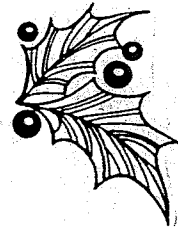




RIP-RAP



Restoration, Improvement and Preservation
Through Research and Projects

Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited

December, 1991

Editor: Craig Mason

Layout: Andy Lamberson

TENT STEAKS

BY D.F. FLOATE

They were looking for new water, eager to be steelheading on the Brule. Some old woman had landed a 27 incher right at the campsite on some worn out gear her husband wouldn't use anymore, and that sort of thing will turn the indecision about a late afternoon fish into action. They took off for that bridge below the camp, parked the Blazer, and headed up, figuring to find a pool at the top of a rapids where a big steelie might rest before charging up the next riffle. The wisdom of resting at the top of the rapids was not lost on Drag, who was forcing his aching knees to keep pace with the charging Scout. Actually, he wasn't charging, he just never stopped. He fought every minute on the bank was a minute his line wasn't in the water; you know the type.

But this stretch was all rapids, and at every corner some SOB was throwing a flatfish with a Zebco, standing there taking up space, and with those stupid giant nets tied to their backs. Scout was getting real fried, and when they came to the new pipeline crossing that had leveled a 200 foot swath of pristine forest into an ugly scar, Drag thought he'd have a coronary. By the time he finished raving about corporate irresponsibility, and had decided against monkey wrenching the whole damned Central Pipeline distribution system, Drag had slid into the next corner pool, the first unoccupied water they found in three miles of river.

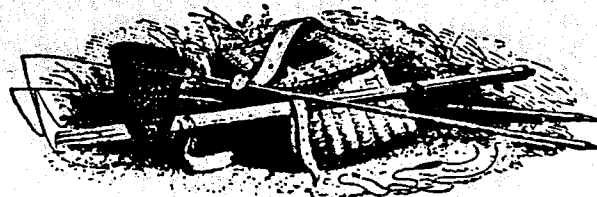
Well, it was cold, and deep, and they couldn't help imagining how a steelhead might tail dance across that smooth surface. But it wasn't to be. Drag caught a rainbow skipper, not the dance they had anticipated, and they had to march out just before dark. Heavy rain had brought a flood four weeks earlier, so the browns moved up to the spawning beds early, and now the coho had all starved themselves to death in their tragic ritual of procreation. The steelhead were waiting for higher water, nastier weather, or whatever. "Whatever" seemed to be the

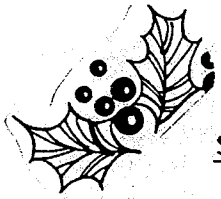


consensus at the Lion's Den, where that 16 pounder keeps an eye on the pool players, because nobody had caught any fish. That seemed to settle Scout a little, because after a couple beers he and Drag headed to camp for supper.

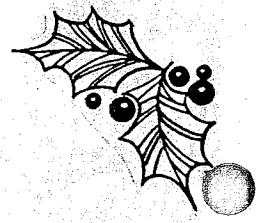
Drag had his Weber and two of those thick narrow sirloins that Sonny Simek ages extra long for him. He got the coals going and was scurrying around the campsite with plates, the knives, and the cole slaw, never once coming close to the line holding up the awning. But when he had those juicy steaks on a paper plate in one hand, and just after he closed the Weber's vents with the fork in his other, he wheeled around and went straight through that rope, dumping the succulent beef in the sand, the leaves, and the pine needles.

Now, Scout's been eating in the woods a long time, and the only reason Drag washes anything is some imprinted female notion of sanitation, so that carrion off the coals was salvaged and consumed with the cole slaw and cold beer, and never tasted better after a rugged hike on the Brule. Scout named them "tent steaks," describing their shape, seasoning and serving method, and they'll be a tradition on trout outings for years to come.





SOME THOUGHTS ON FLY VEST DESIGN - BY SKIP JAMES

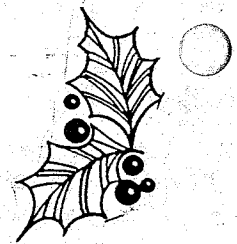


Fifteen years ago, I made my first vest. I simply couldn't find one that suited me. Commercial vests seem to have too many pockets, of the wrong size, and in the wrong places... at least for my gear. I eventually realized that I carry just about the same assortment of tackle that most Midwestern flyfishers carry, and that they are as ill-served by these vests as I was. Most of us "make do" with what we can buy. I've tried, and I think successfully, to design a truly intelligent vest.

I carry six or eight rectangular fly boxes. I know that's excessive, but I'm always sure that I'll need some thing obscure if the fishing gets tough. Most vests have fly box pockets arranged horizontally along the bottom of the vest front. Since none of us, particularly me, are created with flat tummies, this configuration is less than ideal for two reasons. First, only two large fly boxes can be mounted horizontally on the vest front, and second, if the pockets have a zipper closure, the boxes tend to fall out when you lean over. With the pockets mounted vertically, two can be placed on either side, allowing the vest to conform to the body shape, and eliminating the problem of spilling flies into the stream. A simple velcro flap on each pocket makes one-handed operation a breeze. If each large vertical pocket has a smaller pocket placed on top of it, a single flap serves to secure two fly boxes. So, by simply changing the orientation of pockets I can put four large and four small boxes on the vest front.



