



RIP - RAP



Editor: Ken Hanson

**RESTORATION & PRESERVATION
THROUGH RESEARCH & PROJECTS**

NOVEMBER 1994

KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

KIAP-TU-WISH PLANS GALA HOLIDAY EVENT

The chapter is continuing its tradition of offering the best holiday party in town with the banquet to be held Wednesday evening, December 7 at the Hudson House. Social hour begins at 6:30 PM and dinner will be served at 7:30 PM. The event will include a silent auction of donated angling and sundry items that have made the banquet such a resounding success over the last several years.

This year's speaker is Don Wisner, pastor at University Lutheran Church in Eau Claire. Don is a widely experienced angler, having chased brookies in the little creeks around Eau Claire for many years and having worked as a guide on Henry's Fork in Idaho. His presentation will center on stewardship and the conservation ethic.

The dinner menu will feature Boneless Breast of Chicken at \$11.54, the Hudson House Top Sirloin at \$13.30 and Broiled Caribbean Shrimp at \$16.94. All prices include tax and gratuity. Reservations may be made through Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop, 612-770-5854, or by contacting Jon or Karen Jacobs at 715-86-7822.

NOVEMBER MEETING NOTICE

WHEN: Wed. Nov. 2nd
TIME: Dinner at 6:30
Meeting at 8:00
WHERE: Hudson House

The November program will feature Brian McKinley of Minneapolis, who will present a slide show entitled "How to Fill Your Fly Box".

Mr. McKinley, a teacher by profession, has worked for the Orvis Company at its flyfishing schools in Idaho and Wyoming.

Please come to dinner at 6:30!!

If you would like to donate an item or items for the silent auction, you may drop your contribution off at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop, or you may bring it to the banquet. Incidentally, if you would like to help set up the auction items, just arrive a bit early and any help you can offer will be greatly appreciated.

Watch for further details about this exciting event in the December newsletter.

First Meeting of St. Croix Watershed Network Scheduled

There will be a meeting to discuss the state of the St. Croix watershed and the outlook for it's future on Wednesday, November 9th at the Stillwater Public Library. The meeting starts at 6:30 in the Margaret Rivers Room, 223 N. 4th St. in Stillwater. There is a potluck dinner and you are asked to bring something to share.

The goal of the St. Croix Watershed Network is to bring people together to create a cooperative vision among all citizens of the watershed who are interested in and concerned about its well-being and enhancement.

For directions call 612-439-1675. If you plan on attending please call Alexis Adams at 612-333-5424 for more information.



DISGUSTING FLIES, FINE FISH

By Anthony J. Route

Putting on a slide show for a group of anglers in Alaska is a tough gig. A photo of a large salmon isn't a show stopper. It has to be chrome bright, and even then most of the viewers have caught one before so it's no big deal. Steelhead have to be longer than my inseam to draw more than just passing attention, and rainbow trout, well they have to be as big as steelhead to get even a murmur from the audience.

Outside audiences are easy. They are quite familiar with Alaska from all the magazine articles they have read and their one or two visits to the Greatland. For all their familiarity with fly-fishing in Alaska, what really amazes me is what they don't know and how quick they are to compare Alaskan fly-fishing with their home waters.

While presenting some slide shows outside recently, I projected a slide that depicted a fall fishing scene. The central figure was an angler fishing a small stream, but what drew the most attention was the pile of dead sockeye salmon in the foreground.

"How did all those fish die?" asked a voice from somewhere within the darkened room.

"They all die," I replied. "When they are done spawning they die."

"All of them?" the voice asked.

"Yes, all of them."

"After a brief discussion on the natural history of Pacific salmon, I clicked to the next slide. It was a close-up shot of a green-headed, red-bodied sockeye salmon that spawned, died, and, as so often happens, had its eyeball neatly removed from the socket by a hungry gull. The next slide was a close-up of a sockeye that had been dead for about two weeks. There was just a faint trace of red left on the parts of the fish that weren't covered with velvety gray blanket of fungus.

These two slides are, of course, my cue to begin discussing flesh flies. These gory patterns that take advantage of the fact that trout and char will actually eat pieces of rotting salmon flesh as they float downstream.

The atmosphere in the room changes. Many in the audience aren't fond of the dead salmon nor the idea of tying a fly to imitate a rotting piece of salmon flesh. This, I believe, adds further credence to my idea that

lots of these hoity-toity fly-fishers who wear pastel colored vests with gizmos hanging all over them only gave up baitfishing because they didn't like to get their hands dirty.

