

# STURGEON



# SPEARING

## LAKE WINNEBAGO STURGEON SEASON NEWS RELEASE

by

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The 1959 sturgeon spearing season set as much of a record for poor spearing success as the winter did for heavy snow and cold weather. Several heavy snowfalls along with drifting winds kept spearmen off the lake, or spending much of their time bucking snow drifts to get to their shanties.

Only 221 sturgeon were registered during the 19 day season, which is 25% of the average number registered annually since sturgeon registration began in 1955. The total registration weighed in at over 5 tons. The average length of the sturgeon speared was 55 inches and the average weight was over 46 pounds. The size was down slightly from the 56 inch, 50 pound record average chalked up in 1958.

The heaviest fish speared were a 109 and a 107 pounder. Several other fish in the 100 pound class were also registered. A total of 22 tagged sturgeon were registered for \$10 rewards. All of them were originally tagged in Lake Winnebago, except one, which was a male fish tagged in the Wolf River near Shiocton during the spawning season in May, 1957.

The annual aerial count of shanties on the ice of Lake Winnebago pointed out the drop in spearing pressure brought about by severe winter weather. There were 1,480 shanties on the ice this year, 700 less than the 1958 record.

The 1959 season will long be remembered as a lean sturgeon year and a season hard on snow-plowing equipment. The best aspect of the season is that Mother Nature conserved a crop of these "long lived fish" which can be stockpiled and counted on being in the "Big Lake" in future years.