a lotta volunteer time. And I'm curious how would you quantify weather. Because if walleye go down or disappear from some places like other fish will still be there So what is it about walleye specifically that makes it worth? To do all this to spend all this money or all this effort to make sure they're still there

[00:14:28] **Speaker 2** So you know when it comes down to walleye fishing you know it's it's a crazy industry because you know a lot of people are buying like hundred thousand dollar boats plus just to go chase walleyes and you know. When it comes for the spring run especially here in Green Bay you know if you ever showed up and seen the Fox River first open water you could literally walk across the river on boats and you know it's a crazy crazy industry and I think that you know it's no amount of money is you know you could put as much money as you want into it you know there's no end to that and I think walleyes are specifically important is because they taste good and they're fun to catch and they get big and you know it's it's kind of its own little world you know these fish are an amazing creature in their own ways.

[00:15:24] **Speaker 1** But you were talking about when you started and what species you were targeting as you grew up And you said you eventually kind of had those options and you branched out But what age were you first aware that walleye was considered like different from some of the other things?

[00:15:38] **Speaker 2** I would say when I was in my early teens or so, you know, the thing about it is like bass fishing is so addicting and then you get to a point where you're like, hey, you can pretty much throw anything in front of a bass and they'll eat it. And then you go to this next level, wait, these walleyes are different, they take a little bit of skills or else you're never going to catch them. And that's why I tell a lot of people come on my boat, you got to know how to jig. You know this. I get this from my friends all the time, because I always tell them, whenever I'm catching fish on a boat, they're not catching anything, I always say, you gotta know how to jig, and they always jokingly say that to me, and say, hey, you got to know how to jig if I'm not catching a thing, but definitely walleyes is a different predator in some way. It's definitely a little bit more tougher to catch, and that's what makes them so much more fun.

[00:16:25] **Speaker 1** I mean, and so being successful kind of is a way to demonstrate your skill level. It's a way of, I mean if you say, if someone says, I'm really good at catching panfish, okay. But if you said, I am really good in catching walleye, you've got the videos to prove it. You're looked at differently, right? Thank you very much.

[00:16:41] **Speaker 2** Yeah, definitely. Walleyes, especially Green Bay, if you look at Green Bay it's a huge body of water. If you can put on a good day out on the bay, you got something going on right and you definitely figure something out. And compared to other fish, you just put something in front of their face, they're going to eat it. But if you find all the walleyes in the world, some days they might not just eat and then you just got to pick them apart. That's the fun of it. You got to throw different things, you and different techniques and you know if you figure it out it just makes it feel way better.

[00:17:16] **Speaker 1** Anything else that you want to add that we've been talking about.

[00:17:22] **Speaker 2** I just want to say that, you know, I believe walleyes are one of the best fish around in this area, the Wisconsin area. They're great to eat and you know living in Green Bay here, you know I want the population to thrive so my kids can enjoy them one day just like I am. And you know walley's are important to me and that's why I'm involved in programs like Walleyes for Tomorrow and trying to improve habitat and trying make just better walleye fisheries around.

[00:17:53] **Speaker 1** Can I get you to say and spell your name just so I'm correct on the tape?

[00:17:57] **Speaker 2** My name is Shia Vang, spell S-H-I-A-V-A N-G.

[00:18:04] **Speaker 1** Alright, and what's the name of your YouTube channel?

[00:18:07] **Speaker 2** My YouTube channel is Shia's Outdoor Adventures.

[00:18:11] **Speaker 1** That wasn't so bad, right? No. Great. Just do 20 seconds of higher room tone. So we're just going to be quiet so we can record the sound of the room. That should work.