Fishing with flesh flies, I tell them, is not a complicated endeavor. There are lots of different fly patterns that you can use, but a basic few will get you through most situations. A Battle Creek Special, because of its bright colors, will do a good job of imitating a recently killed fish. These flies are particularly appropriate when any piece of flesh is apt to be fresh. Like those fish, for instance, that have been torn apart by a bear or a fillet knife. A Ginger Bunny Fly can be mistaken for a hunk of fish that is in that light brown and gray moldy stage, and a White Wooley Bugger looks like those completely blanched all white pieces.

These flies can be fished in almost any type of water. The best spots, however, are just downstream from those mid river snags where carcasses collect. And the presentation? Well, this is a no brainer. You fish it dead drift of course.

At this point, many of the fly-fishers in the audience are having their Alaska fly-fishing dream seriously corrupted. Then I hit them with the knockout punch.

"We have maggots too."

Yes, that's right, I explain. With all those dead fish



"Hell with mansion and the yacht!
Who gets his bamboo fly rods!?"

you get plenty of maggots, particularly during years with a relatively dry August and early September. Maggots feast on dry-docked salmon, and then when it rains the maggots get washed into the water. The trout and char love them.

The next slide—only because I don't yet have a very good photo of maggots on a salmon—is of a maggot fly. It's a little wormy looking thing that is simple yet very effective.

A shaft of light momentarily brightens the back of the room. Two or three fly-fishers escape before I can finish my program. Whether they like it or not, their dreams of pristine Alaskan waters have been infiltrated with scenes of rotting, maggot-infested salmon and the fact that their noble and highly esteemed rainbow trout actually eat the disgusting stuff.

In other parts of the country at this time of year fly-fishers are fishing with little tiny flies that imitate insects which are known by their Latin names. With any luck, they'll catch a fish that somehow made the transition from the hatchery to the stream and also made it through the summer's heat and onslaught of anglers. Right now, the successful Alaskan fly-fisher will be toting around a vest of flies that imitate maggots and hunks of rotting flesh. With any luck they'll catch their biggest rainbow or char of the season.

Although we may occasionally forget it, fly-fishing in Alaska really is beyond comparison.

Anthony J. Route writes a regular flyfishing column for the Anchorage Daily News and has written several books on flyfishing Alaska.

I had the opportunity to meet Tony while fishing the Russian River in Alaska this fall. He was very generous with advice on fishing for those football sized Alaskan rainbows. Thanks to him I even managed to catch a few.

Tony has donated an autographed copy of his book "Flyfishing Alaska" to the chapter to be included in our banquet's silent auction. If anyone is interested in purchasing autographed copies of Tony's books please contact me at 612-774-8807.

Ken Hanson

WHAT MORE COULD WE WANT

N. Irv S. Waters

It was early spring in western Wisconsin and two old friends were reminiscing about fishing and the good old days. Bruiser, a lazy, potbellied, dark complexioned character was just kind of taking it easy, as he did most of the time. Bruiser's friend, in contrast, was a sleek, trim, flashy individual with a jutting lower jaw who took great pride in his appearance.

Bruiser leaned over and mumbled out of the side of his mouth, "It used to be an awful lot easier. You only had to know a few flies. An Adams or Elk Hair Caddis were or all you would ever see. Now it is really tough with match-the-hatch and no hackles." Bruiser's friend nodded his head in agreement and commented, "What really gets me are the fine tippets. I mean, I can hardly see 7X with my failing eyesight."

Bruiser idled over and picked a stone fly off a rock like he had been doing it for years, which, of course, he had, as Bruiser was a seven pound brown trout. Bruiser's friend, a five and one half pound rainbow, cruised along next to him.

Bruiser swallowed the nymph, gave a little belch, barely opened his eyes, and said to his friend, "Suck, wouldn't it be nice to go back to the old days?" Bruiser's friend, obviously agitated, replied, "Bruiser, how many times have I asked you to quit calling me Suck? Just because my family used to live on the other side of the bridge with the family of suckers, you don't need to call me Suck. Do you realize how ugly a sucker is? Ugh. They have huge scales and funny shaped mouths. They even lisp when they talk."

"Suck, let's face it, you are over the hill and ugly as sin. You've got hook marks all over your face, a heron scar on your back and a rusty, Woolly Bugger hanging off your lip. You're the ugliest thing I've ever seen." Suck, acknowledging that he would never get Bruiser to change, gave up and sulked behind Sawtippet Rock.

