

Newsletter January 2022

President's Message

What year is it? I feel as though I am in the movie Groundhog Day. Covid-19 is not just a memory behind us as we have all hoped for in recent months. We are constantly reminded that the whole world has been confronted with this invisible enemy for more than two years. It was thought that with vaccines and boosters, that there was some immunity, along with other precautions, e.g. indoors increased ventilation. The current state Covid mandate stated, as long as one is vaccinated, boosted even better, it did not require wearing masks indoors. On that basis it was decided to have the Holiday Party.

It is now shown that the Omicron variant is more contagious and can infect even those that are boosted. The good news, so to speak, is if you are vaccinated, that you would not be hospitalized. So, at this time it seems the best option is to keep, for most of us, our rickety old immune systems home. As a side note, I want to thank those that did attend the Holiday Party, for wearing their masks indoors while socializing and social distanced while eating.

Calendar

January

Given the current state of Covid affairs, we are cancelling the January meeting. In the past there has been a real lack of enthusiasm for Zoom meetings, which is one of the reasons that we didn't hold the meeting via Zoom.

February

An in-person meeting is dependent on the Covid status, and the members mind set. Chris Aubut is scheduled to discuss the many aspects of rod building. Maybe we can try a Zoom meeting, I'll be polling the membership over the next few weeks, to determine whether to Zoom or not to Zoom.

March and April

TBD

ATTENTION: ALL MEMBERS

**PLEASE NOTE THAT THE JANUARY MEETING
HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO AN
ABUNDANCE OF CAUTION REGARDING
OMICRON COVID-19 CONCERNS**

As always, we are looking to build up our membership. If you have a fishing buddy or know someone who has an interest in fly tying and fishing, let them know about the club. Point out our website that is packed with lots of useful and valuable information. BTW, if you haven't used it in awhile go check it out. You can Ctrl+Click right here for instant access: www.crossroadsanglers.com. Steve Dewar has made some excellent improvements. Leave him a message on the message board—he'll appreciate it.

Funds are very tight now, so if you haven't paid your dues, please use the new PayPal button on our website or send a check to Sumner Levine, 94A Mechanic St, Foxboro MA 02035. We are looking into a number of different fundraising options, if you have any suggestions please email them to me or a board member. Don't forget to go through your stuff for good stuff to donate to the club.

We are always looking for ideas and new members. Invite someone you know or don't know, who might be interested in fly fishing, to a meeting. At the meetings voice your opinions, we need your input, this is your club.

Tight lines looking forward to seeing you and meeting new members,

Ed

Reflections on Fly Fishing

By Ed Rosenbloom

After a recent thought-provoking period, I was reflecting on my time fly fishing and its effect on me. I had previously read various articles on the subject and decided to share some edited snippets with you and possibly more in future newsletters. Feel free to email some of your thoughts, experiences, lessons, etc. about your reflections on fly fishing.

Piscator Non Solum Piscatur- there is more to fishing than catching fish

Proverb from *A Treatyse of Fysshynge with an Angle*, part of the second edition of *The Booke of Saint Albans* written by Juliana Berners, 1496 – the first published work about fishing.

“... fly fishing has always been something very special to me -- a sort of sacred dance with Nature, and a true source of solitude.”

“...I cherish moments where I need for nothing, my mind wanders, and I am able to reflect. It’s the feeling when you do something you love. And it’s almost impossible during the hustle and bustle of a typical day. To many, fly fishing is silly—you stand in a river, wave a stick, and fling chicken feathers at wary fish. But if you dig a little deeper, it takes persistence, patience, and a bunch of different variables coming together at the same time to succeed.

“ In any activity, when you do something enough, the act transcends itself and you learn something greater. Sometimes about yourself, sometimes about others, sometimes about the world. I fly fish because of where it takes me and who I meet there, but most importantly, to feel a singular moment of connectedness and reflection. Silence and tranquility. it’s that same rare moment of clarity that makes it all worthwhile. It all makes sense. “

” Early on, I decided that fishing would be my way of looking at the world. First it taught me how to look at rivers. Lately it has been teaching me how to look at people, myself included. To the reader accustomed to the sort of instructional fishing writing which I myself enjoy, I must seem to have gotten very far afield. I simply feel that the frontier of angling is no longer either technical or geographical. The Bible tells us to watch and to listen. Something like this suggests what fishing ought to be about: using the ceremony of our sport and passion to arouse greater reverberations within ourselves.”

“...To sit by a river is to enjoy the fittest place for contemplation even as one awaits a struggle with whatever monster might reside within those depths. Rivers are themselves threads, lines that link us to whatever we have left behind. I have maintained ... the illusion of control, the dream of constancy. Change has always been the enemy.... The old dilemma: I want something to happen but nothing to change.”

