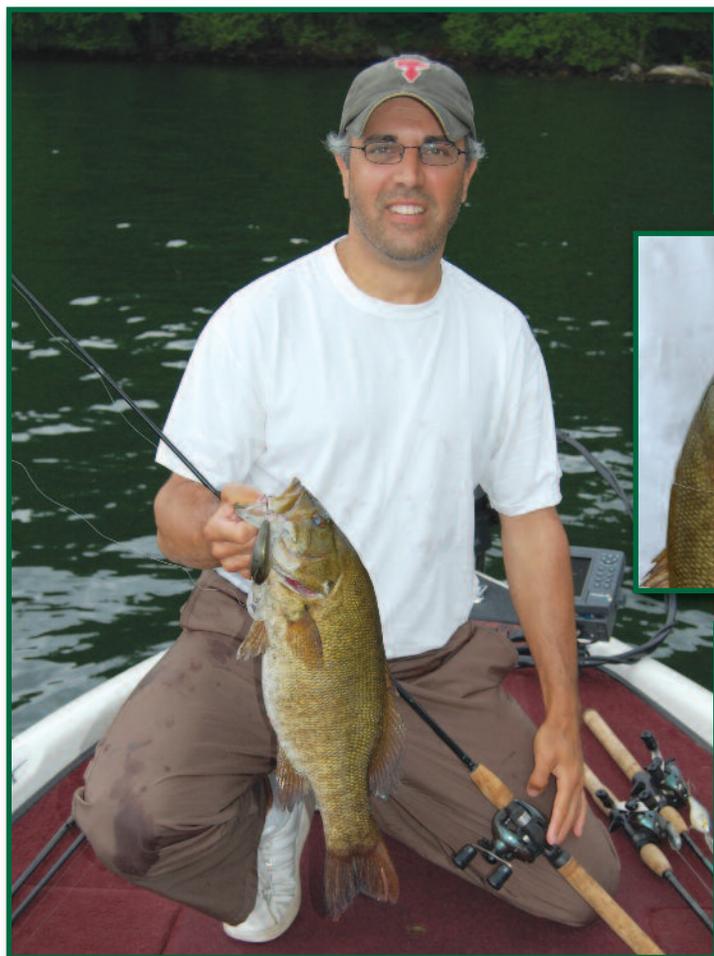


Reigning NYBCF Angler of the Year

FRANK GINER Targets **BIG Bass**

With **BIG Baits**

By Tom Presnell - Executive Editor



schools of bait on the sonar and you'd see the fish suspended under the bait. So I got in the habit of throwing two things: deep diving crankbaits and 5" swimbaits. They pretty much act like the alewives."

Frank's two favorite lures for applying this technique are a Jackall Muscle Deep 15+ and a Basstrix 5" swimbait fished with a weighted hook. He'll also go to a vintage Rapala Risto Rap on occasion and even has some custom painted deep divers that work best under certain conditions.

"As you approach a hump, I like to start casting, working the outer edges until I get on top of it," Giner explains. "I'm fishing for bass in the 10-15 foot water column that are suspended under the bait. And those are the ones that are usually the biggest, and they bite first," he adds. Frank will then methodically fish the hump with a drop shot. Even though he may catch more on the drop shot, it's usually the two or three that he caught on the approach with a big bait, that end up in the bag at the end of the day.

"Unless they are really aggressive one day, most of the time, that bigger bite is the one that gets you over the edge and above the normal tournament limit," Giner says. "Instead of coming in with a twelve pound limit, it'll get you in with fifteen."

Frank also knows that there is no one magic bait for using this strategy. He feels it's important to experiment with big baits. "Don't just think throwing one is enough," he adds. "Mix it up. Try throwing one that's got a hard wobble with a big knock for a rattle, or one with a tight wobble and no rattle. Experiment until you find the one that works best in that situation."

Ripping a big bait when approaching the edges of humps or structure can also pose an interesting obstacle that most people don't think about. "Be mentally prepared that the first fish you're going to catch, is the one you're going to keep," Frank says. "Because, I would say 75% of the time, the first one I catch approaching a hump, is the best one."

As we probed the emerald waters of Candlewood Lake, Frank consistently pulled up on each spot and popped between a three and four pounder within five casts. As it was my first time on this body of water, he was kind enough to leave the smaller ones for me. The day was capped right before we decided to head in, with the 5+ smallie that is pictured above. It managed to jump once on Frank as he fought it, and could only be described as a cinder block hitting the water as it landed.

The ironic part of this entire story is that Frank feels this is not one of his strengths. "I am not a crankbait guy," he admits. "But I will do this, because it makes a difference." **FL**

It's not often *Fishlines* gets to take a fishing trip with the NYBCF's reigning angler of the year. With both Editor and Angler's busy tournament schedules, it was humorously difficult to find a day we both had available. We settled on July 4th, and Frank suggested we go hunting in areas (mainly submerged humps) where we could throw some big baits. Since big baits tend to catch big fish, it was easy to oblige.

If you believe in Darwin's principle of natural selection, which states "*In the struggle for survival, the fittest win out at the expense of their rivals because they succeed in adapting themselves best to their environment,*" then you know that big fish will beat their smaller rivals to a big meal. So on a rainy, overcast Summer day, we decided to apply his theory and put it to the test.

"I learned this technique from Kota Kiriyama," Frank explained over his morning coffee. "I used to drive up on an area or some structure and have trouble catching the big ones drop-shotting. I noticed that, the days I'd have a hard time, would be when the fish were suspended up off the bottom," Giner adds. "So I wanted to develop a way, where before I pulled up on some fish in 25 feet of water and dropped a buoy, I started throwing things that get down to 15 feet prior to getting directly over it. A lot of times I'd get to a spot and see the