

FISH SLAM CLUB



MARCH 2016

FIRST EDITION

NYMPHING

NYMPH FISHING
THE BREAKDOWN

WHAT DO YOU GET

When You Join The Fish Slam Club

HOW TO:

Kayak Fishing

WHERE TO:

Long Lake,
Ontario, Canada

UTAH TROUT SLAM

2-Day Utah Slam

BY LINDSAY PARKER

FUNNY BONE

Rivers and Kids

BY SHANE LANCE

FRESHWATER COLD

DIY Salmon Fishing

BY KELLY NIELSEN

WASHINGTON FISHING

From Silver to Red

BY TYLER FORBUSH

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Chasing Ahi

We have had some pretty good trips before, but this was the first all-female triple ahi day, and I will never forget that day as long as I live!



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WHERE TO FISH:

Ontario, Canada



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HOW TO FISH:

Kayak Fishing



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Kayak fishing is a lot slower, it is more relaxing and you generally get to thoroughly work an area. You can also get your kayak into a lot of areas that other boats cannot get into.



EDITORIAL



LINDSAY PARKER
FOUNDER

WHY THE FISH SLAM CLUB?

Our fishing lodge in Alaska, the Phoenix Lodge, has all five species of salmon available at different times of the year. I've caught all but the sockeye (red) salmon. I have caught a sockeye, but not there. I'm going to get my red in July this year. Check out the pins in The Fish Slam Club store. You can get one of each, as you document each species you catch.

was great exercise, and it beats running on a treadmill! Life is too short to spend it all chasing the dollar. You don't need a big house and a fancy car—a modest house and a reliable older truck will do the trick. Now you have less pressure on you to work so much. In the long run, you'll live longer and how much is that worth?

Spring is coming on, and the fishing will really start to pick up. The rainbows will be spawning and the hatches will begin. Grab your kids or an old friend and make a day of it. Decide which of the fish slams you are going to do this year. Take good photos, one of the fish next to a tape measure, one of you with the fish, and make a note of who you were with (or get a selfie stick and take your own photos). Get good video footage, keep a good journal and then send the info to us. You could be in the next magazine for The Fish Slam Club!

COME VISIT US:

International Sportsman's Expo in Salt Lake City, March 17 - 20 at the South Towne Exposition Center. *We will be giving away a trip to the Phoenix Fishing Lodge in Alaska.*

FOLLOW US ON:

Facebook/FishSlamClub
YouTube - <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCXAaPIRtS2M1X8eJOCZYRZw>.

THE FISH SLAM CLUB is all about having fun and what is more fun than playing a game? Who can catch all species of fish in the world, or maybe the United States, or maybe just in your own state? Any way you look at it, it's always more fun if you are playing a game or having a competition. Last year my buddy, Dennis Wintch, and I wanted to complete the trout slam in Utah, and we wanted to do it in one trip. We caught six out of the seven. The mackinaw (lake trout) was the only one we missed. Check out the story on page 14. We are going to give it another try this year—join us June 8th and 9th for the Utah Trout Slam Challenge!

My buddy, Jason Holmes, and I fish a lot in Wyoming. Wyoming has a cutty slam, which consists of four species of cutthroat. I've caught three out of the four on the Green River. The only one I lack is the Colorado cutt. I'm going to complete that one this year.

TOURNAMENTS

These slams make your fishing a lot more interesting. It's like having a fantasy football team. All of a sudden, you are a lot more interested in who wins! To add to the fun this year, we are going to have two Fish Slam Club fishing tournaments on the Provo River. The first one will be on Wednesday, May 18th and the second on Wednesday, October 19th. The tournaments will have prizes and will be a lot of fun.

If fishing is your passion, you need to be spending more time on the water. If you aren't fishing every month, something is wrong. Personally, I fished at least one day per week all winter long. I live five minutes from the Provo River, so it is easy for me to get out. I don't get too excited about fishing in February and early March because the fishing slows to almost a crawl, but I have needed to log information on those months in my journal—done! Also, it

FIRST ANNUAL FSC FISHING TOURNAMENT

MAY 18, 2016

PROVO RIVER - JORDANELLE TO DEER CREEK



One half of the entrance fees paid out to the first three places!
Entrance fee: Members of the Fish Slam Club \$25, Non-members \$75

If you want to participate, contact:

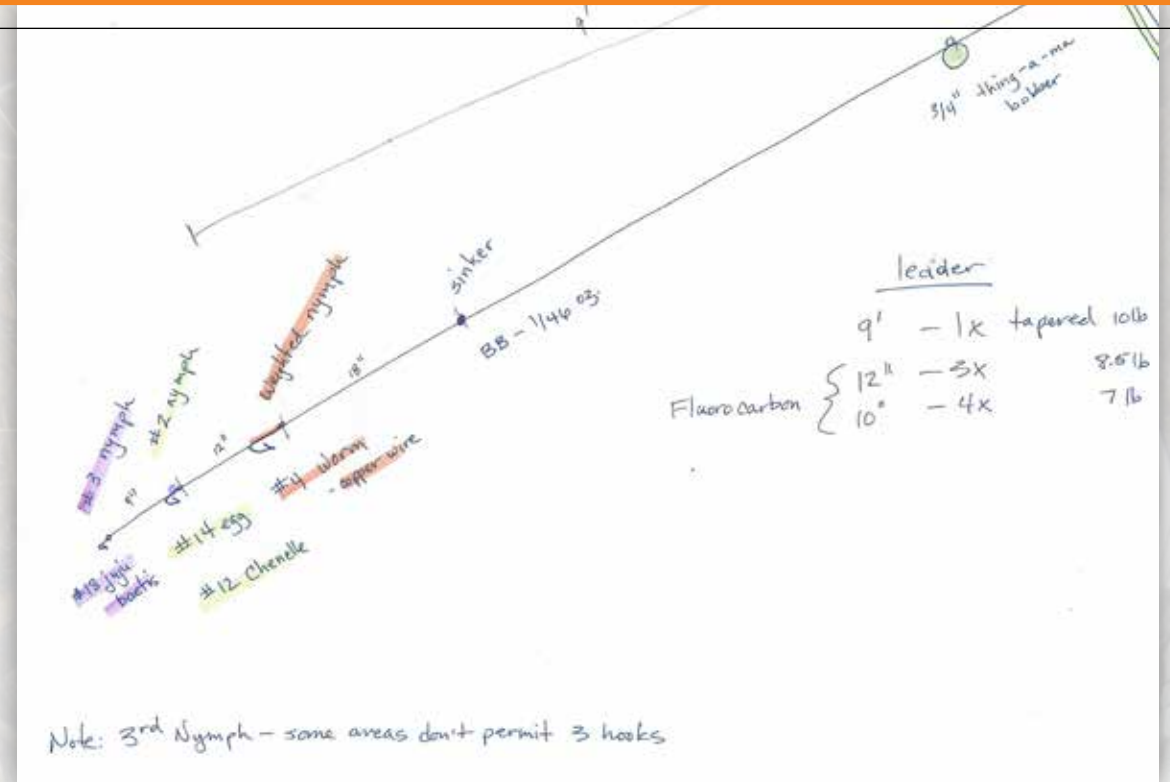
LINDSAY PARKER
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NYMPH FISHING THE BREAKDOWN

Nymph fishing is an art.

IT IS MUCH MORE DIFFICULT THAN STREAMER FISHING OR EVEN BASIC DRY FLY FISHING. THIS THREE-PART SERIES IS TO HELP THE AVERAGE FLY FISHERMAN AND NEW FLY FISHERMAN KNOW HOW TO BEGIN.

PART 1: THE SETUP



RIGGING THE ROD

Most fly fishermen start with a 9- to 10-foot rod (the larger the stream, the longer the rod) in a 4 to 6 weight (the larger the stream and fish, the higher the weight).

LINE - The fly line will match the rod weight and start off with a tapered floating line.

LEADER - (See Diagram) The first nine feet is 1x tapered monofilament (cheaper). Then 12 inches of 3x 8.5 lb. fluorocarbon leader (tougher and more invisible). Then 10 inches of 4x 7 lb. fluorocarbon leader.

NYMPHS - 1st nymph is a San Juan worm on a #4 hook and wrapped in copper wire. 2nd nymph is a #12 egg (if any spawning is close to occurring). 3rd nymph is a #18 JuJu Baetis or Hare's Ear.

NOTE: THE SAN JUAN IS ALWAYS THE 1ST FLY, IT'S WEIGHT

HELPS KEEP THE RIG LOW IN THE WATER. FLIES #2 AND #3 WILL CHANGE DEPENDING ON WHAT IS WORKING THAT DAY.

STRIKE INDICATOR - 3/4 inch Thing-a-ma-bobber (I like yellow the best) tied 6 to 12 inches down from the fly line junction.

SINKER - Lead bb (1/46 oz) 18 inches above the San Juan (this may vary slightly depending on the current speed and depth of the water).

NOTE: IF YOU ARE A NEW FLY FISHERMAN, OR IT IS WINDY, YOU SHOULD ONLY USE TWO NYMPHS, TO AVOID TANGLES.

This is my favorite nymph rig and I start out with this setup 75 percent of the time. Year round I will catch 50 percent of the fish on the San Juan, 30 percent on the egg and 20 percent on the JuJu Baetis. Get your rig set up and we'll show you how to fish it in Nymphing Part 2.



PART 2: FISHING

Trout, like all of God's creatures, try to stay alive and reproduce, so they look for protection from their predators, they seek oxygenated water, and try to eat more calories than they burn off. With these facts in mind, let's look at their living conditions. The time of year, the time of day, the weather conditions, etc. will all drive the fish to different levels and locations in the river.

TIME OF YEAR

In spring, the fish start moving from the deeper holes to more shallow runs and riffles. As the temperatures rise, these cold-blooded fish become more active. In the summertime, the fish are super active and will move to pick up something to eat. They also move to the riffles, where there is more oxygen in the water. In the fall, when the spawn is on, the fish move into the shallow lies to create redds on which to spawn. They become territorial and fight to protect their turf. Once again, they become very active, eating and bulking up for the winter. In the winter, after the spawn, the fish move into the deepest holes and almost hibernate.

TIME OF DAY

The time of day is also a factor. In the morning before the sun comes up, the big boys are out feeding,

because they feel safe from their predators in the low light. During the bulk of the day, the fish move under structures and stay there most of the day, especially if it is sunny and or there is a lot of fishing pressure. Most fishermen don't want to walk back to their trucks in the dark, so they start walking and are getting ready to leave during the best fishing time of the day. The last hour of the day until dark is prime time, it's trophy fish time, it's the best hour of the entire day!

