



Newsletter December 2019

President's Message

It's crazy weather time in New England: it's cold, it's snowing, no it's raining and it's 60, now it's 32! Days like this mean turn the heat up and tie some flies and/or read some good fishing stories. At the last meeting, the consensus was that everyone enjoyed Rick Little's presentation. It was very interesting hearing about and seeing pictures of some great fishing spots up in Maine. Now I have to plan a Maine fishing trip for next year—after checking with Rick on the best time and spots. Any one interested let me know.

Please do not forget we are making a donation to the Bonefish and Tarpon Trust, where 100% of the donation will be going directly to getting the guides back on the flats. We are asking the **members to join us in making donations** for this cause at our upcoming meetings. If you cannot make the meetings contact myself or one of the board members to coordinate getting your donation. Thank you for helping support this.

I know that we all have stuff, lots of stuff from feathers to tools, from rods to reels and a lot of other "necessary, gotta have it". We are now adding a "**barter, swap, sell 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—so that's the donation portion.

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. Even if you cannot make the meetings, we are very interested in hearing your thoughts and ideas as well.

Tight Lines & looking forward to seeing you and meeting new members!

Ed



NEXT MEETING:

Tuesday December 17, 2019
South Foxboro Community Center
382 South St. Foxboro, MA 02035
Time: 630pm to 9pm

WINTER HOLIDAY DINNER MEETING

Featuring our First 6 Foot Sub
Serving Roast Beast, Seafood
Salad, Ham & Cheese, and
more...

And
Dessert Soft Drinks & Coffee

Bring Friends & Family!!

The Bulletin Board

Crossroads Speaker & Events Series

December 17th: Holiday Party Meeting

January 22nd: Speaker: Scott Travers from the Rhode Island Division of Fish and Wildlife Education Office will be presenting on Fly Fishing in Rhode Island. More details to follow.

February 25th: Ray Stachelek, Cast-A-Fly Charters, Presenting and tying a few of his favorite flies.

March 26th: Joe Cordeiro will be back presenting Flies for Estuaries

April 23rd: Ken Elmer, Fly Tier and Guide, will be presenting on Central/Western MA rivers and will do a fly-tying demo beforehand (tentative at this time)

May 26th: BBQ Picnic Time!!

UPCOMING OTHER EVENTS

January 17-19 The Fly Fishing Show, Marlborough MA

February 22 Bear's Den Expo, Taunton MA. Bob Clouser is the Guest Celebrity.

FOR THE Bear's Den show: WE ARE LOOKING FOR VOLUNTEERS TO TIE AND/OR SCHMOOZERS TO PROMOTE THE CLUB. PLEASE LET ONE OF THE BOARD MEMBERS KNOW IF YOU CAN HELP OUT!

To All Members: On arrival at meetings, please check-in with IZZY at Membership Table to register for Door Prize!!

SECOND NOTICE—Bonefish & Tarpon Trust—SECOND NOTICE

Bonefish & Tarpon Trust and the [Bahamas National Trust](#) have established the Hurricane Dorian Relief and Recovery Fund to benefit fishing guides, lodge staff and others in the Bahamas' fishing industry who have been impacted by Hurricane Dorian, the worst natural disaster in the nation's history.

"Our success as an organization has been shaped in large part by our experience over the years in Abaco and Grand Bahama," said BTT President and CEO Jim McDuffie. "We simply wouldn't be the organization we are today without the Bahamas. This fund acknowledges the importance of our collaboration and friendship with guides, lodge staff, and others who have always been such great stewards of the Bahamas' natural resources. We will do all that we can in partnership with BNT to aid the recovery efforts."

The Hurricane Dorian Relief and Recovery Fund will be multi-faceted, providing immediate support to relief efforts, followed by support of long-range recovery, including promoting the recreational fishing industry as guides and lodge staff return to work. Additionally, BTT and BNT will collaborate further on future efforts aimed at also addressing the needs of impacted natural areas.

