



CHICO AREA FLYFISHERS'

short casts

apr 2003



THE LINE

Eric See, CAF President

Fishing new waters and techniques is always a fun thing, and doing this is one of my favorite aspects of the Chico Area Flyfishers. It's easy to get into a groove where you do the same thing all the time, fish the same river, same riffle, same fly, same leader, etc., and while this can be a good way to catch more fish because your techniques are more refined, it can also be a good way to miss out on some wonderful fishing experiences. This has certainly been the case with me and stillwater trout fishing, although I have fished pond and lakes my entire life for warmwater fish, I consider myself relatively new to the art of stillwater trout fishing. I certainly have fished my share of coldwater lakes over the years, from the Hex hatch on Almanor to float tubing Lake Crowley in the fall and winter fishing on Baum Lake, however this kind of fishing has represented a very small fraction of my overall fishing effort, and I know I am missing out on the bigger trout because of this. There is a vast reservoir (get it! HA!) of stillwater trout fishing experience in the Chico Area Flyfishers, and fortunately this has been rubbing off on me in the past few years. A good example is a recent trip I took to Pyramid Lake, a place whose ecology I read about decades ago, and whose fishery I had heard about for years but had never fished.

Pyramid Lake is totally cool for a variety of reasons. It is home to the Lahontan cutthroat trout, a federally listed threatened species that is indigenous to many of the waters of Western Nevada/Eastern California. Pyramid's fertile waters used to support the largest inland trout in North America, the lake record sport caught fish of 41 pounds (caught in 1925) was 20 pounds smaller than some caught with nets in previous times by tribal fishermen. Due to the usual suspects of 20th century fishery atrocities (overfishing, dams, nonnative stocking, etc.) the wild trout disappeared in Pyramid Lake, and it is now sustained by a hatchery that is run by the Pyramid Lake Paiute Tribe. Although the 40 pounders no longer exist, there are still relatively large numbers of 2 to 5 pound fish, and a CAF member caught a 13 pounder last year. Pyramid is a high desert alkali lake that is 1/6 as salty as the ocean. It contains a vast array of tufa formations, those strange towers and mounds of calcium carbonate that made Mono Lake so famous. Apparently the largest tufa formation in the world is at Pyramid Lake, and one of these formations gives the lake its name. The Pyramid was right across the lake from where we were fishing, and the sun's late afternoon illumination of this formation was truly spectacular. People fish off of ladders at Pyramid Lake, a quirk that I had often heard about and it was fun to see in action. Pyramid is a natural lake, with a shallow sloping bottom of hard sand. It can also be very windy. Although it is possible to wade out and fish, as many people do, one can get uncomfortable after a while especially if you are belly deep with waves pounding on you all day. With something to stand on, you can wade out to belly deep water, and then climb up a step or two to be in shin deep water, which can also assist in casting a little further. Some anglers have taken the ladder concept one step further (get it! HA!) and have built a chair on top of a platform, with room for a little ice chest. It was nice to do some flycasting again, for several months I have been almost exclusively indicator nymphing, which is more about lobbing and line control than flycasting, so it was nice to feel the rod load up for a change on some longer casts.

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March General Meeting
Butte County Library
7:30 pm Apr. 9th

Our featured speaker for the April meeting is Will Maloney. Will is the owner of CREEKSIDE INN in Niniichik Alaska. He has currently extended an offer to our members for a five night six day fishing trip to his lodge at a very affordable price. Many have already expressed an interest in this trip. Will will speak primarily about this trip offer and the fishing opportunities in the Niniichik area. Originally,

FLY TYING –
Apr 17 – 7:00 pm

This month the folks at the Chico Fly shop will be tying Stonefly patterns. Don't miss this one!

Getting The Word Out

had never fished.

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Since he bought the lodge in 2000, Will has been guiding on the Kenai Peninsula. He runs the lodge as a family business with his wife Leah and daughters Coleen and Stephanie. His goal for the lodge is to bring groups there for affordable fishing trips to Alaska.

FLY TYING – Apr 17 – 7:00 pm

This month the folks at the Chico Fly shop will be tying Stonefly patterns . Don't miss this one!

Getting The Word Out

Occasionally we receive information that would be of an interest to club members I would very much like to have an e-mail list so that our membership could be contacted when necessary . Just so you know, I will not give the list to anyone other than a board member of the club. So, if you want to be included, e-mail me at:

pmh@stormnet.com

Thanks **Paul Hendricks**

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Calendar of Events

Gem Mtg. - Apr 9th 7:30 pm

Fish-Out - Apr 12th & Apr 26th

Fly Tying - Apr 17th 7:00pm
Chico Fly Shop - Stoneflies

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Boy was I rusty with my double hauls on Saturday, got better on Sunday though. Cast out and strip it in. Cast out and strip in. Cast out and strip in. As Dawit said, there are no snags out there so if you think you are hung up, it's a fish. As Mark said, strip it all the way in because the fish will often hit right in front of you. Cast, strip, cast strip. One time, after stripping almost all the way in, I undid a tangle in my "tangle free" Amnesia shooting line. I lifted my rod to make another cast and was snagged on the bottom, right in front of me. Of course, it was a fish. My line was scattered all around me and looped a couple times on my rod so the fish was lost in a few seconds, but it reinforced their advice. Saturday was pretty tough - 4 or 5 fish with a 25 mph tailwind with enough 40 mph gusts to give us a good windburn by the end of the day. So on Sunday morning, Dawit and Mark faced a tough question. They had come up and fished the day before I arrived, and with the slow fishing on Saturday were not sure they wanted to drive the 35 minutes north of our Reno hotel room for another day of wind and tough fishing. Could be good though, "you never know" as I tried to sell them on sticking it out. Mark was particularly conflicted, I could see it in his face. They opted to sleep in and go home early, and I was on my own. I arrived at the lake and it was raining and cold, with about a 15 mph head wind, blowing directly on shore. The constant swells kept everyone closer to the shore, and the ladders were very helpful. In 2 hours I caught as many fish as I had all day on Saturday, with several more lost or broken off. All of the fish except one were caught within 2 rod lengths of me, I even shortened my cast to increase the amount of times my fly was close in. I would strip my fly all the way to the tippet knot, and even then bring it out of the water slowly. The biggest I landed was 20 inches, and I lost one bigger. An angler near me caught one that weighed 7 pounds. You never know! I almost felt guilty sending the post-trip email to Mark and Dawit. Almost...

Trout season is right around the corner, remember: It's the wet fly that fishes!

BOARD MEMBERS

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Past President

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Spring Tune Up - Sat April 12

CAF will be presenting our annual Spring Tune-Up at Horseshoe Lake, which is free to CAF members. The Spring Tune-Up consists of instruction on the subjects of flycasting (at Horseshoe Lake along with a discussion of fly lines and rods), flytying, knot tying, and stream reading/wading techniques. Attendees will be able to go from station to station to learn more about each of these flyfishing subjects, or just attend the sessions that you are interested in. Meet at the shooting range clubhouse at 8:30 am, Any questions call Eric, 343-1398

FISHOUT SCHEDULE

April 12 - Siskiyou Lake

April 26 - Hat Creek area - opener





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