

The Final Run

O.B.F.N. 2010 Tournament Trail

The venue is Lake Erie Sandusky. The date is August 22nd. The event is the last official tournament for the Ohio Bass Federation Nation where its competitors will make their final run to qualify for a state team position for 2011. For the last four tournaments we've run the gauntlet and persevered through tough conditions and tough competition to make it to this point.

We've stayed consistent in our angling efforts and kept a watchful eye on the point's board after each event. We've traveled the tournament miles on this long trail and sacrificed time away from our families and friends hoping to secure a spot on the team that will travel to the next level in 2011.

We'll make ready our gear and prepare for the unexpected, mother Erie is known all too well not to forgive mistakes. We'll study the maps and the charts; keeping a good eye on the weather and wave conditions all the while. We'll check our inventories of proven lures and secret weapon "go to's" that could make the difference at the scales between making the cut, and going home. We'll draw our game plans from two days of pre-fishing and then lock and load for tournament day. This is the final run.

From an angler's point of view, that being my own I've always believed that preparation before any tournament is just one key to success. Another would be how well an angler can improvise when a condition or situation occurs that changes your game plan. More often than not it would be when your pattern or (pattern within a pattern) suddenly disappears. However on Lake Erie it could be a million things and sometimes the better plan would be to head in and call it a day, or fish in the bays. She can play pretty rough.

From a co-angler's perspective heading into Lake Erie next month I can tell you that I'm looking forward to the venue and the competition. I know that all of you competing will be bringing your best. Our destiny and our fate will be in the hands of the anglers we're paired with by random computer draw. After all we go where they go and we fish where they fish. I have been fortunate to have been paired with great guys all and I tried to learn from them along the way. To those anglers I say thank you for the ride and the experience you've given me; I will remember and try to apply what I have learned.

If I had to write a book on the philosophy of tournament fishing it would take me a year to gather and organize the first paragraph. I would want to interview the icons of our sport, the pioneers that cut the trails for us to follow, and the ones who have excelled along those paths. It would be a dream job just to meet these people and gain their insight. To be able to draw on their philosophy of our sport and fishing as a whole would be without a doubt priceless. At one time or another in their careers, they were in the same place we are now; trying to make the cut on a final run.

For those in the running for the 2011 state team I say congratulations on a job well done so far. We're heading to the proving grounds of Lake Erie. Arguably the best Smallmouth Bass waters in the world, she will expect nothing less than our very best. From her waters great careers have been launched as she can yield a winning limit in record time; or she can end your day with a zero bag in eight to ten foot waves.

She can give an angler a hundred plus fish a day and sometimes more; she will humble those anglers that do not respect her signs when the winds change. For any angler having to prove that they belong at the next level of competition there is no better test than Lake Erie. Who will go on and who will go home is a question that will be answered on August 22nd, when we all make our final run. Good luck to all and we'll see you at Lake Erie.

Sean Wright
Tournament Director
Out Cast Bassmasters