

Kids' KOrner

CastingKids Aim High At Lancaster Sports Show

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Lancaster Farming Staff

LANCASTER (Lancaster Co.)

— At the BassMasters Casting-Kids competition last Saturday at the Lancaster Sports and Outdoor Show, all it took was a little practice, a good rod and reel, a great lure, and lots of luck.

The prize was big — choice of a brand new rod and reel combination courtesy of Rubbermaid and the Lancaster County Chapter of BassMasters.

It looked easy in practice. You just grabbed a spincasting reel fitted with a 1/2 ounce Berkley "jig" lure (without the hook, of course) and went fishing.

Well, it was a little more complicated than that.

You had to strike the BassMasters target. The closer to the center you landed the lure, the more points you scored. The competitor with the greatest number of points won the prize.

Steven Steinberg, 8, Lancaster, launched the lure from the first spot, at 10 feet, and hit the bull's-eye — 50 — on the first try. That was the "flipping" distance. At the next spot, 20 feet, the "pitching" distance, he scored a 30. Not bad! But at the "casting" distance of 30 feet, it got trickier, and Steven was only able to hit the edge of the target.

Brandi Lund, 14, Lititz, at the practice area, easily hit the center and scored 50 at the flipping distance. But the longer the distance, the harder it got. She switched reels and was finally able to strike the target for 30 points at the "casting" distance of 30 feet.

In practice, Brandi's brother Jared, 8, could hit the target at the casting distance, but couldn't score high enough on the target. But when it came down to the marker, Jared hit a 30 at the casting level.

J.J. Martin, 7, Ephrata, worked with instructor Dennis Lausch to improve the "pitching" distance for quite a while before stepping into the competition area. Ashley Carruthers, 9, Columbia, had assistance from Mike Krofchek to improve at the longer distance casting level.

With all this competition stirring, who would emerge the champion?

In the end, the 7-10 year-old champion was Ashley Carruthers from Columbia, and in the 11-14 year-old category, Dan Dore, 12, Leola, was champion. These champions have a chance to compete at the statewide competition in February.

"The competition serves to promote the work of the local BassMasters club, which is conservation and youth work," said Ken Keener, president of the chapter. "It is important to us to involve more kids in these events, which promote wholesome activities and recreation."

Two age groups competed, including 7-10 years and 11-14 years. The contest was the primer for the state event, to be held in State College in February. The national championship is scheduled July 25 at High Rock Lake in

Greensboro, N.C.

The big prize at the Greensboro contest? A \$5,000 scholarship, according to Keener. Also, second place is a \$2,000 scholarship, third is \$1,500, fourth is \$1,000, and fifth is \$500.

Keener said the local club is affiliated with the national club,

the National BASS (Bass Angler Sportsmen's Society), which boasts a membership of 23,000 statewide. The local club meets the first Wednesday of each month at 7 p.m. at the Lititz American Legion. Annual dues are \$27.

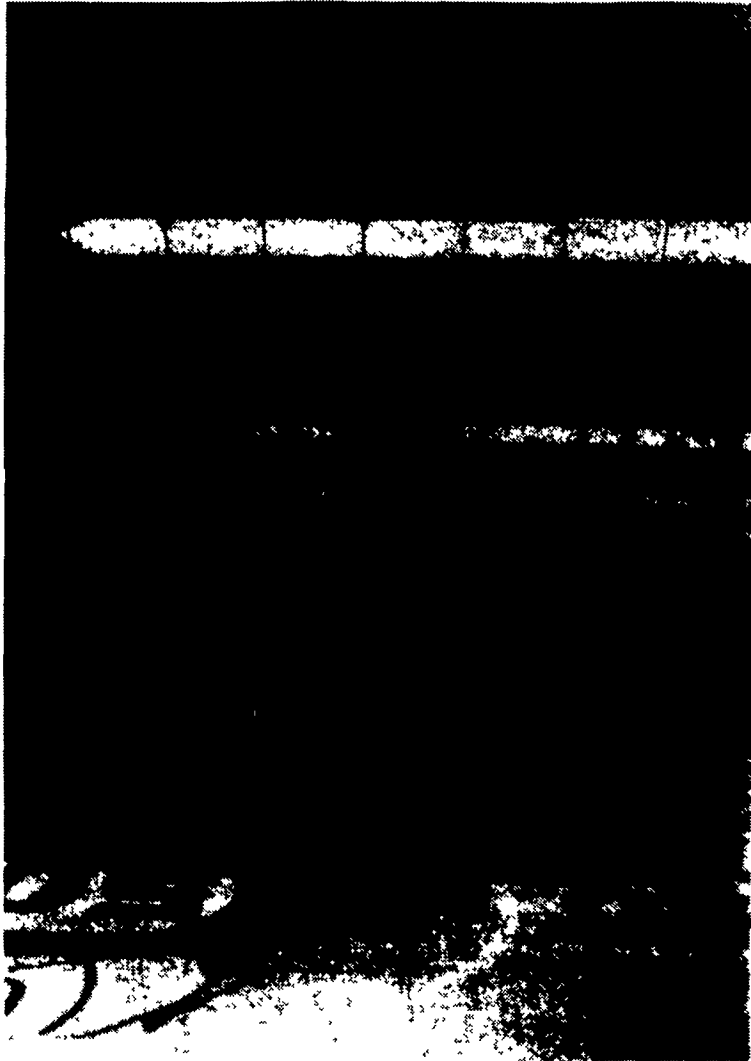
The local club boasts a membership of 40, and is growing, accord-

