



## Payne Wins on Wheeler Lake

### Wheeler Lake - Decatur, AL BASS Communications

DECATUR, Ala. — Chris Payne of West Blocton, Ala., took home \$45,000 as the wire-to-wire winner of the 2009 Bassmaster Southern Open presented by Oakley on Alabama's Wheeler Lake. Payne accumulated 45 pounds, 8 ounces over three days and closed Saturday with a chatterbait pattern to hold off Bassmaster Elite Series pro Mark Menendez, of Paducah, Ky., who totaled 41-6.

"This is unbelievable," Payne said as he raised the trophy for his first BASS win. "I was really nervous about Mark

(Menendez) being right behind me, but it feels great to get the win."

Payne says he owes his success in part to a friend, Chad Hall.

"I was outrun by another Triton — my friend Chad Hall — and when we got to the idle zone, he told me I could pass him and go fish first as we were fishing the same area."

Payne knew was not unfamiliar with Mark Menendez, and counts Mark as a friend.

"I've roomed with Mark before as a co-angler, and

he even helped me out with some baits," Payne recalls. "It was really special being able to compete against him that closely."

Payne relied on a 5/8-ounce chartreuse and white Chatterbait for most of his bites. He said he burned it as fast as he could to get a reaction strike. A Zara Spook played a lesser role Thursday and Friday as the fish seemed to want a sub-surface lure. Payne also boated a few fish by swimming a jig.

Payne says he will reinvest some of the \$45,000 back into his fishing career, but will use a good portion to buy a moving truck for the moving company he recently started, Motivated Movers.

## Blake's Knowledge Base

In general, topwaters tend to work best in the late spring (just after the spawn), summer and fall. In hot weather, topwaters will produce on schooling bass; in dense cover, fish a buzzbait right over the heads of bass. Topwaters are excellent baits for fishing big, open water as well as shallow shorelines. For example, if there is a drop off from 15 to 25 feet, a topwater will often draw strikes from bass that are

suspending there, especially in clear water. Long, tapering points are great places to try topwaters. Move to the end of the point and cast the area where the point falls off into deep water with a big topwater such as a stick bait. In extremely clear water with little structure, a silver, white, or gold minnow lure twitched quietly on the surface

will often produce explosive strikes. Fish topwaters quickly in rivers and around extremely heavy cover. A buzzbait is ideal for these situations. The idea is to fish the lure fast over the heads of bass, provoking a reaction strike. In a river, bass may not enter the current to strike.

## Jerry's Tackle Tips

### Spinning Reels vs. Baitcasting Reels

There has been a lot of talk about the differences and advantages of a Baitcaster vs. a Spinning Reel setup. My preference would be a baitcaster because of the control aspect that you have with your lures or bait. Spinning setups are easier to cast Finesse type lures (Smaller worms, jigs ect), its a simple as that. With a baitcaster, sometimes depending on how many bearings it contains, its very tough to cast out lighter lures, where a spinning setup you can throw anything from a 1/16th size jig up to an ounce +. But being an avid angler, i suggest you use what you are most comfortable & confident with. **Comfort & Confidence** is key when catching BIG BASS!

Bass anglers have at their fingertips an ever increasing array of advanced technology to apply in pursuing their sport. Fishing reels are no exception. Each year they become better designed and constructed out of new composites which often result in them being stronger, lighter, and more functional than their predecessors.

