

Optimum Baits

Optimum Bait Company Brings New Zappu Jigheads to the United States

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TEMECULA, California – Zappu, Japan’s finest terminal tackle manufacturer has already brought innovations like the Inchi Wacky to American anglers rabid for new ways to catch heavily-pressured bass. Now, with the US introduction of the all-tungsten PD Chopper and Mustang Head, Zappu has raised the game when it comes to swimming-style jigheads.

The cat was let out of the bag in April, when BassFan.com referred to the PD Chopper as likely to be “a spot-on killer in the heart of American swim jig country.” Since then, an eager public has clamored for its introduction to American waters and Optimum Bait Company is eager to fulfill their wishes.

Like all Zappu terminal tackle, both types of jigheads are made of 97% tungsten. This is both environmentally-friendly and advantageous for the fisherman. Tungsten is substantially more compact than lead, allowing it to slip through smaller gaps, and its increased density provides even greater feel as the jigs bounce off cover or when light-biting fish subtly engulf them.

The swimming jig, known in Japan as the “scone rig,” is nothing new, but the PD Chopper has a uniquely-shaped head with a rudder-like protruding bottom. Allowed to fall to the bottom, it stands up on its face to tempt neutral bass, but the real beauty is when an angler swims it back to the boat steadily. The face pushes water and has an erratic, occasionally violent side-to-side motion that “hunts” like the finest balsa crankbaits. The face of both the PD Chopper and the Mustang are relatively flat, pushing water out of the way as they barrel forward. That flat design also allows them to stand straight up when allowed to rest on the bottom. Viewed from the front, the head is widest at its approximate mid-point and tapers down quickly toward the bottom to provide increased vibration and their signature rolling actions.

“I like to trim the skirt down and thin it out a bit,” said Zappu pro Fred Roumbanis. “Sometimes a Chatterbait has a little too much vibration. With the Chopper, you can hop it and kill it and a lot of times that’s when you’ll get the strikes.”

The PD Chopper will initially be available in the 3/8 ounce size with eight different two-tone skirts. Matched with a small swimbait like an Optimum Baits Double Diamond, it comes through grass and other vegetation flawlessly but is also a killer in open water. Each jighead has both a screw-in trailer keeper and a wire affixed to the hook shank – it’s up to the angler to choose whichever level of weedlessness best suits the situation at hand.

The Mustang Head is a scaled-down version of the PD Chopper, minus the skirt, made for swimming smaller swimbaits and finesse worms in clear water. It can be used like a shakey head or like the PD Chopper it can be retrieved steadily and provides the same unpredictable lifelike action.



Mustang Head with Reins Bubbling Shaker & Optimum's Micro Double Diamond



PD Chopper with a Double Diamond Trailer

“It’s unlike anything else out there,” said Roumbanis. “If you put a lean body worm on it, it’s like candy to a fish. It’s particularly good for post-spawn bass chilling under boat docks.”

The Mustang will be available in 1/16, 3/32 and 1/8 ounce sizes and features a titanium weedguard.

While Roumbanis uses the two new jigheads primarily for horizontal presentations, fellow IMA pro Bill Lowen calls them “the best ‘dragging’ jigs” he’s ever seen.

“When you let it fall, it stands up and stays standing up,” he said. “It’s especially good if you use a floating, buoyant trailer behind it.”

Because of the way it stands at attention, Roumbanis believes that a shad-colored PD Chopper with a white Double Diamond is among the best bed fishing baits every produced. Allowed to stand at ease on the bottom, the lure takes on the defensive posture of a fleeing crawdad, just begging bass to remove them from their nests. Even when allowed to sit still, the seductive side to side action of the Double Diamond combined with the PD Chopper’s flared skirt antagonizes even the most non-committal spawners into striking.

Both the PD Chopper and the Mustang have specially-designed Owner hooks. The Mustang heads feature a #1 hook and the PD Chopper has a 4/0.

ABOUT OPTIMUM BAIT COMPANY: Optimum Bait Company has been the leader in swimbait design since 1996. Optimum was the first company to release a swimbait with an internal weight in the head, but that is only one of their many innovations. Using CAD machinery, the company has branched out not only within the swimbait market, but also into other genres – one such development was Furbit the Frog and the Poppin’ Furbit, which were chosen as the best new soft lure by the American Sportfishing Association at ICAST in 2006. While Optimum is based in Southern California, where swimbaits got their start, the lures have gained a strong foothold throughout the US as well as in overseas markets.

For more information about Optimum Bait Company and Zappu products, go to www.optimumbaits.com.