ing to Keener.

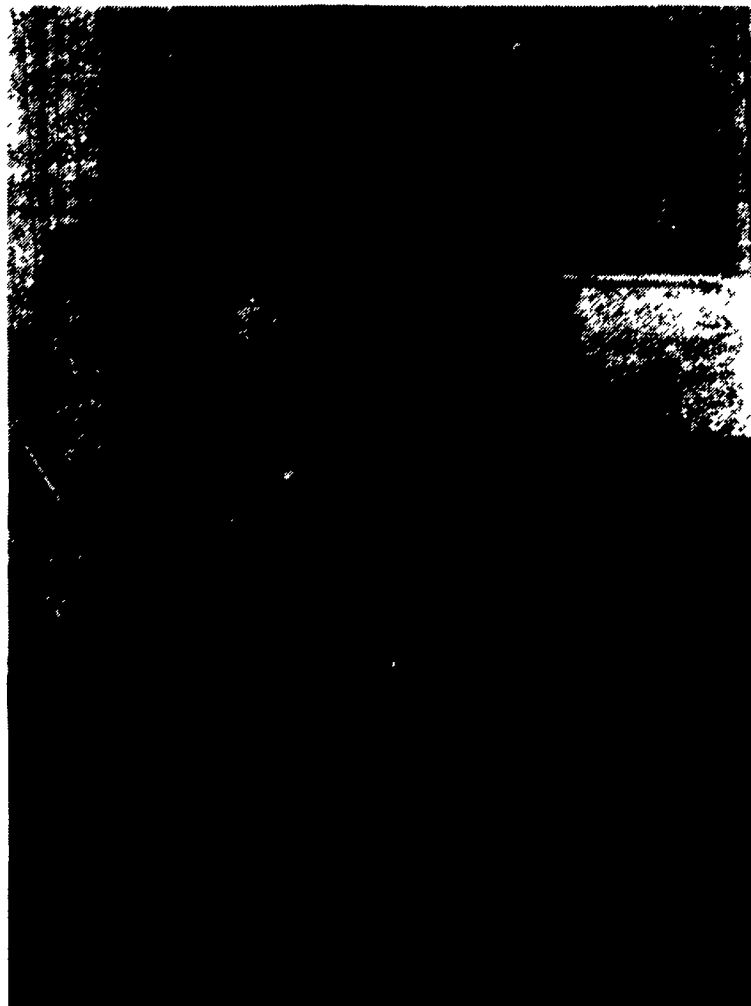
To prepare for the big contests, members meet for a practice session at East Towne Mall in Lancaster. Unfortunately, the session scheduled for early January this year was cancelled because of bad weather.

This is the second year for the event at the Lancaster Sports and Outdoor Show.

