



THE SPLASH

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and Tom
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Visit the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame this year.
It's like a peek into Granddad's old tackle box!



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HALL OF FAME ENSHRINEE HIGHLIGHT CURT GOWDY

By Tim Lesmeister

Curt Gowdy was enshrined into the Fishing Hall of Fame in 2005. The highest honor bestowed on an individual, enshrinement recognizes a person as a pioneer in an essential aspect of freshwater sportfishing who has contributed a lasting and significant national or international impact to the benefit of freshwater sportfishing. Those achieving enshrinement are recognized for excellence and innovation of their contributions to freshwater sportfishing. The magnitude or importance of their endeavors stand out among contemporaries as being avant-garde, unparalleled, unprecedented, transcendent, and served as an inspiration to others and they are recognized for contributions which are singular and distinct, without which some critical aspect of freshwater sportfishing, as it is currently known, would likely not have existed

Curtis Edward Gowdy (July 31, 1919 - February 20, 2006) was an American sportscaster, well known as the longtime "voice" of the Boston Red Sox and for his coverage of many nationally-televised sporting events. He also hosted the long-running outdoors show The American Sportsman on ABC.

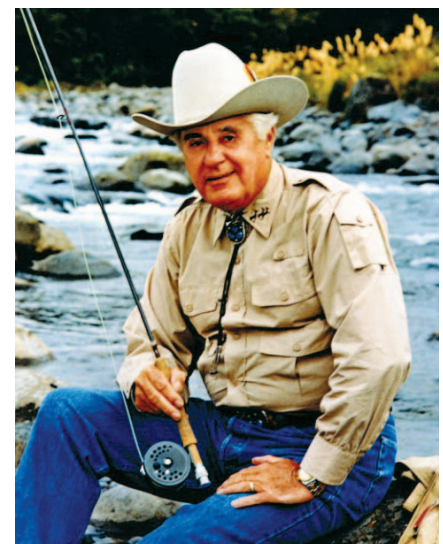
The American Sportsman was a television series from 1965 to 1986 on ABC which presented filmed highlights of hunting and/or fishing trips involving the program's hosts and celebrities. It was typically presented on Sunday afternoons, frequently following coverage of live sporting events. The show had its roots in a 20-minute segment depicting Curt Gowdy and Joe Brooks fly fishing in the Andes Mountains in Argentina in 1964. The segment appeared on the Wide World of Sports and immediately was spun off into its own. The show's first episode was on January 31, 1965.

Gowdy was the first individual sports figure to win a Peabody Award for outstanding Journalism. He won 7 Emmys for sports coverage and 6 Emmys for his TV program "The American Sportsman."

Gowdy, a Wyoming native was inducted into the Wyoming Outdoor Hall of Fame in 2004. A state park in Wyoming which opened in 1971, was officially named for Gowdy on March 27, 1972, one of numerous honors bestowed on the native son from the state of Wyoming on "Curt Gowdy Day." The 11,000 acre Curt Gowdy State Park is halfway between his hometown of Cheyenne and his college town of Laramie. Additional acreage was acquired by the state for the park in 2006. "It has two beautiful lakes, hiking trails, camping, boating, fishing, and beauty," said Gowdy. "It has everything I love. What greater honor can a man receive?"

Gowdy was proud of his Wyoming heritage and loved the outdoors, and said that he was "born with a fly-rod in one hand," and that the sports microphone came a little later. In 2002, he recalled that his father, Edward Curtis Gowdy, who had taught him to hunt and fish, was the best fly-fisherman in the state. "We had free access to prime-time fishing and hunting. The outdoors was a way of life for me. I should have paid them to host The American Sportsman," he said.

For more about our awards recognition program go to our website at www.freshwater-fishing.org. Nominations can be done on-line and electronically sent. The process only takes about 10 minutes!



EXCELLENT SNOW PACK IN SOUTHERN ROCKIES

It is another banner year for snow pack in the southern Rockies.

