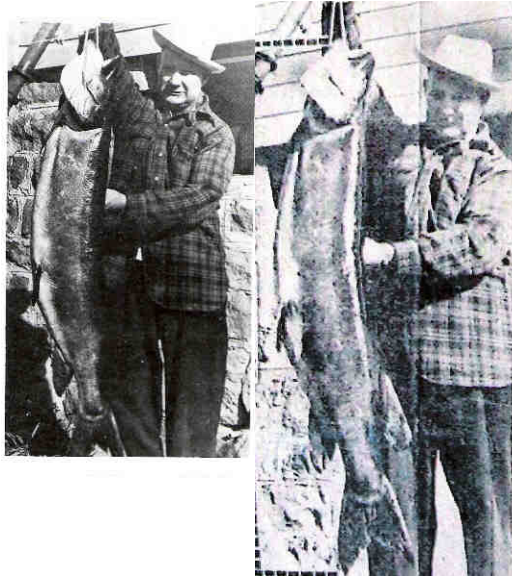


Louie Spray 69-11 Chippewa Flowage, Wisconsin – 1949



These photographs are the others of only three known originals of Spray's 1949 record. The one on the right is the most obscure and rarely seen

After Johnson caught his record muskie in late July, a brash claim echoed forth from none other than Louie Spray. Dettloff covered it in a *Musky Hunter* article entitled, *In Defense of Louie Spray* in the Dec. 1991/Jan. 1992 issue ...*The third strike against Sprays musky involved a comment he made following Cal Johnson's 67 1/2-pound world record musky catch. Cal was a frequent Hayward area visitor, sportswriter, and well liked by the area residents who greatly accepted and embraced his record catch. Now enters Louie Spray, and at a celebration thrown to honor Cal Johnson's catch a gag telegram sent by Spray was read to the crowd:*

DON'T GIVE AWARD YET. I WILL CATCH A NEW WORLD RECORD MUSKY THIS SEASON. SIGNED LOUIE SPRAY.

Low and behold if Spray didn't come up with a bigger musky like he said! Cal was upstaged by Louie's catch and many people couldn't believe it. Not wanting to see Johnson's fish dethroned so quickly, they were very receptive to believing and spreading rumors discrediting Sprays catch. Spray's comment is not surprising though, for he had known about and spotted a record-class musky during the past several seasons on the Chippewa Flowage. His comment was probably half jest and half very serious, knowing that he did have a chance to better Johnson's catch.

Well, here you will have to make up your own mind. Dettloff calls Spray's telegram a *gag* and says that it was probably ...*half jest*...but there is nothing in archives of Spray's claiming it was a gag. One has to find it very curious that Spray's 1939 record was caught less than one month after Haver's record catch, his 1940 fish was caught less than two months after Haver's record catch and conveniently in 1949 he tops Johnson's record catch less than three months after it was

caught! Again a Dettloff comment ...*Keeping bogus records on the books diminishes the standing of all the great angling achievements that have honestly been made.*

I have no clue as to how Dettloff reconciles one of his idols usurping the other.

Last, Ellis challenges Spray's 1949 world record in his *True* magazine article.

Spray said he caught his new record fish on October 20 between 5:30 and 6 p.m. with an 18-inch sucker off Fleming's bar in the Chippewa Flowage. He said that in the boat with him were Ted Hagg, a tavern keeper from Sarona, Wisconsin, and a Hayward guide, George Quentmeyer. There was the usual story of how the fish was finally boated, but then shortly after the news got around, along comes one Tony Burmek, another Hayward guide, who said: "I was fishing on Fleming's bar and Pete's bar, right near it, from three o'clock until dark on October twentieth, and Spray was not there. Nobody else was there. Spray wasn't on Fleming's bar the day before either. Fleming's bar is only two blocks long, and I don't see how I could have overlooked another boat, especially if it spent forty-five minutes landing a fish as big as that one."

Right away Nathan W. Heller of the Lie Detector Laboratories in Milwaukee announced through The Milwaukee Journal that he would examine free of charge any muskie fisherman who might want to prove his stories. His offer still stands, but he has received no takers.

Burmek came in for considerable criticism from resort owners who wanted to know whether he was for or against Hayward. "You are one of Hayward's leading guides," they said, "and you should be proud of Hayward."

Burmek, in a long letter to the press, explained that he was proud of Hayward, but added that he certainly would like to see this muskie mess cleaned up.

And so would a lot of people in Wisconsin, and in some other states that claim the 'lunge as a headliner in their resort advertising.

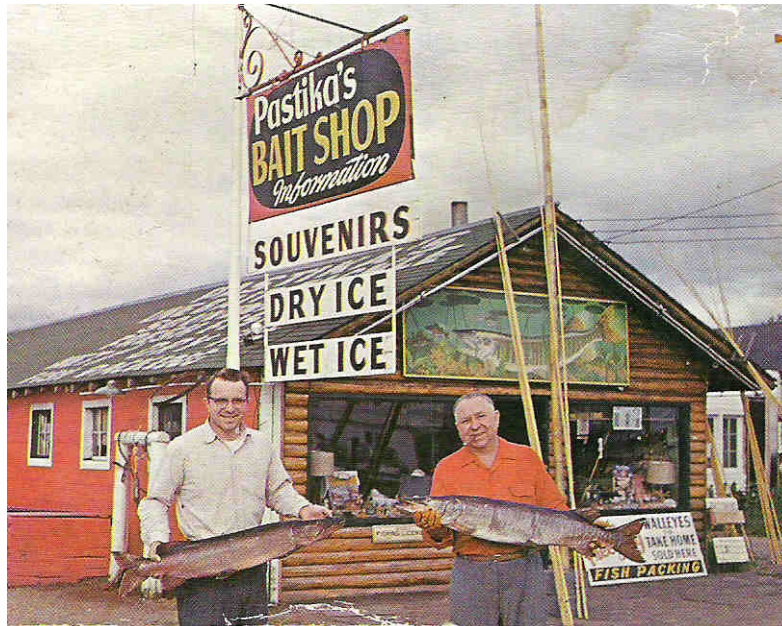
But what is done is done, and both Johnson's fish and the one Spray said he caught have been recognized in some circles as world record catches. Considering the notarized statements these men submitted, the judges had no other choice.

Could Ellis' article be considered sensational journalism? I don't believe so. Rather, he was performing his journalistic responsibility and seeking out the truth. The circles he refers to are the record sanctioning bodies. Let us return now to Louie Spray's story after the catch.

...We headed for Herman's Landing where the grog flowed freely for a few minutes - then to Hayward to weigh it, but the stores were closed.

We stopped at Charlie Pastika's Bait Shop, but he had no scales. We stopped at Stroner's Store, but his grocery scales would not weigh it either, so we went down Highway 27 and on out to Karl Kahmann's, the taxidermist, whose scale I thought would weigh it, but Karl had

had his fill of world record muskies, with the Cal Johnson catch that had beaten me not too long before.



Charlie Pastika (r) with son Leon. Photo courtesy Leon Pastika

It should be noted here that Spray's account of when they went to Kahmann's place didn't mesh with the affidavit account given by Ted Haag (see below) and was different from what published reports of that day said. What Spray himself said had them going directly to Karl Kahmann's taxidermy shop. This was further supported in a letter from Spray to me in December of 1979 when Spray related that the original photos of him and his record fish were taken *...in back of Karl Kahmann's Taxidermy Shop*. With darkness coming early in late October, it would have been impossible to take the photos later after the weighing unless done the following day! Why would they go back then if Kahmann had refused to mount the fish? Back now to the completion of the story.

He showed us how they had to get a bulldozer in to make a road from his shop back to the main road, because the narrow road into his place from the Town Road had become so plugged with cars when the word got around that Cal's fish was out there, that they, nor anyone else, could get out of the yard. They tore up his lawn: they backed over his shrubbery and did untold damage to his grounds. Karl said, "Get it out of here and don't come back." I reasoned with him that due to our long and continued friendship that I was quite perturbed by his attitude toward me. He calmed down and said that he was not angry with me or anyone else but just did not want to be bothered with the mob again. I was sure down in the dumps because, who could I get to mount such an important fish, should it be a Record? When we got to Stone Lake, Ted said he was thirsty for a drink of water. (Imagine Ted drinking water!) So we stopped at Smock's Tavern to get it and show off the fish. We were asking about scales and someone mentioned that Jack Reinke, the postmaster, might come down and weigh it. The post office was alongside of Smock's Tavern and Jack did come down to weigh it. It was 69 lbs. 11 oz. ...a new world record. We set up some whoopee then and there, and Ted had had

enough “water” (on the side), we headed on for home but I was very worried about who would mount that fish.

It was late when I got home so I carefully packed the fish in ice in the basement and got busy on the phone looking for a good qualified taxidermist. Les Fossum, a bait and tackle salesman, told me about a man in Wausau, Wisconsin, whom I called. He said he wanted to look at it before making any decision, so early the next morning I was on my way over there. His store and shop was located out of Wausau a ways, at Schofield. He asked me why I did not have Karl Kahmann mount it and I told him why. Then he was afraid of a mob busting into the place and informed me that he was not equipped to handle a multitude of curiosity seekers. However, after some coffee and get-acquainted talk, he promised to do the job, providing I kept it strictly confidential. I left the fish with him and didn't even tell my wife where it was. Because of this, the fish was not placed on display before it was mounted, as had the other two record muskies I had caught. All in all, I was very disappointed because I could not display it or even tell where it was, so naturally, once again I got some very unfavorable publicity from sports writers and such, but good old Hugh Lackey, the taxidermist, went right to work and I soon had the fish on display, and the gossip, rumors, and “you gotta show me” attitude, narrowed down to the fact that someone must have caught the critter because there it was. I finally got the gass off my back.