"Fishing guides epitomize key natural resource users of areas impacted by Dorian, including in National Parks," said Eric Carey, BNT Executive Director. "This effort is aimed at helping to get them back on the flats—with paying clients—and rebuilding their local economies, as soon as possible."

Please make your most generous contribution today.
All contributions are tax deductible as allowed by law



Let's try this again!!!----->



Gear Swap and maintenance:

Do you have fishing gear (rods, reels, and accessories, even tying equipment or tools) that you have too much of, never used, old, used in good shape, bring it to our December 17th meeting.

Sell, Barter or Trade 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.

Or, if you're in a giving stuff-away-kind-of way, donate it to the Club so we can use for a future raffle!! And, any reels that you have that need some attention for the coming season, Howie DeBeck will be there to help in that department.

When Your Best Fish Story Is About Catching... A Goat

By [Rick Bragg](#)

From *Garden & Gun*

I started forward with a powerful heave ... and hooked my brother's pet goat, Ramrod."

I should have given up fishing, I suppose, after the goat. He was not a regular goat. He was more part goat, part rhinoceros, about the size of a small horse but with devil horns. He looked out on the world through spooky yellow eyes and smelled like ... well, I do not have the words to say. My little brother, Mark, bought him at the sprawling trade day in Collinsville, Alabama, for \$75; I would have given him \$100 not to.

The first thing the creature did after coming into our possession was butt the side of a truck. You have to be one terror of a goat to assault a Ford. His name, my little brother said, was Ramrod.

"Why would you buy such a thing?" I asked my brother. He told me he planned to purchase a bunch of nanny goats to "get with" Ramrod, after whatever courtship that goat required. Ramrod would beget little Ramrods, who would beget more, till the whole world was covered in ill-tempered mutant goats. I think, sometimes, we did not love that boy enough.

Ramrod moved into his new home in a beautiful mountain pasture in northeastern Alabama and, first thing, butted heads with my mother's ill-tempered donkey, Buckaroo. Buck staggered a few steps, and his head wobbled drunkenly from side to side, but he did not fall unconscious. This, in Buck's mind, constituted a victory, and he trotted off, snorting and blowing, like he was somebody.

My point is, Ramrod was a goat not to be messed with.

Later that year, I was fishing with my brothers in the pond in that same pasture. The water was mostly clear, and you could see the bream in the shallows and the dark shapes of bass in the deeper end. For a change, even I was catching fish and had

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pulled in a few nice little bass. My cast, to me, was immaculate, my aim perfect, my mechanics sound, especially for the clunky crankbait I was throwing.

"But I'm not gettin' much distance," I complained to my big brother, Sam.

"It's fine," he said, and with an easy flick of his wrist, sent a black rubber worm sailing beyond my best cast of the day.

I decided to put a little more mustard on it. I let my lure dangle about a foot and a half from the tip of the rod, reared back, torqued, and started forward with a powerful heave ... and hooked Ramrod, who had crept up behind me to do me some kind of grievous harm, right between his horns.

Ramrod, who for perhaps the first time in his long life seemed unsure of what to do, took off running. Sam, who has never been too surprised by anything in his whole laconic, irritating life, gazed at the retreating goat as if this were a thing he witnessed every single day.

"Can't remember if that was a ten-pound test I put on that baitcaster," he said, as if it made a difference. "You can't catch no fish with heavy line. They can see it," and he made another cast.

The goat ran on. I considered, briefly, just standing my ground and trying to reel him in, to play him like a great tarpon or a marlin. Instead, I began to run parallel with him, reeling in the slack as I did, as I have seen great anglers do with giant fish on the TV. I guess I thought I could eventually get close enough to reach out and snatch the hook out of his head. I truly did not want to hurt him, but that was foolish, of course; you could not hurt Ramrod with hammer or hand grenade.

