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GREG MENCHEN WINS NY BASS CHAPTER FEDERATION 2010 NON-BOATER ANGLER OF THE YEAR

October 20, Calcium, NY... The New York BASS Chapter Federation (NYBCF) is pleased to announce Mr. Greg Menchen (Watershed Bassmasters) as our 2010 Non-Boater Angler of the Year (NB-AOY). Along with the NB-AOY title Menchen earned a slot on the NYBCF 2011 Eastern Division 12-man Team scheduled to compete on Lake Champlain. What follows is our Q&A with Menchen to find out what he did to win the title along with a few tips he has for other non-boaters

NYBCF: Winning AOY honors on the NY Federation trail is a pretty big accomplishment. Where do you rate this title against your other angling achievements?

Menchen: I'm absolutely thrilled. This is by far my highest achievement in tournament bass fishing. It is a tremendous honor to finish at the top of such a talented group of co-anglers. I welcome the challenge and look forward to being part of the 2011 NY 12-Man Divisional State Team.

NYBCF: Can you tell us a little about your game plan and how you practiced for each tournament this year?

Menchen: I was fortunate enough to be able to get out on the water one or two days with my father, who is also my fishing partner, for each of the first two events. I decided I would bring up my boat to Oneida Lake for the extra practice day considering I was in contention for the AOY title.

Lake Champlain: I had never been to Lake Champlain at this time of year and was very excited to get at it. My partner and I finessed enough post-spawn smallmouth still roaming their spawning flat for decent limits. Near the end of the day we were able to aid a fellow boat in distress with motor problems. I thought at the time, what goes around comes around. Sure enough it did. Thanks for a great day Doug.

St Lawrence River: This was my second trip up to the spectacular St. Lawrence/1,000 Islands area and I enjoyed every second of this event. I had the luxury of spending the day with Angler of the Year Matt Martin. We effectively target-fished a total of 10-12 spots and picked off fish from most of them. I found this event to be the most challenging trying to clean up what little Matt left behind. It definitely proved to be a success...thanks Matt and congratulations.

Oneida Lake: I had been to Oneida Lake a handful of times in the past but knew the fishing had been off there as of late so I expected to be in for a grind - and a grind it was. I fished hard and tried not to think about too much. I didn't have a fish until 1:00pm, I'd hooked two and lost both, and then I had a third fish hook up but I never saw it. I just kept my composure, settled down and I was able to put three fish in the well in short order. That was it for the day and luckily it was just enough weight to win the title... thanks again Burnie.

NYBCF: Was there one tournament or one angling moment this season that you felt put in position for the title?

Menchen: No not really, I never felt like the AOY title was even an option. I'm not sure the reason. I think it was a matter of overall consistency and a culmination of things coming together in the end. I knew I had a legitimate shot at the top two throughout the year and that was what I was focused on. If anything, I felt I was in bad shape coming into the weigh-in at Oneida Lake. It was a tough day, no doubt about it. I honestly thought I didn't have enough, but after seeing the weights, I maintained hope and it all worked out.

NYBCF: How important is it to fish to your strengths when fishing a new lake for the first time or a familiar lake at a different time of the year from what you're used to?

Menchen: For me, it's essential I start with what I know and then work from there. Sometimes I can make something work out and other times I feel the need to step outside my comfort zone in an attempt to try to narrow it down. Patience is my key in making adjustments to what I feel is happening around me. However, I try to avoid getting lulled into forcing a pattern that does not seem to be materializing.

NYBCF: What is your favorite style of fishing and why?

Menchen: I enjoy fishing open water. The depth would be a little deeper, relative to the body of water. I like to work all angles and perspectives, covering as much water as possible. I'd much rather be out off the bank breaking down transitional/structural areas and honing in on schools of fish. I find it more effective most of the time to be fishing for a group of fish as opposed to one here or there. My favorite style of fishing is the one that leaves me with sore thumbs at the end of the day.

NYBCF: What do you use most spinning tackle or casting tackle and what lures do you use on each type of rod?

Menchen: I use a balance between the two. I love light line with big fish, but I've been burned enough to realize the importance of stouter lines in balancing out my tackle. Lately, I've been using heavier lower profile jigs and baits requiring I upgrade my line. I used to fish mostly spinning gear, but thought it wise to incorporate more of a power approach to help refine my game. I found this move very beneficial in my fishing this year.

NYBCF: Do you have a go-to bait or series of baits and if so did they play a role in your success this year?

Menchen: I usually alternate between the drop shot, spinnerbait, and a jig or some sort of weighted plastic craw imitation bait. I will also rotate a top water of some sort through the mix. This year slow steady and persistent with the jig along with beavers and brush hogs was the deal for me. I just mixed it up between weights, bait sizes, and presentations depending on the situations I faced. I caught the majority of my fish on 1/8, 1/2 and 1 oz. baits.

NYBCF: When we ask you for two tournament tips you can share with other NY Federation anglers what comes to mind?

Menchen: Most important for me is to stay positive and maintain a good mindset. I try to tune in on what's going on around me and keep balanced throughout the highs and lows of the day's fishing. Making longer casts and being as stealthy as possible has definitely resulted in more bites for me. I

believe being quiet in the boat is crucial in most circumstances. Lastly, I focus on keeping my bait in the water as much as possible and spend minimal time digging through my gear.

NYBCF: Tackle management and packing is very important. If you could bring only five rods for a day's fishing what would they be and what lure is tied on each one?

Menchen: Depending upon the fishery, I would carry a combination of three casting and two spinning outfits, or the other way around. My spinning would consist of reels spooled with 6, 8, and 10 pound test and casting with 10, 14, and 15-20 pound fluorocarbon. I would bring a couple of extra spools for spinning and one more casting reel with braided line. I might rig up setups consisting of a drop shot and a small plastic or grub, as well as a jig and spinner bait. I always keep top water like a small popper or walking bait tied on and it would get a fair shot as well. Equally important to efficient angling is the organization of your tackle on the boat throughout the day. Keep your gear tidy and be ready to roll when the boater says lets go.

NYBCF: We understand you also won your local club's Angler of the Year competition and your club classic. Our records show this is the second straight NY Federation Non-Boater AOY title for the Watershed Bassmasters any thoughts on that?

Menchen: I attribute my success and learning to the plethora of anglers I've had the pleasure of spending time with over the past eight years both in competition and fun, especially the Watershed Bassmasters. We have a great bass club that readily shares information with one another and that really helps the learning curve. I've also put more time into fishing over the last couple of years. I've become a boater in my club, and concentrated more on research and preparation.

I want to acknowledge my best sponsors, my 21-month-old nephew Ripley and the rest of my family. I am forever grateful for your love and support.

My three boater partners this year, Doug Kirkbride, Matt Martin, and Burnie Haney for great days out on the water and putting me within casting distance of beautiful fish.

And I also want to recognize Zoom baits that helped me achieve this title; their plastics are great!!!

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