Now that we have the rest of Louie's story, let's look at his documentation. The first bit of evidence he obtained immediately after the weighing of the fish on a United States postal scale. On United States Post Office stationary was the following.

10/20/49

69 lbs. 11 ounces muskie weighed, above date.

63 1/2 inches in length

31 1/4 inches in girth,

Witnessed by -

J.C. Reinke (Postmaster)

George Quentmeyer (Spray's fishing partner)

T.A. Hagg (guide – with Spray on a “day off”)

Louis Spray (Spray is witnessing his own fish size – not allowed)

A short time later, Louie got busy and obtained affidavits from everyone involved; from the people with him right on through the taxidermists. Following are those affidavits.

STATE of WISCONSIN

County of Barron

Ted Hagg, of Sarona, Wisconsin, being first duly sworn, on oath says that he accompanied Louis Spray of Rice Lake, Wis. on October 20th, 1949, on a fishing trip, and was present in the boat with him and George Quentmeyer, licensed guide of Hayward, Wisconsin. That the three of them fished together from the same boat near Herman's Landing on the Chippewa Flowage near Hayward, Wisconsin. That at about 4:00 p. m. on that date he saw Mr. Louis

Spray hook and land on rod, reel and line, a muskellunge weighing 69 lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 5 feet 3 1/2 inches long. That although he did not time the actual fight he would estimate that to the best of his knowledge, it took approximately 45 minutes to land said fish. That Mr. Spray fought and landed the fish without any assistance except that the guide George Quentmeyer shot the fish twice.

That to the best of his recollection the fish was landed at approximately 4:00 p. m. That he went with the said Louis Spray and George Quentmeyer from Herman's Landing on the Chippewa Flowage where they got the boat and where they landed with the fish, to Pastika's Bait and Tackle Shop to obtain ice, thence to Stroner's Store at Hayward, Wisconsin to have the muskie weighed. That the scales at Stroner's store were not large enough to weigh the fish so they proceeded to the Stone Lake, Wisconsin post office where the fish was weighed in my presence by Jack Reinke, local postmaster, on the governmental post office scales. That the said fish weighed 69 lbs. 11 oz. That I was present when Mr. Reinke measured the fish with a steel tape and that it measured 63 1/2 inches in length and 31 1/2 inches in girth. That the said fish was weighed at the Stone Lake post office at approximately 6:45 p.m. on that date. That thereafter they proceeded to the shop of Karl Kahmann, taxidermist at Hayward, Wisconsin, and inquired whether or not he would mount the fish. That Mr. Kahmann said it would be impossible for him to get at the job for from 60 to 90 days so it was taken to another taxidermist.

Ted Hagg

Subscribed and sworn to before me

This 28th day of October, 1949.

Margaret Mesang

Notary Public, Barron Cty., Wis.

My comm...expires 11-23-52

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Sawyer County

George Quentmeyer, of Hayward, Wisconsin, being first duly sworn, on oath says that he is a licensed guide and that on the 20th of October, 1949, he was employed by Louis Spray of Rice Lake, Wisconsin. Again we have conflicting reports. Quentmeyer says above in this affidavit that he "was employed by Louis Spray" and below says; while accompanying Mr. Spray," whereas Spray said in a taped radio interview ...On that particular day, George Quentmeyer, a guide who was off duty, joined Ted and myself for a fishing expedition. A minor point at best, but since it is highly likely that Spray prepared this affidavit, which was notarized by his wife, one has to wonder which it was, "employed" or "off duty." Back to the rest of Quentmeyer's affidavit.

That he accompanied Mr. Spray together with Ted Hagg of Sarona, Wisconsin on a fishing expedition on the Chippewa Flowage near Hayward, Wisconsin. That they put out from Herman's Landing and fished for several hours. That while accompanying Mr. Spray on this occasion Louis Spray did hook and land with rod, reel and line a muskellunge weighing 69

lbs. 11 oz. and measuring 63 1/2 inches long. That your affiant shot the fish twice but that otherwise the fish was hooked, played and landed by Mr. Louis Spray without any assistance, except that this affiant also helped lift the fish into the boat. That he was present in the boat with Mr. Spray as was Mr. Hagg at all times above described. That he would estimate that it took Mr. Spray approximately 50 minutes to land the fish. That the bait used was a sucker minnow, and that the fish was finally landed at about 4:00 p.m. of that date. That they then proceeded to Herman's Landing where they showed the fish to the proprietor and his wife. That from there they proceeded to Pastika's Bait and Tackle Shop to obtain ice. Then to Stroner's store at Hayward to have the fish weighed. That when it was discovered that Stroner's scales were not large enough to weigh said fish they proceeded to the Stone Lake post office where the fish was weighed in the presence of this affiant and in the presence of Mr. Spray and Mr. Hagg by Jack Reinke, Stone Lake postmaster. That the fish was weighed on the official post office scales and that it weighed 69 lbs. 11 oz. That after the fish was weighed Mr. Reinke measured the same with a steel tape. That from the tip of the tail to the tip of the snout the fish measured 63 1/2 inches and around the girth that the said fish was 31 1/4 inches. That the said fish was so measured in my presence.

George Quentmeyer

Subscribed and sworn to before me

This 28th day of October, 1949.

Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)

Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.

My comm. expires March 2, 1952

STATE OF WISCONSIN

Sawyer County

Herman Ceranske and Edna E. Ceranske, his wife, being first duly sworn, on oath do each for themselves say that they are the proprietors of a resort known as Herman's Landing located on the Chippewa Flowage near Hayward, Wisconsin. That they were present at their resort on the 20th of October, 1949. That they, of their own personal knowledge, know that Mr. Louis Spray and Mr. Ted Hagg fished the Chippewa Flowage in a boat rented from them in the company of each other and in the company of Mr. George Quentmeyer, licensed guide, of Hayward, Wisconsin. That at about 4:15 p.m. of said day, they were present when the above named parties landed at Herman's Landing with the same boat they had rented from them and that Mr. Spray had in his possession the largest muskellunge that either of them had ever seen. That the muskie had been freshly caught and the parties told them Mr. Spray had just caught it. That present with them at the time that Spray, Hagg and Quentmeyer landed was one Mr. Nixon Barnes, a carpenter of Hayward, Wisconsin. That Mr. Barnes measured the fish in the presence of all the above named people and claimed it measured 5'4" long. That this is by far the largest muskellunge that we or any of us had ever seen. That we did not have a scale at our resort strong enough to weigh said fish and it was not weighed in our presence.

Edna E. Ceranske

Herman Ceranske

*Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 28th day of October, 1949.
Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)
Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.
My comm. expires March 2, 1952*

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Sawyer County

Nixon Barnes, being first duly sworn, on oath says that he is by occupation a carpenter and that he was at Herman's Landing on the Chippewa Flowage on the 20th day of October, 1949 at about 4:15 p. m., when Louis Spray, Ted Hagg and George Quentmeyer landed at said resort and had with them a muskellunge which they all said Mr. Spray had caught in the Chippewa Flowage. That it was by far the largest muskellunge I had ever seen. That I measured the same and found it measured 5'4" long. That there was no scale at Herman's Landing sufficient to weigh the fish so it was not weighed there. The fish was undoubtedly freshly caught at the time we had seen it.

Nixon Barnes

*Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 28th day of October, 1949.*

*Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)
Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.
My comm. expires March 2, 1952*

STATE OF WISCONSIN
County of Sawyer

Charles Pastika, being first duly sworn, on oath says that he is the owner of Pastika's Bait and Tackle Shop near Hayward, Wisconsin. That he was present in said shop at approximately 6:00 p.m. on October 20th, 1949 when Mr. Louis Spray, Mr. Ted Hagg, and Mr. George Quentmeyer came to said shop to obtain ice with which to pack a large muskie. That I saw said muskie and that it was undoubtedly the largest muskie I had ever seen. That I did not weigh or measure said muskie. That I did observe that it was freshly caught and that Hagg, Spray and Quentmeyer all said that Mr. Spray had just caught it from Herman's Landing on the Chippewa Flowage. That the parties did not stay at my shop very long as they were in a hurry to have the fish weighed and measured.

Charles Pastika

*Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 28th day of October, 1949.*

*Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)
Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.
My comm. expires March 2, 1952*

STATE OF WISCONSIN
County of Sawyer

Jake Jordan of Hayward, Wisconsin, being first duly sworn, says that he was at Pastika's Boat & Tackle Shop at about 6:00 p.m. on October 20, 1949, when Mr. Louis Spray, Mr. Ted

Hagg and Mr. George Quentmeyer came in said shop for ice. That Mr. Spray displayed a large muskellunge which he had just caught in the Chippewa Flowage. That the muskie was undoubtedly the largest that he had ever seen and that it was obviously freshly caught. Mr. Spray stated in the presence of myself and Mr. Pastika and the others that he had caught the fish on Fleming's Bar in the Chippewa Flowage on a large sucker minnow.

Jake Jordan

Subscribed and sworn to before me

This 28th day of October, 1949.

Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)

Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.

My comm. expires March 2, 1952

STATE OF WISCONSIN
Sawyer County

Milton Stroner, says, being first duly sworn on oath, that he is the proprietor of Stroner's Store at Hayward, Wisconsin. That on Thursday, October 20, 1949, while we were having our evening meal, Mr. Louis Spray, Mr. Ted Hagg and Mr. George Quentmeyer called at the store and showed us the largest muskie that I have ever seen. Mr. Spray had just caught the same in the Chippewa Flowage near here and wanted to have it weighed and measured. However, the scale I had in my store would not weight anything over 35 pounds so it was impossible to weigh the fish. Mr. Spray then brought some gas at my store and the three of them again departed with the fish.