WEATHER CONDITIONS

Sunny, bluebird days may be the best for hiking and sightseeing, but they are not the best for fishing. They are good conditions for seeing fish, but if you can see the fish, they can see you. It's a good time to find big fish, so find them and leave them and sneak back

later to catch them. The best fishing days I've ever had have been when it is overcast and lightly raining. The skies are dark and the water surface is broken and the fish feel more comfortable being out.

So, by understanding the weather conditions, the time of year, and the time of day, you will know where in the river the fish are, at what depth they are, and when they will be most active.

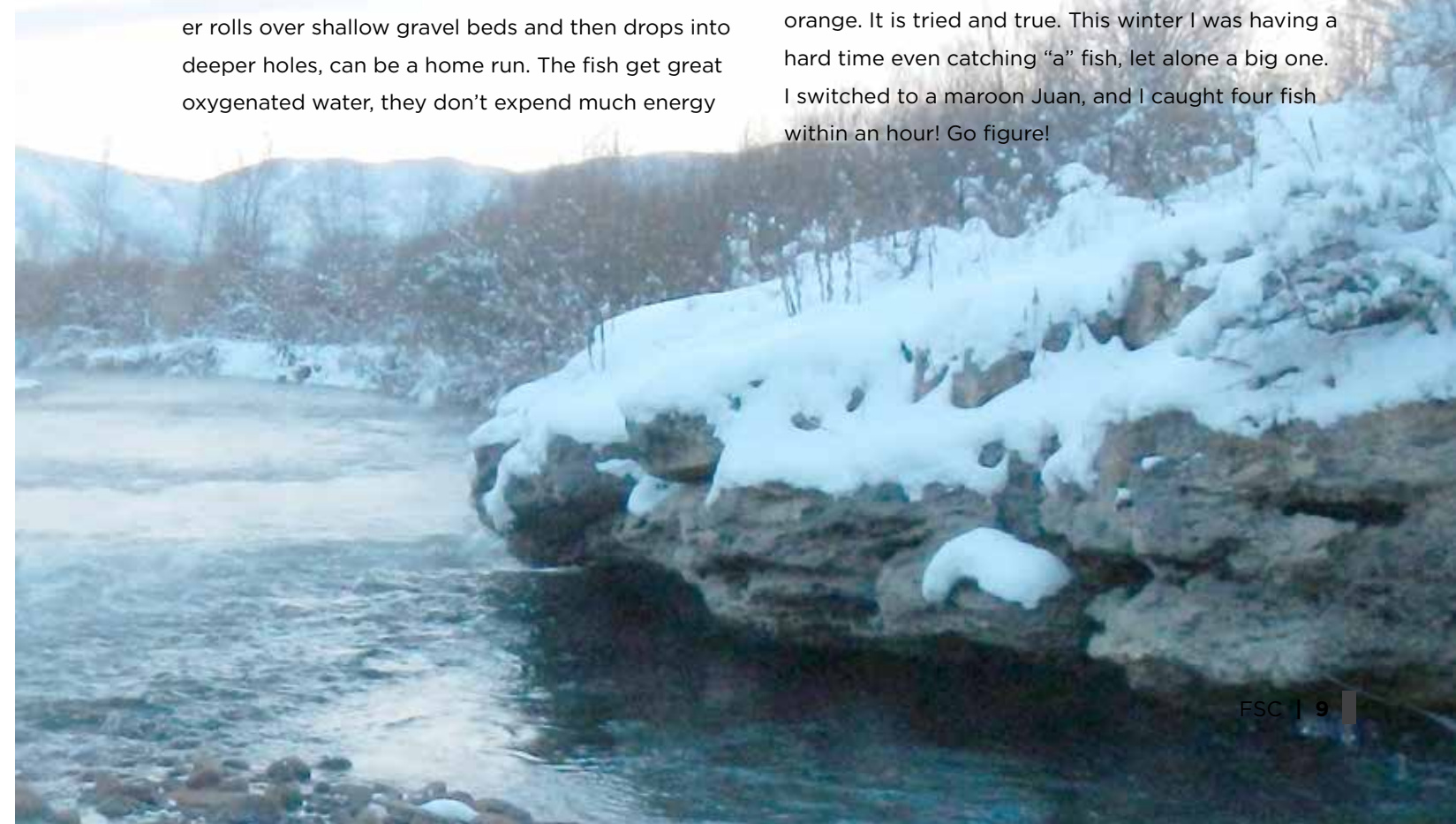
READING THE WATER

Once again, remembering that fish are trying to stay alive will help you read the water. Structures like rocks, logs, cutbanks, moss beds, and the like will hold fish, especially if they are near the current where feed is floating by. The structures protect the fish, yet they can pop out quickly and grab a snack then float back into their hidey hole. Seams in the current are great places to pick up fish. They expend little energy in the slow water, but once again can grab a meal as it floats by in the swifter water. Shoals, or places where the river rolls over shallow gravel beds and then drops into deeper holes, can be a home run. The fish get great oxygenated water, they don't expend much energy

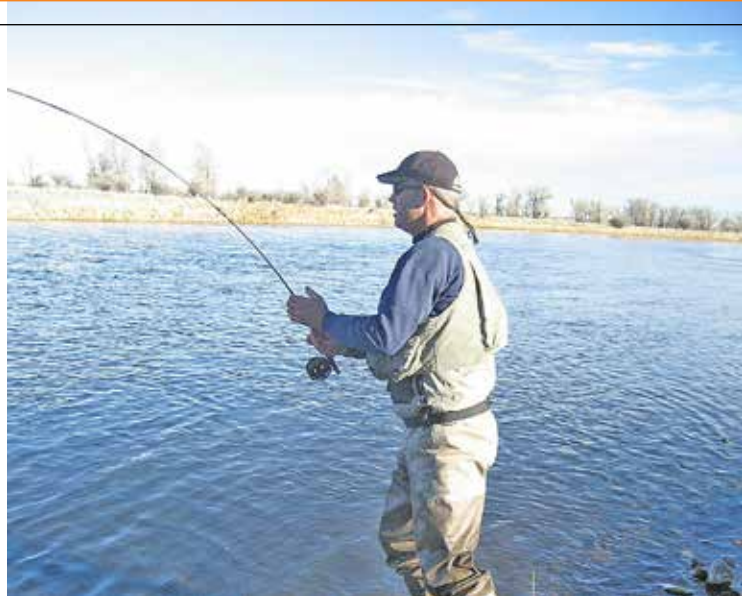
and the food just keep rolling by. So structures, seams, and shoals are "go-to" places when reading the water.

EXCEPTIONS

Just when you think you have it all figured out, you will realize, usually by accident, that you don't. You get a strike or catch a fish in some nonsensical way and you say, "Wow, what was that all about?" Here's an example. It was a bright winter's day, and I had been fishing a deep run where I have had a lot of success in the past. I had fished it for ten minutes or so without as much as a look. I was moving up river, there was a little pocket of water about ten inches deep with no protection from the side, and the sun was out. I flipped my nymph in just for the heck of it. Wham! I caught a beautiful 16-inch brown. If you would have bet me 100 dollars, I would have laughed and said, "Keep your money!" So, you never know! Don't get stuck in a rut—change it up. Here is another example. You can see from the pictures in the first part of this article that the San Juan worm I use is orange. It is tried and true. This winter I was having a hard time even catching "a" fish, let alone a big one. I switched to a maroon Juan, and I caught four fish within an hour! Go figure!



PART 3: PRESENTATION



You can have the right setup and you can know where to cast your nymph, but if you do not present it to the fish correctly, you are out of luck! This is the hardest thing for the novice to, first, understand and, second, do!

When you see the fly fishing movies, the fisherman is casting the fly line on a beautiful day and the sun catches the graceful arc of the fly line as it lightly rolls out on the calm, clear water—NOT! When you are nymph fishing, you have one, two and, maybe, three flies on. Some are weighted and, on top of that, you usually have sinkers and a strike indicator. That's a lot of crap! You try false casting that setup and it's going to be a long day sitting on the bank, untangling and re-tying.

CASTING

First you have to learn how to cast a nymph rig. It consists of taking out line and flipping upstream. You need to strip out line and let it go downstream. Being in the water you can load the rod and then flip it upstream. If there are trees or brush behind you, you may have to do a roll cast or a temple cast. These will be taught in another article. Remember, your first cast is your best chance at catching a fish in any particular hole, so don't waste that opportunity thrashing the water.

DRAG

Drag is the alarm bell for fish. If your line is making any kind of a wave with the current, you are done. You will not catch a fish. To prevent this, there are several things you can do. One, mend the line. That just means you flip the bell of the line (the arc made between the fly and the rod) upstream. This usually gets the fly first in the flow as your rig floats downstream. In other words, it means the fish are seeing your fly before they see the sinker or fly line. The second way to prevent drag is to high stick your rig. This means

you are fairly close to the area you are fishing, you hold the fly rod directly above (or close to it) your rig, and you follow the rig as it floats downstream. This works great, especially in deeper water. It also helps to get into the water closer to where you are fishing.

WEIGHT

Weight is one of the most overlooked parts of nymphing. Some say, "Get on the bottom or go home." This means, if your rig isn't touching the bottom of the river, you probably are not going to catch any fish. Remember this...if you aren't getting caught on the bottom and occasionally losing flies and rigs, you don't have enough weight on and you are not nymphing correctly. I use removable sinkers; otherwise, you will not change your weight enough. If you have more than one sinker on, separate them by at least a few inches. This will cause them to roll over and give your nymph more action. There are times when you want no weight on, like when you are casting into dead, calm water or if the fish you are targeting is in very shallow water. That is why I like the San Juan that is weighted, it will still get your flies down.

INDICATORS

There are a lot of snob fly fishermen that think if they catch fish without an indicator, they are superior. Ballyne! My philosophy is..."Whoever catches the biggest fish wins!" (as long as it is legal - no Chlorox or pipe bombs). My good buddy, Dennis, always says, "If they are biting on rabbit turds, that's what I'm using." Ha, ha! Anyway, if you are not using an indicator, you are anticipating, or guessing, when you have a hit. There are times when you have to do that. For example, in the winter, the fish will barely take your fly. At times

like that an indicator is useless. For the most part, you are going to catch more fish using an indicator of some type. There are almost as many indicators as there are flies. My favorite is the "Thing-a-ma-bobber." They don't get waterlogged and sink after a few minutes. I also like to tie about four feet of yellow-colored monofilament directly off the fly line. This line is "high visibility" and many times you can see the line move without the indicator moving at all. It also points to where your rig is, while a single bobber doesn't do that. I'm convinced that we get five times as many hits as we think we do, we just can't see them.

