

American Fishing Tour Region 4 Championship Fishes ... Henderson Harbor



by Burnell Haney

The American Bass Anglers, Inc. "American Fishing Tour" will converge on Henderson Harbor in September, bringing 500 anglers from 13 northeastern states to this fishing hotspot. The Region 4 Championship Tournament will run Sept. 8th through the 15th. Practice days will be Saturday through Thursday, with the two-day championship scheduled for Friday and Saturday. The American Fishing Tour is dedicated to the non-professional weekend bass angler; and if you too are a weekend bass chaser, it's not too late to get in on the fun.

Based on a full field of 500 anglers, the first place winner receives \$10,000, with a potential for a \$5,000 bonus if they're fishing out of a Mercury-powered Triton boat. All competitors at the championship will be entered in a random drawing for a Triton TR186 bass boat valued at \$30,000 with a Mercury motor, Lowrance electronics and MotorGuide trolling motor. The top 50 anglers from this event will qualify for the National Championship tournament scheduled for November 4 to 11; the location will be announced in June.

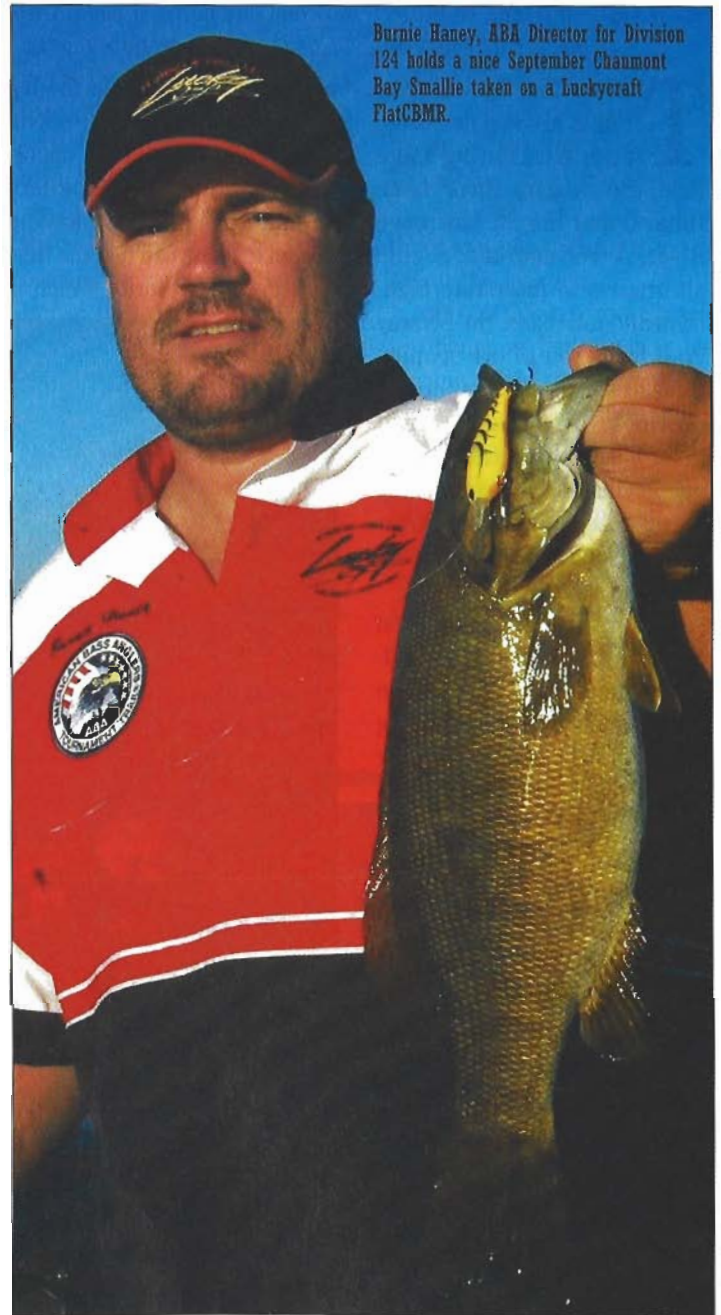
The American Fishing Tour has 106 divisions offering over 1,000 tournaments nationwide annually. Two of the divisions in Region 4 are in NY and offer non-conflicting tournament schedules on bodies of water across the state from June to August. These

one-day tournaments provide part-time anglers many options for competitive fishing throughout the summer. The New York Northwest Division 4 is based out of the Rochester area and the New York Thousand Islands Division 124 is based out of the Watertown area.