“The best thing about fly fishing is that it led you inexorably to one paradox after another.”

“... Eventually, all things merge into one, and a river runs through it. The river was cut by the world’s great flood and runs over rocks from the basement of time. On some of the rocks are timeless raindrops. Under the rocks are the words, and some of the words are theirs. I am haunted by waters.”

Stay Upright in Winter Fly Fishing

by Matthew (Castingacross.com)



I broke my net. The net broke my fall. The wooden handle took my full weight as I hit the granite boulder. Shiny rocks looked like icy rocks, so I let my guard down. One of those shiny rocks was actually an icy rock. My feet went out from underneath me so fast that I heard the *crack* of the net before I knew that I slipped. It wasn't immediately adjacent to the stream, but that didn't make it hurt any less.

How do you move to, in, and from the water when there's snow and ice on the ground? Obviously, there are some situations you'll probably want to avoid. Based upon your mobility and health, you should use your best judgment. That being said, there are a few things that will increase your odds of staying upright and safe.

Here's one gear suggestion and two practical tips on navigating frozen streambanks:

The best soles for snow and ice are studded rubber. The bigger the studs, the better. Some are concerned about the click-clack of spikes on streambed rocks. That is a real concern. But it is a much less significant concern than taking a spill into freezing water or icy parking lot. Little studs are nice; aggressive spikes are better.

When entering the water, don't use an ice shelf. It might seem thick enough. It might seem incredibly convenient. It might even be where you usually enter the water. But what happens if it breaks? Even if you're only a foot or so over the streambank, will you fall straight down? Probably not. Even a few inches of ice, which would usually be very stable, can be brittle if over running water and at the edge of an ice shelf. If you can't safely stomp the ice away, head to a spot where you can access the water from snowpack or bare ground.

When exiting the water, carefully step onto ice or packed snow. This might sound completely contradictory to the previous bit of advice. The key here is the surface that you contact when landing with a wet boot sole. And, of course, you'll want to make sure that said surface is stable. Packed down snow and ice will have a tacky effect on the bottom of rubber (or felt, even) on that first step. You'll eventually want to find your way to something softer. Snow or bare trail are easier to traverse.

Although it is common sense, it needs to be said: go slowly. Walk to your spot slowly. Wade slowly. Walk back to your car slowly. My wipeout, which I mentioned at the beginning of the post, wasn't on the stream. But I was pretty deep in the woods. I'm lucky that a broken net was all that I suffered. As fly fishers, we're used to looking all around and taking things in. In the cold winter, we need to train our focus a lot more on where our feet are and where they will be.

Fight The Good Fight, in Saltwater or Fresh

By Louis Cahill



My friend Kirk Deeter says freshwater and saltwater fly fishing are, “two entirely different sports played with the same equipment.”

In essence that is true and Kirk’s point is doubly true. Anyone who’s tried both can attest to that, but some of that equipment looks more similar than it is.

Reels, lines, leaders, hooks, tying materials are all different but there is likely no piece of equipment more different than the rod. There are a lot of differences between freshwater and saltwater rods and in several ways their use is quite different. This became readily apparent while giving a good friend, who guides for trout, a quick lesson before his first bonefish trip. He’s a great fisherman and caster but I could see from the look on his face that the eight weight I was lending him was strikingly unfamiliar.

We’ve talked a good bit about saltwater casting, the double haul and line speed but for those who are making the switch from trout to saltwater fly fishing, I’d like to offer some pointers on the techniques that I feel are the least intuitive. The fighting of fish.

When it comes to the fight, the trout rod and the saltwater rod are truly two different tools and they require different techniques. The divergence of those techniques starts with a fundamental element, the fish. It is the difference in the fish that dictates both the design of the rod and the tactics employed in its use.

The trout and the trout rod

The trout is a cautious, finicky fish. Much of this has to do with his proximity to man. He doesn’t have an ocean to hide in, and so he sees a good bit of fishing pressure in most places. To catch him, you will most likely need small flies with light hooks and fine tippet that will pass his scrutiny. Fortunately, he has a soft mouth to bury a hook in and although a big one will make you work to touch him, he’s not likely to head for the coast of Africa once he’s hooked.

The trout rod is designed with a light tip to protect that fine tippet and light hook, as well as the fish’s delicate mouth. When fighting a trout you move the rod well off its axis. That’s to say that you lift the tip high or hard to the side rather than pointing it at the fish. This puts light pressure on the fish and gives the tip plenty of spring to keep you tight to him and cushion your tippet against head shakes, jumps or sudden runs. The steady pressure wears the fish down quickly.

