

TACKLE AND TOYS *by Captain Mike Schoonveld*

CUDA BRAID SHEAR

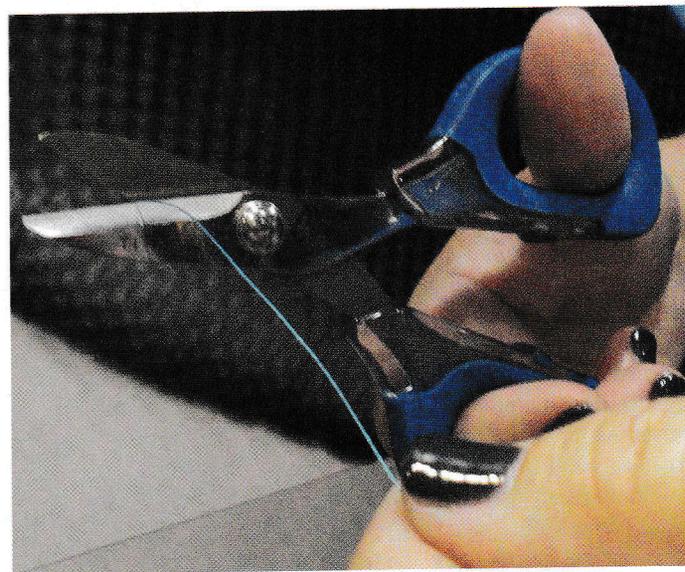
It wasn't long after braided line became popular for all sorts of fishing, anglers started seeing all sorts of tools designed to easily and efficiently cut braided line. Some were extremely sharp nail-clipper types (which didn't stay extremely sharp). Some were battery powered "laser" devises—actually, an electrical spark generator or extremely hot wire which burned through the line as well as fingers and batteries.

The closest to perfection were scissors types but even with these, many were just cheap scissor blades fastened to some sort of supposedly fisherman-friendly handles. Often the friendly handles weren't so friendly, and the cheap blades seemed to chew through the line more than shear through it effortlessly.

So when the Cuda fishing tools rep handed me a pair of their 5.5" Large Braid Shear, I was skeptical. It looked like a nice, well-built pair of scissors with a jaunty rubberized handle. It is just that, but the devil is in the details. Look very close at the scissor blades and you will see "micro" serrations along the edges which are the devil's detail that makes these shears a "cut" above all the others I've tried.

On non-serrated scissors-type braid shears, the line slips when you snip. Snip again and again—perhaps hold the line in place and gnaw through it or wish you had a laser-burner. The tiny serrations on the Cuda-cutters prevents the line from slipping and snip, the job is done—easily and every time!

Though they are called Braid Shears, they do a perfect job on mono or fluorocarbon line as well. Available online at www.cudabrand.com, Amazon.com or at many retail tackle outlets.



Most Great Lakes Anglers with trailerable boats have probably had the problem of leaving home with an empty cooler in the boat and arriving with a cooler-empty boat or at least a cooler with no lid. Most Great Lakes Anglers haven't had the problem of their cooler being accosted by a bear—well, maybe a few.

I know I've had all these cooler fails except a bear attack and over a decade ago, so had the Seider Brothers, founders of YETI. Roy and Ryan had a lifetime of being outdoors and a background in the outdoor industry—though not in coolers. What the Yeti guys did was imagine the ultimate cooler, then built it and then marketed it.

Others have copied them and soon there were several brands of extreme performance coolers available. None of these have been in the business as long as YETI. Some have come and gone since 2006 when the first YETI Tundra cooler popped out of the mold. The Tundra, still made in the USA, has stood the test of time and proved when Roy and Ryan's idea to produce the cooler "they'd use everyday" was a sound business plan. Now, the YETI Tundra is the cooler to which all other coolers (performance brands or disposable brands) are compared.

Sure, you can slap a piece of plywood on top of one of the disposable cooler brands and stand or sit on it without crashing the lid. Sure you can buy extra ice—or an extra cooler with extra ice to make sure things stay cold over the long run. You can add extra durable hinges, extra foam insulation, replace cheap plastic handles with rope and make any cooler work better than when you drag it out of Walmart. You can also put a V-8 in a VW Microbus and make it go 130 miles per hour; but in the end, you are still driving a VW Microbus.

What can I say about the YETI I put on my boat? The hinges are great, the handles are great, a fat guy can sit on it, the ice and fish I put in it stay cold all day, its slick finish cleans up nicely whether it's walleye blood or laker poo. I've not yet pitted it against a bear assault.

Sure YETIs are expensive. But they aren't disposable. If you are a Great Lake Angler who wants the best, demands the most and understands the concept of getting what you pay for, check out www.yeti.com.

YETI TUNDRA COOLER



Most Great Lakes Anglers have had the problem of high temperatures thwarting their best guess about how much ice to poke in the cooler at the beginning of a trip to keep fish, beverages or anything else you need to keep cold all day—or on into the night. Most Great Lakes Anglers have had cooler lid cave-ins when some big guy thought the cooler you stowed on the back deck would make a good bench seat or even a medium-sized guy used it as a step stool.