

# Reigning Bassmaster Kayak Series champion Drew Gregory heats up desert to win big at Lake Havasu

LAKE HAVASU CITY, Ariz. January 19, 2025— While most of the United States prepared for a polar blast on Sunday, Drew Gregory was heating up the Arizona desert on the closing day of the Newport Bassmaster Kayak Series at Lake Havasu presented by Native Watercraft.

Gregory, a 45-year-old resident of Kent, Ohio, earned a come-from-behind win in the two-day tournament, the first derby of the 2025 Bassmaster season. His total of 10 bass measuring 165.25 inches was 2.25 inches better than Utah’s Caymen Rasmussen, who finished second with 163 total inches.

Gregory, who won the 2024 Yamaha Rightwaters Bassmaster Kayak Series Championship scored by TourneyX on Oklahoma’s Lake Tenkiller, measured five smallmouth bass on Day 1 at Havasu for an 83.50 inch total. He followed with another limit (this time four smallmouth and one largemouth) totaling 82 inches, which was enough to slip into the pole position and take the season-opening victory on this 19,800-acre reservoir on the Arizona/California border.

Those aren’t eye-popping numbers, but as he often does, Gregory found a way to win and claimed \$7,000 on Sunday. “It was very tough this week,” he said. “But you know, that’s typical. Anywhere in winter, except maybe Florida, it’s gonna be tough fishing. The water here was cold.”

Gregory game planned for Havasu’s winter smallmouth bite. He found a school of 10 to 15 nice-sized fish stacked up on Day 1, and he caught four measurable fish from the bunch before the run ended. He started in the same area on Day 2 but managed only one bite.

Lucky for him, it was his biggest catch of the day — a 17.75-inch smallie that came on Sunday’s second cast. Gregory then started working his way upriver, em-



Ohio's Drew Gregory wins the Newport Bassmaster Kayak Series at Lake Havasu presented by Native Watercraft with 10 bass measuring 165.25 inches. (Photo by Mark Cisneros/B.A.S.S.)

ploying an arsenal of Z-Man lures, including the Gobius swim bait (natural color) that was his go-to at Havasu.

“I took note of the waypoints I made yesterday and started working them today,” he said. “The river is shallow and clear, so I looked at a lot of that both days. But my fourth fish today, the only largemouth I had, came on a spinnerbait in a backwater that was a little stained. It was just a little cut with a mudline, but it stood out as a good place to catch one.”

Gregory struggled to catch a limit on Sunday, hooking his fifth fish with only 20 minutes remaining in the competition. “I had what I think would have been the winning fish come off twice earlier in the day,” he said. “When I missed those, I figured it just wasn’t going to be my day. But I went back to that murky water, and this time, I threw a 3/8-ounce Z-Man CrossEyeZ Power Finesse jig with a Pro Craw Trailer (both in green pumpkin). That got it done.”

Gregory also said he used a prototype signature casting rod throughout the tournament at Lake Havasu, a project he’s been working on with Yakrods. Rasmussen, who was second, claimed \$3,000 of the \$22,200 cash purse up for grabs at Havasu.

Rounding out the Top 5 are third, JJ Gibbs, 158 inches, \$2,500; fourth, Mark Kile, 158 inches, \$2,000; and fifth, John Turner, 153 inches, \$1,700. Each of that trio hails from Arizona. In all, 111 kayakers from around the U.S. competed.

The \$500 Big Bass Award went to California’s Kong Yang, who hooked a 21.75-inch on Day 2. Fellow Californian Chris Cabral also caught a 21.75-inch fish on Day 1, but Yang’s next biggest fish (19.50 inches) gave him the tiebreaker edge.

The kayak event on Havasu was the first of six regular-season kayak tournaments on tap in 2025. Other kayak showdowns are scheduled Feb. 1-2 on the Kissimmee (Fla.) Chain of

Lakes; April 26-27 on Dale Hollow Reservoir in Tennessee; May 31-June 1 on Lake Tenkiller; July 26-27 on Lake Champlain in New York; and Sept. 27-28 at Toledo Bend on the Texas/Louisiana border.

The 2025 Yamaha Rightwaters Bassmaster Kayak Series Championship scored by TourneyX is scheduled for March 19-20 on Texas’ Lake Fork, immediately preceding the 2025 Bass Pro Shops Bassmaster Classic presented by Under Armour on Lake Ray Roberts near Fort Worth, Texas. Top anglers from the 2025 season compete in that tournament, while this year’s best from the kayak series are vying for spots in the 2026 championship.

