

# Kings of the water

**N.B. Pro Bass Tour:**  
An economic,  
tourism draw for  
New Brunswick

By Jeffrey Bento-Carrier

From an economic and tourism standpoint in relation to the province's waterways, the annual N.B. Pro Bass Tour continues to pay big dividends on many levels for the sport in the province.

Officially launched in 2008 through the efforts of Bruce Campbell of Prince William, the tour has grown quickly to become one of the biggest of its kind in eastern Canada.

Campbell said the athletes, organizers, supporters and sponsors who help make the series run smoothly every year also do their part to support the communities which host events every season.

"This has been a win-win situation, especially from an economic standpoint, for everyone involved," Campbell said. "When we make a tour stop in Woodstock or Perth-Andover, for example, it brings tens of thousands of dollars per stop in relation to hotel stays and other factors."

"People from across North America come to our events and they spend money and time enjoying the communities which are proud to host our stops. In many cases, these athletes are also tourists, which also opens up additional opportunities for these villages, towns and cities to showcase what's best about their regions.

"For example, at our 2009 title event in Perth-Andover, we

estimated it may have brought at least \$20,000 or more into the local economy just from two-night stays the athletes booked for the title event. It's hard to estimate what each stop means from a financial standpoint, but it is easily in the five figures."

Campbell said in a recent release organizers are proud of how far the tour has come since its opening campaign two years ago.

"We started in 2008 with 13 teams and we now are very pleased to have 63 registered teams this year," he said. "We also have been able to promote great conservation methods with our state-of-the-art water weigh-in system. This is where the fish are weighed in a tank of water instead of being placed in a plastic bag and placed on the scales.

"Our 2009 tournament season consisted of seven events and we are very proud to say we had a 99 per cent safe release of approximately 1,500 fish weighed in last year.

"I am amazed at the growth factor of the tour over a short period of time, because we have transformed from a grassroots group to the premier tour in New Brunswick."

"In 2008 the N.B. Pro Bass Tour began its inaugural season with just a few teams who wanted to fish competitive tournaments in an organized group where sportsmanship was paramount

"We set a format where teams competed in a series of five one-day qualifiers. Teams had to fish four out of the five events to qualify for the two-day championship.

"We were able to attract some great sponsors which enabled



us to provide the largest championship payout in the history of competitive fishing in the Atlantic Provinces. "Our tour has now grown into one of the premier tours in Canada, with our participation more than doubling in 2009 and new sponsors coming on board every day.

"In 2009 the tournament format of five qualifying tournaments and one championship event remained. As a result, we benefited from great articles about our tour appearing in newspapers across N.B. and national sporting magazines, with more media coverage expected for 2010 and beyond.

"I personally attribute most of our great success to one key thing that we concentrate on, and that is sportsmanship.

"The people who are on the tour each season, and who are coming in this year from points across North America, from Kentucky to the Maritimes, love the sport and what it pro-

vides to them as athletes."

The official kick-off to the tour's season was in St. George on Lake Utopia on May 8, with a non-points tour event held in Woodstock on May 15.

"This event in Woodstock, one of several we will be holding this season, gave people who were thinking of getting into the tournament scene a chance to try it out without joining a group and paying membership fees," he added.

Campbell said he is hoping to see old, and new, faces on the tour this season.

"The athletes make our tour, no question," he said. "The more we have the better it is."

Campbell said his tour is also about giving back.

"Each event will have fundraisers, proceeds of which will go to the Canadian Tire Jump Start program, which helps, underprivileged children get into sports."

Campbell said the tour "is a team effort all the way."

"We also have to attribute much of our success to our great sponsors, our tournament staff, our great webmaster Sterling Gallan, and the support of the towns, villages and cities that host our tour. We also owe a special thanks to Rogers for the faith they had in us to produce the N.B. Pro Bass Tour television show on Cable 10.

"We will be doing five regular one-day qualifying tournaments this year across the province, with our two-day championship in October.

In addition, we will be hosting our annual children's tournament, and a sponsor's appreciation tournament complete with a steak barbecue and all the trimmings, later this year.

"If you are interested in fishing any event or the possibility of joining and becoming one of our great sponsors please con-

tact me at 363-4662 or via email at [bassmn@nb.sympatico.ca](mailto:bassmn@nb.sympatico.ca)," he added.

Those wishing more information on the tour may go on-line at [www.nbprobass.ca](http://www.nbprobass.ca).

Upcoming main tour stops will include Magaguadavic Lake on July 10; Woodstock on Aug. 7; Mactaquac on Aug. 28; Oromocto on Sept. 11; and the tour's annual two-day championships on Oct. 2 and 3 in Perth-Andover.

Non-tour events under the N.B. Pro Bass banner will also be held in Fredericton on July 24 and Oromocto on Oct. 23.

- With files from [www.nbprobass.ca](http://www.nbprobass.ca).

**En français :** Depuis sa création en 2009, la compétition de perches du NB s'est développée pour devenir l'une des plus importantes compétitions au Canada et a contribué économiquement à plusieurs communautés néo-brunswickoises.

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