Milton Stroner

*Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 28th day of October, 1949.*

*Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)
Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.
My comm. expires March 2, 1952*

STATE OF WISCONSIN
County of Sawyer

Jack Reinke, of Stone Lake, Wisconsin, being first duly sworn on oath, says that he is the postmaster of the Stone Lake, Wisconsin post office. That about 6:45 p.m. on October 20, 1949, he was called upon by Mr. Louis Spray, George Quentmeyer and Ted Hagg. who had in their possession the largest muskellunge that he had ever seen. That all of the parties said that Mr. Spray had caught it that afternoon in the Chippewa Flowage near Hayward. That at their request we proceeded to the post office where I personally weighed the fish on the post office scales. That the fish weighed 69 lbs. 11 oz. That thereupon I measured the fish with a steel tape and it measured 63 1/2 inches long. That I measured the girth of the fish and that the same measured 31 1/4 inches. That Louis Spray, George Quentmeyer and Ted Hagg were present when I weighed and measured said fish.

Jack Reinke

*Subscribed and sworn to before me
This 28th day of October, 1949.*

*Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)
Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.
My comm. expires March 2, 1952*

STATE OF WISCONSIN
County of Sawyer

Karl W. Kahmann, being first duly sworn, on oath says that he is a taxidermist at Hayward, Wisconsin, and that in the evening of October 20, 1949, Mr. Louis Spray called at his shop with a muskellunge which Spray claimed weighed 69 lbs. 11 oz. and was a new world's record. That I personally saw said muskie although had not measured or weighed it. That I saw the same was freshly caught and was undoubtedly one of the largest muskies I had ever seen. That Mr. Spray requested me to mount said muskie but that I advised Mr. Spray it could not be done by me within the next 60 to 90 days and that I advised Mr. Spray that if he wished the muskie mounted sooner he should attempt to get some other taxidermist to do the same.

Karl W. Kahmann

Subscribed and sworn to before me

This 28th day of October, 1949.

Inez Spray (Spray's WIFE!)

Notary Public, Sawyer County, Wis.

My comm. expires March 2, 1952

Spray must have had the whole gang in to do affidavits on October 28th and it sure kept his wife Inez busy typing them all up and notarizing them. She even prepared the next one for Lackey but it was notarized elsewhere.

STATE OF WISCONSIN

County of Marathon

I, Hugh A. Lackey, being first duly sworn on oath, says that he is a taxidermist at Schofield, Wisconsin, and that on Saturday, October 22nd, 1949, Mr. Louis Spray of Rice Lake, Wisconsin, delivered to him a very large muskie to mount. That Spray told him it was a world record muskie. That a price was agreed upon and that he would mount the muskie, provided such information was kept from the press and public until after the mounting was completed. That examination of the muskie disclosed that there was nothing inside or out to add artificial weight. That I am mounting the muskie and it will be ready for delivery about November 20th, 1949.

Hugh A. Lackey

Subscribed and sworn to before me

This 5th day of November, 1949.

Gertrude Sarges

Notary Public, Marathon Cty., Wis.

My comm. expires Sept 3-1950



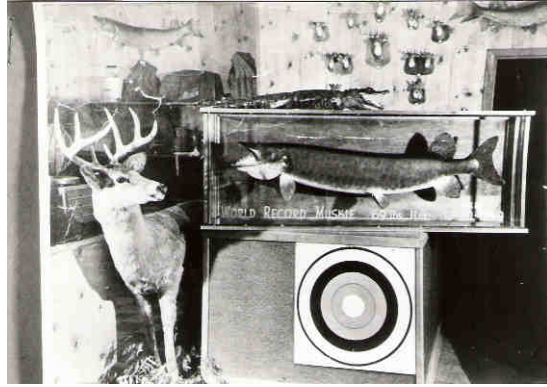
Hmmm, mount 'peers a bit long vs. the fresh fish!



Spray shown in front of Lackey's Sport Shop w/completed mount



Spray with the mount at his Bar in Rice Lake in 1952



A third early photograph of Spray's mount surfaced in 1992, obtained by Klaus Winkler from the owner of Buds Sport Shop in Richfield, Wisconsin, where it was displayed for a short time, likely after Spray sold his Bar in Rice Lake. He sent it to Joe Bucher or 'Musky Hunter' who forwarded it to me. Mr. Winkler stated that it was "...perhaps a pleasant find of Musky angling history for all musky anglers and Historians to enjoy."

One glaring point to me, regarding the Spray affidavits, is the fact that the affidavits were not prepared by the affiants, for example; several of the affidavits begin with I and later in the same affidavit use the second person. It appears quite obvious they were all formatted and prepared by Spray's wife Inez and merely signed by the affiants.

Now for a moment let's review the statement and subsequent newspaper articles surrounding the Burmek allegations regarding the location where Spray's fish was supposedly caught. First, is the newspaper article written by R.G. Lynch, sports editor of the *Milwaukee Sentinel*. This one was dated November 12, 1949.

Where Was Louie on the Afternoon of Oct. 20?

Louis Spray, Rice Lake tavern keeper, says his latest world record musky was caught about 5:30 or 6 o'clock on the afternoon of Oct. 20 off Fleming's bar in the Chippewa Flowage.

Now comes Tony Burmek, a Hayward guide, who says: "I was fishing on Fleming's bar and Pete's bar, right near it, from 3 o'clock until dark on Oct. 20, and Spray was not there. Nobody else was there." Spray has two witnesses to his catch - another tavern keeper, Ted Hagg of Sarona, and a Hayward guide, George Quentmeyer, who say that they were in the boat with him.

Quentmeyer has said: "Several of us knew there was a big fish on Fleming's bar. Spray and Hagg had been after it for three weeks. I worked with them the last three days. Thursday, we worked from noon until 5:30 or 6. There was quite a fuss when Louie hooked the big one, then it went down and Louie gave him plenty of time before he brought it in and I shot it. About 45 minutes, I think."

Now Burmek says: "Spray wasn't on Fleming's bar the day before, either. He was hanging around the Dun-Rovin resort. That was Wednesday. On Thursday, I didn't see him at all.

Fleming's bar is only two blocks long and I don't see how I could have overlooked another boat, especially if it spent 45 minutes landing a fish as big as that one."

Suggests Lie Test

Spray's muskie weighed 69 pounds, 11 ounces. It surpassed a record fish of 67 pounds 8 ounces brought in July 24 on Lac Courte Oreilles by Cal Johnson, a Hayward outdoor writer. Spray had told Johnson that he would beat Johnson's fish before the season ended.

"Cal was cussing Spray all over Hayward," reports Burmek, who has returned home to 4173 N. 15th St. for the winter. I told him it was up to him to challenge Spray's fish. I said, "Challenge him to a lie detector test, Cal. Tell him you'll take the test if he will." Cal thought that was a good idea, but the next time I saw him he didn't think so much of it.

The sports editor can understand why Johnson might not think the lie detector test such a good idea, in view of the fact that he first said that Jack Conner, Minneapolis newspaperman, was in the boat when he landed the fish, next called Conner a liar after Jack denied having been with him, and finally admitted that Conner had not been along.

The lie detector test is a good idea. We pass Burmek's suggestion along to Field & Stream and the American Museum of Natural History. Before they authenticate the muskies of either Johnson or Spray as world record rod and reel catches, why not, in view of the conflicting stories, ask these men to submit to the lie detector? Wouldn't that be something? A lie detector test for fishermen!

The following letters were received and published in the *Milwaukee Sentinel* after Lynch's column appeared under the heading *Free Lie Detector Tests Offered Muskie Men*

Mr. Lynch: I read your column which contained Mr. Burmek's suggestion of lie detector tests for the men who caught the record muskie. To my knowledge, the polygraph (lie detector) has never been used to test the veracity of a fisherman. The idea is novel and in this instance meritorious, considering that a world record is involved. I have never engaged in fishing, nor do I know of any of the individuals named in your article, and therefore I can have no personal bias in the dispute. In the interest of good sportsmanship, I offer to examine free of charge as many of the individuals involved as will submit willingly to a lie detector test.

*Respectfully submitted,
Nathan W. Heller,
Lie Detection Laboratories
632 N. 2nd St.*

P.S. And The Journal will pay the expenses of Louis Spray and Cal Johnson, who caught the controversial muskies, if they will come to Milwaukee for such tests. This would get Hayward more national publicity than it ever has had before.

Burmek Explains

Mr. Lynch: Since you printed in your column my statement that I was on Fleming's bar in the Chippewa Flowage Oct. 20 from 3 p.m. to dark and did not see Louis Spray who claims he caught his world record muskie there late that afternoon and my suggestion of lie detector tests for both Spray and Cal Johnson, who caught a record muskie some weeks before, I have received many letters from resort owners and friends in Hayward, who ask, "Are you for or against Hayward?" They add, "You are one of Hayward's leading guides and should be proud of Hayward." Certainly, I am proud of Hayward, but I am also a sportsman and will answer honestly and to the best of my knowledge any question put to me about these fish. Since I returned to Milwaukee, many persons have said, "You're a Hayward guide. What's the dope on those record fish?" How many of those Hayward folks can honestly say that they have not been asked the same questions?

Everyone knows there have been some things, confusing to the public, about how and where these fish were caught. If, through my suggestion to you, pressure is brought to bring out the true stories about these fish, then I will be of service to Hayward.

