

HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER...

A NEWSLETTER BY ESPN WOMENS TOUR ANGLER, COLLEEN MCKAY

WOMEN'S BASSMASTER TOUR—LAKE GUNTERSVILLE

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The practice period for the Women's Bassmaster Tour event on Lake Guntersville was cut short as the B.A.S.S. Elite Series had a tournament there the weekend before ours. The shortened practice period allowed us to watch the men weigh in. It sounded like there was a decent spinner bait bite although the fishing seemed to be tough as many of the men fishing in the final day of their tournament did not weigh in a limit.

After watching the weigh-in I ran into Kevin Van Dam (KVD) and Mark Zona at a gas station. It looked like they were eager to get home. I congratulated KVD on his win and joked "did you leave any fish for the rest of us?". They laughed and KVD said "there's plenty of fish in there". I wished them a safe trip home and headed on my way.

As I thought about my pre-fishing strategy I also reflected on how fortunate I been to meet so many great anglers while fishing the WBT and want to acknowledge three Alabama lady anglers: Kimberlee Striker and Linda Sands from Cullman, AL and Betty "Boop" Stahl from Guntersville, AL. Between those three ladies I had a place to stay during the tournament, a vehicle to use, and

practice partners every day. These ladies have become good friends and were a tremendous help. We talk a lot about catching fish and winning some money but the people that you meet and the camaraderie on the water is priceless.

Well, it was a tough practice and I began to wonder if KVD was wrong about there being plenty of fish in

her again. Kathy was staying nearby in the Guntersville Campground which made things much easier. There's nothing worse than trying to find your boater amidst 100 other boats in the dark before a tournament.

Kathy managed to catch a couple of fish pretty quickly and then I boated my first keeper. Getting that first



COLLEEN & WBT ANGLER KATHY HURST

Lake Guntersville. I managed to catch a decent keeper on the final day of practice which helped boost my confidence heading into the tournament.

Day1: I was paired with Kathy Hurst. I had fished with Kathy in 2006 and was looking forward to fishing with

keeper in the boat takes a lot of pressure off. Later I caught a nice bass. As the day wound to a close Kathy managed to catch a good fish to get her limit. I was worried about where I would be in the standings as I did not have a great day. As it turned out, a lot of anglers did not have a great

LAKE GUNTERSVILLE (CONT..)

day either so I was in the top 25 after Day 1.

I headed back to the campground to prep for the next day after a brief discussion about strategy with my Day 2 partner.

Day 2: Day 2 was a personal rendition of the “co-angler’s nightmare”. My partner was bed fishing (fishing for spawning bass) for the majority of the day. I managed to catch a couple of small fish behind her but was unable to boat any keepers. Unfortunately that’s the way the luck of the draw goes sometimes.

After Day 2, I was in thirty-first place overall and had missed the cut by a pound. I was disappointed and hoped that I would not drop too much in the standings. As it turned out, I am 10th place overall, and will have some work to do at Kentucky Lake in June.

MASS BASS FEDERATION

I am fishing the Mass Bass Federation Team Trail with my fishing partner Peter Bright. Pete and I have had some success on the team trail over the last several years, finishing seventh in the Tournament of Champions in 2006. There are four events on the team trail. Our first tournament was on Long Pond in Lakeville, MA. The temperature had dropped significantly and it had rained for several days prior to the tournament so we figured the fishing might be tough. We struggled to catch fish (well bass anyway). I had a big pickerel try to steal my Toad Hunter Spinner Bait but was fortunate enough to get it back. We had a difficult time locating and catching fish all day and ended up in 31st place. The top 25 qualify for the Tournament of Champions so we will have some work to do at the next three events!

ON STAGE AT THE WOMEN’S BASSMASTER TOUR



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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
Charles River
Waltham, MA
May 12, 2007

Massachusetts Bass Federation Team Trail
Long Pond
Lakeville, MA
May 20, 2007

Women's Bassmaster Tour
Kentucky Lake
Guntersville, KY
June 14-16, 2007

Watch the weigh-ins live: go to www.bassmaster.com to get to the link to see the Kentucky Lake tournament weigh-ins live on Thursday-Saturday, June 14-16, at 3:10pm EST.