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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NY BASS CHAPTER FEDERATION TAKES A SOLDIER FISHING

April 24, 2010, Brewerton NY... The New York BASS Chapter Federation (NYBCF) held their second annual Take-A-Soldier-Fishing event on Oneida Lake for 80 Soldiers from the 10th Mountain Division at Fort Drum. Many of these Soldiers had recently returned from combat duty in Iraq and Afghanistan. The Soldiers arrived around 8 am for the morning registration, receiving a free Bass Pro Shops tackle pack, followed by coffee and donuts as they mingled with the boaters for morning introductions.

The day's events started with a brief moment of silence in recognition of all service members, followed by the National Anthem and drawings for assorted tackle and lures. The morning's big prize winners were Specialist William Kissell and Mr. Eric Barker; both walked away with a Dobyns Rod, US Reel and Rod Glove, each combo was valued at \$325.00 Tackle packs winners included Specialist Joe Porter and Staff Sergeant Ken Rodocker and several others enjoyed receiving Lucky Craft Pointer lures.

After a safety brief, the partner draw paired Soldiers with boaters that traveled from as far away as New Jersey and Pennsylvania. The Boaters provided Soldiers with rods, reels and tackle for the day's fishing. Weather conditions couldn't have been better as the day provided bright skies, light winds and temperatures in the mid 60s. The ultimate goal of Take A Soldier Fishing is to provide these Soldiers an opportunity to just decompress and disengage from the mission overseas and we use fishing as the vehicle to do that. Naturally when you assemble a bunch of tournament anglers, those guys and gals always want the opportunity to come to the scales, so to that end there were specific species of competition.

Winning the \$100 Gander Mountain Bucks for the biggest Drum (7.43 lb.) was boat captain Jesse Herbert and his Soldier team of Shawn Vanderpole and Lee Vasquez. The Sunfish/ Bluegill prize went to boater John Seijak's team of Soldiers Don Ellen and Byron Mack with a .52 lb. whopper. Mike Donahue piloted his Soldier team of Richard Olsen and Darren Cutrade to the winning Rock Bass with a weight of .81 lb. The Perch category (.45 lb.) was a tie between boater Brian Hammond's team of Larry Hym and Shannon Sherman and boater Randy LaManche's team of Mark Rhodes and Nicole Wright. Hanafin Marine Pro Staffer Craig Nels guided his Soldier team of Shawn Emond and Shone Warren to the winning Bowfin with a weight of 6.33 lb. The day's biggest fish went to boater Eric Barker's Soldier team of Tim Shepard and Chad Adair as they brought in a 31.07 lb. Carp.

All teams reported catching fish throughout the day and following weigh-in everyone was treated to a cookout style lunch compliments of the NYBCF, NYBCF Juniors and Luck O' the Irish Guide Service. After lunch, prize tickets were drawn and Soldiers continued to receive shirts, hats, gas cards, restaurant gift cards, passes to local baseball games and auto races, vouchers for free car washes and detailing, Swiss Army knives, binoculars and other useful items. Event sponsors were so generous that many Soldiers took home multiple prizes. The show of support from the local community and area businesses was truly overwhelming.

NYBCF President Mike Cusano stated, "most of our members know someone who's in the military or have friends, or friends of family members that are in the military and taking these Soldiers fishing is our way of saying thanks in recognition for what they do for us everyday."

An extra special thank you go out to the shore crew that made this program a success, Mike Cusano, Lori Haney, Craig Terpening, Lori, Chris and Nick Wheeler, Mickey & Kathy Bonano Fortunato, Katie Knapp, Paul Hudson, Bill Mahyna, Scott Frank, Joe Noffey, Butch Kritsberg, Hank Parker, Joe Maloof, Mike Sudol, Bill LaManche, Ed Moore, Bill Baldwin and Patrick Grady.

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Event Sponsors

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