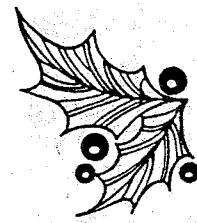
Every flyfisher wants tippet spools to be handy, and so I have put individual compartments in a horizontal pocket with a single flap cover, to fit the brand of tippet I carry, in sizes I use most - 5x,6x,7x. The tippet pocket was mounted on the vest front higher than the fly boxes on the side opposite my casting hand. In addition, I carry other sizes of tippet material, but these were relegated to an inside pocket since I rarely use them.



Recently, I have begun using "Tippets in a Tube" from Terminal Tactics. The tubes are meant to snap to your net ring, at the back of the neck. To avoid weakening the nylon, the manufacturer recommends that the tubes be protected from sunlight. So, most of us tuck the tube inside our waders, or under the vest, where, of course, it's anything but handy. In my latest vests, I have built a suspension system that routes the tubes from a "D" ring on the inside of the vest back, through belt loops built into the inside of the vest, and presents the tippet ends at the center of the vest front where they are easy to find and select. In addition, they are always protected from ultraviolet radiation.



I feel the need for two small pockets, one to hold split shot and lead strips, the other to hold an assortment of strike indicators. Two more, on the opposite side hold fly floatant, leader sink, hook hone, sunblock, insect repellent, etc. Highest on the shoulder of my vest is a large, flat leader wallet pocket with a fleece patch mounted on it. On the opposite side there is a place for my Trout Unlimited patch!



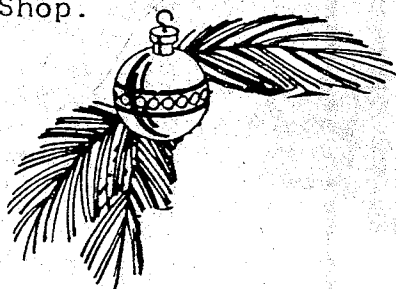
Inside the vest are two breast pockets, one for my sunglasses, the other for my wallet. Many times I have discovered soggy bills and credit cards when I have forgotten to put my wallet in its proper place while wading wet! Two very large zippered pockets are found mounted behind the fly box pockets. Since the closure is a vertical zipper, these pockets are always accessible, even with the vest snap closed. I put log books and pencils, insect net and collection vials, and even a spare reel spool in these large pockets.

Appended to our vests are a variety of arcane gadgets that we can't do without: nippers, hemostat, thermometer, amadou, and of course, a landing net. Hemostats always seem to tangle in my net when I throw the vest in the car, so I've given them a special place that holds them securely with a velcro tab. It is located between pockets on the right side of my vest. The corresponding position on the left side is occupied by a sleeve to hold my thermometer. I find that the "D" ring at the back of the neck is a perfect place to hang my net, but there's no reason why the ring couldn't be placed under the arm that holds the rod. Remember, if you're fighting a fish, it's the other hand that goes for the net.



If you make your own vest, or have one custom made, you can pick the fabric and the color. The latter should be neutral of course. Fabric should be a 50/50 blend of cotton and polyester. This is easy to wash, holds its shape well, and dries quickly. It also breathes better than water resistant material.

Sewing your own vest isn't difficult. Have someone show you the basics of running a sewing machine if you don't know how. Most important, is a good fit and a design that holds your personal gear in the most efficient way possible. No two flyfishers are alike, and therefore your "best" vest will be different from anyone else's. I had the privilege of making a custom vest for Bob Mitchell a few weeks ago. You can see the design features I've talked about here "in the flesh" on display at Mitchell's Fly Shop.



CHRISTMAS BANQUET REMINDER

Don't forget to make your reservations for the Kiap-TU-Wish Christmas Banquet and Silent Auction! Reservations must be in by Nov. 30th. Call Jean Mitchell at (612) 770-5854

WHEN: Wednesday Dec. 4

WHERE: Hudson House (Best Western Motel)

TIME: Social Hour at 6:30p

Dinner at 7:30p

We still need items for our Silent Auction. This is the Chapter's biggest fund raiser-so please contribute. The items can be dropped off at the Mitchell's fly shop in Lake Elmo or brought to the Banquet.

All guests are welcome...you do not need to be a member to attend!

NONPOINT BILL

Wisconsin Senate Bill 281 that deals with nonpoint source pollution, passed through the state senate and is now in assembly. This bill covers a variety of nonpoint issues including; accelerating the watershed selection for implementing conservation measures and further addresses construction site erosion. The Dept. of Ag., Trade and Consumer Protection, along with the DNR, is to draft a model livestock exclusion ordinance under this bill.

I would encourage chapter members to contact their representative and voice their support for passage of this bill. More information is available from Senator Chvala's office at (608)266-9170, State Capitol, South Wing, P.O. Box 7882, Madison, WI 53707-7882

Gary Horvath

Kiap-TU-Wish

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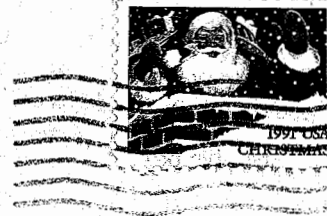
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1991-92 MEETING SCHEDULE

Dec. 4- Christmas Party

Jan. 8- Tom Anderson- Panfish

Feb. 5- Dan Simonson- Wisc. DNR

Water Quality Issues

March 4- Business Meeting

April 8- Fly Tiers

May 6- Marty Engel Wisc. DNR

Dinner at 6:30 Meeting at 8:00

All Meetings are at the Hudson

House (Best Western)

KIAP-TU-WISH

TROUT UNLIMITED

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