

## Jr. hooks fish of a life time twice in one day

On August 6<sup>th</sup> Lucas French and Alex Ellerbrook, members of "Off the Hook" Jr. Bassmasters, were on the water for the first day of their clubs classic at Mill Creek. The bite was good but you had to fish slow and in deep water. Neither of the two Jr's ever fished this way before.



Lucas with a 7 lb 9 oz.

It was about 9:00am and Lucas yelled "fish on" and the hawg at the end of the line ran with the bait away from the boat. Lucas was able to turn the fish and after a few minutes he had it alongside the boat.

Lucas picked up the fish and was shaking as he sat down with both hands on the lip of the fish. This was the largest fish he had ever caught. The scale read out 7 lbs. 9 oz. and both Jr's let out a yell with high fives for everyone. After taking pictures and recording the catch, Lucas released the fish saying "that was the biggest bass I had ever caught, I'll never top that."

We continued to fish and both Jr anglers were picking up keepers. By 2:00 pm Lucas had a five fish limit at 16 lbs 8 oz. and had culled a couple.

He then turned to me and said that he was hung up again on the stump as he pulled and yanked on the line. Just as he said this the line started to move and we all know, tree stumps don't swim. He felt the weight of the fish and all of us thought it was a large cat fish until the bass decided to surface a short distance from the boat. Alex was yelling "it's a 10" and Lucas was working very hard keep the fish from coming off. It came by again and this time we got it in the net. Lucas grabbed the giant with both hands as he could not believe the size of this bass. He sat there for a few seconds holding one of the largest bass we had ever seen in our lives. The jig was stuck in the tongue of the fish which was bigger than my cell phone. After a second or two we all realized what just happened and all three of us were yelling with another round of high fives.



Lucas with 9 lb 14 oz. Giant

The boys sat facing me holding the scale when the numbers stop changing revealing the weight of this fish. 9 lbs 14 oz. was on the scale as I turned it around for them to read and another round of yelling and jumping with high fives. When you get a fish like that you just need to show it to someone. Just then fellow club members came around the point and Lucas held up the fish. They could not believe the size of this giant. After a few pictures Lucas released the fish and it went straight down back to its home on the point. Lucas turned to me and said "what do I do now I can't possibly top that". I answered "keep fishing you said the same thing after the other one this morning".

Lucas's best 5 fish weight for the day was just over 27 lbs. He had caught the largest fish of his life twice in the same day. I am glad I was there as their boat captain, I will never forget that day.

Lucas resides in Sugar Grove and plans on fishing for Kaneland High School on their IHSA fishing team.

By Frank Labanowski - Illinois BFN President