The obvious exception to this scenario is streamer fishing. When fishing streamers you are generally fishing heavier tippet and larger hooks. I generally use nothing finer than 0X tippet for streamers and most of my streamers have #4 hooks. A #4 hook is plenty large to fight the biggest trout without inflicting unnecessary harm to the fish. For this reason, I often fish a six weight saltwater rod with streamers.

Saltwater fish and saltwater rods

Saltwater sport fish are tough. They live in a harsh environment and have evolved to meet the challenge. They have hard mouths for eating crabs and toothy bait fish and it takes a lot of pressure to bury a hook in them. Once hooked they are freight trains with the whole ocean to run in. It takes a lot of pressure to turn them. It's simply about force. A saltwater rod is designed for just that. Delivering force to a fish's mouth. It has a stiff butt section that is used for fighting fish. The point at which the force is applied is generally marked by a second stripper guide. When fighting fish on a saltwater rod imagine that the second stripper guide is your tip top and fight the fish with that guide. To do this you will need to apply a lot of force with the reel through a heavy drag and some hard cranking on that reel handle. The rod stays at about fifteen degrees off axis where the butt can apply maximum pressure and the tip is out of play.

Fortunately, most saltwater species are not tippet shy so you can fish heavy leaders and bite guards. Saltwater reels, hooks and lines are all designed to work with these tactics. It's a specialized system designed to break tough fish. When used properly the results are great but you'd have a tough day fishing trout with this setup. Different fish, different tool.

A test worth trying

Here's a great way to refine your fish fighting skills for both saltwater and trout fishing. Get yourself an old-fashioned spring scale. The kind made to weigh fish works fine. Get out both the saltwater and trout rigs, if you have them. Tie your tippet to the scale and have a friend read the measure as you employ both the techniques described in this article. If you have never tried this, I promise you will be surprised.

Odds are your not putting nearly as much pressure on your fish as you think. It's a good idea to do this several times with different sized tippet and let your muscles learn what the different rods and methods are capable of. You will fight fish more efficiently, land more of them and release them fresher.

Sell, Swap or Donate

I know you never have too much fishing stuff(rods, reels, and accessories, even tying equipment, and of course, all that tying material), right. But I bet that some of that "necessary, gotta have it" stuff you have too much of, never used, old, or used in good shape that you'd like to get rid of or make room for more newer stuff.

So, here's a great idea, bring it to our meeting. Sell, or Swap for an item. You put a price on the item and whoever wants it can pay the price or negotiate the price or maybe trade for something else.

I know that we all have stuff, lots of stuff from feathers to tools, from rods to reels and other necessary stuff. We are now adding a "sell, swap or donate your stuff" to the beginning of our meetings. At last year's similar events, there had been a large number of happy members.

The club is in need of stuff for our raffles that's the donation portion.



Fly Tying - Materials



Captain Ray's Guided Charter Trip Raffle

Tickets are STILL Available. Ask any board member. They are \$15.00 a ticket. Or 2 tickets for \$25.00. Only 75 tickets will be sold!!

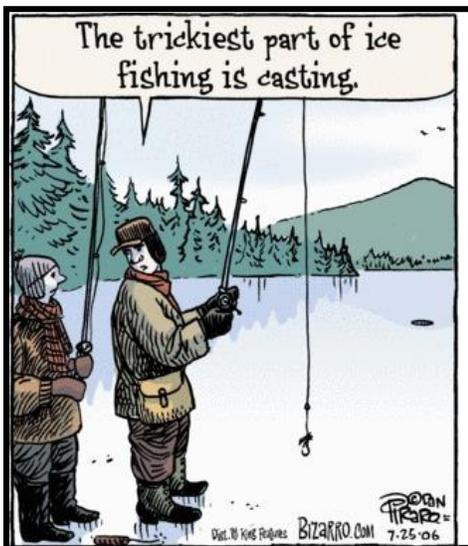
Drawing will be for 1 raffle winner with 1 or 2 guests. Don't forget to ask your fishing buddies if they'd like to purchase tickets too!

THE DRAWING WILL BE HELD AT THE Spring BBQ MEETING!!

The trip includes 8 hours of fly or spin fishing with Captain Ray Stachelek in Rhode Island.



For more info on the Captain go to: www.castaflycharters.com



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Please visit our website:
www.crossroadsanglers.com
For contact info on any Club Officer

This is our monthly newsletter for the 2021-2022 season.
Best Wishes to All to Continue to Stay Safe and Stay Well!
See you Soon!!