

SUSKIE BASSMASTERS WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERIES – WEEK 9

Good afternoon everyone!

Week 9 is officially in the books, and apparently last week's replacement-anglers experiment was enough to get some of our missing team captains back in their boats. After watching the substitutes take over the top of the leaderboard last Wednesday, the captains returned this week and wasted very little time reminding everyone why they're the captains. We'll get into that a little later.

The river had dropped considerably, and the water was still stained, but fishing remained strong. A nasty storm developing to the north also had several anglers who ventured upriver changing their plans and heading south earlier than expected. Even with Mother Nature trying to shuffle the deck, **17 bass** crossed the scales, including several quality fish and a **2.18-pound winner**.

With **47 anglers** competing, Week 9 gave us another great turnout and another tightly contested Wednesday night on the Susquehanna.

WEEK 9 TOURNAMENT SPONSOR

This week's Wednesday Night Series was proudly sponsored by **Day's West Side Cafe & Sports Bar** in Luzerne!

Located at **570 Union Street in Luzerne**, Day's West Side Cafe is a local neighborhood spot offering wings, burgers, pizza and other bar favorites, along with plenty of TVs and a relaxed atmosphere for catching a game with friends. They also offer weekly food specials and accommodations for parties and group gatherings.

 **570 Union Street, Luzerne, PA 18709**

 **570-283-9382**

 **Monday–Friday: 4:00 PM – 2:00 AM**

 **Saturday & Sunday: 3:00 PM – 2:00 AM**

Please join us in thanking **Day's West Side Cafe & Sports Bar** for supporting the Suskie Bassmasters Wednesday Night Series. Our weekly tournaments wouldn't be what they are without the local businesses that continue to support the club, so please remember to support the businesses that support us!

WEEK 9 TOURNAMENT STATS

 **47 Anglers**

 **17 Fish Weighed**

 **24.51 lbs Total Weight**

 **1.44 lb Average Fish Weight**

 **16 of 17 fish were over 13 inches**

 **8 of 17 fish were 15 inches or better**

There were plenty of quality fish in the mix Wednesday night. Nearly half of everything brought to the scales measured **15 inches or better**, and four of the top five fish weighed **1.70 pounds or more**.

RIVER & WEATHER CONDITIONS

 **Wilkes-Barre River Gauge: 2.1 ft**

 **Water Clarity: Stained**

 **Air Temperature at Launch: 81°F**

 **Conditions: Sunny**

 **Wind: Calm**

 **Humidity: 49%**

 **Barometric Pressure: 29.96 inHg**

Conditions around the launch were pretty decent, but anglers who headed north had another problem developing. A nasty storm was moving through farther upriver, and it was enough to convince several boats that maybe the fish to the south suddenly looked a whole lot more attractive.

SEASON LEADERS

 **Team of the Year Leader: Team Hamm – 14.74 lbs**

 **2nd: Team Matty Centak – 14.00 lbs**

 **3rd: Team Orloski – 13.07 lbs**

Team Hamm continues to control the top spot, but Team Matty Centak remains just **0.74 pounds behind**. Team Orloski has now moved into third at **13.07 pounds**, with Team Ciravalo right behind them at **12.99 pounds**.

Before we move on, a quick good luck to **Jace from Team Hamm**, who was one of the stars of the team during the first few weeks of the season. With school starting, Jace won't be able to fish Wednesday nights again until the Championship. **All of us at Suskie Bassmasters wish Jace the best of luck with the upcoming school year, and we look forward to seeing him back on the river for the Championship!**  

Nine weeks are now in the books, and things are getting awfully crowded near the top.

And judging by what happened Wednesday night, **a couple of those returning captains apparently heard what we said about them last week.**

We'll get to that... 😊

NOW FOR THE RESULTS...

Week 9 brought plenty of quality fish to the scales, and with **47 anglers** competing, only the top four spots were getting paid. The top of the leaderboard was especially strong, with the first four fish all weighing **1.70 pounds or better** and the winning fish breaking the two-pound mark.

Last week, we joked that maybe the secret to success was leaving the team captains at home and letting the replacements take over. Well...apparently a couple of captains took that personally. They were back this week, and judging by the results, they came prepared to defend their jobs.

