

RAPALA VMC HEADS INTO THE 2022 ICE FISHING SEASON WITH STRONGEST CATALOGUE IN COMPANY HISTORY, REINFORCING ITS GLOBAL MARKET LEADERSHIP IN ICE FISHING WHILST BENEFITTING FROM GROWING DEMAND AS PANDEMIC LOCK DOWN MEASURES CONTINUE WORLDWIDE

The 2022 ice fishing season is here, and with it comes a winter product offering from Rapala VMC that includes more brands and more exciting products than has ever been seen in years past. Now including both 13 Fishing, firmly established within the international ice fishing scene since the mid 2010's – and most recently, Okuma, a global mega rod & reel brand with over 35 years of experience now set on a new growth journey, spearheaded by Rapala VMC's 2021 acquisition of the brand in Europe and Russia.



On top of this great new addition to our brand portfolio, the market is currently experiencing an unprecedented demand for electric-powered ice augers, thanks both to booming participation in ice fishing, and a sweeping transition from gas/fuel power to more efficient and sustainable electric power. With StrikeMaster as our flagship lithium technology ice auger brand, Rapala VMC is perfectly positioned to enjoy this trend, delivering more high-performance ice-cutting products to demanding consumers than ever before.

"We are extremely proud to be able to claim that today, StrikeMaster is undeniably the market leader in powerheads and ice drills," says Tapio Verho, Director of Rapala VMC's ice fishing business. "Innovative products such as the 100% electric-powered Lithium 40V Ice Auger and new, lightweight Lithium 24V Ice Auger have raised the bar of what is accepted by enthusiastic hard water anglers worldwide, propelling the brand to this esteemed position." Furthermore, ice fishing anglers are

eagerly stocking up on Rapala's latest ice accessories & safety gear, along with 13 Fishing FreeFall ice combos. VMC's newest ice jigs have disappeared from shelves after being launched in Europe, following on from years of growth in North America. Sufix ice lines are proving more popular than ever and Rapala's Ice blades continue to be the blades-of-choice for serious ice-drilling anglers.

Exciting Okuma products are now hitting shelves across Europe under Rapala VMC's distribution for both the 2022 winter and summer seasons with a proven range of over 350 reel models, and over 450 different rods and combos across predator, carp, saltwater, spinning, trolling, game fishing, casting, centerpin and ice. Customer excitement is very high and pre order bookings are very strong. Our customer base is loyal and confident with several retailers having come to value the technical features, high performance, durability, and massive assortment that Okuma is bringing to the recreational fishing industry. Okuma's product range is highly suited to European and Russian fishing methods, and Okuma will become the flagship brand in Rapala VMC's European rod & reel product portfolio. Together with 13 Fishing and other Rapala VMC Group brands, the Group's impressive product portfolio will form a winning platform in the region.

For winter ice fishing enthusiasts, Okuma brings a range of micro-sized baitfeeders on the Ceymar reel platform. These specialist reels are built for tough conditions with features such as Okuma's Precision Elliptical Gearing and Rotor Equalizing System that improve performance in cold weather.

"With three of our five PD&I centers located in the main ice fishing regions globally, we're very well positioned to capitalize on emerging trends as they happen. Be it in the vast Nordic region surrounding Helsinki, or the cold clear Canadian lakes of Ontario, to the epicenter of all ice fishing 'The American Ice Belt' stretching directly through Minnesota," comments David Neill, Executive Vice President, Product Development & Innovation at Rapala VMC. *"Having our development teams located in these key fisheries allows us to work together with top pro's – with this we are able to capture trends early and continuously bring new and emerging techniques to the marketplace. 2021/22 has been no exception with products like the Jigging Shadow Rap and Rap V now in store. Both are modernized vertical jigging lures that will be attractive to all gamefish through the ice. With many new offerings in Rapala VMC's key ice brands, pre-season sales were at record breaking levels in all regions."*





An earlier-than-usual start to the Nordic winter season has seen ice fishermen already braving the cold. This quick, cold change has helped kick off what we expect to be a great winter season of sales and outdoor activities enjoyed by many. We are excited and grateful to be able to bring anglers such a diverse product line to choose from this winter season.

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