

Even the Leafs were good when big one hooked Trout fishing tales



LOON TUNES
and
OUTDOOR NOTES
by Len Landry

"No! Bob! Wait a second! I'll get the net... no! Bob, don't do it! Oh no..."

Ah, trout season will soon be here. The memories...

It's springtime in Stewarttown, as the breathtakingly scenic countryside warms up in fine, drizzly, muddy fashion.

A couple of young teenage friends are plying their piscatorial prowess in the waters of that beautiful babbling brook that courses through the tiny village, past the backyards of some fortunate locals... slowing to a crawl by the horse stable... now speeding over a picturesque waterfall... crash! And the clear, clean water moves on after finding its way out of the whirlpool below the falls, travelling ambitiously now, rapids, ... past more backyards, and on into Georgetown, Stewarttown's more serious, bigger and businesslike sibling.

"Bob... wait! Play that fish out! You can't land him yet! He'll break the line... oh God..."

Yes, the brook meanders, and weaves its watery way, changing personality every fifty yards or so, for at one point, Black Creek is in fact fast and filled with swift current, and at the next juncture, it slows... to a crawl... and bulges... with deep, calm water...

Sounds. The only ones you hear are the musical chatter of cheerful birds and, of course, the incessant distant growl of that waterfall... and now you can detect the scheming screams of yours truly, trying desperately to coach a friend into landing his big catch.

Bob and I had been fishing one of those quiet river pools that day in 1967, a couple of carefree lads armed with humble gear, garden worms, and the dreams of good luck.

Realistically, our hopes weren't too high. We anticipated and angled for the usual quota of speckles and chub, and maybe the odd sucker to stretch our gear and imaginations to their limits, for anything with any size in these parts had to be a sucker, that friendly but ugly old vacuum-cleaner of a fish.

Sucker. Sure. That's what I thought Bob had hooked that day o'er a score of years ago.

Sucker... sure. Wait a minute! That flash of silver... band of pink... the sleek, streamlined shape... the quick boil in the calm water... the uneven and hoarse singing of Bob's drag... and now a sudden, strong, head-shaking leap by the fish, up, up, seeking

freedom in the spring's heavy, heavenly air...

Bob watched, mouth half-open in shock.

"Rainbow!" I yelled. "Bob, you've got a (censored) rainbow trout! I ain't ever seen one so big around here... Oh God, play it out, Bob! Wait, I'll get the net..."

Ah, yes, the memories of trout season in Stewarttown are as vivid as ever, and if you decide to try your luck on opening day in Halton Hills, circle Apr. 29 on your '89 calendar.

It's easy to remember. It's always the last Saturday of this often (ahem) taxing month.

And it's not complicated: small hooks, fine line, garden worms, or tiny spinners and a quiet approach are essentials. Fishing the fly is the fancy of many, but that's a story in itself, for another time.

Play the edges, the borders of swift water, and strain those pools with your offering, looking for bottom obstructions that may harbour a fish.

Quite simply, the trout will be facing upstream, awaiting a welcome meal to flow near striking distance, then... bang! "Fish on baby!"

Bob had done everything just right on this long ago day and he continued to struggle with the rainbow-hued warrior.

"Wait! I'll get the..." and then I realized one sad fact.

"Hey... we didn't bring a net... Wait! Bob! I'll get one... somehow... just hold on!"

But Bob's mind was clearly made up. He looked at me silently, smiled, shrugged, then he tightened his line in firm resolve as he began to heave on his rod, pulling back over his shoulders and...

"No!" I yelled. "You can't do it that way! The line will snap for sure!"

Well, the line didn't break and the rainbow trout soared out of the water as Bob forced the issue, and that fish sailed in a fine arc, just like a Dave Mann punt. The big bow landed on the shore and Bob pounced on it like a hungry linebacker after a fumbled football; not an advised technique, mind you, but it was effective on this occasion.

"You did it! I don't believe it Bob! What a beautiful fish!" and I laughed, yes a little enviously, as my partner held up his fine catch and we prepared to head back to town on our well-travelled bikes.

Now, of course, I don't remember what I did for the rest of that day. Perhaps I contemplated our coming trip, to Expo. Maybe I watched a little TV... Hogan's Heroes... Star Trek was in its second season. Possibly I tried to figure out a little more of the message in the latest, craziest Beatles' album, "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band." Probably, I watched some late playoff hockey in a year that the Maple Leafs were destined to defeat the Canadiens for the Stanley Cup.

Yes, but if you talk about sports, we took a break from the greatest one of all when we packed up our fishing gear that day. Oh, we'd be back... you could bet on it... but first, I just had to find out what type of line Bob had been using...

SHORELINES: The citizens' group POWER (Protect Our Water and Environmental Resources) holds its big garage sale this Saturday (Apr. 22) at the Halton Hills Town Council garages on Trafalgar Road.

ON THE HORIZON: "The Call of Duty."

Big fish fight is on

Starting April 15, anglers have four great ways to win a share of the \$100,000 in cash and prizes being offered in Canada's longest running fishing contest. Prizes in the 1989 "Molson Export" Big Fish Contest include a Dodge Dakota pick-up truck, a Stryker bass boat and trailer, two Evinrude outboard motors, 20 Evinrude electric motors, 300 Berkley rod and reel combinations, 60 cash prizes, fishing vests, tackle boxes, and cameras from Direct Film.

Entering the "Molson Export" Big Fish Contest is easy. Just catch a fish of any species and any size, measure it, photograph it, and mail the completed entry form and photograph to the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Box 28, Peterborough, Ontario, K9J 6Y5.

All entrants who are Ontario residents 19 years of age or older are eligible for the O.F.A.H. "Any Fish Can Win" Monthly Draws, and the spectacular O.F.A.H. "Any Fish Can Win" Grand Prize Draw.

And every contestant whose fish

is one of the ten game fish Ontario sportsmen love best (Largemouth Bass, Smallmouth Bass, Northern Pike, Muskellunge, Walleye, Brown Trout, Lake Trout, Rainbow Trout, Speckled Trout, and Salmon), and one of the 15 biggest in its Live Release or Catch and Eat class wins too.

Plus every Ontario resident who enters the "Molson Export" Big Fish Contest is automatically considered for the province's most prestigious angling title, All-Ontario Angler of the Year.

For complete rules and details on the four great ways to win, pick up a "Molson Export" Big Fish Contest entry form from any Molson representative; any Chrysler, Evinrude, Stryker, or Direct Film outlet; any lodge, resort, provincial park, or licence issuer; any Canadian Tire Store, or directly from the Ontario Federation of Anglers and Hunters, Box 28, Peterborough, K9J 6Y5.

The contest runs from Apr. 15 - Nov. 30, and anyone fishing in Ontario waters is invited to take part.

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