Wildcard Winner (7th Place)

This week's Wildcard landed on **7th place**, putting **Team Orloski** in exactly the right spot with a **15½-inch, 1.56-pound** smallmouth.

After winning Week 8 without their captain, Jerry Orloski returned this week and apparently decided he wasn't going to let the substitutes have all the fun. They didn't make it back to the winner's circle, but somehow managed to land exactly where they needed to for the Wildcard.

Team Orloski has already collected a 1st, 2nd and 3rd and now a wildcard, this season. All that's missing is a 4th-place finish to complete the podium cycle. Most teams are trying to move *up* the leaderboard...Team Orloski may be the only one with a legitimate reason to aim for 4th. 😄

On the Bubble

This week's unfortunate invitation to the **Bubble Club** goes to **Team Kane**, whose **15-inch, 1.63-pound** smallmouth finished **5th**.

A 1.63-pound fish is nothing to be ashamed of and would have found its way into the money plenty of Wednesday nights this season. Unfortunately, with four payout spots available, Team Kane finished exactly one place away.

So close they could probably see the payout table from the Bubble Club.

4th Place

Congratulations to **Team Lacomis**, who brought a **16¼-inch, 1.70-pound** smallmouth to the scales to claim fourth place.

After finishing second last week with Wyatt Tompkins filling in, Jimmy returned to the boat this week and Team Lacomis immediately found themselves back at the payout table. Apparently, Wyatt's performance last week was enough to put a little pressure on the returning captain.

Jimmy came back, the team cashed again, and the starting job appears safe for at least another week.

3rd Place

Congratulations to **Team Aufiero**, who landed a **15½-inch, 1.72-pound** smallmouth to take third place.

Ralph found his way onto the leaderboard while simultaneously doing battle with the weigh-in scale this week. The scale seemed to have a mind of its own this week and gave Ralph plenty to deal with throughout weigh-in.

But wouldn't you know it...when Ralph's fish went across the scale, **1.72 pounds** showed up just fine.

We're sure that was independently verified. 😄

All kidding aside, it was another quality fish for Team Aufiero and another well-earned trip to the payout table.

2nd Place

Well, well, well...

Look who suddenly figured out how to catch fish.

Congratulations to **Team Bevilaqua**, whose **16½-inch, 1.77-pound** smallmouth earned an impressive second-place finish.

After spending a good portion of the season quietly hanging around the middle of the standings, Team Bevilaqua apparently decided Week 9 was a good time to remind everyone that they actually know what they're doing out there.

And they didn't just sneak into the payout spots. A 1.77-pound fish put them firmly in second place on a night loaded with quality bass.

We're not ready to call it a hot streak yet...**but we'll be keeping an eye on them.** 👁️

1st Place – WEEK 9 WINNERS

Congratulations to **Team Vitale Jr.** on capturing the **Week 9 victory** with a beautiful **15½-inch smallmouth weighing 2.18 pounds!**

Jerry Vitale Jr. and his Dad, picked the right night to find the big bite. With Team Bevilaqua, Team Aufiero and Team Lacomis all bringing fish between **1.70 and 1.77 pounds**, there wasn't much separating the rest of the podium. Team Vitale Jr. took care of that problem by bringing in the only fish of the night to break the two-pound mark.

At **2.18 pounds**, their smallmouth put some breathing room between first place and the rest of the field and left very little drama about who was taking home the Week 9 win.

The victory also comes at a great time in the season. Team Vitale Jr. now sits **7th in the Team of the Year standings with 11.33 pounds**, keeping them very much in the conversation as the regular season heads toward its final stretch.

When you bring a **2.18-pound Susquehanna smallmouth** to a Wednesday night weigh-in, you can usually stand back and let everyone else worry about the scale.

Congratulations to **Team Vitale Jr.** on a great fish and a well-earned Week 9 victory! 🏆 🐟

TRENDING

Nine weeks into the season, the leaderboard is starting to get crowded—and Week 9 gave us plenty to talk about.