As it turned out, the point of the hook, not even to the barb, had snagged in the bony base of one horn, and the crankbait jangled atop his head. He was not wounded; he was just mad. He quit running about the time I ran out of line, and my little brother, who had a sort of telepathic bond with this creature, calmly walked over and pulled the hook free while the goat stood there like a pet. Then he and the goat both gave me a dirty look, as if hooking him were something I woke up that morning intending to do.

I went back to the pond, frazzled, and—I am not kidding—immediately hooked a water oak, a blackberry bush, and a low-slung power line. I shuffled off with a rubber worm dangling high above me; it was Cherokee Electric's problem now. I was done fishing that day and seriously considered being done for good. I walked to the house defeated but not ashamed, at least as far as Ramrod was concerned. That goat never liked me anyhow.

Great anglers, the kind who tie their own flies and read the tides and have fished the deep blue for leviathans, will most likely shake their sun-bronzed heads in pity and

sad wonder over this. But the bad fishermen out there—you know who you are—will merely nod in understanding and sympathy and, I hope, some degree of solidarity. The only reason they have not caught a goat is that, so far, one has not made their acquaintance or wandered into the proximity of their backswing.

But perhaps the worst thing about it is that the best fisherman I know, my brother Sam, did not even think that, in the long, sad epic of my fishing life, this episode was remarkable at all. He did not even tell it to anyone, not in the decade since. To him, it was just the kind of thing a poor fisherman like me was likely to do, was somehow fated or destined to do, assuming of course that he did not first fall out of a boat and drown.

“What is it, truly,” I asked, “that I do wrong?”

He was too kind to give voice to it.

He just spread his hands, palms up, as if to say: Everything.

Sadly, as a fisherman, I am just missing something, something that is both mechanical and mystical and, I am sorry to say, apparently permanent. Still, fishing is the one thing I will get out of bed for in early morning ... well, that and biscuits and gravy.

And, honestly, I'd rather be a bad fisherman than no fisherman at all.

This article is courtesy of [Reader's Digest](#)

TO ALL MEMBERS:

I was talking with Jimmy Clinton who is working with Project Healing Waters. Given the time of the year, I was wondering what our club might be able to help out with. He said that they can always use more freshwater hooks. They have also been using a lot of marabou lately and could use a few red and yellow hackle feathers for throats and tails. If you can help out, please bring it to our next meeting that would be great.

**Cheers,
Ed**





Big Dry, Little Dry: Making the Set

By: [Skip Morris](#)

(Courtesy of Mid-Current Fly Fishing News)

Nothing in fly fishing is ever quite certain, fly-and-tippet combinations included.

Question: "When a trout takes a large, say size 8, dry fly, do you set the hook that same as you'd set it for a much smaller size, say 20 or 22, dry fly?" - Will J

Answer: Before I address you and your fine question, Will (and I mean "fine" in both the sense of "excellent," and the sense of "discriminate" as in "a fine distinction"), I'd better do a little explaining to my readers who are familiar with another dry-fly piece I wrote for this column: "Hooking Dry-Fly Trout." That piece and this one, though related, are not the same. "Hooking" is about how long to pause before setting the hook after a trout takes your floating fly—it's mainly about timing.

This piece, the one you're reading now, is mainly about how hard you set the hook on floating flies through a range of hook sizes. So, yes, both are on setting, but one's on timing; the other, this one, is not about timing but mainly about how much force to apply.

So read on, readers, without fear that this is just the same business, disguised only by mild rearrangement, you've already seen me tackle in MidCurrent.

Will (and everyone else), I'll start with a basic principle that'll be our trailhead. From there we'll walk together through my answer.