Nobody doubts that the record belongs to Hayward. Cal Johnson is a personal friend of mine and I honestly believe he caught his muskie. But I was on Fleming's bar at the time Spray claimed he caught his fish there and I did not see him. Because of that, and because many doubted Cal also, I suggested the lie detector test.

Julien Gingras, editor of the Hayward paper, suggested on the same page that Spray's record fish was announced, that the conservation commission should set a time limit for a full report of a record catch to a game warden, county official or licensed taxidermist. He said:

"In any other sports field, the requisite for a world record is very rigid and I believe fishing records should be given the same standards by which to qualify for a world record."

Boosts Hayward

Hayward enjoys a reputation as one of this country's finest fishing areas. I have chosen to guide there for that reason, having fished all over northern Wisconsin.

Hayward shipped more fish out of the state in 1947 than any other city in Wisconsin. The conservation department reported that of a total of 3,348 shipments, 432 went from Hayward. Woodruff was second with 287. In 1948, more than 670 muskies with a combined weight of over six tons were taken from the Chippewa Flowage, according to an article in the Wisconsin Conservation bulletin.

More muskies are caught in the Hayward area, I believe, than anywhere else. Such lakes as the Chippewa, Couderay, Grindstone, Callahan, upper and lower Twin, Tigercat, Spider, Teal, Lost Land, Round and others are very productive muskie waters. Nelson Lake (Totogatic flowage) is famous for fine pike fishing. The area also abounds with good trout streams.

Yes. I am proud of Hayward and will sing its praises, but always honestly, because I believe as a guide that one of the major requisites is to teach our fellow fishermen good honest sportsmanship.

***Yours sincerely,
Tony Burmek
4173 N. 15th St.***

The foregoing articles were sent to me by Tony Burmek in the late 1970's, and had the following note ***...I was the only one who showed up for the lie detector test. Neither Spray or Cal showed up.***

I then wrote to Louie Spray to get his version. On January 14, 1980, I received the following comment ***On the matter of the Burmek thing, that he said I wasn't on Fleming's bar at all that day, see pages 4 and 5 (of affidavits) or there about. And to this day I have never met either of these fine gentlemen. And they even paid the attorney fees to make the affidavits.***

Oops, seems that this may not be exactly true. In his article ***In Defense of Louie Spray*** in the Dec. 1991/Jan. 1992 issue of ***Musky Hunter*** magazine, John Dettloff reported otherwise saying that Spray may have given a Martin motor to Germanson.

...one source told me that Germanson was given an outboard motor by Spray in exchange for making affidavits negating Tony Burmek's statement, thus leaving Fleming's Bar location uncontested. This certainly is very plausible because Spray did receive two Martin outboard motors in consideration for appearing in a Martin motor advertisement with his 69 lb. 11 oz. musky.

Yes, Spray did receive two motors from Martin Motors to use the photo of his '49 record. He detailed it to me in a letter in 1979.

...I am hoping that you will cooperate with me on the matter of the No. 2 photo in your folder, showing my 69 pounder. This photo Larry, is a simulated picture that came about in the following manner. Long after the fish was mounted and on display at my Bar, the Martin Motor people came to me and said if I would pose holding an oar, like I did in the original photo, that they would fashion their Martin Motors in there with me and the fish, for advertising purposes. (I used their motors for years, and was using them at the time I caught the last one.) And for and in consideration of such, that they would give me Two new Martin Motors... ..They didn't give the fish the credit the other photos did... ..So I (am) wondering if you would discontinue the use of this (Martin Motor ad) photo and replace it with one like I am enclosing, or the original one with me holding the fish in back of Karl Kahmann's Taxidermy Shop...I would like the old ones sent to me to destroy myself personally. I would consider it the above a personally (sic) favor Larry.



The Spray-Martin Motors superimposed photo

Spray didn't like the Martin Motors photo as he felt it made his record fish look smaller. However, if you look at the photo comparison by Scott Hayes in part VI of the Appendix it becomes obvious the reason Spray's record appears smaller in the Martin Motors photo is that all of his feet are showing, whereas in the original photos his feet are almost buried in grass making the fish appear longer.

The affidavits referred to by Spray were from anglers who disagreed with Burmek. The affidavits were as follows.

Elmer Germanson, being first duly sworn, on oath does depose and say that he is a resident of Hayward, Wisconsin, and that on the 20th day of October, 1949, he was fishing on the Chippewa Flowage with Carl Haag, also of Hayward, Wis. That he and Mr. Haag were fishing at Pine Point which is located about 3/4th of a mile from Treeland Pines Resort, and approximately four miles north of Fleming's Bar on the Chippewa Flowage. That they commenced fishing at about 8:00 in the morning and that they fished at this location all day until sundown. That they did not leave the water to eat but just pulled their boat over to shore and ate the lunch they brought with them. That while they were so fishing and after they had started fishing, one Tony Burmek, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, was fishing near them in an aluminum boat from the Dun-Rovin Lodge. That he is personally acquainted with Tony Burmek. That he knows that Tony Burmek is a licensed guide. That on October 20, 1949, Tony Burmek was guiding a fishing party fishing crappies and sunfish. That Burmek fished in the same vicinity with your affiant and that they carried on conversations back and forth during the afternoon. That Burmek did not leave the spot where they all were fishing near Pine Point until he quit fishing in the evening. That Burmek quit fishing before Carl Hagg and this affiant did: and when he quit, he proceeded in an easterly direction directly toward the Dun Rovin Lodge from which he had brought his boat.

That he knows of his own personal knowledge that the said Tony Burmek couldn't have been anywhere near Fleming's Bar on the Chippewa Flowage during the afternoon of October 20th, as he was always within our sight and was always near Pine Point, which is at least four miles from Fleming's Bar by water. That it has recently come to the attention of your affiant that said Burmek has since made statements to the effect that on the 20th day of October, 1949, the said Burmek was fishing on Fleming's Bar, and that he had fished there all afternoon. That he had not seen Louis Spray there, and therefore inferred that Louis Spray could not have caught the world's record muskie on that date.

That your affiant specifically remembers that he was fishing near Burmek on the 20th of October because of personal conversations had with Burmek and with Carl Haag on that date, and because he remembers specifically that he heard on the next day about Louis Spray having caught the world's record muskie. That both dates stick firmly in his mind and he knows there is no confusion about them.

That your affiant has no personal interest in making this affidavit. That he is not a personal friend of Mr. Louis Spray, and that he is making this affidavit for the sole purpose of bringing the truth to the public.

Signed, Elmer Germanson

Carl Haag, being first duly sworn on oath says that he is a resident of Hayward, Wisconsin. That he was fishing on the Chippewa Flowage with Mr. Elmer Germanson on the 20th day of October, 1949, at a place known as Pine Point which is located near the Treeland Pines Resort. That he knows of his own personal knowledge that said Pine Point is at least four miles from Fleming's Bar on the Chippewa Flowage, which is the spot where Louis Spray caught the world's record musky on October 20th, 1949.

That he and Mr. Germanson commenced fishing near Pine Point at about 8:00 in the morning and that they fished continuously at that spot until sundown. That they did not leave the water even to eat lunch but ate their lunch from the boat. That in the afternoon of said day while they were fishing, he saw another boat fishing near them. That Elmer Germanson and one of the occupants of the other boat carried on a great deal of conversation during the afternoon. That he asked Elmer Germanson who the other man was, and that Germanson told him he was Tony Burmek of Milwaukee. That this was the first time that your affiant had ever seen Tony Burmek to his own knowledge and that he recalls specifically the man and his characteristics. That he knows that said Tony Burmek fished near Germanson and himself until just before sundown. and that when Burmek left, he proceeded directly east back to the location of the Dun-Rovin Lodge from where he had gotten his boat.

That thereafter he saw in the Milwaukee papers an article written by Lynch in his column known as "Maybe I'm Wrong" in which one Tony Burmek claims to have been fishing on Fleming's Bar on October 20, 1949, and also claimed that he did not see Louis Spray in the neighborhood of Fleming's Bar on that date. That immediately upon seeing the article he remembered that this was the same Burmek from Milwaukee that Germanson had talked to on the 20th of October, 1949. That this was the first time he had ever met Tony Burmek and that

he recalls the day specifically because the next day he heard about Louis Spray having caught the world's record musky at Fleming's Bar and had commented to many people that he was only four miles from the spot when it was caught and remarked about the fact that they had been fishing in the wrong place. That he immediately brought this article to the attention of Elmer Germanson and that Mr. Germanson suggested that the two of them make affidavits of the true circumstances.

That your affiant has no personal interest in the affair other than the establishing of the truth. That he is not a personal friend of Louis Spray. That he makes this affidavit of his own free volition and not at the request of any other person than Elmer Germanson.

Signed, Carl Haag

Spray commented further to me regarding these affidavits and it appears he put words in the mouth of George Quentmeyer, his guide, and Tony Burmek. Since the accounts of Burmek's were well published in the media, it seems hardly likely that Burmek would tell Quentmeyer he didn't say it. Spray's comment.

On the matter of the affidavits, pages 4 and 5 of this Album, some of the news media splashed all over the front page. that Tony Burmek claimed that he had fished all day on Fleming's Bar, where I caught the fish, and that I was never on that Bar, that day. But George Quentmeyer, a guide. who was with I and Ted Hagg when I caught the fish, jumped Burmek about the matter, and Tony denied saying it. The above has to do with the 69 lb. 11 oz. muskie I caught on Fleming's Bar, October 20, 1949, in the Chippewa Flowage, Sawyer County, Wisconsin.