- 🏆 **Team Hamm Still Leads the Way:** Team Hamm remains the **Team of the Year leader with 14.74 pounds**, but Team Matty Centak is hanging right there at **14.00 pounds**. Team Orloski has moved into 3rd at **13.07**, with Team Ciravalo only **0.08 pounds behind them** at 12.99. There isn't much breathing room anywhere near the top.
 - 📈 **Biggest Move: Team Vitale Jr.** made the biggest jump of the week, climbing **four spots from 11th to 7th place** after their Week 9 victory. A **2.18-pound** winner will apparently do wonderful things for your position in the standings. Team Vitale Jr. now sits at **11.33 pounds** for the season.
 - 🍷 **The Bigger Fish Are Still Showing Up:** Eight of the 17 fish weighed Wednesday measured **15 inches or better**, and the top four all weighed at least **1.70 pounds**. Whatever the bigger fish have been eating lately, please don't tell them to stop.
 - 🐟 **Team Bevilaqua Has Entered the Chat:** After we spent Part 2 questioning where this version of Team Bevilaqua has been hiding all season, their **1.77-pound** second-place fish deserves another mention. We're still not calling it a hot streak...but another performance like that and we'll have to start pretending we never made fun of them.
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SMALL FISH OF THE YEAR UPDATE

The Small Fish of the Year race remains unchanged.

Team Geist continues to hold the title of smallest qualifying fish of the season. Nine weeks have passed, and somehow nobody has managed to catch a bass quite small enough to take the crown.

That's either impressive or unfortunate. We're still trying to decide.

For now, **Team Geist remains the Small Fish leader.**

LUNKER OF THE YEAR UPDATE

Another two-pound fish hit the scales Wednesday night, but **Team Matty Centak** can relax for at least one more week.

Team Vitale Jr.'s **2.18-pound** Week 9 winner made a serious run at the top spot, but Team Matty Centak's **2.23-pound** smallmouth remains the fish to beat. Just **0.05 pounds** now separates the two fish.

That's getting a little uncomfortable.

With the quality of fish we've been seeing lately, that **2.23** is starting to look a lot less safe than it did a few weeks ago.

50/50 UPDATE

SHOCKER!!!

A Lori won again.

Congratulations to **Lori Shaffer**, winner of this week's 50/50 drawing!

At this point, we're running out of ways to explain what's happening. Earlier this season we launched an investigation into the suspicious number of 50/50 drawings being won by people named Lori.

We eventually backed off.

That may have been a mistake.

A Lori has struck again, and the investigation may officially need to be reopened. We still have no evidence of wrongdoing...but apparently if your name is Lori, buying a 50/50 ticket at a Suskie Bassmasters tournament is a pretty solid investment. 😄

Congratulations, Lori!

RIVERFEST – THIS SATURDAY!

A quick reminder that **Riverfest is this Saturday!**

Anyone who can lend a hand is asked to come down and help out. **Even if you can only spare an hour or two, every little bit helps.** If you're planning on pre-fishing, come down early morning. We're also looking for help catching fish to **fill the fish tank** for the event.

Whether you can stay for the day, help for a couple of hours, or contribute some fish while you're already on the water, we'd appreciate the help. Thanks in advance to everyone who can make it down!

SUSKIE BASSMASTERS WEDNESDAY NIGHT SERIES – WEEK 10

We'll do it all again next Wednesday!

 **Registration:** Approximately **4:00 PM**

 **Launch:** **5:00 PM**

 **Weigh-In: 8:30 PM** (*All boats must be between the bridges by 8:30 PM.*)

 **AND ABOUT THAT 8:30...**

Here's an important reminder as we head into Week 10:

8:30 PM means 8:30 PM.

To be considered on time, your boat must be **between the bridges by 8:30 PM**. Returning even **one second after 8:30 PM** means you're late and will result in **disqualification**.

Not 8:30-ish. Not "we could see the bridges." Not "we were almost there."

8:30:00.

With the Team of the Year race this close, don't let a few extra casts turn a good fish into a fish that doesn't count.

Tournament results, Team of the Year standings, and weekly recaps are also available on our website. If you notice any mistakes, omissions, or discrepancies in this week's recap or standings, please let us know. We do our best to keep everything accurate and appreciate everyone's help keeping the records straight.

Nine weeks are now behind us. Team Hamm still holds the lead, Team Matty Centak is breathing down their neck, Team Orloski has climbed into third, and several more teams are close enough to make things interesting.

The fish are getting bigger, the standings are getting tighter, and apparently **the safest bets in the club right now are a two-pound smallmouth and anyone named Lori holding a 50/50 ticket**.

We'll see everyone next Wednesday!

Good luck, tight lines, and heavy bags! 🎣