The next day was the day that Bruiser and Suck dreaded more than any day of the year. No, not

opening day. Even worse. Much worse. It was the day the hatchery truck arrived.

They could hear the truck rumbling off in the distance, and Bruiser and Suck began to go into minor convulsions. If a Prozac salesman happened to be strolling by, he would have had two anxious customers. But no such luck. The truck stopped. Bruiser closed his eyes and prayed, "Please. God, don't let them do this to me. I promise to be good." But Bruiser's plea wasn't heard today and the inevitable happened. The big splash.

Bruiser and Suck knew what would happen next. Forty-five little, seven to eight inch trout came swimming to them, disturbing the tranquility while chattering all the way. "Where are the concrete walls? When do they feed us? How is the food?" Bruiser and Suck winced.



Suck took Bruiser aside and asked, "Well Bruiser should we train them or eat them?" Bruiser with a disdainful look replied, "Eat them, Hell, have you ever eaten one. Ugh! They taste like liver. They're almost as bad as that woodcock that landed in the river last fall. I had heartburn for a week afterwards."

Bruiser slowly adopted an haughty military look, swam over to intercept the arriving planters and stated with a brusque, authoritative voice, "Look, peons, this is Sergeant Suck and I'm Corporal Bruiser. We're in charge and the first sucker, pardon the expression Suck, that doesn't obey will be floating down the river as carp bait. Understand?" "Yes sir", was spoken in unison from forty-five stuttering mouths. Bruiser

continued, "You will do what we say and when we say." The chorus responded, "Yes sir, Corporal Bruiser."

Boot camp started early the next morning, when Bruiser and Suck started to get a lateral line ache. They immediately knew the problem, Bigfoot. Sure enough, the earth started to shake and over the nettles, they saw a 280 pound monster smoking a big cigar and waving an old fiberglass fly rod. Before the military brass could give any instructions, a Hares Ear landed in the pool and one of the peons scooped it up. In a few seconds, Bigfoot placed the small trout in his creel. "Look, you dummies," Bruiser stated, "You have to be careful out there. You only do things after I've given you instructions or you'll end up like your stupid cousin."

Bruiser watched the Hares Ear drift down the pool a couple of times and realizing the monster was using 6X tippet, he said, "Watch this." Swimming up to the Hares Ear, he grabbed it in his lips, purposely came near the surface so the monster would see him and immediately deposited the fly on Christmas tree log. Bigfoot violently jumped up and down and started to create Los Angeles earth quake convulsions. This released a flood of nymphs which had been tenaciously clinging to their rocks, and the military brass feasted like kings before allowing the peons to grab a few morsels.

Suck stated, "Well done, Bruiser, Christmas tree log is looking pretty good. If we could only get a star or an angel for the top!" So far, the two friends had only been able to get a little Krystal Flash for the top of their holiday decoration.

"No rest for the wicked", said Bruiser, as a BMW with Minnesota license plates pulled up in the parking lot and three fisherman came piling out. The one with the Orvis Far-and-Fine fly rod said to the second fisherman wearing the Gore-Tex Up Downer, "Three pools downstream is where I saw the big trout." The three proceeded to crawl 200 yards on their hands and knees. Two of the fishermen watched as the one skulked behind a rock and while kneeling made a reach cast to the far side of the pool. "Not bad", said Suck, "What's he using?" "An antron nymph with

tobacco spit on it, and I need to do something about it. With that Bruiser grabbed the nymph and deposited it in a branch far downstream. Returning back to Suck, Bruiser said, "I couldn't deposit that on Christmas tree log; I hear that second hand tobacco drift can cause cancer." The three fisherman, despondently shaking their heads, returned to their BMW for a couple of double martinis.

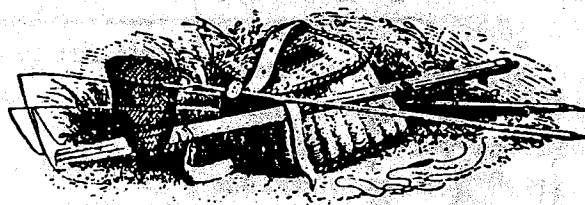
The cavalcade of fishermen continued for the rest of the week. One pair appeared to be speaking in a foreign language. "What is it", asked Suck? "I don't know, but the words sounded like "ee femme er ella dorothy." Suck asked, "You don't suppose they are talking about Dotty, that cute brook trout down in swinging bridge pool do you? She sure is a good looker." The question was never answered, as the two fisherman ran off in the woods wildly waving an insect net in the air.