TIP

Go out on the sunniest day you can find. Go around noon, when the sun is directly above you. Make sure you have your polarized sunglasses on. Go to a nice, deep hole and practice your nymphing technique. You will be able to see your line go down into the water and see what your rig is really doing, not what you think or hope it is doing. You will then know in the prime-time, low-light hours what your rig is doing so you can catch Walter, the monster of the river!

So, learn to cast your nymph rig efficiently and cleanly. Learn to watch and follow your line drag free down the current. Regulate your weight so it is lightly bouncing off the bottom. Use an indicator system that lets you know of the lightest hit from your fish.

PART 1: TAUGHT YOU HOW TO SET UP YOUR NYMPHING RIG

PART 2: TAUGHT YOU HOW TO UNDERSTAND THE SEASONS AND WEATHER CONDITIONS AND HOW TO READ THE WATER.

PART 3: TAUGHT YOU HOW TO PRESENT THE RIG WHERE YOU KNOW THE FISH WILL BE, IN SUCH A WAY THAT IT WILL TAKE YOUR NYMPH.

Now it's up to you! The best teacher is experience, especially if you can do it alongside a mentor. So, hit the water and practice, practice, practice! See you on the water!



I may not be the best fisherman in the world, but no one loves fishing more than I do!

BIG TIME FISHERMAN

Lindsay Parker

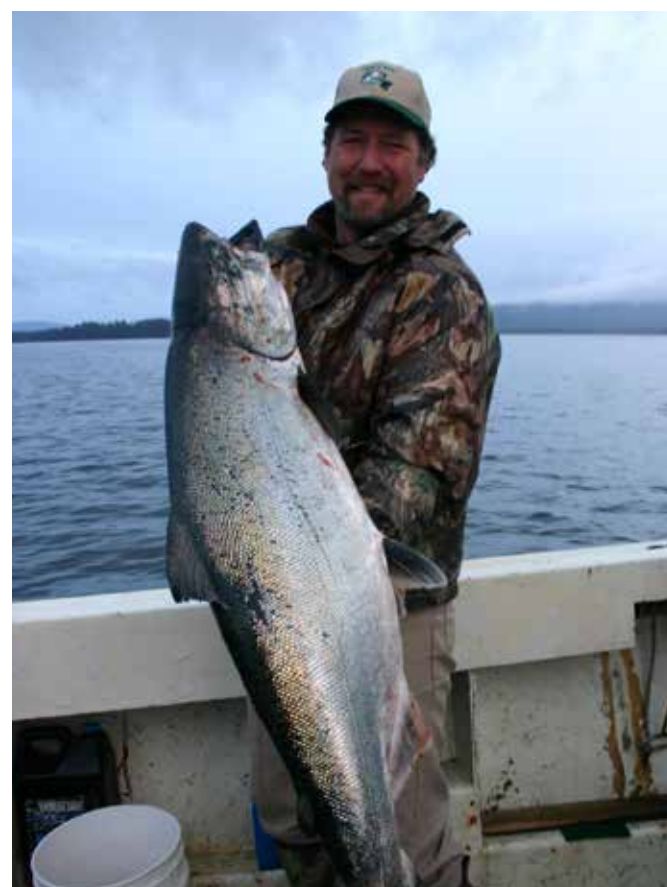
One of my earliest memories as a boy was when my dad took me to the local “mom-and-pop” sporting goods shop in Nephi, Utah. I got a brand new, red, closed-face fishing reel. It wasn’t a cheap plastic Zebco; it was metal and shiny. We went up Salt Creek Canyon, and I remember throwing a big night crawler in a log jam hole and catching a nice trout. I was hooked for life! As an eleven-year-old boy, I would ride my bike ten miles to Utah Lake from my home in east Provo to fish for white bass and catfish. The summer between eighth and ninth grade, I told my baseball coach I wasn’t going to play baseball that summer because I wanted to fish instead. I fished almost every day that summer.

As an adult, I was a carpet salesman and then learned to lay carpet instead so I could get up early, finish my job

and be on the Provo River by the afternoon to fish for big browns. As the years went on, I hunted and fished every chance I got. Eventually, we bought a lodge in Alaska, and I’ve fished Alaska for twenty years now. I’ve fished in Argentina, Costa Rica, and Mexico, but I still have a lot of places to go. My best fish was a 20-pound brown caught on the Provo River. I snagged it when I was fourteen years old, so it probably shouldn’t count. I caught a 40+ inch steelhead in Alaska that weighed in the upper teens.

BEST FISH: 40+ INCH STEELHEAD IN SOUTHEAST ALASKA

BUCKET LIST FISH: MONSTER ARCTIC CHAR IN ITS SPAWNING COLORS
PEACOCK BASS IN THE AMAZON
AND MANY MORE!





**BROOK TROUT
RAINBOW
CUTTHROAT
SPLAKE
TIGER
BROWN**

2-DAY UTAH SLAM

These slams make your fishing a lot more interesting. It's like having a fantasy football team. All of a sudden, you are a lot more interested in who wins!

**TEXT WRITTEN BY
LINDSAY PARKER**



It was the first week in June, the snow was melting off the high mountain lakes. Dennis Wintch called me and asked if I was ready to go fishing. I think it was a rhetorical question, knowing me. I drove to Elk Ridge, and we loaded up Dennis' small fishing boat and off we went. We stopped in Loa and dropped off his boat at his in-laws' home and then headed up Thousand Lake Mountain. We arrived at the trail head to Deep Creek and hiked in to the lake. A few casts later, Dennis had on the first fish of the trip—a nice two-pound brooky. We fished that lake for several hours and each of us had a creel full of fish. Dennis had caught seven, with one three-and-a-half pounder. I had caught five, with one two pounder. The deadly black maribou jigs had done their work. We capped this leg of the trip off with a brook trout lunch over a nice bed of coals. When it comes to trout, brookies eat better than any of them (that's probably because they are a char, not a trout).

After lunch it was back to the truck, back to Loa to pick up the boat, and off to Otter Creek Reservoir to see if we could catch a cutthroat trout. We hammered the rainbows and, finally, toward the end of the evening, I hooked into a six-pound Bear Lake cutthroat, the best I'd ever caught! We were trolling RYX flatfish and stripping wooly buggers. Dennis made his famous dutch oven dinner with blacktail deer steaks; then we hit the sack on cots under a brilliant sky of stars and slept like babies.

In the morning, we caught a few rainbows, then packed up the gear, loaded the boat and off we went for the Boulder Mountain to catch splake, tigers, and brook trout. I had never caught a tiger trout, and it was number one on my list. Dennis reassured me he knew where we could catch a tiger trout. He had grown up fishing all this area, and all you have to do is look in his house at the beautiful mounts to see this is true. We fished Beaver Dam Lake and caught brookies and splake, but no tigers. It's hard to ever beat Dennis when it comes to hunting and fishing. I had a six-pound cutthroat so,

not to be outdone, he pulled in a monster eight-pound splake—the biggest I've ever seen!

Dennis could tell I was worried about my tiger trout, so he said if we drove to Fish Creek Lake, we would catch a tiger. We travelled some of the worst roads I'd ever taken in a truck (and that is saying something considering I've hunted for years with Dennis). We pulled out all the stops and hit the lake with a vengeance, but to no avail! We tried everything in our tackle box—flies, jigs, and spinners. Finally, I dug out a worm and went over to a pile of boulders and dropped my line down in the deep dark crevice. Whamo! I finally had my tiger, the last of the trout in my slam. He wasn't a monster, maybe fourteen inches and a half a pound, but I didn't care. I was on cloud nine!

We now had a brook trout, a rainbow, a cutthroat, a splake, and a tiger. We only lacked a brown and a mackinaw! We knew the mac was out because we were running out of time and Fish Lake is the only place in southern Utah where you can catch one. I told Dennis we needed to stop on the Fremont River as we dropped off the top of the Boulder. I knew I could catch a brown in a river. We found a secluded road that took us to the Fremont. It was late in the day, so I went straight to my tried-and-true #5, floating black-over-gold Rapala; and, on the first cast, I had my brown. We fished the river for an hour and picked up a dozen more browns and rainbows.

As we headed down the road with the sun setting in the west, we just smiled. I told Dennis, "We have caught six of the seven Utah trout in two days. There are probably only a handful of anglers that can say that." Then Dennis said, "Next year we'll start at Fish Lake and catch us a mackinaw and we'll finish this thing right!" He didn't even have to ask if I was in—some things just go without saying!

RIVERS & KIDS

BECAUSE MEMORIES AREN'T MADE PLAYING VIDEO GAMES...

I grew up two blocks from the Strawberry River. Actually, I grew up on the river, but my home was two blocks away. From the time I was about eight until about fourteen (when I discovered catching girls was as fun as catching fish—come to think of it, I never caught any girls), I spent most of my time at the river.

As soon as school let out each day, I quickly made my way home to let my mom know I survived, grabbed a snack, gathered some friends, and headed for the river. I tried to get in and out of the house before my mom could get a chance to say, “Take your brother with you and DON’T GET WET!” What an awful thing to tell a kid. Going to the river and not getting wet is not just impossible, but also takes the fun out of being there. Taking my little brother wasn’t too bad because I could usually lose him for a little while. To this day, if I ever get lost, don’t call Search and Rescue, call Craig. He could find me anywhere!

Once we made it to the river, we would dump our bikes in the weeds and start running up the winding trails to our favorite fishing holes. There were always kids there like lines of ants meandering in and out of the dense willow thickets along the banks. There was always more than one trail through the thick stuff. These extra trails were made especially for losing little brothers. Thinking back, I bet all those little brothers were holding meetings on how they could become more of a nuisance once

they caught up with the big kids.

One day my cousin, Travis, and I spent a little extra time trying to ditch Craig. We had heard that someone had caught a big one at the “Swimmin’ Hole.” The last thing we needed was a little brother there scaring off all the fish. Also, you certainly don’t want the little bugger catching a bigger fish than you. How embarrassing would that be?

We had been fishing there for awhile with no luck, when Craig came stumbling down the trail. I barked out orders for him to stay away from the edge so he wouldn’t fall in. However, once we finished fishing, he could stand by the edge and “accidentally” fall in and I would have to jump in and save him. What mom could get mad at a guy for saving his brother’s life?

