

Qualifier #4 Chautauqua Lake

The OWF just concluded and their 4th and final qualifier of the 2023 season on June 11th. Teams traveled an hour or so from the Ohio line to the state of NY and to the shores of Chautauqua Lake. This is the OWF's second year at Chautauqua and if the fishing and bags keep improving like they have from year one to two, it's going to be exciting in the future.

With this being only the second time the club has been to Chautauqua the pre-fishing appeared to be inconsistent but steady. Many teams that we talked to were catching fish just not a lot of them and not many in the same spot. With the club traveling to NY we also had some local teams that seemed to be on a little bit more consistent bite. Chautauqua Lake is a 17,000 acre natural lake with over 40 miles of shoreline to cover so local knowledge would help.

Every team that was willing to give up any information on Sunday morning before take off was all talking about the overall size structure of the fish that were being caught, and the majority of teams were targeting fish on the weedy shoreline edges. A few teams were really excited by the size of the fish that they were catching on a jigging rod. The common theme amongst competitors was it was going to take more than 20 pounds to win the event and that was creating a buzz amongst the 30 teams getting ready to take off.

It definitely took more than 20 pounds to win the event, as the always consistent OWF team of Bobby Honaker and Kevin Kalinowski brought home the win. They weighed in a whopping 24.37 pounds and won the event by almost 5 pounds! With winning the event Bobby and Kevin took home \$ 2,100 and also moved to 2nd place in the overall team of the year race. Bobby and Kevin were doing what has won them a lot of money in the OWF, Bobby jigging with a jig and half a nightcrawler in the front of the boat. Kevin casting a crank bait in the back of the boat. Bobby said during weigh-in's that they were targeting a specific weed edge shoreline. He was catching the bigger fish but Kevin was putting more numbers in the boat with his crankbait.

In 2nd place was the local team of Al Cornell and Judd Bohall with a 5 fish limit weighing in at 19.61, anchored by a tournament big of fish of 7.20 pounds. 2nd place paid out \$1100 and then big fish was good for another \$400 on top. The team reported catching all of their fish rip jigging soft plastics in the thickest nastiest weeds you could find.

3rd place was the team of Norman Wickline and Brian Spada weighing a tournament limit of 5 fish for 19.44 pounds barely missing out on 2nd place. For 3rd place the team will be taking back to Ohio \$900. They told the crowd gathered that all of their fish were caught on weed edges using hair jigs.

In 4th place with 5 fish for 17.82 pounds was Kevin and Phil Hind. Kevin and Phil won \$700. They reported that they caught all of their fish in scattered weeds rip jigging plastics and blade baits.

Rounding out the top 5 and also winning the very coveted NTC side pot for the 2024 National Team Championship in Lorain was the team of Steve Booher and Mike Schmidt. Steve and Mike are always a top team when it comes to fishing in the weeds and their 5 fish weighed in at 17.77 pounds good for \$500. Steve reported that the fish were caught on hard weed edges with jig and plastics and also a jig and crawler.

Chautauqua was also the final event in the season long Team Walleye Wars. Winning the Walleye Wars was the team of Rick Mulraney and Mitch Shipman. With the win they are in line to get an automatic bid for the 2024 Bass Pro Shops and Cabelas National Team Championship in Lorain. 2nd place went to James Roberts and Dave Jenco. The winner of the 3rd and 4th place match in the Walleye Wars was David Hoisington and Dan Uber taking the win over Jim Leigh and Shane Doughty.

Our next event will be our championship on Pymatuning Lake June 24th and 25th. In order to be eligible to fish in the Championship you must have fished in 1 qualifier with the club. We will also have NTC side pots both days of the Championship.

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; www.ohiowalleyefederation.com.