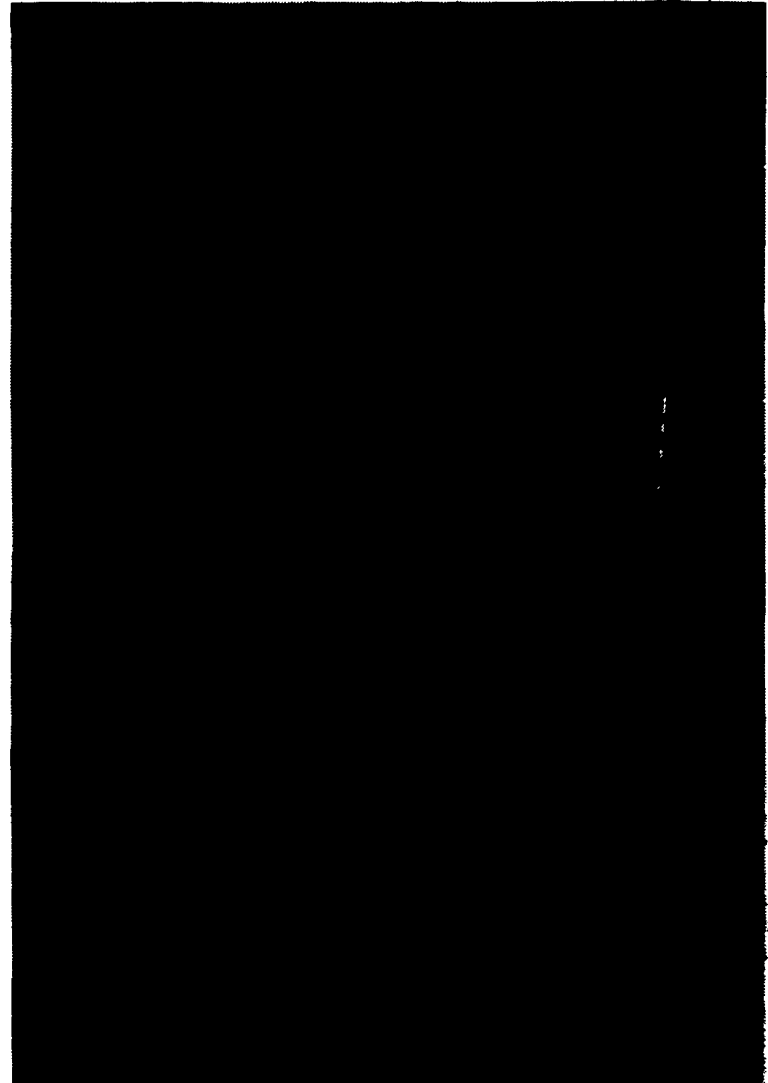
If you want to know more about the local BassMasters club, and how it promotes fishing and conservation, call Keener at (717) 626-6187.



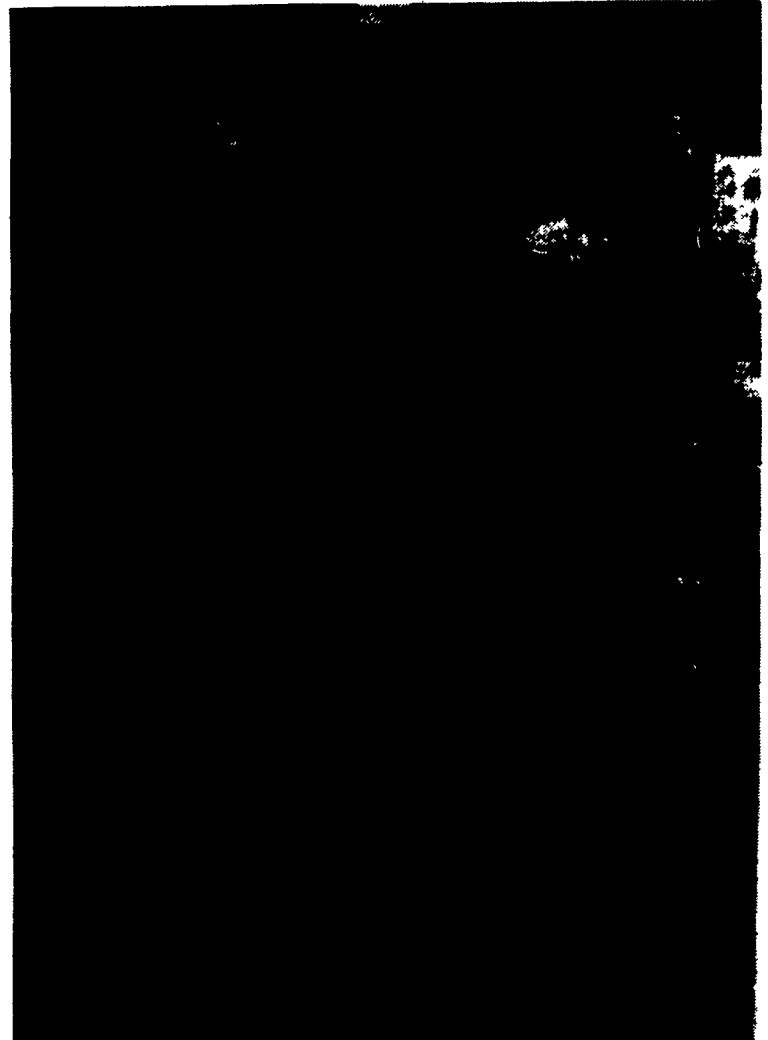
Ashley Carruthers, 9, Columbia, hits the target with the "jig" during practice at the CastingKids competition last Saturday. She was champion in her age category.



Jared Lund, 8, Lititz, scores 30 points at the long "casting" distance while Robert Oberly, Instructor, looks on.



Steven Steinberg, 8, Lancaster, competes at the "flipping" distance of 10 feet with help from Robert Oberly, instructor.



J.J. Martin, 7, Ephrata, competes at the "casting" distance of 30 feet, while Dennis Lausch, instructor, looks on.