We hadn’t even had a bite and were about to give up when I saw a big juicy grasshopper. I threw him on a worm hook and tossed him out on the edge of the rapids. The second he hit the water I saw the belly roll of a large brown, as he gulped the helpless insect down. My reel began to sing, as the big fish fought upstream and downstream. Suddenly, I had fishing experts all around me shouting orders on how to land this big lunger. I had never had a fish fight like that before. I began to worry that this world-record fish would get away. Several kids gathered shoulder to shoulder along the bank wait-

ing to pounce on the fish when I got him to the edge.

After fighting him for several minutes, the big brown jumped nearly two feet out of the water. We all stood in breathless awe at the marvelous sight! He seemed to hang in the air forever! The excitement became too much for my little brother to bear. He ran out past the end of my pole, grabbed my line, and gave it a huge tug—thinking the fish would come flying out on the bank. The snap of my line echoed like thunder up and down the banks of the Strawberry River. We all stood motionless and speechless staring into the water as though we had just witnessed the disappearance of a loved one.

Anger and rage began to boil up from the pit of my stomach! Craig looked at me with a “deer in the headlights” look. I began to scream and he be-

gan to run. I tried to whip him with my pole, but he knew the trails better than I did so he was able to keep out of whipping range. Now it was his turn to lose me. I tried to put more fear in him by yelling that Mom and Dad were going to skin him alive when they found out what he did. I was hoping this would keep him from running home, where I knew he would be safe. Apparently, he was more afraid of me than he was of them because he did not stop until he was locked safely in his room.

I have since forgiven my little brother for that horrible act. However, whenever we go fishing, I still don't trust him around my line. I keep waiting for him to hook a big one so I can return the favor. He never hooks a big one while I am around. Perhaps he remembers that I owe him one!

FISHING'S NOT JUST A SPORT...IT'S A WAY OF LIFE.



FISHING CHEF: HALIBUT AU GRATIN

INGREDIENTS:

HALIBUT 1-2 LBS - half cooked, raw in the middle (can be blanched in seasoned water or grilled)

KNORRS GARLIC & HERB MIX - two packages (follow the directions)

4 CUPS OF BROWN RICE, cooked

2 CUPS OF PEPPER JACK CHEESE, shredded

JALAPENO POTATO CHIPS, crushed

DIRECTIONS: In a 9 x 13 glass dish, fill the bottom with a thin layer of rice. Place the halibut as the next layer and pour the herb and garlic sauce over the halibut. Repeat with the rice, halibut, and sauce and then cover with pepper jack cheese.

Bake for 24 minutes at 350 degrees. Remove from oven and sprinkle the crushed potato chips on top and then cook for 10 more minutes.

As for the topping, I use Ritz crackers with a little butter and cover the dish with this mixture. Delicious!

THE PASSIONATE CHEF: JOHN DIAMOND

My passion for cooking is something I have had for a very long time. I started working in the food business at age 14. I worked for a company called Mr. Steak in Provo, Utah. Fast forward 43 years to age 57. I now chef for a fishing lodge in Alaska, cooking meals for as many as 30 hungry guests. I love to cook and make others happy. One of the main fish we catch (and I cook) in Alaska is halibut. There are so many ways to cook halibut; it is such a great fish. The worst thing you can do is overcook it. In the winter months, I get to experiment with many different cooking options. Last month I tried this new recipe that was given to me by Captain George Dennis of Washington.

TROPHY ROOM



DENNIS WINTCH
Utah Tiger Trout



STEVE KAUFUSI
Utah Brown Trout



JIM VILOS
Alaska Rockfish



LINDSAY PARKER
Yellowstone 5 lb. Brown Trout



ANNA GUNN
Utah Wiper



JASON HOLMES
Wyoming Snake River Cutthroat



KIMBALL PARKER
Utah Brook Trout



DARRELL BUSSARD
Washington Steelhead



LARRY CLARKSON
Alaska Silver Salmon



JIM VILOS
Alaska Dolly Varden



KEVIN BIEGEL
Montana 8-lb. CuttBow



DARRELL BUSSARD
Washington Sturgeon



JAKE VILOS
Alaska Dolly Varden



ELI SKINNER
Alaska Yelloweye



LARRY CLARKSON
Alaska Halibut



STEVE SILLITOE
Alaska Silver Salmon



LARRY CLARKSON
Alaska Ling Cod



DAVE BISCHOFF
Alaska Halibut



DENNIS WINTCH
Utah Splake Trout



BUD DAVID
Utah 8 lb. Rainbow



THE POOR MAN'S LOBSTER

When the dog days of winter come to an end and the first sighting of receding ice and open water on the Montana lakes shows itself, there is one special delicacy that starts flooding my dreams—big, sloppy walleyes.

My fishing passion primarily involves targeting the species that I like to eat, and there aren't many fresh-water fish dishes better than a nice, juicy, white meat

walleye fillet. Primarily a cool water species, walleyes spawn once a year in the early spring. With the large geographical range of this species, the exact spawning dates vary by climate; but I know from experience, that when the ice leaves here in Montana, these fish will be going at it. Male and female walleyes spawn with multiple partners with no lasting relationships. Mating takes place in the marshy areas and, typically, they will return to the same site again and again to spawn. Temperature is the driving factor and extremely important to the well-being of these fish. The best egg fertilization tem-

peratures are around 40-55 degrees Fahrenheit, and the best hatching temperature is around 60 degrees. Post infancy, these fish prefer temperatures between 65-72 degrees for maximum and optimal growth.

Immediately following this spawning time frame, the male fish will feed heavily. Females, however, will rest for a few weeks and then go on a feeding binge. Typically, this is the best time of year to head to the lakes or rivers and try your luck at landing a wall hanger. Opinions vary greatly on what is considered a "keeper" fish. This article will be heavily weighted and geared by the opinion of yours truly. To me, a keeper walleye will weigh 1-3 pounds or possess a length of 12-24 inches. A 6-8 pounder is bragging size, and anything larger would be considered a trophy. From the research I have done, nobody can really tell me how to distinguish between a male and female walleye, but I do know that when the fish reach approximately 24 inches, they are capable of spawning. So, for all intents and purposes of maintaining the population and quality of fish in our lakes and streams, I do not keep any fish longer than the 24-inch mark. Be sure to check your local regulations, as some lakes do have size limitations.

I have heard countless comments from fellow anglers stating that they are an impossible fish to catch or "I could sit out there all day every day for a month and still never catch one." These statements are somewhat true. Walleye are what I call picky, finicky fish, but time and determination always win in the end. There are multiple methods and locations to begin your journey. Today we are going to focus on lake fishing from a boat, targeting water depths anywhere from 6 to 36 feet. How many of you angling nuts have sat through a seminar or watched a show on TV where others have told us that when we fish for walleyes, we have to fish them very slowly? Most of the time it is necessary to fish very slowly for walleyes, especially when they're inactive, which you could say is the case for most of the summer months. But there are times when you'll catch a lot



WALLEYE are what I call picky, finicky fish, but time and determination always win in the end. There are multiple methods and locations to begin your journey...

more fish by moving the bait quickly. Sometimes you have to adapt and overcome the normal and change your methods a little, which can pay big rewards.

If the fish are just crushing my baits and my rod tips tend to slam violently in the downward direction, to me that is a signal that they want fast-moving targets and will chase anything that will swim. When this is the case, and I am seeing these types of reactions, I like spinner rigs, crank baits, or jigs. If the fish are active, jigs are typically involved in my first attempt. Bait the jig with a fresh and fat night crawler or rig up your favorite power bait artificial lure. These baits don't rip off very easy, and I don't have to re-bait after every catch. Toss your jig into the fish holding area, hop it or swim it, even snap the jig and don't pause as you usually would, but keep that thing moving. Many times, when you are starting to snap or swim the jig towards the boat, the fish will already be hooked and the strike will usually be quite firm. These lures work best when casting



along weed-bed edges or over shallow humps in the underwater terrain. I have found that when the fish are in these areas, they are usually quite active. Crank baits can work well in the same areas as jigs while chasing the active walleyes. I like trying these baits out because they simulate the minnows that many of these walleyes chase and depth control is much easier. They seem to love smashing a crank bait that has just been ripped free of a weed or some kind of marshy terrain. I typically use the Shad Rapalas or Rattling Rapalas for this method. I don't concern myself too much with the lure's color, but I do pay attention to its size. Use the biggest bait that the fish will hit—the bigger baits will often attract the bigger fish. I have found that three-inch cranks or swim baits work best for the size of fish I am looking for.

Another method that I have recently become quite fond of is trolling with a bottom bouncer, minimum three-foot leader and spinner rigged with live bait. I have found this method to work best when the water is dirty or if the fish seem to be congregating deeper in the lake. The spinner throws more flash and vibration and will lure fish from greater distances. An active fish could be 20 feet away from your straight live bait rig and not even notice it, but they will come over and hit a spinner rig for the sole reason that it's more visible and, therefore, more attractive. On my boat I have it set up

nicely with a good trolling motor and a fish finder with structure scan and side imaging. I can throw multiple poles out on rod holders, set my trolling speed (I recommend starting at 1 mph) and direct my boat to the proper depth or structures that I am targeting that day. This also allows you to cover a lot of water and there is a greater chance to run into some fish. Now, for a few tips on setting these bottom bouncers up correctly. Typically, you will have 3-5 feet from where you tie in your bottom bouncer to the end of your leader with the spinner rig. You cannot cast this setup—you basically have to just drop it into the water while paying extra attention to its orientation in the water as it sinks. If you tangle any part of this setup on the way down, you will not be bouncing on the bottom (more like dragging your setup) and your leader will not be trailing properly to where the spinner is. You want your line projection into the water at about 45 degrees and make sure you are on the bottom. You are not fishing with this kind of setup if you are not on the bottom. Your rod tip gives you an indicator of whether you are bouncing on the bottom or not. Vary your spinner size according to the water clarity. In dirty or stained water conditions, go with a larger, brighter spinner. As the water clarity increases, try a smaller and more subtle color blade. Also, these spinner rigs (or "Lindy rigs" as they call them) come in all shapes and sizes. I recommend going with the double-hook setup, as I can't even count

the number of times I have caught the fish on the rear trailing hooks or the number of times my single-hook setup has gotten slammed by a fish only to come up empty handed because they just flat out missed the hook or spit it out. Increase your chances and go with the double hooks. Also, how you rig your worm on these double hooks also matters to these picky and finicky fish. Thread the hook through the head of the worm so it basically takes on the shape of the hook and then halfway down the worm, just attach the second hook with a single penetration. This will cause that double-hook worm setup to spin like an arrow flying down range; and, if you have done it right, you will have the tail of the worm trailing properly. DYNAMITE AND FAIL PROOF! This little detail can change the game.