Full results from the Newport Bassmaster Kayak Series at Lake Havasu presented by Native Watercraft are scored by TourneyX and can be found here.

# Zych leads No. 10 Tigers over two days in Bluegrass State

MURRAY, Ky. January 20, 2025– The No. 10-ranked University of Memphis rifle team completed two days of competition Monday at the Pat Spurgin Rifle Range in Murray, Kentucky to open the spring season.

The Tigers took fourth overall in the Withrow Invitational with a 4704 aggregate on Sunday, before falling 4736 to 4699 in a dual match with No. 1 Kentucky on Monday.

Junior Gabriela Zych was the top Tiger on the weekend, finishing third overall amongst more than 50 individuals in the Withrow Invitational behind an 1188 aggregate, which was one point shy of the program’s record.

Zych then took second place in the standings against Kentucky with an 1186 aggregate.

"This was a really good weekend in Murray with some stellar individual performances," head coach Morgan Phillips said. "Megan (Jaros) and Sophie (Cruz) in particular set multiple personal bests. Gabriela was one point shy of tying her program record in smallbore and continues to show her consistency week to week.

“We have a lot of depth and are really excited to see our freshmen making an impact. This coming weekend will be another great opportunity and I’m looking forward to seeing what we can do.”

- KEY MOMENTS
- Gabriela Zych was outstanding for Memphis on Sunday with a third-place finish (1188 agg.)
  - Zych was third overall in smallbore (591) and sixth in air rifle (597).
  - On Monday against the Wildcats, Zych took second overall with her 1186 agg.
  - oShe posted the top smallbore score at 592 with 38 centers and then shot the fourth-best air rifle score at 594 with 45 centers.
  - Sophie Cruz finished eighth overall against Kentucky with a season-high 1176 aggregate, just two points off her career high.
  - She also posted a career high-tying 585 in smallbore against the Cats.
  - Cruz set a career high on Sunday with a 595 in air rifle.

# Super Bowl LIX décor to be showcased in New Orleans to immerse fans in artistic experience

NEW YORK – Jan. 16, 2025 – The NFL will showcase many décor elements throughout New Orleans to celebrate Super Bowl LIX and the local culture. As the Crescent City prepares to welcome both locals and visitors from around the world, fans will be immersed in Super Bowl LIX leading up to the game on Sunday, Feb. 9.

Key décor elements include:

- Caesars Superdome Light Show
- St. Louis Cathedral Projection Show at Jackson Square
- Photo Opportunities in Jackson Square and outside of Caesars New Orleans
- Queen Tahj’s Larger-than-Life Super Bowl LIX Display on the NFL Headquarters hotel
- Opening Night Interview Podiums featuring the famous row house porches, unique to New Orleans
- More than a dozen murals across the city by local artists

“We’re thrilled to bring Super Bowl LIX to life through the culture, creativity and community that make New Orleans one of a kind, as every design choice, installation and moment fans experience across the city is a tribute to its energy and spirit,” said Marissa Solis, NFL senior vice president of global brand and consumer marketing. “We’ve partnered with local artists and tapped into the city’s rich heritage to celebrate the community, and as fans walk through the city, we know they’ll feel New Orleans is as much a part of Super Bowl as football itself.”

The Caesars Superdome Light Show will begin Saturday, Feb. 1 at dusk. Running nightly from dusk to dawn through Feb. 9, this first-of-its-kind show will utilize 67 “Cobra” phosphorous lighting fixtures installed 360-degrees

*“Super Bowl LIX offers a unique and exciting opportunity to light up the heart of New Orleans — St. Louis Cathedral, the Cabildo, and the Presbytère,” said Gayle Benson, New Orleans Saints owner. “This breathtaking illumination will celebrate our city’s rich beauty and history while drawing attention to the Our City, Our Cathedral campaign, a crucial initiative to safeguard the essence of New Orleans for future generations...”*

around the Superdome to light up the sky, delivering over 25 million lux of light and creating an unforgettable viewing experience for fans.