And so it went. Let's one last time return to Mr. Ellis, who wrote in the *Wisconsin Sportsman*, July/August 1980 issue, where he utilized the information from his earlier story in *True* magazine, renamed it, *The Great Musky Hustle* and began again. This article included many of the truths of before, along with some of the same inaccuracies. In addition, he added a couple of important statements that had not been in his earlier article. First a statement about Johnson's fish.

I was on the scene two hours after Johnson's announcement. He would not see me, nor would anyone permit me to see the fish.

And this in regard to Spray's 1949 catch.

This writer was on the spot within hours after the announcement. Again no interview. When told the fish was at the taxidermist's I went there. The road was barricaded to the house. I walked in. I was turned away at the door.

Well, it is logical that he was turned away from seeing Spray's fish, as Karl Kahmann had refused to mount the fish and didn't have it. At any rate, Louie Spray received a copy of Ellis' 1980 article and responded in a letter to the editor of the January/February 1981 issue of *Wisconsin Sportsman* magazine.

A Voice From The Past

This letter is in answer to an article written by Mel Ellis and appearing in this magazine in the July/August issue of 1980.

First, I cannot see for the life of me, why a writer of Mr. Ellis's ability could not have covered the same ground he did without tearing someone apart. Second, he went off half cocked in many places that are actually of public record, should he have cared to avail himself of the facts.

Referring to my catch of 59 1/2 pound muskie in 1939 he said. "Spray at the time said he caught the fish in Rice Lake August 19." Ellis had to know better than that, or else his memory is not very good at going back 41 years. Actually, the fish was recorded with the American Museum of Natural History, New York, as being caught July 27, 1939, in Grindstone Lake, Sawyer County, Wisconsin.

Then he goes goofing-off about a Jens Jorgensen who caught a large muskie about the same time and used phraseology such that he asked his readers to believe that I, somehow, used Jorgensen's fish to record my catch.

With reference to my catch of a 69 pound 11 ounce muskie caught in 1949, Ellis claims that I was not at the spot where I said I had caught the fish at all that day, because a Tony Burmek said that he was fishing at that particular spot all that day and that I was not there, which was October 20, 1949.

It just so happens that Burmek on October 20, was fishing all day in the Chippewa Flowage, at a place known as Pine Point, and a Carl Haag and Elmer Germanson also fished there all day October 20. Burmek never left the area that day, and Haag and Germanson talked with Burmek many times during the day. And further, that evening Burmek left in the direction of Dunn-Rovin Lodge, so that it was impossible for him to have been at Fleming's Bar, where I caught the fish at any time on October 20. Fleming's Bar is some four miles south of Pine Point.

The above is not just hearsay, as the facts are documented in affidavit form by Mr. Haag and Mr. Germanson. Mr. Petrie, publisher of this magazine, has in his possession said affidavits.

Oops again, but we covered this previously when Dettloff said that this may not exactly be true. In his article *In Defense of Louie Spray* in the Dec. 1991/Jan. 1992 issue of *Musky Hunter*, Dettloff reported otherwise saying that Spray may have possibly given a Martin motor to Germanson.

Since I am now nearing 81 years of age, and won't be around too much longer, I ask one favor of publishers and writers. All of my record muskies are recorded in the Recorder's Office, Hayward, Wisconsin: some 24 affidavits. For a very small fee, he will supply you with a photostat copy of those affidavits. Be sure to mention the facts on which fish you want and

enclose a stamped and self addressed envelope so he can reply, stating his fee for same. And one other request, pick on someone else for a while, I've had 41 years of it, and I believe I have served my time.

Lou Spray, Morristown, AZ

There are those that would say that the Ellis articles were sensational journalism and those that would say that they weren't sensational journalism but rather retaliation for not being given the scoop as he seemingly inferred in his 1980 article. I don't know...you be the judge!

While the dispute over where Louie actually caught his fish was never satisfactorily settled during 1949 and 1950, the puzzle was to be solved in 1991, as new information surfaced as a result of further examination of Spray's fish after several newspaper articles, including the ***Chicago Tribune***, which questioned the credibility of the late Louie Spray and his 1949 catch. The articles inferred that Spray's 69-pound 11-ounce world record was a fake and not a legal catch. One of the articles in the ***Chicago Tribune*** by John Husar was a claim made by an alleged former head of a Chicago mob, Joey "The Doves" Aiuppa. He claimed that he had caught the muskie while illegally fishing below the Winter Dam on the Chippewa River at night. He said he sold the muskie to Spray for \$50 and that Spray had used the fish to claim the world record. I'll cover this shortly, and will include more new Joey "The Doves" information from 2005 and 2006.

In a two-part article series written by John Dettloff in the December 1991 and February 1992 issues of ***Musky Hunter***, entitled, ***In Defense of Louie Spray***, Dettloff attempted to counter those charges by dusting off all the old Spray affidavits and coming up with a few new ones of his own in an attempt to justify Spray's record claim while at the same time clarifying the location of Spray's claimed catch. In my second edition with Dettloff's permission I reprinted those articles in their entirety. Since a considerable amount contained in those articles has already been covered above I will just use some excerpts. First, clarification of where Spray's fish was supposedly caught. We covered above what Dettloff learned from Tony Burmek. Here is a bit more.

...Two other people were in the boat with Spray on that fateful day - George Quentmeyer, the guide, and Ted Hagg, a Sarona restaurateur. Since both are deceased, I contacted the offspring of both men hoping they could shed additional light on the catch. Upon asking Ted Hagg's daughter, Ann Amour, if she remembered much about Louie Spray's musky or if she knew where it was caught, she responded:

"My dad was very proud to be involved with the catching of the fish and had saved lots of newspaper clippings and photos. I was a young girl at the time of the catch and don't remember much about the fish. I don't know where it was caught but do remember hearing that the spot that they gave out to the public wasn't the spot where they caught the fish. They wanted to throw everyone off track as to where it was caught so they could keep the real spot secret and to themselves."

Hoping to learn something from the Quentmeyer clan, I contacted George Quentmeyer's son-in-law, Harry Tyler, who confirmed what Ted Hagg's daughter had told me. Harry also didn't know many details of the catch either, but did tell me:

"My father-in-law, George, took me right to the spot where they had caught the world record musky just a short time before. We were driving by, on the way to a walleye spot, and he pointed it out."

When asked if he remembered where on the flowage it was, he said he wasn't real familiar with the flowage and it would be hard to say. I told him Louie had reported it was caught on Fleming's, which is within a half-mile from Herman's Landing, and asked him if that could have been the spot. He replied:

"Oh no, it wasn't near Herman's Landing. At the time, we were heading south and the bar was on our right. The land around there was desolate and wild. Also, to our left was a lot of open water."

After contacting a totally different source, a Tom Jandrt, he documented a notarized statement regarding Spray's 69-pounder...

Dettloff published a copy of the Jandrt affidavit in his article but discussed it no further in his text. It is nothing more than hearsay and it doesn't really have any merit, but in fairness I would like to excerpt the key part from it.

...When I asked Louie Spray where in the Chippewa Flowage he caught the 69# 11 oz muskie, he told me he caught it 3 or 4 miles from Herman's Landing...

Since Herman's Landing is only a quarter-mile from Fleming's Bar, the Jandrt statement sets the stage for further knowledge of where. Back to Dettloff's article.

Now this doesn't prove that Spray caught his musky, but it is certainly substantial evidence that the 69-pounder was not caught on Fleming's Bar as Spray reported. (Amen on both counts!)

Then where was it caught? Enter Bruce Tasker, a close friend of George Quentmeyer's, who documented what he knows about Spray's catch in his notarized statement.

Here once again we have another notarized statement to hearsay. A key element from long time Flowage guide Bruce Tasker's affidavit regarding a question he had asked Spray's guide George Quentmeyer.

...When I asked George if they really got the muskie off Fleming's Bar, George hesitated and said with a grin, "Well....., not really. We caught it a little further south..."

And more from Dettloff's article.

Paul Albrecht, a close friend and confidante of Louie Spray's for many years and publisher of Spray's book, Looking Back At That Phase Of My Musky Days, said Louie had told him that the 69-pounder was caught in the area of the old Trading Post. That just happens to be where Graveyard Point is located and it just happens to be 3 to 4 miles from Herman's Landing.

New Witnesses

My research recently produced three additional witnesses to Spray's record musky catch. Besides Quentmeyer and Hagg, three other individuals witnessed Spray not only catching the 69-pounder, but also observed him fishing the area around Graveyard Point during the whole month of October of that year, 1949. The three witnesses, Don Hendee, John Bennett, and Chick DeBrot, are all deceased now but did pass down to close relatives what they had seen. These relatives are all upstanding, reliable people and documented these notarized statements as to exactly what they were told by each individual witness...

DeBrot also passed on this information about Spray's musky to an Elsie Hornewer, the next owner of Indian Trail Resort after Don Hendee. Indian Trail Resort is located within a quarter-mile of Graveyard Point. The reason the three witnesses were able to observe Spray fishing this area so often and catching his musky was because they were on the resort premises nearly at all times that fall. A boat such as Spray's, spending every single day in the same area, quickly drew attention. Mrs. Hornewer documented and had her statement notarized as to what she was told as well.

We won't get into those affidavits because they involve 2nd and 3rd hand *hearsay* statements and as such have little merit. Spray did *not* spend the "whole month" of October at Graveyard Point, rather the first two-thirds. Also, one has to wonder how "witnesses" at Indian Trail Resort could see someone "catch" a fish when Spray was out of sight around the corner according to Dettloff's determination of just exactly where Spray's fish was landed! I also find it amusing and convenient that all the record catching action and witnessing took place at and near the resort now owned by Dettloff.