If your typical slow-trolling or slow-jigging techniques aren't working for you, kick it up a notch and put some wiggling, rattling and shiny lures

“
THIS ONE DETAIL CAN CHANGE THE GAME OF YOUR FISHING...DYNAMITE AND FAIL PROOF!
”

out in front of them. Experiment with color combinations, but be sure to try a pink head/white tail or orange head/chartreuse tail pattern on your jigs, as these have been very good to me, but so have a lot of other combinations. Kind of like fly fishing, you have to have the gear and you have to be willing to change it up multiple times during one fish setting. Above all, be sure to try plastic, tail-action baits; especially the watermelon pearl power bait minnows. They aren't going to replace live bait, but when conditions are right, they will put a few extra fish in the boat, particularly during those warm and inactive summer months.





A COUPLES' RETREAT TO ALASKA

In August 2015, my wife, Lynette, and I were invited to go on a week fishing trip with Dan and Norma Winder from Jackson, Wyoming. My wife was not very excited about spending a whole week in Alaska fishing; but because she loves me so much and because of our wonderful company and best friends, Dan and Norma, she consented to go. Our accommodations were at The Eagle Lodge, which is owned by Ken Brough, and is located on the Prince of Wales Island. The scenery was amazing

and the fishing spectacular! There truly is nothing in comparison to the beauty of Alaska. We had no problem catching our limit of salmon every day. The silvers and pinks were running and Dan taught us how to land those big boys in the skiff. Once in the skiff, Dan was the master of using a blunt object to the head to alleviate their suffering. With four of us in a small skiff and salmon jumping all around us, the action got very intense, with hooks flying in every direction. It only took Lynette about

one hour of fishing before she was totally addicted, since she did land the biggest silver of the trip! (She made me include that sentence in this article—ha, ha!) On a daily basis we saw multiple black bears (Lynette calls them fuzzy wuzzies) only a few yards away from us. Our favorite part of the trip was when Ken took us to his honey hole on the river to fly fish. You have truly never fished until you have felt the fight of a huge salmon on the end of a fly rod. It is exhilarating and exhausting! The best part of it was that we had the river all to ourselves. Dan and I both had Sitka blacktail deer tags, and we spent a few mornings and evenings cruising around the bays looking for some bucks. We

did not have success in harvesting any bucks, but we saw plenty of other beautiful wildlife, such as sea otters, whales, seals, and bald eagles. On one occasion, we came around a bend and startled a doe and a fawn from a very small island. They jumped into the bay, and we watched them swim at least one half

mile to the bank. We were both amazed at how fast they could swim!

Every morning we would set our crab pots and then in the evenings come back and check them. To me, it was just like Christmas, as I was pulling up the crab pots from the bottom of the bay to see what, and how many, we had captured. But it made me very angry when Dan said we could only keep the large males and that the smaller ones and all the females had to be returned to the ocean floor. I just don't think it is fair that I had to put the big juicy female crabs back, when the sea

otters kept and ate everything that they caught! But when Ken's wife, Corey, cooked those babies up for us, everybody thought that I was going to flounder because I just kept eating and eating and eating. Nobody can cook like Corey!

My wife is a fair-weather gal. If it's snowing or raining, she is always in the house. I was amazed that she was out there all alone with me on a skiff, casting and casting and landing big salmon and having the time of her life. The temperatures were warm, even when it was drizzling rain.

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the puzzle. (Sorry, Norma! I just had to include that one.)

This was probably one of the best trips that we have ever had as a couple! And the best part of it was that we did not have to clean one fish, yet each of us came home with a 50-pound box of salmon!

If you haven't been to Alaska, you definitely need to go! Dan and Norma, thank you so much for the invite!

Do-It-Yourself ALASKA SALMON FISHING



Having traveled to 49 out of 50 states, usually on business, when I got the invitation to go to the only state I had not visited, I jumped at the chance. Alaska was a place I had always dreamed about as a kid for both hunting and fishing. So, to be invited by my business partner, Doug, to fish Alaska with him in July of 1999, was an opportunity I had to take, especially with the business covering all of the land costs. I would not only complete my 50-state quest but, more importantly, do something I have always had a huge passion for—fish!

Doug had fished Alaska several times before, so by plugging into his well-planned trip, I learned a ton

about fishing in Alaska. I quickly discovered that the poles, reels, lines, lures, and fishing techniques for salmon were totally different than fishing in my home states of Idaho and Utah for trout. Another thing I found out was that fishing the Last Frontier state can be quite expensive. Even though our trip had all land costs covered by our business, the guide fees alone were pricey, and even more so today.

Returning home from that very enlightening trip, I realized that was just too much fun not to do again. Fishing Alaska, however, can often be too expensive for the average fisherman. When you consider plane fare, lodging, rental vehicle, gasoline, food, out-of-state fishing

license, king stamp, salmon tackle, guide fees, etc., the costs can really add up quickly. So, I went to work to find the least expensive way to enjoy a fabulous do-it-yourself fishing trip to Alaska.

The first, and biggest, expense I wanted to eliminate was guide fees. For this article, I will focus only on king salmon. Although there are five species of salmon in Alaska, the king salmon is, by far, the largest and, for

are done once you keep a king, but I wanted to fish all day for kings (catch-and-release) and then keep one later on in the day, which is totally legal on that river. If I was fishing on my own, I could do just that. I paid what I thought was quite a bit of money only to catch one fish and then sit around waiting for the others to catch theirs. However, the good news here is that while waiting, I observed carefully the various tackle and fishing techniques used by the guides to catch king salmon.

WHEN YOU CONSIDER

plane fare, lodging, rental vehicle, gasoline, food, out-of-state fishing license, king stamp, salmon tackle, guide fees, etc., the cost of a salmon fishing trip in Alaska can really add up quickly. So, I went to work to find the least expensive way to enjoy a fabulous do-it-yourself fishing trip to Alaska.

many anglers, the ultimate salmon to catch. Yes, you can pay a lot of money and hire guides and catch kings, but to do it on a shoestring and to be successful on your own lends to a great deal of satisfaction and accomplishment. Almost anybody can catch fish with a guide because they have all the knowledge, know how, experience and, very often, their own private access to fish. You are just there, and you do what they tell you to do. At least that was my experience with four separate guides on both of the rivers (the Klutina and the Gulkana) that we fished for kings during my first trip. It was fun and we caught fish, but could I do it on my own less expensively and with a lot more satisfaction? I say a lot more satisfaction because on my own I can fish all day if I want to. With a guide, after I caught a king out of the river, he wanted me to keep it so he could continue helping the other three dudes catch theirs. Once all four of us had each caught a fish, we were off downstream in the jet boat to their dock and that was it for the day. Yes, the limit is one king per day and you

Later, when I asked if someone could fish the Klutina on their own, I was told by my guide, and also by the head guide, that the only access to fishing that very swift river was to jet boat upstream from the mouth because the land along the river banks was privately owned by the native Indians. However, I noticed a pickup truck and a narrow two-track dirt road about four miles upstream. Was that truck owned by the Indians or did someone obtain a permit to trespass on Indian land in order to fish? I was determined to find out.

Once back in Utah after that first trip, I went to work researching everything I could find regarding fishing for king salmon in that part of Alaska. Many phone calls were made over the next two years to numerous places, such as the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, local merchants, other fishing guides, the local Indian tribal headquarters, lodging locations, etc. After a serious bout of investigation, it was determined that, indeed, one could have a potentially fabulous fishing ex-

perience in Alaska doing it all on their own and rather inexpensively.

After investing a one-time couple of hundred dollars into specialized salmon fishing gear, six of us left for Alaska in July of 2002 to test my cumulative research and king salmon fishing strategy. By the way, the most cost efficient and easiest way to fish Alaska is out of a 28-foot motor home with a party of six fishermen. We like to go for a two-week trip, and Anchorage has many places where a motor home can be rented. The motor home sleeps six, so all costs are divided by six. The motor home is your rental car, your hotel room, and your restaurant all in one. You can stop at Walmart in Anchorage and stock up the fridge and freezer, purchase licenses, king stamps, roe, hooks, etc.

After driving 200 miles northeast of Anchorage, we had prearranged to pick up a trespass permit from the Indian tribe to travel the dirt roads near the Klutina, where we wanted to fish. The motor home, however, obviously could not be the vehicle for dirt roads,

and so we rented the only Suburban available within a 200-mile radius of that river. The roads were wet that week, and we even got stuck once, but we had access to the river and a great adventure pursued.

I have taken several trips to Alaska since that time to fish for multiple species of salmon and other fish as well, but king salmon fishing on a remote river all on our own is most certainly a fabulous memory not soon forgotten. Pictured with this article is the author hold-