A Basic Principal of Hook Setting

It only makes sense to go ever finer on tippet as you go ever smaller on fly hooks. (Reminder: although this principal applies to all flies, we're concerned only with floating flies here, right?) For a big beefy size 8 or 6 Stimulator, 3X tippet is a solid match. (New fly fishers: that's a big trout dry fly and a tippet thick for trout fishing.) Equally solid is 4X tippet for a size 12 dry fly, 5X for size 14, 6X for sizes 20 and 22. The finer the tippet, the more easily it busts—so you can set much harder on 3X than on 6X. Conclusion: the larger the fly, the harder you can set the hook without breaking the tippet. There: Welcome to the basic principle of hook setting by fly size, and to the trailhead. Shall we stroll on?

That principle is valid, and in general does apply, but this, after all, is fly fishing: exceptions are to be expected. And here they are.

Reasonable Limits

Especially when you get into heavier tippets, it's possible to set too hard yet not bust the tippet. The purpose of a hook set is to sink the hook's point well into a fish—beyond that, you risk tearing the hook out if it has caught only a sliver of flesh on the trout's jaw. But with a reasonable hook set and good fish-playing technique you might land a trout, even a big one, on that sliver.

A Practical Consideration

Dry flies are usually tied on fine-wire hooks, and these can be momentarily bent partway open on too hard a set. When a hook opens partway, that can be enough to free the trout. A fine-wire hook may open before the tippet it's tied to snaps. Solution? Again: a set of sufficient force to sink the hook point and no more.

Another Practical Consideration

Tippet doesn't always, shouldn't always match hook size. Example: a size 8 mayfly dry fly that imitates well the big Western Green Drakes drifting down from a reach of quick current to ride the smooth water just below, where angler-savvy trout wait for them. Big fly, flat water—the nervous trout can see everything here well, and they have time to really look: only a fine tippet, say 5X, will pass their inspection. So, we have a combination of fine tippet and a big fly. Here, the tippet's breaking point limits how hard you can set the hook—so set with extra care. Set even a smidge too hard and your tippet will fail.

Here's the opposite scenario: The trout are big and strong, not especially cautious because they're only lightly fished, and they're on a hatch of size 20 caddisflies. So you go heavier on the tippet than you'd like, just to control your fish among all that submerged timber they can run to (and if you tie your own flies, you tie those floating caddis imitations not on light wire but on standard- or even heavy-wire hooks). Let's say, 4X tippet. Now you can theoretically set harder than normal for a dinky size 20 floater. But the point of the heavy tippet here isn't about hook setting, it's about fish playing. So, sure, set a bit harder than usual for a size 20 to insure a good hook bite if you like, but don't go wild: a solid sinking of the hook is all you need and you can't get anything better than that. Then play that big, athletic trout with an extra dose of confidence thanks to your stout tippet.

Fast, Slow, or Somewhere in the Middle?

I've never felt that the size of my floating fly had anything to do with how soon I set the hook after a trout takes the fly, Will. I do vary my pauses between take and set, but that's not about fly size. (It is, however, the subject of that MidCurrent piece I mentioned, "Hooking Dry-Fly Trout.")

The Distance Factor

The farther away your fly is, the harder and quicker you must set in order to sink the hook—the difference in force and speed is slight, but real. Thing is, the more line between you and your fly, the more time you'll need in order to set through the additional line slack and against the increased resistance that extra line will apply to your set. Seriously, though, this adjustment is easy to overdo.

How Light, How Hard?

So now you know to set more lightly on tiny flies than on middling-size ones, on middling-size ones more lightly than on big ones; more lightly on fine tippet than on heavy—but none of that truly tells you how firmly to set on any tippet or fly. Honestly, that's a much easier thing to convey by showing than by telling. Still, I think I can pull it off.

I've been setting hooks on floating flies of all sizes since I was a kid, and that was now crazy long ago—the proper force on all hook sets is in my blood and bones. But to make sure I got the nuances right, I just worked with a rigged six-weight trout rod, practicing different hook sets with the tippet tied to the base of my guitar stand. Here's what I got: On a fly of size 18 or smaller, the set is a tad beyond just pulling until the line straightens—but it is more than just straightening the line—there's a light but definite bend in the upper part of the rod; for hooks of around size 16 to 10, add a mild-but-noticeable degree of force; for hook sizes 8 and up, at least another tad, maybe two, of force—the best way I can describe the set for the big hooks is that

if the hook were stuck in a fat shiny-slick wallet, you should try to make the wallet really skid across a smooth carpeted floor. (I can use that description with confidence because I just tried this on my own fat wallet. Fat with various discount cards and fishing licenses and such rather than money, sad to say.)