At any rate, it appears that Louie, like most muskie anglers of then as well as today, was trying to protect his hotspot, but as Dettloff stated above ***...this doesn't prove that Spray caught his musky...***

Then too, there is the matter of the weather that fateful day. Spray said ***...Upon waking up on that Thursday of October 20th it was still warm, but the weather made a sudden change and a major cold front had moved in. Mostly it was chilly and damp with temperatures in the 40s, sometimes a slow drizzle, and a strong N.E. wind had blown up - generally nasty weather.*** Spray is also quoted as saying: ***...a miserably cold, damp (occasional drizzle), and windy day at about 5:00 P.M...***

Louie's boat partner, Ted Hagg also made a comment about the weather in the Hayward paper on October 21, 1949, ***...We set out on our fishing trip about 1:30 Thursday afternoon. It was windy and chilly. The water was pretty rough...***

Newly found evidence collected in 2007 by George Will disputes part of these claims as Hayward DNR records for 10/20/49 indicate that the wind at 5 P.M., Spray's reported time of catch as noted above, was NE at 5 m.p.h. and the temperature was 52 degrees with a relative humidity of 93%, .09 inches of rain had fallen and it had been 9 days since the previous rain. At 8 A.M. the temperature was 59 degrees with a 7 m.p.h. north wind and 94% humidity.

The battle was supposedly over only 40 minutes after it started, and that may well be, but a review of the time-line of that afternoon's events from the published records of the day (not to mention discrepancies in the actual time of the catch) by the WRMA in their rebuttal to the NFWFHF rejection of their protest, report that things just didn't add up. Their findings, from page 36 of that rebuttal, are presented here.

The entire 49 page WRMA rebuttal as well as the complete protest can be found on their web-site at www.worldrecordmuskiealliance.com The WRMA protest synopsis and the entire rebuttal may be found in the Appendix.

I recommend that you read the complete 93-page WRMA protest on their web-site, and the WRMA rebuttal there or in the Appendix. The NFWFHF's decision to reject the protest may be found at: www.freshwater-fishing.org/spray/ and a synopsis may be found in the Appendix.

The WRMA excerpt quote regarding the time-line follows.

Asserts the physically impossible: "That he would estimate that it took Mr. Spray approximately 50 minutes to land the fish...and the fish was finally landed at about 4 p.m." (George Quentmeyer) "At about 3:30 p.m., I knew Ted was freezing as he was not dressed for the cold, so I suggested we go in and have some warm drinks and get warm at a nearby resort...the battle lasted about 40 minutes and we finally landed the fish at around 4 p.m." (L. Spray)

You'll have to make up your own mind. This "time-line" is covered completely in the WRMA rebuttal.

Another thought comes to mind regarding photographs of Spray's record muskies...why are there so few? For his 1939 record, there is only one photograph known to exist and *that isn't even of Spray holding the fish it is a friend of Spray's, Alton Van Camp*. The 1940 fish doesn't fare much better with just a couple from Spray (one labeled 42-pounds) and one from an individual in Rice Lake found later. For his 1949 record *there are only three "original" photographs known to exist and the two most common originals are superimposed on three different backgrounds!*



This is an early photo from a sequence photos of Spray Poling a gear (and guitar) laden boat on the Flambeau River. It is from this series of photos the background for the most common Spray 1949 record photograph was chosen



This is the most commonly known and seen Spray “photograph” with the “best” of the three originals superimposed on the water background. Interestingly, Spray is in this photo twice! The background photo shows Spray poling a boat on the Flambeau River

A fourth “messed with version” is one where Hagg and Quentmeyer were *superimposed* shaking hands on the already *superimposed* third version with a pine trees background. This was the superimposed photo that resurfaced during the 2005 WRMA Spray protest, when Scott Allen rediscovered it in Dettloff’s archives. Spray had sent me a copy of it long ago and I resurrected it from my vast files. It is the same *superimposed* photograph that the NFWFHF provided to at least three math professors with a request for a direct scaling analysis to bolster their decision to uphold the Spray record. This photograph is shown below and the “math version” is shown and covered in detail in the WRMA rebuttal in the Appendix.



The 3rd superimposed version of Spray's 1949 record fish with the second most common original used

Reference to a quote by Leonard Dorazio from the Dettloff Spray articles, makes me wonder why more photographs haven't shown up. Dorazio's quote also suggests that a big muskie did in fact exist. That quote was a result of a telephone interview of Dorazio by Dettloff.

I was about 14 years old and heard about the fish by phone...I got to Herman's as quickly as possible and remember seeing Spray and his two friends and Herman. The musky was outside near the old dock (where the boat house is now) hanging from a pole or an oar. The musky was as long as I was tall (no mention of his height at the time). Its tail wasn't much off the ground but I still had to look up at it. People were taking pictures...

Dettloff was also quoted in a 1991 *Sawyer County Record* article by Terrell Boettcher as saying *...Once Spray reached Herman's Landing around 4:30 p.m. that day, the story is well-documented as to the many people who saw the freshly caught fish and snapped pictures of it...*

In a June/July 2003 *Musky Hunter* article titled, *A Dilemma of World Record Proportions*, Brad Latvaitis notes *...In my mind, St. Louie's halo becomes tarnished when photographic documentation is explored.*

So, just where are these “pictures?” Why are there only three known original photographs of the 1949 record? And why are there three additional “photographs” of the two *most commonly known* poses of Louie and fish *superimposed* on other backgrounds? If Spray had that sophisticated technology available to him in 1949, certainly most other folks at least had cameras at the time as alluded to above! Where are all of those photographs?

Have other photos been found and not made public because they don't support the claimed size of Spray's fish like the known photos where Spray is on an incline? In these photos Spray's fish is out in front of him with him pushing the fish out away from his body as much as possible (that is why the head is *tilted* back in those photos). One has a right to wonder!

And what about those math professors utilized by the NFWFHF to direct scale the Spray muskie? Dr. Douglas N. Arnold Ph.D. on behalf of himself, Joseph Gallian Ph.D. and Dorian Goldfeld Ph.D. sent to NFWFHF Executive Director Emmett Brown a letter dated February 1, 2006 after the NFWFHF rendered their decision to uphold the Spray record. The first two paragraphs say volumes.

We are writing you concerning the recent validation of Louie Spray's 1949 world record musky, on which you sought photographic analysis from each of us. It is our impression that there is not complete understanding of the results of the analyses we sent you, and we wanted to clarify this.

We want to stress that there is no disagreement among the three of us. Moreover, none of us is willing to say, based on the limited information and investigations we have made up to this point, whether or not we believe the record is valid. However, we feel that it is important that the analysis we have contributed be correctly understood...

The balance of that letter is a 'must read' and may be found in the Appendix.

Let us now go back to the John Husar 1995 column in the *Chicago Tribune*. ...***Dzialo*** (Hall Director Ted) ***didn't say if any of those phoned records also might apply to the deified Spray, who currently sits atop the Hall of Fame's official list with a 1949 fish that weighed 69-11...***

...There certainly are enough skeletons in Spray's closet, including allegations that he bought at least two of his record fish-one from an Indian, another from a Chicago mobster who was hiding out. Recent efforts to extol Spray's sterling character only clouded the situation, having been built upon useless third-hand testimonials from hearsay witnesses and distant relatives of his contemporaries (Husar is referring to Dettloff's two-part article, ***In Defense Of Louie Spray***).

Spray's ascendancy came about when Hall of Fame record-keepers were dazzled by a controversial-and still unproven-method of forensic photo analysis, which is now being used to knock down all of Spray's competitors from that era... (Husar was referring to Dettloff's "Lawton Investigation" which will be covered later in this section and the subsequent discrediting of the two Haver records and the Hanser record which were covered earlier).

Now let us review more of the published information on the Joey “The Doves” connection to Spray’s 1949 record.

It first started in John Husar’s column in the *Chicago Tribune* when he wrote *...A dark and glowering man, Spray said he caught his muskie on Fleming’s Bar in the Chippewa Flowage. The fish was mounted and displayed for a few years in a couple of taverns until it was destroyed in a mysterious fire. Spray collected \$25,000 insurance.*



This 4th Spray mount photograph was taken at Spray’s Bar in Rice Lake in 1951 and was “...donated...” to me “...for...” my “...muskie research projects” by Jerome J. Sloboda after he had heard me talk for the second straight year at the Chicago Musky Show. It is noticeable in this shot that the skin in the center of the fish is starting to wrinkle for reasons unknown

Decades later, a friend of mine was fishing for crappie on a private lake in northeast Illinois. He encountered another party on the lake and the groups later met on shore.

*My friend was impressed with the authoritative manner of one of those strangers. In fact, both were impressed when they learned the other’s name. That’s how Spence Petros, editor of *Fishing Facts* magazine, met Joey “The Doves” Aiuppa, then alleged to be head of the *Chicago Crime syndicate*.*

Aiuppa was accompanied by his bodyguard and gofer, a man called “Pepsi.”

They were both in their upper 70’s...Spence recalled the other day. “Then Aiuppa mentioned he would rather fish for muskies than anything else.”

...They chatted...and Aiuppa gave a little shrug.

“There was a pause,” Spence recalled. “Then Aiuppa said, “You know I caught the world-record muskie.”

“Oh yea, sure,” Spence grinned, thinking this was going to be some kind of joke. But Aiuppa was serious.

“No, I mean it. I caught the world-record muskie. I sold it to Louie Spray for \$50.