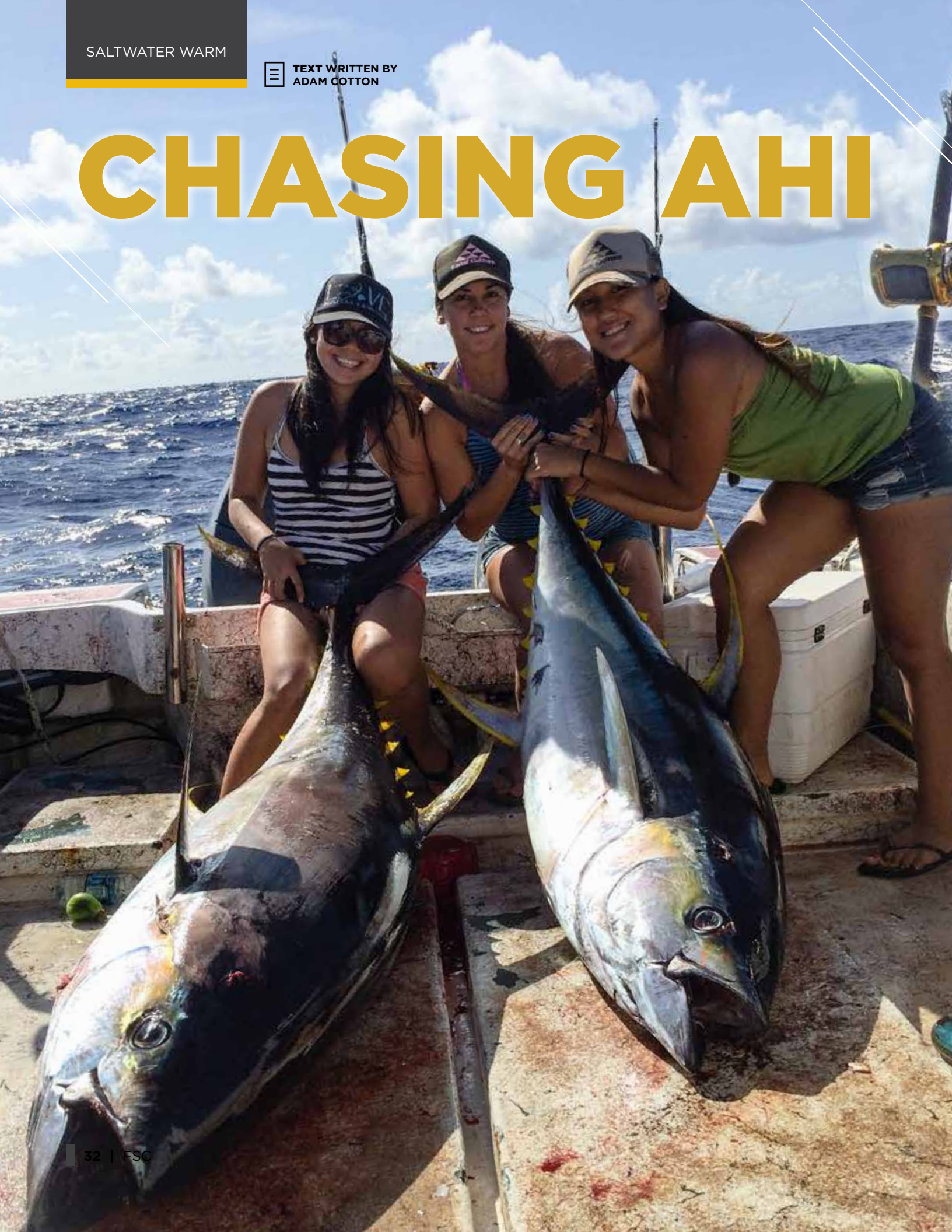
ing one of the largest kings caught on the Klutina River in 2005. What a thrill and all on a do-it-yourself Alaska king salmon adventure!



I HAVE TAKEN SEVERAL TRIPS TO ALASKA SELF-GUIDED TO FISH FOR MULTIPLE SPECIES OF SALMON AND OTHER FISH, BUT KING SALMON FISHING ON A REMOTE RIVER ALL ON YOUR OWN IS MOST CERTAINLY A FABULOUS MEMORY NOT SOON FORGOTTEN.



CHASING AHI



AHI

In Hawaii, “ahi” refers to a few different species of tuna, caught year round in Hawaii’s blue waters.

The months between May and September are when they are most abundant. On this particular trip we were after yellowfin tuna, and it was a trip dedicated to the women in our lives—Rachel, Sarah, and Shels. They put up with a lot of our hunting/fishing addictions and today the boys were only helping when needed.

We started out of the west side of Kauai on an early summer morning and headed towards a few of our favorite buoys. We like to plot our fishing course based on the buoys and tend to have the best luck around those areas due to the wildlife they create. The day was a good day to be out on the water with relatively light trade winds and calm seas. When we fish, we typically

troll; so, as soon as we got out of the harbor, we put our lines in the water. Trolling plugs work best, and we travel at a speed that skips the plug going in and out of the water. We were fishing from a 22-foot Force, and we like to cruise at about 7.5-8.5 knots on average sea conditions. That can change depending on the wind and current. Not twenty minutes into the fishing trip, the outrigger whipped back and that sound of a reel screaming brought everyone to attention. If you have done any blue water fishing, you know how that sound can be an instant shot of adrenaline. Shels was the first woman to take the rod. As the ahi was tearing out line, the rest of the crew brought in the remaining four lures to prevent the ahi from getting tangled and breaking off. Shels put her glove on and began working the fish. We could tell that hit had some weight and just as she was making some ground, the fish would take the line right back out. After about thirty minutes of fighting, she was able to get the fish within gaffing distance and the boys brought it in. A 180-pound ahi was a good way to start out the day and we all celebrated with some hoots and hollers. We quickly prepared the ahi and got the lines back out in the water.

We kept heading to the buoy and saw a big group of birds in the distance. “Bird piles” are sea birds feeding on schools of bait fish; and when you have bird piles, you will find the big boys who eat the bait fish. As we came closer to the bird pile, we could see ahi breaching the surface in a feeding frenzy. As we went right over the fish, two of the lines started to scream. We quickly found out that they were both aku, ranging from ten to fifteen pounds. We reeled them in and set the lines back out. We made several trips in and out of the bait ball and, on our last trip through, the outrigger snapped and the reel started to scream. We knew right away that this was not another aku, but definitely an ahi. It was Sarah’s turn, and the rest of the crew brought in the other lines. We could tell this was another heavy fish, and she struggled on this one for some time. After a few breaks and trading off with the other ladies, Sa-

rah brought in her fish, the boys gaffed it, and brought another bruiser onto the boat. Once again, cheers and high fives took place and a few pictures were taken before setting out the lines again to see if we could pull off the trifecta.

Now it was Rachel's turn to handle the rod. We set a course for the harbor and were going to fish all the way back. As we got closer and closer, you could tell that Rachel was getting a bit nervous and didn't want to be the only woman to not bring in an ahi. Just as we were about to call it a day, one of the back rods bent over and, once again, the sound of reel screaming brought everyone to their feet. Rachel looked like it was Christmas morning and had a smile from ear to ear while putting on her glove to start reeling. The rest of the reels were brought in and everyone was very anxious to get this fish in to complete one of the best days ever out on the water. Rachel actually made pretty quick work of the fish and, after about twenty minutes of back and forth, the fish was gaffed and brought aboard. If we cheered for the previous fish caught, you might say there was a small party after the third was brought in! We have had some pretty good trips in the past and have had several triple ahi days before, but this was the first all-female triple ahi day, and I will never forget that day as long as I live!



“
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 ”



We pulled off the freshly plowed road and the temperature reading was 13 degrees below zero. The sun was shining and there was virtually no wind, but I wondered how the young boys would do in the extreme cold. We left the comfort of the truck and loaded the gear and ice auger and ventured out on the snow-covered ice. The hike was short, as we would be fishing the edge of the weed bed which extends from the shore to about 50 yards into the lake.

Fish Lake is a jewel in the Utah fishing lakes. It sets high in the mountains, is surrounded by pine trees and wilderness, and is one of the most beautiful places in Utah to fish. Fishing pressure is actually heavier in the winter than during the summer months, with many different species of fish available. The lake was noted for large lake trout years ago and the size of these fish has decreased dramatically in the past ten years or so. It was possible to catch a 30-pound "laker" back in the



GOOD FISH FINDERS

that locate the fish will be a huge help in finding the lake trout, and it normally takes an hour or more to get a hookup, but the reward can be well worth the effort.

day, but a good lake trout today would be in the 10- to 15-pound range. Of course, there is always the chance that a really big one is there, but for the most part the “pups,” which range from a couple of pounds to ten pounds, is the norm. The lakers hang out in deeper water, in the 100 foot and deeper depths; and jigging with large, white jigs tipped with perch or sucker meat will usually do the trick. Good fish finders that locate the fish will be a huge help in finding the lake trout, and it normally takes an hour or more to get a hookup, but the reward can be well worth the effort.

The big draw to Fish Lake, however, is the other fish that are available. Millfoil weed was accidentally introduced into the lake and perch, as well. The combination of the two has led to an explosion in the perch population. There is no limit on perch and the small average size of the perch is an indication of over popula-

tion. I go to Fish Lake primarily to catch perch with my grandkids. They don't really like to “fish,” but they love to “catch fish,” and the perch provide that opportunity. Fishing on the edge of the weed bed can provide hot action catching perch, and the kids didn't seem to mind the cold temperatures when the fishing was good. We caught splake, brook trout, and rainbows over the course of a couple of hours. When the fishing slowed, the attention span lapsed and by noon it was time to go; but once again...Fish Lake produced and the grandkids are anxious for another trip.

If you go and you don't have a fishfinder, just look for old ice holes or talk to someone fishing for pointers. Ice fishermen are almost always very helpful in giving you tips on how to catch whatever you are looking for. If

you find the transition zone between weeds and open water, you can catch three or four species of fish from the same hole. Normally, the water depth will be in the 15- to 25-foot range. Move out to the deep water for lake trout.

Look for high-pressure weather patterns and low wind. If you do, even 13 below is tolerable. By the time the kids and I left the lake, it was 24 degrees and it felt like a heat wave!



BIG MAC FOR ANNA

I'm getting up early, but you won't hear a complaint from me. Why? I'm headed fishing for lake trout (mackinaw)—one of my favorite fish.

The boat is hooked on; it's a crisp June morning. It's just right for jeans and a sweatshirt; and I don't know what it is about today, but I have a feeling it's going to be a good one.

Not too long of a drive and we are at the lake. The boat is backed in, the motor is running, and we are heading to some of the favorite honey holes. I know I have to be at work this afternoon, so we have to make the time we have count. "Anna, you pick the lure today and make sure it's a lucky one." I'm told. "Well, of course it's going to be a lucky one—I'm picking it!" is my reply. I picked my favorite lure and rubbed a little of my luck on it so it was sure to make them want to take a bite.

We began trolling along at just a couple miles an hour around one hundred feet of water. I let the line out, hooked it to the downrigger, and set the rigger above the bottom. This would be my pole for the day. Now for my favorite part (insert a hint of sarcasm), sit back and wait.

Add a zig and a zag, change up the trolling speed, change the depth of the downrigger a few times, and



finally the line "pops" from the downrigger! "FISH ON!" I exclaim. I grab the pole, make sure the hook is set, and hold on. The fish is taking drag, and I can tell it's a good one. The tip of the pole is bent and my line is straight down. I begin to lift the pole and then reel down, working on tiring out the fish on the other end. The fish takes drag again. I am excited and my adrenaline is pumping and my hands begin to shake! I continue to work on reeling the fish in. The water is crystal clear. As I follow my line, I can start to make out the fish. I can already tell that it's bigger than any fish I have ever caught. The net is in the water and with just a few more reels the mac is landed.

