

HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

A NEWSLETTER BY ESPN WOMENS TOUR ANGLER, COLLEEN MCKAY

WOMEN'S BASSMASTER TOUR—KENTUCKY LAKE

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After a tough tournament at Lake Guntersville in May I was ready to get back to fishing the Women's Bassmaster Tour.

The fourth stop on the tour was on Kentucky and Barkley Lakes. I had a two hour drive after my plane touched down in Evansville so I was eager to get on the road. As I waited for my luggage, I began to wonder where my St. Croix fishing rods were. Evansville is a small airport and my rods were nowhere to be found. To make matters worse the person from the airlines told me that he could not tell where my rods were but he didn't think they had left the airport back at home. He said "What did you have in there? One fishing rod?" Well, I guess he doesn't tournament fish but he seemed confident that my rods would arrive the next day so I headed for Gilbertsville, Kentucky.

A couple hours later, I arrived at the Inn by the Lake in Gilbertsville and caught up with my practice partner and roommate on the tour—Kimberlee Striker. I told her about my rods—she had a shocked look on her face and said "not again" (it wasn't the first time the airlines had misplaced my rods).

The next morning my rods had still not arrived so Kim loaned me a couple of hers but it just wasn't the same. As the day progressed it became clear that my rods were not going to show up that day. I was beginning to think they might be gone for good and we began searching for a St. Croix dealer in the area in case I needed to replace my rods.



Kimberlee Striker and Colleen at the Weigh-in on Day 2 at Kentucky Lake

During the afternoon of our second day of practice we noticed some crappie "huts" (stakes driven into the ground in a circle in a shallow area of the lake). We discussed whether there would be any bass around the crappie huts. Lo and behold, Kim managed to catch a small bass off of the first hut. She cast toward the next hut as we approached it when another bass

grabbed her lure. This one appeared to have swallowed a watermelon, it's stomach was stuffed. I told Kim to take a peek inside the bass' mouth and we both burst into hysterics when we saw the tail of a crappie sticking out of that bass' throat. So, if you ever see a crappie hut—check it out—there could be some bass pigging out on crappie there.

My phone rang after we fished the second crappie hut. It was a delivery guy with my St. Croix rods. What a relief! I couldn't imagine fishing the tournament without those rods. Fortunately, the rest of the practice was uneventful and I hoped things would continue to improve during the tournament.

Day 1: I would be fishing with Linda Redford from Missouri. Linda said she and her practice partner caught several nice bass during practice. During the tournament I caught a walleye, a drum, spotted bass, and a small-mouth bass. Unfortunately the bass were not big enough to keep and weigh in. I figured if it was a catch the most species tournament, I would be in the lead.

Day 2: I was paired with Emily Shaffer from Tennessee. Emily had also struggled on day 1 but I was

KENTUCKY LAKE (CONT...)

confident that we would catch some keepers. I had fished with Emily at the WBT event on Lake Amistad earlier in the year, catching a seven pound largemouth from the back of her boat. I told Emily that I just wanted to weigh in a fish so I could get some points and try to stay up in the standings. I hooked into a two pound bass only to have it come off when we went to net it. I tried to keep calm and attempted to focus on catching a keeper as the pressure mounted. After catching a couple of small bass I hooked into one that was almost four pounds. What a relief to get that one into the boat!

Later, I managed to catch another one over two pounds. I ended up in 25th place after day 2 which was enough to squeak into the cut and fish on day 3.

Day 3: I was fishing with Kathi Hurst. I had fished with Kathi at the Guntersville tournament and was looking forward to fishing with her again. The entire tournament had been a tough bite for many of the lady anglers and the third day was no different for us. After catching several small bass I caught a three pound bass with a Carolina rigged lizard. Unfortunately it was the only keeper that either one of us managed to catch that day.

As I walked on the stage and was asked about my day by ESPN announcer Lurch, I told him how it had been a tough week. The bad news was that the airlines had lost my rods—again! However, the good news was that every time the airlines have lost my luggage I have been fortunate enough to make the cut, fish on day 3, and cash a check.

As I walked off-stage one of the fans in the audience said that I should thank the airlines. I laughed, said I wasn't convinced of that but that I was glad that everything had worked out ok. I moved up to 21st place in the tournament and moved from tenth place in the points race to 9th overall with one tournament to go on the Red River. Now I just have to wait until September.

As I head the next WBT event I want to take the opportunity to thank my sponsors and supporters:

Sponsors & Supporters

Barry's Bait and Tackle

Sure-Life Laboratories
(Please Release Me)

McCoy Fishing Line

St. Croix Rod Company

Buckeye Lures

COLLEEN FEATURED IN BASS BETS ARTICLE IN THE BOSTON HERALD

Colleen was featured in a Bass Bets article by Ted Ancher. The article was in the Boston Herald on Saturday, June 23, 2007. The article features Colleen and her fishing "hotspots" on her favorite lake—Conway Lake in Conway, NH. The article is archived on the Boston Herald's web site here:

<http://sports.bostonherald.com/otherSports/view.bg?articleid=1007915&format=graphic>

I'm on the web:

<http://www.cmckaybassfish.com>

ABOUT ME

I am employed as a faculty member and researcher at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. I began fishing bass tournaments in 1999. I compete on the Women's Bassmaster Tour and fish both club (individual) and team tournaments in the Massachusetts Bass Federation. I'm fishing the Women's Bassmaster Tour (WBT), initially as a non-boater but with a goal of obtaining a boat and fishing as a boater. I would like to establish relationships with sponsoring companies for myself and for my club. I strive for advancement opportunities in pursuit of a professional fishing career.

UPCOMING TOURNAMENTS

Green Water Wizards—Club Tournament
Lake Champlain
North Hero, VT
July 29, 2007

Mass Bass Federation Team Trail Tournament
Connecticut River
Hinsdale, NH
July 22, 2007

ESPN Women's Bassmaster Tour
Red River
Shreveport, LA
September 20-22, 2007

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