

Grady Notches First Win, Ponto Second, Raiti Third

Finishing at the top of the tourney heap isn't easy to do. The Club level is absolutely no different than any other level, you have to get yourself into contention, and then hope the fishing Gods are on your side.

Things finally aligned for Patrick Grady August 9, 2009 on a wind-whipped Oneida Lake – bringing in 14 pounds 6 ounces to the scales.

Oneida was in a nice mood at launch. The Weatherman told us we would have light winds from the South, overcast skies and a good chance of rain – perfect conditions. As usual, Oneida defied the Weatherman – at least with respect to the winds. Stiff easterly winds came up late morning - kicking up Oneida's waters- making running tough on equipment and bodies, and presentation a challenge in areas.

Grady started on a weed edge in 12' of water. Floating grass made topwater inefficient so he mixed in a tube and Senko when needed. Grady nailed a real good smallie on top water. After fouling three casts in a row with a grass, he threw out the Senko for solid 3 - 13 Largemouth swimming in Smallmouth water. The fishing Gods seem to like guys that throw that salty stickworm.

Grady filled out his limit in the next hour on small fish up shallow. Most on small tubes. Patrick then finished fishing most of the day in 15 to 20 with big tubes to cull out the small fish.

Congrats on your first Club win – there will be many more.

In Second Place with 14 lbs 5 ounces was Pat Ponto. Ponto was just a single ounce from Grady's weight – showing how important the fishing Gods can be – not to mention a stomach full of craws. Ponto took his limit of smallmouth in 12 to 20' feet all on drop shot. He was using a minnowbait.

Prior to this Tournament, Jim Raiti had only seen Oneida while standing on its frozen surface. That ice fishing time probably didn't help him too much for the tournament. Despite his lack of experience on the lake he was able to bring in a nice bag going 14 lbs 3 ounces – good for Third Place. Jim threw a 1/2 ounce red and black spinnerbait most of the day for his limit. He fished in and around rock and weeds in 6' to 8'.

Lunker went to this writer – a 4 pound 9 ounce largemouth taken early in the day on a Fluke.

rsa