To say I was excited was an understatement. We got the mac in the boat and snapped a few pictures. We weighed the net without the fish in it so we knew what to subtract out of the weight with the fish in the net. We then weighed my mac. It weighed in at 20 pounds, 2 ounces. By far the biggest mackinaw I have caught to date and, as I like to call it, a total pig! We hustled through every motion to get the fish back in the water. After getting some water through the gills, the fish took off into the deep blue. I watched the fish until I could no longer make it out in the water and watched it on the fish finder go all the way to the bottom. I was relieved, knowing it was now back in the lake for me to catch another day.

These old monster fish can live to well over forty years old. There is a chance that one day my kids will have the opportunity to catch the same fish I just did. We made every minute in the boat count that day and landed a few more mackinaw before I had to head to work. It was truly a day of fishing I'll never forget!

HOW TO:

Kayak Fishing

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. The pace is a lot slower, it is more relaxing and you generally get to thoroughly work an area.
2. You can also get your kayak into a lot of areas that other boats cannot get into.
3. Even though you can fish from any kayak, not all kayaks are created equal. I am a big guy at six foot two and 300 pounds, and I find that some of the smaller kayaks feel a bit “tippy” and are too narrow to sit in. Some kayaks are not rated for a 300-pound fisherman and all of his gear.
4. I would recommend going to a kayak demonstration day and trying out several kayaks or borrowing one from any buddies that own kayaks. This way you will find a kayak that fits you and what you want to do with it. Make sure you feel comfortable when sitting in the kayak.
5. There is nothing like discomfort to ruin a good fishing trip.



There I sat on the bank fishing at one of my favorite small lakes to go to when I go camping—Tropic Reservoir. I was not having much success when I saw a truck pull up on the other side of the lake with two yellow kayaks in the back. I watched a man unload one kayak for his wife and the other for himself. He then added some fishing gear to the kayaks. This made me sit up a little straighter, thinking, “Really?... He is going to fish from this craft? What is this? Dark magic?”

Intrigued, I watched for an hour as he casted over and over, landing several fish while paddling up and down the lake. He finally came close enough to my side of the lake for me to stop him. I wanted to ask a few questions before my brain exploded. We talked for about thirty minutes before he resumed fishing and I sat dreaming of the possibilities...

He fished for another hour and then loaded up and left. The remainder of my camping trip was difficult to finish. All I wanted to do was get to a computer so that I could research kayaks. I researched (and earned money at a second job) for about a year before I bought my first kayak. I didn’t earn enough for more than one, which kind of upset my wife, so she bought four more so that it could be a family activity. That was seven years ago.

I will never forget my first trip out on the water. After I paddled around for a little while, just to make sure that I was not going to turn the boat over and

lose my gear, I paddled back to the shore, grabbed my gear and out I went. That had to be one of my best days of fishing ever! I caught a lot of fish and kept the biggest ones for dinner. It was so peaceful being out on the water, practically sitting on top of it. That was the best feeling I have ever had. (I had better not tell my wife that!)

Not only can you fish from a kayak, but you can just spend the day lazily paddling around the water. You can pack enough gear on a kayak to float downriver and spend several nights along the way. My kids love to paddle their smaller kayaks around, and now they are getting a little top heavy for those smaller kayaks. I was amazed at how well they took to the sport. We had them practice turning over and getting back into the kayak in a 14-foot swimming pool. They love exploring new areas that few people ever get to see because access is limited to the water. They paddle all over, sometimes fishing, other times just goofing off with all of their friends or cousins. Plus, how can you argue with the view from a kayak?

It is amazing how quickly the sport of kayak fishing has come on, and the industry keeps growing. New boats, accessories and gear are continually being advertised just for fishermen. If you have not tried kayak fishing, I would highly recommend it. Take some time and spend it on the water in a kayak. Tight lines everyone!

WHERE TO FISH:

Long Lake, Ontario, Canada

LOCATION: Long Lake, Ontario, Canada

FISHERMEN: Dennis Wintch, McCade Cook,
Family & Friends

FISHING LICENSE: 7-day, non-resident license =
\$36

DATES: First week in May

RATING: 8

Northern Pike - 9
Mackinaw - 7
Walleye - 6
Brook Trout - 5

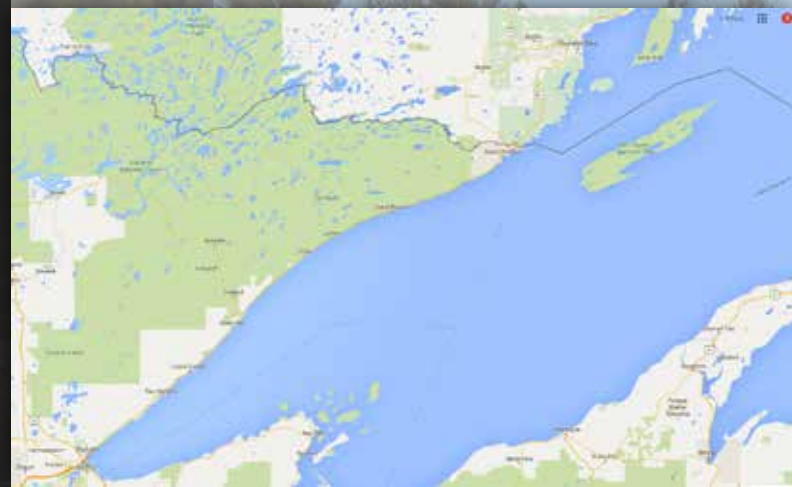
PRESSURE: Mild

FISH NUMBERS: Lots of good-sized fish, only a
few monsters

DAYS FISHED: 6

BEST FISH: 43-inch, 18-pound Northern Pike

NOTES: These days coincide with the spring
spawn



One of our fishing reps, Dennis Wintch, his buddy, McCade Cook, their wives and one other couple, went fishing in Ontario, Canada, for trophy brook trout, mackinaw and northern pike. It was a seven-day trip (but they didn't fish on Sunday). It was the first week of May, which coincides with the spring spawn. They flew out of Salt Lake City, UT, to Minneapolis, MN, (round trip flight was around \$250); and then from there, they took a rental car to Duluth, MN. They drove around Lake Superior and crossed the border into Canada. They said the border crossing was uneventful (not like when you take guns across the border). They drove north to Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada; and from there they took a dirt road for 30 miles until they arrived at Long Lake. They stayed at the North Wood Lodge on Long Lake. They said on their 30 miles of dirt road they saw over 30 black bear. I guess that's what happens when you outlaw spring bear hunting. (I think they are opening spring bear hunting again this year).

Each couple had their own little cabin. For fishing they each had a 16-foot skiff with 30hp mercury outboard motors. They paid \$2500 per couple, which included lodging, food and gasoline. They took their own fishing gear, though the lodge had gear if they needed it. They trolled with Rapalas and flatfish and jigged with rubber-twister baits with quarter-ounce heads. They were given steel leader, but Dennis switched it out for 14-pound Sten mono-

filament. It gave them better action, but they had to switch the line out after every other fish because the monofilament line was damaged, as the north-erns have brutal teeth.

FISHING. The target fish were 6- to 8-pound brook trout; 30-pound mackinaw, and 20-pound northern pike. Dennis really wanted to catch a big brooky, but no such luck! Their best trophies were northern pike. They caught northern pike, mackinaw (lake trout), and walleye pike. They fished three different lakes. They fished for mackinaw two days, where they trolled using lead line to get down deep. They caught four six-pound macs, but that was the best they could do. They did catch 20 or so in the 4-pound range, mostly on RYF flatfish (X4). They caught a ton of walleye, but they were all in the 1-pound range. So, let's concentrate on the big northern pike they did catch. Dennis said they would cruise the shores looking for any kind of structure (trees, logs, grass, etc.). Then they would just cast up to the weed beds and throw in the rubber-twister jigs. Dennis kind of acted as the guide, so McCade caught the big ones—two 18 pounders—and Dennis caught a 9 pounder.

Fun was had by all! The accommodations were good, as well as the food. Fishing was excellent, although they didn't catch any big brookies or mackinaw. Check out the Fish Slam Club website for information on how to book your trip to Ontario.

MONSTERS ON THE FREMONT

I am a fisherman who enjoys finding new places to fish, as well as fishing itself. I love exploring the mountains to look for new streams



One day I was fishing some lakes on the Boulder Mountains, in Utah, with a friend, when I said, "I heard there were some big fish down on the Fremont in an area called the Bicknell Bottoms." Well, if you are a true fisherman, you will always go for the big fish.

I had an idea where to look because of some information I had previously acquired. Also, as a seasoned

fisherman, I had to assume that the information I had received may not be 100 percent accurate, as stories sometimes get stretched. That's okay—that is the excitement of it all. We drove down off the north side of Boulder Mountain and searched for a spot along the Fremont River that could possibly support the monsters I had heard about. We found a place that had slow-moving waters along with deep holes that appeared to cut under the banks with a lot of brush for cover. I could tell that this had the possibility of some big fish.

I had heard of people putting a hook through a mouse, setting it on a board and floating it down to the holes and then yanking the mouse off of the board into the deep holes to catch the big browns there. Well, first of all, I did not bring any mice with me; and I wasn't so sure about this method, so I just stuck to using my good, old faithful, gold Mepps #2 spinner. I scouted the river for a good place to try, fighting the difficulty of access to the deep holes because of bushes and trees. The first big hole I actually got a decent cast into was from downstream because it was nearly impossible to hit the hole from upstream. I rolled my spinner with the current just fast enough to make it spin. I saw a big

brown follow it up to the surface and then, not quite committed enough, turn and swim back out of sight. With the adrenaline rush I got from just seeing the size of this fish, I knew the stories were true and I would not quit until I landed a monster.

I fought the bushes and trees, working my way downstream, catching good-sized rainbows and browns, but not hooking one nearly as big as the one I had seen in the beginning. I worked my way down to a hole, where I saw a big wake from a fish that was feeding. I got a lucky cast and landed my spinner in a good place in the hole; when, all of a sudden, I hooked a monster! It turned and swam downstream and snapped my eight-pound line. I was instantly depressed! I finished out the day catching several more rainbows.

When you lose a big fish or miss a big deer or elk, you have a lot of time to think about it. Well, that is exactly the situation this time. I could not stop thinking about how I could catch that fish. I went back several times trying for the monster, but always coming up short. In June of that year, I took my family on a little trip to Colorado and, in the back of my mind, I had a plan to drive back through that area and try again. I packed my fishing pole, geared up for success with heavier line and a new gold Mepps #2.

