

# **FIRST-TIME WINNERS at CANDLEWOOD**

**Submitted by: Nick Angiulo**

The New Jersey Bass Federation's 2015 point tournament season got off to a running start on June 7, 2015, when a group of anxious tournament anglers made their way up to scenic Candlewood Lake in Connecticut for the season's first point event. Welcomed by beautiful late spring conditions, the participants covered the lake in hopes of catching large numbers and weights of the abundant largemouth and smallmouth bass that inhabit the clear, brownish/green-tinted waters of Candlewood. With many of the fish in transitional patterns, catching the giant fish the lake is known for was difficult, but many of the anglers caught more than respectable weights. When the final tally was calculated, both the Boater Division and Co-Angler Division victories went to first-time Federation winners.

## **Boater Division**

Capturing first place in the Boater Division by nearly two pounds over his nearest competitors was Matt Durant, who posted a 15.52 pound five fish limit. For Durant, who hails from Milford, New Jersey and is a member of the East Coast Bass Anglers, the win proved to be his first-ever with the Federation. Along with the victory, Durant anchored his weight with the 5.54 pound Boater Division lunker winning largemouth. Durant received \$780 for the victory and an additional \$130 for his Boater Division lunker.

Taking second place with a five fish limit of 13.87 pounds was Darren Pincus of the Blazin Bass chapter. Pincus, from Flemington, New Jersey brought a combination of largemouth and smallmouth to the scales and received \$572 for his second place Boater Division finish. Third place in the Boater Division went to Nick Angiulo from Hainesport, New Jersey and a member of the Big D Valley Bassmasters. Angiulo also posted a mixed bag which weighed 12.87 pounds. He received \$390 for his third place Boater Division finish.

## **Co-Angler Division**

While Mike Wotanowski did not win an event in 2014, his first full year with the Federation, he did have three top-five finishes. However, he started this season with his first Federation Co-Angler Division win. In doing so, Wotanowski, from Randolph, New Jersey and a member of the Quickfire Bassmasters, posted a five fish limit of 11.66 pounds that was enough to take the Co-Angler title by more than 1.50 pounds. For the victory, Wotanowski was rewarded with the Co-Angler Division first place check of \$540.

Second place went to Brian Chang with a five fish limit weighing 9.98 pounds. Chang, from Matawan, New Jersey and a member of the Castaway Bassmasters also posted the 3.57 pound Co-Angler Division lunker winning smallmouth. For his second place finish, Change received \$396 and an additional \$90 for his Co-Angler Division lunker. Third place went to Chris Ferry, who is a member of the South Jersey Hawg Hunters. Ferry, who is from Frenchtown, New

Jersey brought four fish the scales weighing 7.15 pounds, and received \$270 for his efforts.

### **Miscellaneous Notes**

1. Fifteen anglers (32.6%) brought five fish limits to the scales and 147 fish totaling 292.53 pounds were weighed in. All fish were released alive. The average weight per fish in this event was 1.99 pounds.
2. Hutchinson Cabinets has once again graciously sponsored this season's points tournaments where in each event, the Boater and Co-Angler not in the top three with the next highest weights in their Division who **are present at the awards presentation at the end of the weigh-in**, each will receive \$50. In this event, the \$50 was awarded to Rich Boyko in the Boater Division and Frank Hutchinson in the Co-Angler Division.
3. By virtue of being the highest placing eligible Ranger Boat owner in the event, Darren Pincus will receive \$120 in Ranger Cup bonus money. The second highest placing eligible Ranger Boat owner, Mike McMahan, will receive \$100 in Ranger Cup bonus money.