

2023 Ohio Walleye Federation Qualifier #2 Lake Milton

The Ohio Walleye Federation just concluded the second tournament of the season on Lake Milton. As is usually the case with the 1700-acre reservoir, the anglers were concentrated to small areas, and the fish were spread out throughout the lake.

Teams that got a chance to get out and pre-fish the few days before the event were rewarded with beautiful sunshine days and high sporadic clouds. Reports were given that there were many fish over the 15" minimum length being caught with a few of those fish 20"+ that would be needed as a "kicker" to push you from an average bag to being able to compete for a win. After a minor boat ramp adjustment that was made at the last minute on Saturday evening, teams arrived at Millers Landing Boat ramp with some definite changing conditions. Clouds had filled the sky, and the temperature in the morning was about 20 degrees warmer than had been the past few days. Looking at the weather forecast, it was told rain was coming and they weren't lying. Anglers were faced with a few hours of rain during the competition day.

The team of Anthony Naples and Christopher Durkin persevered through the raindrops to pull out an impressive win. The team weighed 3 fish for 10.95 pounds with a Lake Milton giant kicker of 6.49 pounds. Naples and Durkin were 2 fish short of their tournament limit and still won by almost 3 pounds. Taking home \$1700 for the day's fishing. Talking to Christopher at weigh-in, he stated that they were fishing one of their favorite stretches in the river and jigging, live bait, either a minnow or night crawler on a jig. He said that they would cast up onto the bank and work the jig back to the boat that was sitting in roughly 12 feet of water. The team also wanted to give out a huge assist to Joe Yackmack for his lending them a landing net on tournament morning when it was realized that the team had left theirs at home. Durkin told the crowd that they would have never been able to land that big fish without borrowing that net.

The 2nd place team of Rick Mulraney and Chaun Martin trolled leadcore in 10-14 foot of water to pull in a 5 fish limit that weighed in at 8.21 pounds good for 2nd place plaques and \$1050. Rick and Chaun were pulling flicker shads in a variety of colors on the lake's south side. Rick was also the winning captain in qualifier #1, and after this impressive showing, he has taken commanding lead in the OWF points thru 2 events.

In 3rd place, that paid out \$800 was the always consistent team on Lake Milton of Bobby Honaker and Kevin Kalinowski with 5 fish that weighed 6.57 pounds. Bobby and Kevin said that they bounced around to multiple different spots looking for fish to jig up. They two used a combination of live bait, minnows, and night crawlers. Bobby and Kevin were also the winners of event #2's NTC Side Pot winning a paid entry into the 2024 Bass Pro Shops and Cabelas National Team Championship, presented by the TWF.

In 4th place, with 5 fish for 6.35 pounds was Dan DeBenedictis and Ciprian Donici they won \$600. They were also 6 said that most of their fish came jigging boat docks with live bait. Dan stated that after a productive morning jigging, they then switched to trolling to the shallow waters next to the boat docks as well. Dan stated that there was no particular lure or color that worked better when they were trolling.

Rounding out the top 5 was the team of Matt Simunick and Tommy Delvecchio with 5 fish for 6.09 pounds good for \$400. This is Matt and Tommy's 2nd season fishing with the OWF and their first top 5. Good job, gentlemen! Matt reported that he caught all of his fish trolling flicker shads on the south end of the lake as well. He said that his fish were all from 8-12 foot of water. In total, the 26 teams fishing their were five 5 fish limits weighed in and a total of 67 fish with a grand total of 97.91 pounds from Lake Milton.

The OWF season is now moving its focus to Berlin Lake on May 21st. Berlin was the sight of last year's Inland Lake Championship, and there were some impressive bags weighed in. The OWF record for the largest 1 day bag ever weighed of 31.54 pounds was pulled out of Berlin last summer. Make sure to get your registrations in.

The Ohio Walleye Federation would like to thank our title sponsor, Erie Marine Sales, for all of the support that they provide to us. If it weren't for them, we wouldn't be able to provide 100% payout at all tournaments.

For additional information or to sign up for an event, please check us out on Facebook – Ohio Walleye Federation or on our website;