Late evening two of the regular fishermen intruded on Bruiser's and Suck's pool. Bruiser, Suck and the peons had feasted on nymphs all day and were complacently finning in the pool. One of the fishermen, Hawkeye Mitchell, was calmly smoking his pipe while he tied on a no hackle Sulphur. The other, Sweetarm Stifter, was squinting as he tied on a paradun Sulphur to his 7X tippet. Eventually, both fishermen began to ply their expert casts upon the water.

After a few minutes, Suck said to Bruiser, "We need some exercise to work off that heavy meal. Let's get the peons to splash their tails at the floating duns, and you and I can see who can make the biggest bubbles." "Great idea", replied Bruiser, who swam to the surface and made a tremendous splash in front of Hawkeye. This continued for over three hours, while the two fishermen set a world's record for the number of flies tied in a three hour period. Realizing his leader was down to two feet and after dropping his fly box in the water for the fourth time, Hawkeye began to violently flail his arms in involuntary seizures with red hot ashes flowing from his pipe like Mount Vesuvius. A low flying airplane thought the circular light was the airport and flew an approach pattern over the river before realizing his mistake. Bruiser was kind of disappointed, as he liked the ring of "Cessna Pool."

Hawkeye's and Sweetarm's dismal moans rolled down the river like a deep gray fog, as they slowly trudged back to their truck. It is said that you can still see their pressurized fingerprints in the bar counter at the local River Falls pub.

Both fish just loafed around for a couple of days with a grin on their faces and finally Suck asked, "Bruiser, how about you and me swimming downstream and seeing some new territory in the big river, and getting away from all the fishermen. Bruiser, reflecting on his answer before responding. "Suck, what more could we want? We can rest in our deep hole. There is a shady undercut bank with a cool spring. We can feed in the rocky riffle at the head of the pool. We can sunbathe on the flat. And we have all the fishermen to give us laughs." "Yes, I guess you're right", replied Suck, as he swam upstream and nailed a caddis larvae.



FLY ROD FOUND

A member of the chapter found a Fenwick fly rod and reel near Foster and River Ridge RD in River Falls. The outfit was still rigged up and appeared to have fallen off of someones car. Please call 612-731-0940 to claim it.

Notes From The President:

At the October meeting, I mentioned that there was a possibility that the lower Willow River may be the only inland trout stream in the state to have an early season, if proposed regulation changes are adopted by the DNR. I would like to outline why this is so for those not present at the meeting.

Fish managers from around the state were asked to nominate streams capable of supporting an early trout season. Using the category 5 regulation, an early season on selected streams statewide would replace the recently closed southwest season. At the September 16 meeting of the Trout Committee of the Wisconsin Conservation Congress, proposed regulation changes were revealed. As it turned out, the Willow River was the only stream nominated for an early season in the entire state. In light of this fact, the DNR asked Kiap-TU-Wish whether we supported advancing the proposed change in regulations.

As stated, the proposed regulation would be for the entire Willow River below the Mounds Dam and would include the Willow and Race branches. There would be an April 1 opener with artificials only and no kill. After the general opener in May, a 1 fish over 16" bag limit would be allowed.

The Chapter Board was polled, and voted to support advancement of the proposed change. Pending no veto from Madison, the next step would be to present the changes as a question at the April Conservation Congress meeting. Needless to say, the Chapter Board and Officers were disappointed that no other streams were nominated as was anticipated. If the proposed rule comes to question, I encourage all members to attend the spring hearings in April to voice your opinion. I will keep you posted on the status of this issue.

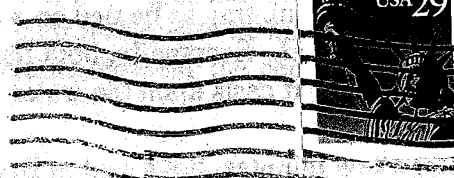
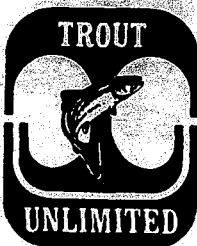
Gary

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Kiap-TU-Wish Meeting Schedule

Nov 2: Brian McKinley "How to Fill
Your Fly Box"

Dec 7: Holiday Banquet

1995 Meetings

Jan 4: To be announced
Feb 1: To be announced
Mar 1: Business Meeting
Apr 5: Fly Tiers
May 3: Marty Engel WI DNR

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