



Participants from the Mayhem in Maitland walleye tournament hold up their prized fish at the conclusion of the tournament. Despite inclement weather, 24 teams took part in the ultra-competitive tournament.

PHOTO BY SHAWN SMITH, THE SACHEM

# Walleye of the storm

*Exploring the danger, skill and competitiveness of walleye fishing in Haldimand County*

SHAWN SMITH  
THE SACHEM & GAZETTE

To the outside world, walleye fisherman of Haldimand County and surrounding area are a rough group.

Those in attendance at the weigh-ins for Saturday's Mayhem in Maitland tournament, a new annual tournament held at Fishmasters in Dunnville, are a motley crew of sorts. There's no need to ask them what their favourite beer is – most have it emblazoned across their t-shirts. Those who take things a little more seriously have official collared shirts with their names emblazoned across the chest pocket.

After eight hours on the rough waters of Lake Erie, the alcohol is flowing and nearly everyone lights a cigarette. Occupation hazards, one could say. And while everyone appears to be having a good time, there's a serious undertone to the occasion. It's about fun, but nobody came here to lose.

Everyone gathered around the buckets of walleye. Each is waiting to see if their catch for the day is the big winner.

The tournament provides fisherman from Haldimand, Niagara and the United States with the opportunity to compete in a professional manner.

"Everybody wants to win," said Rocky Richardson, tournament organizer. "There are bragging rights, trophies and money on the line."

The tournament is one of three big tournaments that take place in the area, although it is the smallest of the three. This year, 24 teams participated, marking a 20 per cent increase from last year but still short of where Richardson hoped it would be. If he has his way, Mayhem at Maitland will join the Top Gun Professional Walleye Series in the near future, joining major tournaments that take place in Port Colborne and New York.

There are two prizes to be awarded. One is for biggest fish in which each team submits their biggest catch to be weighed separately. The other is main event in which each team submits their cooler of fish to be weighed together. The heaviest collection of walleye wins.

This isn't some random guy in a boat. There's serious calculations and money put into doing this properly. Knowing depths, what equipment to use, as well as where and when to fish are the difference between thousands of dollars in prizes and going home empty handed.

"It's almost like golfing – if you're not on the course every day, not in the water regularly, you're not catching anything," Richardson said. "There's also days you'll be doing everything right and the guy beside you is catching lots of fish. It can be frustrating but any day out fishing is a good day. It is really technical, really involved. There's a lot to know."

Saturday's conditions weren't

ideal. If Richardson knew how bad the waters would become, he would have called the thing off and waited until Sunday.

When the boats left at 7 a.m., the waters were good and wind was low. Weather reports said it would stay relatively calm, but Lake Erie is a vicious lake that can quickly turn. Because of its relative shallowness and narrow width, the wind can pick up in a hurry and waves can come from nowhere.

"The weather turned sour today. The wind was brutal," Richardson said. "All the reports we had were off."

Richardson said that reports called for fishable conditions, but by 10 a.m., there were six-foot waves that made things dangerous.

"Lake Erie can definitely turn ugly in a hurry," Richardson said.

The fish hit the scale, one after another. The weights range from 6.5 lbs. to the eventual winner, weighing in at an impressive 9.5 lbs. The winning main event bucket of walleye weighed in at a combined 44 lbs.

After the 50/50 was drawn and the prize money was handed out, everyone took a final swig of their drink. It was time to go home.

The final leg of the Top Gun tournament takes place in Dunkirk later this month, where everyone will try to snatch that final fish that puts him or her over the top.

It's about bragging rights, trophies and money.

## ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD NOTICE TO CUSTOMERS OF UNION GAS LIMITED

**Union Gas Limited has applied for approval to change its gas commodity, storage and transportation rates effective January 1, 2016.**

**Learn more. Have your say.**

Union Gas Limited has applied to change its rates to better reflect how it supplies natural gas to its customers. The proposed changes include the following:

- A change in the reference price used to set rates on a quarterly basis for a majority of its customers; and
- A change to how it allocates costs to the different types of customers that it serves.

An average residential customer would see the following annual bill impact, but these impacts would only start in 2018:

Residential Customer – Service Area	Approximate Bill Impact
Southern Ontario (Windsor to Hamilton)	Decrease of \$20
Northern Delivery Area (North Bay to Kapuskasing)	Increase of \$26
All Other Delivery Areas	Decrease of \$1.50 – \$51.50

**Other customers in Union Gas Limited's service area, including businesses, will also be affected.**

### THE ONTARIO ENERGY BOARD IS HOLDING A PUBLIC HEARING

The Ontario Energy Board (OEB) will hold a public hearing to consider the application filed by Union Gas.

We will question Union Gas on the case. We will also hear arguments from individuals and from groups that represent the customers of Union Gas. At the end of this hearing, the OEB will decide whether to approve the changes that Union Gas has requested in this application.

The OEB is an independent and impartial public agency. We make decisions that serve the public interest. Our goal is to promote a financially viable and efficient energy sector that provides you with reliable energy services at a reasonable cost.

### BE INFORMED AND HAVE YOUR SAY

You have the right to information regarding this application and to be involved in the process.

- You can review the application filed by Union Gas on the OEB's website now.
- You can file a letter with your comments, which will be considered during the hearing.
- You can become an active participant (called an intervenor). Apply by **August 25, 2015** or the hearing will go ahead without you and you will not receive any further notice of the proceeding.
- At the end of the process, you can review the OEB's decision and its reasons on our website.

### LEARN MORE

Our file number for this case is **EB-2015-0181**. To learn more about this hearing, find instructions on how to file letters or become an intervenor, or to access any document related to this case, please select the file number **EB-2015-0181** from the list on the OEB website: [www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/notice](http://www.ontarioenergyboard.ca/notice). You can also phone our Consumer Relations Centre at 1-877-632-2727 with any questions.

### ORAL VS. WRITTEN HEARINGS

There are two types of OEB hearings – oral and written. The OEB will determine at a later date whether to proceed by way of a written or oral hearing. If you think an oral hearing is needed, you can write to the OEB to explain why by **August 25, 2015**.

### PRIVACY

*If you write a letter of comment, your name and the content of your letter will be put on the public record and the OEB website. However, your personal telephone number, home address and e-mail address will be removed. If you are a business, all your information will remain public. If you apply to become an intervenor, all information will be public.*

*This hearing will be held under section 36 of the Ontario Energy Board Act, 1998, S.O. 1998 c.15 (Schedule B).*



Ontario Energy Board Commission de l'énergie de l'Ontario