Anglers are guaranteed to use their own boat and sometimes may end up fishing alone when there is a shortage of non-boaters. Competitors are on an eight-hour clock and the heaviest legal limit of bass wins. Prize money is awarded based on the number of \$70 entries and the angler's place of finish. Anglers may fish as few or as many tournaments in either division's schedule as they wish. However to qualify for the regional championship, anglers must have competed in a combined total of four of the one-day tournaments and one two-day divisional tournament from any Region 4 division.

Anglers earn points based on their place of finish in each tournament and at the completion of the divisional two-day tournaments, the top 500 point-holders in the region are eligible to fish the regional tournament in Henderson.

Anglers interested in fishing local American Fishing Tour tournaments may contact Division 4 Director Mark Mothersell at (585) 303-3602, bassing48@frontiernet.net, or www.upstateny-bassanglers.com; or the Division 124 Director, Burnie Haney



Burnie Haney, ABA Director for Division 124 holds a nice September Chaumont Bay Smallie taken on a Luckycraft FlatCBMR.

at (315) 786-8897, bhaney@twcny.rr.com, or on the web at www.aba-district124.com.

The American Bass Anglers,

Inc. is a national organization that started in 1975 with the idea of giving military personnel a pro-

Continued On Page 26

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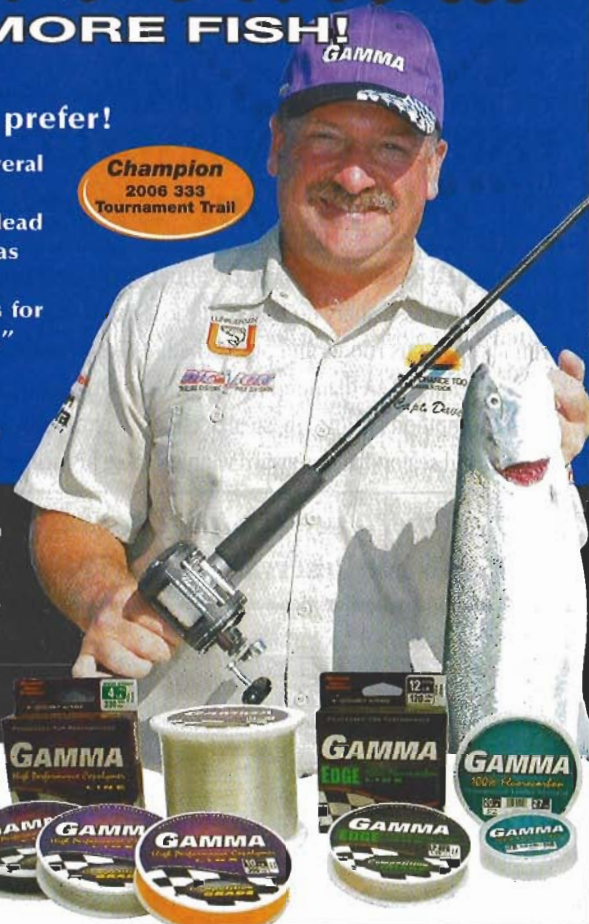
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Continued From Page 17

Henderson

gram that provided tournament bass fishing opportunities by scheduling close to home events with a reasonable entry fee.

The organization now welcomes all anglers, and it's about a 50-50 split between military and civilians. Non-boaters are always welcome and are paired with boaters through a random draw at the morning tournament launch.

In January 2000 Morris Shee-

han, a long-time member and 1977 Angler of the Year, purchased the tournament trail and formed American Bass Anglers, Inc. Sheehan established his headquarters in Athens, Alabama to manage day-to-day operations and hired David Hagood as vice president.

In 2007, Sheehan purchased the operational rights to the ESPN/BASS Weekend Series tournament trail and he formed two new trails under the ABA banner. Today the organization hosts four distinct tournament trails: the

Bassmaster Weekend Series, the American Fishing Tour, the American Couples Tour, and the Grand Slam Tour.

Local sponsors for the Henderson Harbor event include Deal-maker Auto Group, Town of Henderson, Rhodes Greenhouses, Aspinwall Motel, Rent-a-Wreck, The Sunset, Henchen Marina and Fishing Camp, Willoughby's On the Bay, Bill Saiff's Westview Lodge, Ryan's Lookout, Lake Ontario Fishing Coalition, The Gill House Inn, The Willows on the Lake RV Resort, Barb Rendell,

Fort Drum Morale Welfare & Recreation, 1,000 Islands Bait Store; and Lake Ontario Mariner's Marina. National ABA sponsors are Triton Boats, Mercury Motors, MotorGuide, Ardent Reels, Royal Purple, Gander Mountain, Lowrance, Anglers Advantage Insurance, Hi-Seas Line, Airrus Rods, Fishing Hot Spots Maps, V & M baits, PROBASS Networks, Rejuvenade, Keep Alive, and Reaction Systems.

For more information about competitive bass fishing, go to www.americanbassanglers.com.