

# Angler & Young Angler Fishing Tournaments

## 2009 International Championship

The 2009 Angler Young Angler tournament season was nothing short of extraordinary!! The program grew from 19 to 26 regional events across North America. After the Regional Events took place throughout the spring and summer, the Regional Qualifiers gathered on beautiful Lake of the Woods to compete for the 2009 AYA Championship title.

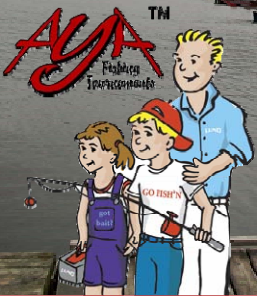
It all kicked off with the Rules & Welcome Banquet on August 14<sup>th</sup> at the Kenora, Ontario Harbourfront. The tent was filled with incredible energy from kids and adults alike.



Professional anglers Gord Pyzer and Jeff Gustafson provided the finalists with a seminar revealing top secret tips on

how to score trophy Walleye out of this beautiful body of water. This was very useful for most of the teams not having fished this lake before.

After the amazing staff at Kenora's Super 8 served a hearty breakfast early Saturday morning, the kids, their captains and their appointed Professional Guides headed to the docks for a traditional Blast Off. Each team jumped into their guide boats and were clearly identified as a representative of a major sponsor of the AYA program on their team shirts. The guides included prominent anglers such as: Ben Gustafson, Doug McKim, Gord Pyzer, Chris Kindraka, Scott Dingwall, Rory Wiebe, Jeff Park, Perry Good, Howie Adams, Norm Klopak, Gord Adams, Frank Mclymont, Jeff Gustafson, Darin Bohonis, Alex Keszler, Les Moroz, Wayne Wagner, Chris Oakes, Craig Stapon, Roy Lemay, Andrew Moore, Blair Dingwall, Bill Allanson, Rick Moore, Paul Forsyth, and



Peter Adams. These generous individuals dedicated their day to guide these teams and in turn, have made a significant impact to these kids, families and the future of this awesome sport. Thanks guys!!

The cameras were all rolling as the boats hovered around the dock for the American anthem followed by the Canadian anthem. Off they went at 8:30 am. The entire event is filmed and produced by Adventures North & InFisherman Productions. The show will hit the airwaves in early 2010 throughout Canada and the U.S.

For the first time in many years, the AYA Championship was not blessed with beautiful weather however; the day was blessed in many other ways. Despite thunder storms and nearly constant rain, the teams were having the time of their lives. It was truly remarkable seeing the young anglers, some as young as 5 years old tough through a long day on the boat in such horrible weather with a huge smile on their faces and full of excitement!

A lot was riding on this competition. The teams were competing for the increasingly prestigious AYA Championship title and an all expenses paid trip for four; four days to Miminiska Lodge north of Thunder Bay, Ontario Canada then off to a Disney World Resort® in Orlando, Florida for four days!



The excitement filled the air under the giant Harbourfront tent when the teams arrived at 3:30 pm for the official weigh in. New Emcee this year, Jason Gauthier

has a voice and energy to be reckoned with! Partnered with Fishing Hall of Fame'r, Tom Neustrom, the crowd was overwhelmed with anticipation to find out who will be crowned the 2009 AYA Champs! The television cameras, loud music and Jason and Tom's energy heightened the drama as the weigh in began. The weigh in stage show was described by a few people as a Bassmaster Classic!



The majority of the teams brought in their limit of 3 fish and competed very well with the overall weights of last years championship which were record

breaking! Everyone was sitting on the edge of their seats as the teams entered the tent one at a time to step onto the stage and hand over their basket of Walleye. Andrew Klopak, AYA Founder was the official Weigh Master and also brought a lot of enthusiasm on stage.

Team Lac La Biche, Alberta representing RYJUS and guided by Scott Dingwall stood strong as the leaders onstage for quite some time until Team Dryden, Ontario came to the stage. Representing Woodlake Marine and guided by Chris Kindraka, Team Dryden outweighed the leaders with a remarkable 17lbs 6oz. Their turn sitting in the hot seats was short lived as Team Travers Dam, Alberta representing InFisherman and guided by Gord Pyzer tipped the scales at



18lbs 8oz!! With two more teams left to weigh in, the crowd was going crazy! Next up on stage was team Arlington, South Dakota representing Walt Disney World and guided by Doug Kim. Father Shane Spooner, daughter Cheyenne and friend Olivia were in tears when their weight of 19lbs placed them in the lead. A very emotional Shane took the mic and spoke about this experience being one he will carry with him forever. The girls were very anxious to find out if they will remain in the lead or if the last team to weigh in will take home the title and the trip of a lifetime!



Team Green Lake, Wisconsin representing Lucky Strike and guided by Ben Gustafson were the last team to hit the stage and could barely stand the anticipation. Bill Coats and 14 year old Bryce were not the only ones shaking on stage waiting to hear their weight. Their guide Ben was overwhelmed with excitement! As Andrew placed their basket on the scale and revealed only one Walleye, he described how this team came in earlier in the day to weigh in two of their limit of three fish. Team Green Lake, WI needed a weight of 3lbs 5oz for their third fish to take the Championship title. Will their one Walleye in the basket be enough to win? Andrew Klopak announces 4lbs 4oz leaving Team Green Lake, Wisconsin with an overall total weight of 19lbs 15oz!!!



2009 AYA Champions – Team Green Lake, WI. Bill Coats, Bryce Dombrowski & Guide Ben Gustafson.

It's official, Team Green Lake, Wisconsin representing Lucky Strike and guided by Ben Gustafson took home the Championship title and a family fantasy two-tier trip for four!! Bill and Bryce will be going on a trip of a lifetime!

But wait, the drama did not end there!!.... With Team Arlington, SD left on stage as 2<sup>nd</sup> place finishers, Don Price with RYJUS jumps on stage, grabs the mic and in tears announces, "I can't let this happen, on behalf of RYJUS, we are sending Team Arlington, SD to Walt Disney World!!" This may have been the most heart felt act that many have ever witnessed. The emotions were running extremely high under the tent that afternoon as Shane, Cheyenne & Olivia were literally in tears with excitement. It was difficult to find a dry eye in the crowd!! There have been some trickle effect donations made to RYJUS to help them cover the cost of sending the second place team to Walt Disney World. The expression 'Pay It Forward' comes to mind; truly an experience filled with excitement and inspiration for all in attendance.

All 26 teams and families walked away winners that weekend having experienced the 2009 Angler Young Angler Championship. This event will be one that will never be forgotten.

Thanks to the growth, the kids, the captains, volunteers and sponsors of the AYA program, we are making a big difference to the future of this great sport! For more information on how you can get involved, visit: <http://www.angleryoungangler.com>.