The day I arrived with my family in the car was a nice, clear June day. I had my wife drop me off at my spot, while she took the kids into Torrey to get something to eat. I needed to be alone on this one so I could sneak my way down the river and really concentrate on catching the monster that had made a fool of me earlier in the year. I went back to the same hole and saw the same wake being made by the feeding monster. I made a few careful casts, trying not to spook this crafty monster. On the third cast, I hit the spot I was trying for. Bam!—the monster hit my spinner! I fought this fish,

trying to keep him from wrapping my line in the bushes that drooped into the water and trying to keep his head pointing upstream to keep him from snapping my line. I fought him and he began to tire. I was in an area where there was no good place to bring this monster ashore. When I felt I had sufficiently tired him out, I jumped into the river and grabbed him by the mouth and gills. I threw him up on the bank and crawled out of the river. I could not believe the size of this rainbow! I just sat there in amazement that I had finally caught him. My wife came back to pick me up, and she knew something was up by the look on my face. When I held up "Elvis (the king)," her jaw dropped! I had told her the stories about losing him earlier, but I don't think she had believed me about his size. My family was very excited for me.

I have learned that if you want something bad enough and believe in something strongly enough and are persistent enough, you will succeed! Oh, yeah, and you can't leave out the word "LUCK"! I have caught other monsters on the Fremont, but "Elvis" still remains the king.



FROM SILVER TO RED

Ever since I came back to the lower 48 states from being an Alaskan fishing guide, I've never fully recovered.

I worked with Roger Melior, a good friend and a man who lived his dream and spent several of his summers taking trips down the Gulkana and Klutina Rivers in Alaska. He asked me to help him one year and, ever since, I've been hooked on fishing for king salmon. I've fished for salmon in the ocean and in the rivers. Salmon, while in the ocean, are silver. Eventually they return to the rivers to spawn and die. Immediately, upon entering the rivers, they start to darken and change from silver to red. There's nothing like hooking onto a hog in a river. Most fish put up a great fight, but wait until you hook a king in a stream!

Since I don't live in Alaska anymore and wanted to do some king fishing, I decided to get away from work and create some memories. I booked a trip for my two sons, Jacob and Jessen, and my nephew, Dillon Bird. We had to drive about three and a half hours from Spokane down near Hanford Reach on the Columbia River in Washington. It was fun to have three first timers who have never caught a king salmon. There was no pressure on me, as I have caught many in my previous years as a guide and on previous fishing trips with Rusty Taylor, a river guide. Jessen, my youngest son, took the first fish, then Dillon, and then Jacob caught the hog which was close to 24 pounds. We all landed fish that day, and it was a great day away from work and school.

I don't think there's any greater reward, as a Dad, than to see your kids smile from ear to ear and experience the thrill of the mighty king salmon. All I know is that it's worth every second to be with your kids! Time on this Earth is of the essence. If we don't improve our time on this Earth, then comes the night where no labor can be performed. Get on it! Let's create some memories that will last forever!



"I don't think there's any greater reward, as a Dad, than to see your kids smile from ear to ear and experience the thrill of the mighty king salmon."



FISH SLAM CLUB



WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN THE FISH SLAM CLUB?

PERSONALIZED WEBSITE—As a paying member of the Fish Slam Club (FSC), you can log into the FSC home page. This gets you to the “Members’ Only” section of the website.

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE—These beautiful magazines are professionally designed with photos, stories, where to’s, how to’s, and so much more. This is an online magazine and is in a pdf format, so you can print it as well. The photos are high resolution so, if you decide you want to print an article, the photos that go with it will be of excellent quality.

EXCLUSIVE VIDEOS—As a paying member, you can access our exclusive videos on many different subjects—fishing videos, how-to videos, tutorials on how to do things, and many more.

ACCESS TO REPS—The FSC has reps for each species of fish and in each state. If you supply your member number (showing that you are an active member), you can email a rep and he will respond to your questions.

SHARE YOUR FISHING TRIP—Once you have been an active member of the FSC for one year, you can join the “share-your-fishing-trip” program. You have to supply at least one report on a fishing trip in the previous year to be able to access the data base of all the members’ fishing trips for that year.

WHERE TO FISH—Our reps will give personal information on different fishing areas that they have fished.

HOW TO’S—Our reps will give information on interesting things that they have learned in their lifetime of fishing.

COST—\$75 per year.

If you join our sister company, the North American Deer Slam Club, at the same time and which is \$75 per year as well; you can join them both for \$100 per year.

HOW TO JOIN

→ GO TO WWW.FISH-SLAM.COM

→ CLICK ON THE FISH SLAM CLUB HEADER

→ CLICK ON STORE

→ CLICK ON MEMBERSHIP FISH SLAM CLUB JOIN TODAY!

NORTH AMERICAN DEER SLAM CLUB



WHAT DO YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN OUR CLUB?

PERSONALIZED WEBSITE—As a paying member of NADSC, you will log into the NADSC home page, which gets you to the “Members’ Only” section of the website.

QUARTERLY MAGAZINE—These magazines are beautifully designed with photos, stories, where to’s, how to’s, and so much more. This is an online magazine and is in a pdf format, so you can print it as well. The photos are high resolution so, if you decide you want to print an article, the photos that go with it will be excellent quality.

EXCLUSIVE VIDEOS—As a paying member, you can access our exclusive videos featuring many different subjects—hunting, how to’s, tutorials, and much more.

THE BUCK NEWSLETTER—The Buck newsletter will come out every month that draws are coming up. It will tell you “How to Play the Game” in each state. It will tell you what the best units are to hunt for trophy animals. It will give you the draw odds for each unit and the draw odds for each unit based on the number of bonus points you have. It will let you know of tags that you can purchase over-the-counter in case you didn’t draw your favorite tag.

ACCESS TO REPS—NADSC has reps for each species of deer and for each state. If you supply your member number (showing that you are an active member), you can email a rep and he will respond to your questions.

SHARE YOUR HUNTS—Once you have been an active member of the NADSC for one year, you can join the “share-your-hunts” program. You have to supply at least one report on a deer hunt in the previous year to be able to access the data base of all the members’ hunts for that year.

WHERE TO HUNT—Our reps will give personal information on different hunting units that they have hunted for deer.

HOW TO’S—Our reps will give information on interesting things that they have learned in their lifetime of hunting deer.

COST—\$75 per year.

If you want to join our sister company, the Fish Slam Club, which is \$75 per year as well, you can join them both for \$100 per year.

HOW TO JOIN

→ GO TO WWW.DEER-SLAM.COM

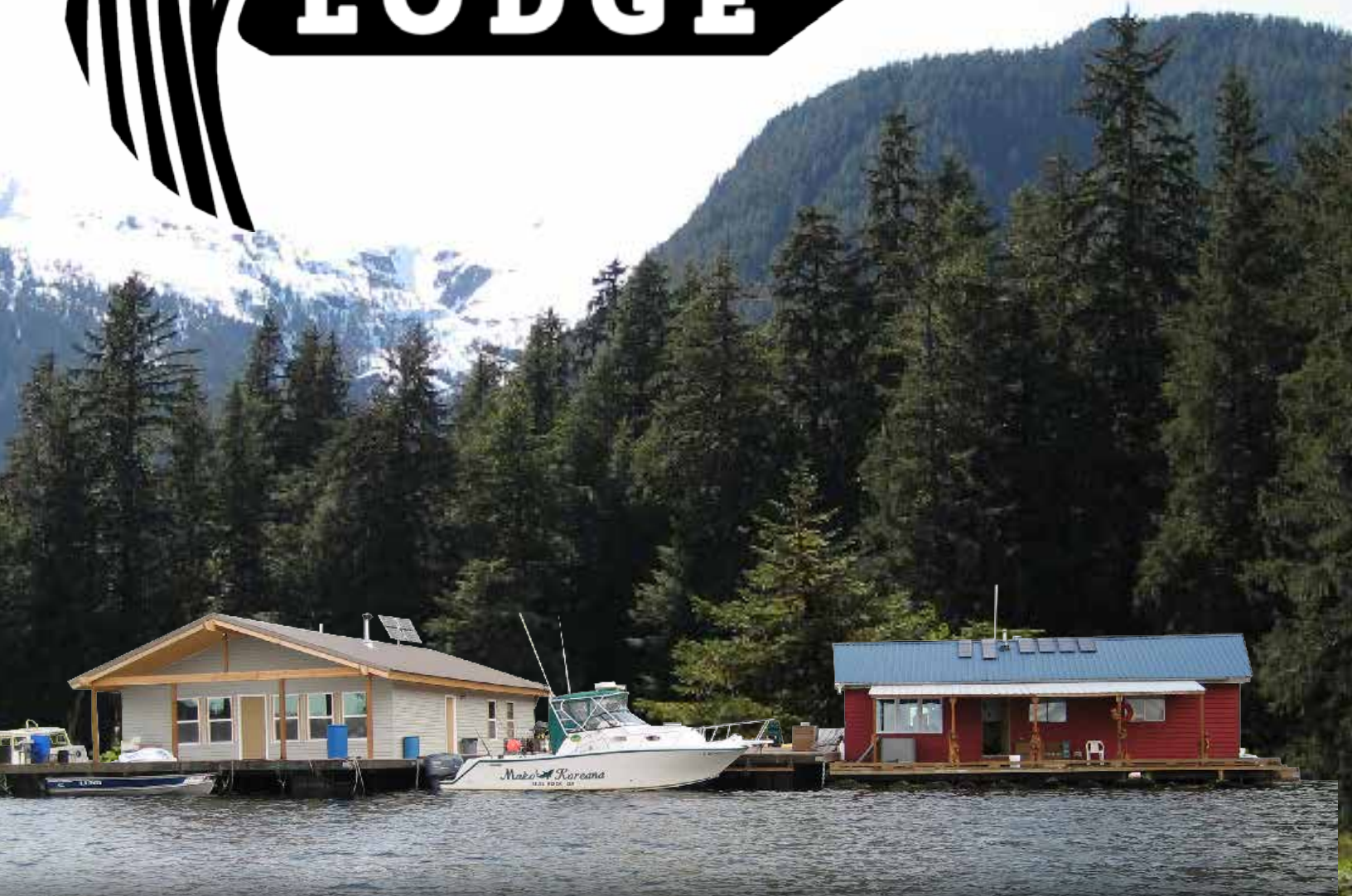
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