Spence gave a sigh.

“When a man like him says in that way that he did something, it’s pretty hard not to believe him,” he said.

Aiuppa said he caught the fish beneath the Winter Dam, where the Chippewa Flowage begins (actually ends), “But that is a restricted area,” Spence said.

“I know. That’s why I was fishing there at night,” Aiuppa said.

Spence asked why he didn’t keep the fish and register it himself, even say he caught it somewhere else.

Aiuppa gave a pained look and raised his hand, fingers touching.

“Do you know what ‘on the lam’ means,” he asked.

Larry Ramsell..., is the premier historian of muskie lore and has heard many stories about Louie Spray. He and Bob Kutz, who founded the National Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame in Hayward, remember Spray as a gun-toting Prohibition rum runner who ran a gambling casino, dabbled in prostitution and hung around with mobsters. Kutz said Spray even wrote a book glorifying his associations with crooks.

Ramsell said Spray was known to frequent Hayward’s Al Capone hideout, now a restaurant south of town. He said he talked with an acquaintance who remembers sitting in a meeting at the Capone hideout when the topic was what to do with a big fish...

...“I knew Spray, and he was a cantankerous, ornery, old goat,” Ramsell said. He characterized Spray as far from honest, a man who enjoyed talking about his outlaw days.

“I suppose the Aiuppa thing is plausible,” Ramsell told me. “It’s just one more shadow on Spray’s record, which has many shadows already.”

Kutz said he got along with Spray, despite the man’s reputation.

“I liked him. You knew where you stood with him,” Kutz said. “The only thing I didn’t like was his ego, which filled the room. He wanted to be No. 1 in fishing, no matter what it took to be No. 1...”

...Unfortunately, Spray cannot defend himself. Ill with cancer, he put a shotgun in his mouth and blew the top off his head a few years ago in Arizona. All other principals are dead, except for the 83-year-old Aiuppa, who sits in the federal prison hospital in Rochester, Minn.,...

“At his stage, he had nothing to gain by telling me,” Petros said. “It didn’t seem all that important to him.”

Ironically, Spray left \$25,000—the amount he got from his muskie’s insurance—to the fishing Hall of Fame.

John Husar too, passed away, and one of muskie histories staunchest protector's was gone. Of course John Dettloff wasn't going to take this charge sitting down. Some excerpts from the aforementioned newspaper article in 1991 regarding the "Joey 'the Doves' Aiuppa claim.

...It also cast doubt on one of the two giant muskys on which Hayward built its reputation: the other was Cal Johnson's 67 ½-pounder... That made Dettloff angry. "It's real important to document the real story about Spray's fish and slam this tabloid journalism that's being shoved down people's throats," he said.

They took this tale and sought to write a story around it without any more proof than the old man's word."

Dettloff already knew that Aiuppa's tale was not true, based on what eyewitness to Spray's catch had told him.

"I wanted to set out and gather all possible information surrounding the catch and present it to the public because it's important for Hayward, and Wisconsin as well."

Dettloff wanted to "contact sources before they were gone" and "my goal as a historical society director is to document history," he added.

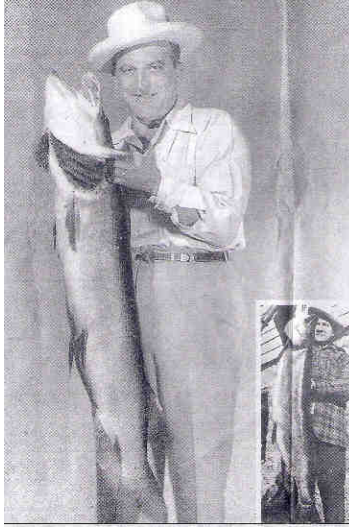
Dettloff then proceeded to write the two-part *In Defense of Spray* articles noted above. An envelope I received from Dettloff entitled *Packet Of Documentation Supporting Louie Spray's 69-pound 11 oz. muskie*, merely contained one page with the most common of Spray photos, a copy of Spray's *Field & Stream* application and Dettloff's hand-written note detailing the fish's size and his estimate of Spray's height. The balance of the packet contained only copies of the Spray affidavits. *A photo analysis of fish size was not included!!* This was certainly a far cry from the lengths he went to in his massive report attempting to discredit the Lawton record.

But this story doesn't end there. When the Spray flap began anew in 2005 with the WRMA's protest against Spray's 1940 and 1949 records, and the subsequent Hall's upholding of that record, Dale Bowman, Staff Reporter for the *Chicago Sun-Times*, picked up where Husar left off. In his June 11, 2006 Times article *Picture worth thousand words in never-ending fish story*, Bowman dug further into the Joey "The Doves" story and I will quote some excerpts of that article here.

Inside the cool darkness of Capri DiAmore...on Tuesday, James "Pepsi" Buonomo looked at the photo of his longtime pal, the late Joey "Doves" Aiuppa, and a big muskie.

Then he quickly said, "That's not the fish."

The spry 91-year-old just as quickly followed that with, "Where did you get the picture?"



*The Joey "The Doves" Aiuppa photograph with Spray insert that Bowman ran in the Chicago Sun Times.
Photo courtesy Dale Bowman*

Let's start somewhere near the beginning. If nothing else, its one more piece in our most notorious fish story (he then referenced the stats on Louie's 1949 fish)...

...“On Oct. 20, 2005, the Illinois-based World Record Muskie Alliance filed a damning 93-page protest (to the NFWFHF), based primarily on photographic and other scientific analysis, that Spray's fish was nowhere near as large as claimed.

On Jan. 16, 2006, the Hall made the ill-fated decision to deny the protest and began a counterattack, defending Spray's muskie as the All-Tackle record (as recognized by the NFWFHF and not the IGFA).

In the aftermath of that decision, Hall of Fame angler Spence Petros, the best-known fisherman in Chicago, reminded me of the story of Aiuppa...

...Petros suggested I find Buonomo, who was Aiuppa's hunting and fishing companion for some 70 years. With the help of many readers, I was able to track down Buonomo, who told his memories of Aiuppa and the muskie in the March 26 edition of the Sun-Times. But he had no photos of Aiuppa with the muskie.

Enter Chris Jankowski, who...has long connections to alleged Chicago crime lords, dating to Al Capone.

Jankowski remembered a photo that hung in the home of Peter and Arlene Ansani Jakstas...I figured it was a wild-goose chase, but considering all the twists and turns of this story, I ran up to Fox Lake to see.

This twist of the story has even New Yorkers noticing. “CBS Sunday Morning” was in town last week to do a follow-up with Bill Geist...

Then the Jakastases showed me the photo, and I began to wonder: Could it be the photo?

In most of the photos of Spray with his muskie, he has it turned broadside to show the heft of the belly. Aiuppa – a very young Aiuppa, dressed very formally – has his big muskie turned more to the side, so it is hard to tell how fat the fish is.

The length looked about right, somewhere in the range most of us think Spray's fish actually was – around 55 inches, give or take a couple of inches...

...Buonomo said he is certain that it's not the big muskie, though he did say, "Tell her I want a photo of it too."

Really big fish stories never end. This one is far from over.

Indeed. Now to Dale's *CBS News* reference. *CBS News* got involved and the story was covered by Bill Geist and it even appeared on their *Sunday Morning* TV show. On the *CBS News* Internet web-site a news story about the matter was published and we'll excerpt from it. It was under the dateline of *HAYWARD, Wis. Oct. 8, 2006*

The people of northern Wisconsin take their muskie fishing seriously...the local man who caught the biggest muskie ever is a legend. In the Hall of Fame museum, the man, the late Louie Spray has an entire room. It showcases his wool fishing pants and shirt, fishing shoes and his old motor.

"He reminds me of the Babe Ruth of Muskie fishing both people had the same type of personalities," John Dettloff, a resort owner and county historian, who authored a book on Louie Spray told Sunday Morning correspondent Bill Geist. "They both were flamboyant. They both were good time Charlies."

...But now a group called the World Record Muskie Alliance has filed a 93-page challenge to Spray's world record, a document brimming with modern professional forensic analysis.

"We decided to apply some modern scientific processes to a lot of these old fish stories we hired an independent expert in the field of photogrammetry – it is the science of trying to determine measurements from photographic evidence with some high level mathematics," Rich Delaney, president of the Alliance, said. "It's a technology that I believe NASA used to determine the size of objects on the moon. If you put length times girth the weight of the fish couldn't possibly approach the claim of Mr. Spray, 69 pounds 11 ounces."

Rather, Delaney says the fish would have to be about 38 to 40 pounds. The report charges local favoritism, outright cheating and even unethical taxidermy. Delaney said evidence shows that the taxidermist augmented the fish by 10 inches to match Spray's story.

To rebut, the Hall of Fame contacted distinguished mathematicians like professor Doug Arnold of the University of Minnesota.

“This is a problem in projective geometry you really need more information than is sitting in this photo to tell me how long that fish is,” Arnold said. “It depends on the placement of the fish and the placement of the camera. It’s no longer than 63 inches they were claiming but it could be a lot shorter.”

Then another bombshell dropped; a Hall of Fame inductee and guide, Spence Petros, said that Chicago mafia capo Joey “The Doves” Aiuppa told him on a fishing trip that he caught Spray’s fish...