The St. Louis Cathedral Projections will kick off in Jackson Square beginning Sunday, Feb. 2 at 6:30 p.m., with stunning visuals as projected onto the city’s most iconic landmarks, the Cathedral, the Cabildo and the Presbytère. Highlighting Super Bowl LIX colors of orange, red and yellow, the projection will feature unique designs from local artists, including Becky Fos, James Michalopoulos, Terrance Osborne, George Rodrigue, and Hunt Slo-nem. The show will include a soundtrack inspired by the many native sounds of the city, leaning into jazz, blues, and rock and roll. The images will be created by thirteen 40,000 lumen laser projectors and emitting 520,000 lumens of light. Nightly shows will take place every 30 minutes starting at 6:30 p.m.

“Super Bowl LIX offers a unique and exciting opportunity to light up the heart of New Orleans — St. Louis Cathedral, the Cabildo, and the Presbytère,” said Gayle

Benson, New Orleans Saints owner. “This breathtaking illumination will celebrate our city’s rich beauty and history while drawing attention to the Our City, Our Cathedral campaign, a crucial initiative to safeguard the essence of New Orleans for future generations. Together, we can celebrate our heritage and inspire a brighter future.”

The projections are supported through the patronage of the Louisiana Office of Tourism and Lt. Governor Billy Nungesser, the PVBLC Foundation, and New Orleans & Company.

“I would like to thank Mrs. Benson and the NFL for recognizing the importance of Jackson Square and our historical museums,” said Lieutenant Governor Billy Nungesser. “This will make Super Bowl week that much more special.”

To complement the projection show, fans can take photos in Jackson Square at a Super Bowl-themed display, modeled after New Orleans’ colorful row house porches. Additionally, outside of the recently transformed Caesars New Orleans (located at 8 Canal St, New Orleans), fans will have the opportunity for a memorable photo moment at the 8-foot-tall, 12-foot-wide Super Bowl LIX display starting Jan. 30.

On the stadium-facing exterior of NFL Headquarters hotel, the Hyatt Regency New Orleans, a

50’ x 200’ Vince Lombardi Trophy building wrap by New Orleans artist Tahj ‘Queen Tahj’ Williams will be prominently displayed, along with theme art featured on digital game tickets and the official program cover. Queen Tahj is the first ever to handcraft both the Super Bowl logo and theme art for Super Bowl LIX.

Super Bowl Opening Night fueled by Gatorade is the ultimate New Orleans-style kickoff to Super Bowl, bringing fans together for a sneak peek at the iconic Super Bowl imagery and host stadium ahead of Sunday’s Big Game. At Opening Night, on Monday, Feb. 3, Super Bowl players will take center stage at interview podiums meant to represent New Orleans’ famed stylish, and colorful row house porches, bringing the city’s unique character to the celebrations.

Supported by the city’s Economic Development organiza-

tion GNO Inc., more than a dozen larger than life murals will be painted at key locations across the Central Business District and downtown, which include motifs that reflect New Orleans’ spirit.

This initiative was made possible through the generous financial support of several local partners such as Arts New Orleans, Helis Foundation, and Krewe de Nieux, who share a vision for a more dynamic and inspiring city by transforming blank walls into symbols of possibility, ensuring New Orleans continues to shine as a beacon of culture, innovation, and opportunity.

Additionally, the Crescent City Connection lights will be colored in celebration of Super Bowl events throughout the week.

Super Bowl LIX will take place at Caesars Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana, on February 9, 2025. For more information on Super Bowl LIX, visit: SuperBowl.com.

- TIGER SCORECARD – WITHROW INVITATIONAL (JAN. 19)
1. Gabriela Zych - 591 smallbore | 597 air rifle | 1188 aggregate | 87 centers
  2. Kenlee Ewton – 582 smallbore | 590 air rifle | 1172 aggregate | 77 centers
  3. Megan Jaros – 584 smallbore | 587 air rifle | 1171 aggregate | 75 centers
  4. Sophie Cruz - 570 smallbore | 595 air rifle | 1165 aggregate | 68 centers
  5. Jack Kersey - 579 smallbore | 584 air rifle | 1163 aggregate | 58 centers
  6. Gabby Ayers - 570 smallbore | 586 air rifle | 1156 aggregate | 54 centers
- The Tigers are back at home this weekend for the first time since November. They will welcome No. 7 Murray State to the R.F. Fogelman Rifle Range on Saturday before making the trek to Oxford, Mississippi to face No. 6 Ole Miss on Sunday.

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