Trout Bulk

I never hear anyone talk about this, but: setting on a small trout is different than setting on a big one. The small trout gets yanked on the hook set, moved, so you compensate by setting slightly harder. The big trout, like a parked Volvo, doesn't budge—the hook only, not the trout, will move under the force of your set. So if you're sure a big trout's taken your fly, back off on the set a tad.

What About Lakes?

We trout-lake fans really do fish dry flies (see "[Dry Fly Fishing on Lakes](#)" here on MidCurrent)—everything I've said about setting dries on stream trout applies to setting hooks on trout in streams. There are some small differences—lake fishing never includes the slack-line presentations of stream fishing, so you might have to make a slightly quicker and longer set for streams than for lakes on average; and, well, actually . . . maybe that's all.

The Following Short Story Courtesy of our Fearless Leader—Ed Rosenbloom:

Four married guys went fishing. After an hour or so, the following conversation took place:

First guy: "You have no idea what I had to do to be able to come out fishing this weekend. I had to promise my wife I will paint every room in the house next weekend."

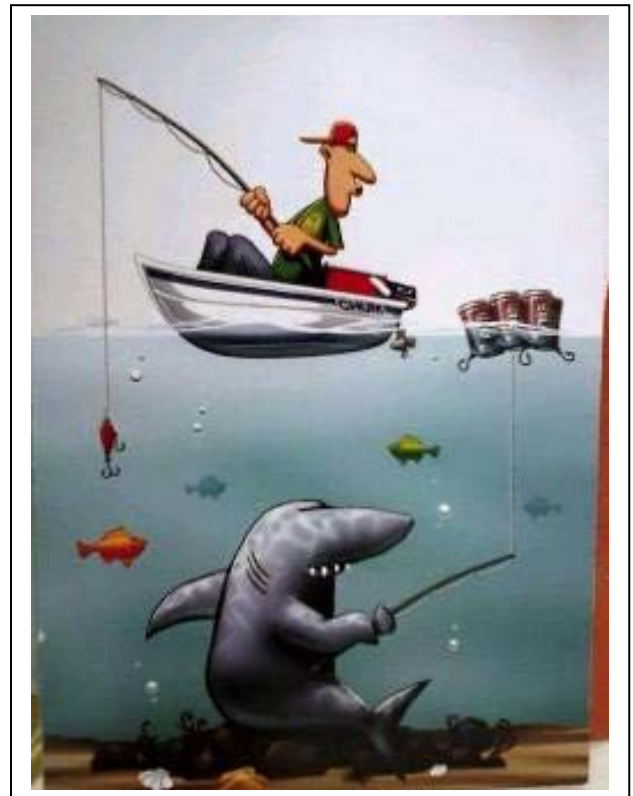
Second guy: "That's nothing! I had to promise my wife I'd build her a new deck for the pool."

Third guy: "Man, you both have it easy! I had to promise my wife that I'll remodel the kitchen for her."

They continued to fish until they realized the fourth guy had not said a word.

So they asked him. "You haven't said anything about what you had to do to be able to come fishing this weekend. What's the deal?"

Fourth guy: "I just set my alarm for 5:30 am. When it went off, I shut off the clock, gave the wife a nudge and said, "Fishing, or Sex," and she said, "Wear a sweater."



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This is our monthly newsletter for the 2019-2020 season. Hope Everyone's ready for Winter!
So why not gather together and discuss what we like to do best: Flyfish!
See you at the Monthly Meetings. *Editor*