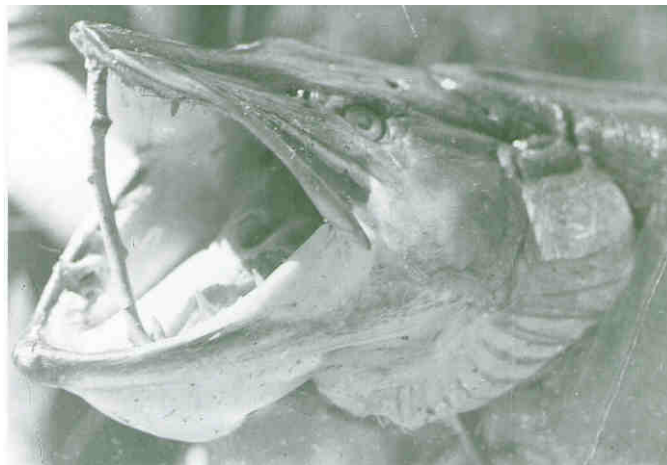
...This fish tale is confirmed by Aiuppa’s constant companion Jimmy Buonamo (sic), also known as Pepsi or Jimmy Bananas.

“Yes, he caught that fish,” Buonamo (sic) said. “And he wouldn’t lie to anybody he caught the fish. That’s one thing about him. He was true. He caught the fish.”

Emmett Brown of the Hall of Fame says Spray’s world record stands, supported by notarized affidavits from the other two men in the boat with Spray, and man who measured it and a local postmaster who weighed it.

“They’ve kind of voted to uphold this fish in the face of modern scientific research,” Delaney said.

In his later years, in an apparent effort to bolster his ego and keep his muskie records in front of the public, Spray developed a couple of different collages of his record fish photos and sent them to me and various establishments in the Hayward area. In so doing, Spray repeated his mix-ups and incorrect photo captioning. This included a “head-shot” of a head-shot muskie (the huge bullet hole is quite obvious), supposedly of one of his record fish; the 61-13 from 1940 in one and the 69-11 from 1949 in the other.





The "head-shot" head and the two collages

The Pete Maina protest to the NFWFHF regarding the Spray fish was partially covered above in the Johnson section. It included a somewhat amateur photo analysis. The analysis used various camera angles and a professional photographer to calculate potential fish lengths ranging from 53.4 to 56.1 inches based on six estimates of the camera's distance from the fish. These length estimates were similar to professional photogrammetric solutions by DCM Technical Services of Toronto, Canada in the WRMA protest; 53.6 to 55.1 inches maximum length. As noted previously, Maina's protest was rejected by the NFWFHF. I find it interesting that these independent photo analyses found the 1949 Spray fish to be, at best, in the mid-50-inch range!

Eli Singer did a comparison of the measurement in the photos of the fresh fish and the mount and the vast difference in the length, fin placement and distances between the fins. His conclusion was that they cannot be the same fish. It was his opinion that Spray's 1949 record should be disqualified. Singer also suggested that perhaps Spray's mounts had burned to assure they would never be examined or closely scrutinized!

The sordid details of the Spray controversy are provided in; a) a synopsis of the WRMA's Spray Protest, which includes a professional photogrammetric analysis on the 1940 and 1949 Spray fresh fish and mounts, as well as, a taxidermist's analysis of the three Spray mount photos, b) a synopsis of the NFWFHF's rejection of the WRMA protest, c) the WRMA's rebuttal to the NFWFHF's rejection, d) Dr. Arnold's letter, and e) Brad Lavaitis' letter of admonishment to the NFWFHF Directors, in the Appendix.

Finally, before we depart our discussion of Louis Spray we must address one of the more talked about details regarding Louie Spray; his height. Just how tall was he?

In the April/May 1996 issue of *Musky Hunter* magazine Spray's height was claimed by John Dettloff to be 6-feet 2-inches. In that same article about Louie's 1940 record, *Was Louie Spray's Musky Really That Big*, this Compendor echoed that height and a supposed Spray weight based on what Dettloff had told me at the time and which I accepted as fact. I learned later that this information was incorrect. A packet of material that I received from Dettloff after I had expressed some concern to him about the size of Spray's 1940 record included a height "estimate" of Spray. All of a sudden, Mr. Spray seemed to shrink! Or did he? Dettloff used *...Spray's 6-foot 2-inch height and broad lumberjack's frame...* in the article. Following are some notes that he included in the packet to me.

...So I sent you info on his height – 6'1" I would say... On all photo's the 59 ¼" length calipers correctly against Spray's 72" to 73" height... (by "direct scaling," an improper method).

Dettloff then claimed that the photo of Spray with this fish labeled 42-pounds was in error and tried to justify the appearance in that photo that the fish did look to be in that size range by saying that Spray's right hand was ***...pulling the fishes head inwards – towards him just a bit. This makes the fishes' end of its lower jaw tilt slightly away from the camera, making the fishes' head appear a bit shorter (maybe one inch) than it really is,*** and that a ***...high camera angle is always unflattering when taking fish pictures*** (on that photo Dettloff drew a line showing his estimate of the ***...Approximate camera level and true horizon...*** and also noted, ***...Once you blow up this picture, the fish suddenly looks a little more impressive than it does on that little picture).***

On a later discovered photo of Spray's 1940 record, dubbed the "Rice Lake photo," Dettloff did further estimations and showed his calculations justifying the claimed fish length by subtracting his **direct scaling** fish length estimate from his newer claim of Spray's height of "73" inches.

Dettloff also included a photograph of Louie Spray standing beside his wife Inez. It is from this photo that Dettloff apparently came up with his new Spray height estimate. His note on that photo said ***...I figure – in Spray's prime he was approximately 6'1" or 73" tall...*** He also noted ***...Spray may have stood an inch or so taller when he was a young buck. So it could be possible he may have been as large as 6'2" when he was young – but 6'1" would be a good safe conservative height for him. Spray was stocky in build and I bet weighed 220# or so when he was young. I am just shy of 6' and am 200# at times and Spray was a bit larger than me in both height and weight.***

Spray's **actual and true height** of 5-feet, 11-inches, was confirmed by a "***Statement of Injuries Received***" medical report dated June 18, 1934 found by Dettloff in the microfilm records at the Sawyer County, Wisconsin Court House!

Supreme Secretary Whinn...
STATEMENT OF INJURIES RECEIVED
 Name Louis Spray Age 34 Weight 190 Height 5'11"
 Street, City Hayward State Wisc.
 do you desire your final claim blank sent? Hayward, Wisc.

Is in any other accident since or associations?	Name of Company	Amount
<u>Yes</u>	<u>Wisconsin Casualty Co</u>	
	<u>Milwaukee Journal</u>	
	<u>Sentinel</u>	

(QUESTION 6b MUST BE ANSWERED "YES" OR "NO")

Name Mr. Sullaghan Address Hayward Wisc.
 Name _____ Address _____

maintained loss of hand, foot or the sight of either eye previous to this accident? No.
 the time of the injury, in good and regular standing in this Order, with all dues, fines, fees, costs and assessments? Yes.
 the time of receiving the injury under the influence of intoxicating liquor? No.
 injury caused or loss of time prolonged, directly or indirectly, as a consequence of intoxicating liquor, or in any way? No.
 name and address of physician who is attending you? Dr. E. H. Harnager
Hayward Wisc.
 date of first visit? June 18th 1924

So the mystery of Spray's "real" height has finally been settled negating all the incorrect information previously published in *Musky Hunter* magazine and in other venues as well!

Dettloff went on to say in his note to me ...*As far as Alton Van Camp holding Spray's 59 1/2#er 58" long. Alton was the same height as Louie...* In his 2004, *Musky Chronicles III* Eli Singer related had learned from Alton's son Alvin that Alton was only 5-feet 10-inches tall. When Singer discussed Spray's true 5-foot 11-inch height with Dettloff he was reportedly told by Dettloff that this new found information about Spray actually being shorter than he had long reported was not to be made public and that he wanted it kept quiet! One has to question why?

In the professional photogrammetry analysis commissioned by the WRMA, they gave instructions to DCM Technical Services' Dan Mills to make his analysis assuming Spray's height as 6-feet or 72-inches. This was done because Dettloff claimed Spray's height on the medical exam was 5-11 without shoes, which is unproven, and with his shoes on Spray was therefore 6-feet tall in the photo of his 1949 record. The WRMA gave Spray the benefit of the doubt and the DCM analysis still found Spray's fish considerably lacking in actual vs. claimed length!

In Latvaitis' letter to the NFWFHF Director's regarding their assessment of the Spray protest (see Appendix), Brad makes an important point regarding Spray's height and its application in attempting to scale from photographs ...*Importantly, the Hall gives no consideration to the fact that height measurements are taken with feet together and head straightly aligned with the spine (as during a medical exam) in contrast to the reduced height that would occur when Mr. Spray's head is cocked and his feet are spread off-center as in his photographs with muskies.*

To set the record straight, *Field & Stream*, the record sanctioning body at the time of Spray's 1949 record, reviewed and accepted Spray's contest application. Since then, *Field & Stream* has not reviewed the Spray record. The IGFA obviously conducted, at least a minimal review because they refused to list the Spray 1949 fish as their all-tackle record after the Lawton disqualification. Spray's record was not recognized by the IGFA because it was shot during

landing; which although legal at the time, is at odds with their record protocol. The NFWFHF reviewed Spray's muskie in conjunction with the WRMA protest and upheld the *Field & Stream* record.

In summary of the previous two records, I am not advocating that the Johnson and Spray records be disqualified. My position on historic records has been made clear. I am advocating that ALL *historic records be treated equally by current record keepers and historians*, and that they give serious thought before overturning records sanctioned by others as far back as almost 70-years ago. Since the esteemed sanctioning committees which were involved in the original acceptance of historic records are no longer in existence, this is the prudent course.



Two pretty gals coming up!