The Taos area is 100% and the Chama area (San Juan Mountains of Colorado) is 150%. This is good for the free flowing streams as the water table should remain full and provide steady flows throughout the summer. The big snow pack will probably push the start of the fly fishing season well into June.



The Jemez area in New Mexico will fish earlier than that as snow is already melting there. Expect the red hot fishing to continue at Eagle's Nest Lake in northern New Mexico starting in April.

Stone Lake on the Jicarilla Apache Reservation should be excellent with large trout this spring.

The green drake hatch on the Conejos River in southern Colorado will happen in early July and is fabulous dry fly fishing. Further north, The Mountain Angler (.com) of Breckenridge, Colorado reports big snows also and suggest concentrating on tail water streams, ponds and lakes until runoff ends.

For more information, call 575-751-1312 or www.streitflyfishing.com.

TIPS YOU CAN USE!

Here's a way to keep your cookware used outdoors clean and sanitary. Add about half a cup of vinegar to your very hot soapy water to really cut the grease. Since most outdoor cooking is done with grease, it only makes sense to use something to cut it.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK

by Emmett Brown

Spring is just around the corner! As a matter of fact, spring has arrived in many of our southern and central climes.

Spring is, of course, a time of renewal and re-birth. So, appropriately, we have unveiled our new "The Splash" with this issue. Not only is the format new, but so is much of the content. Inside, you'll see articles by Legendary Anglers Roland Martin and Gary Roach. California Legendary Angler Bill Siemantel has contributed a very interesting piece on how to care for the fish you are about to release.

In upcoming issues, look for information regarding your particular region. Our goal is to provide relevant forecast information on a regional basis. Legendary Guide Taylor Streit has provided, in this issue, his southern Rockies run-off prediction. This should be of considerable use and interest to you southwest anglers.

East coast legend and Legendary Communicator C. Boyd Pfeiffer is going to contribute on a regular basis. His anecdotal fishing stories are absolutely timeless. His first installment appears on page 9.

Of course, Chris Slusar will continue his always entertaining "Ol' Tackle Talk" series. In this issue, Chris chats about the Creek Chub Bait Company of Garrett, Indiana. I found it particularly interesting as CCBCO has always been a favorite of mine. To this day, I still "chuck" a 3000 series (Jointed Husky Pikie) at a musky or two. They still work!

I hope you like our new look and content. I look forward to your comments.

Our museum will open its doors (about the time you read this) on April 15th. If you've never visited us, or if it's been a long time, come and see us this year. We always love to see our old friends and meet new ones.

During the interim, please go to our website at www.freshwater-fishing.org and visit us on-line. Just click on "Photo Gallery and Museum Tour" – left navigation.

Thank you again for all of your great support.

Best regards,

Emmett A. Brown, Jr.
Executive Director
The Splash Editor

THINKING LIKE A PRO

By Legendary Angler, Gary Roach - Mr. Walleye

Professional anglers don't really fish much different than the weekend anglers, we just think differently. Here's an example.

When a pro-angler takes to the water they know where the fish should be and they go there. We've been patterning a particular species of fish for so long we have confidence in the spots we go to because, through experience, that's where those fish should be.

The twice-a-month angler doesn't get to spend as much time on the water so they must rely on information from the bait shop or join a group of boats. Some look for their own school of fish, but without the assurance of a bite or two in the spot they pick, it's tough to put much effort into a location that isn't producing, and much easier to hang with the crowd.

The only way you will ever gain confidence in your search for a school of non-pressured fish is to get good at finding productive spots. Since you can't spend a lot of time on the water you need to substitute that lack of time with some equipment. That would be a top-of-the-line sonar.

By researching the period and the species you're targeting you can get a general idea of how deep and what kind of structure the fish are on. Then it's just a matter of going to spots like that on the lake and performing your search. Searching is faster and easier with a high-end sonar.

I find that most anglers have a tough time deciphering what they see on their sonar screen. If that's your situation consider an underwater camera where you can actually see what you've got on that sonar screen. This sure shortens the learning curve. It won't be long before you will be at a master-class level in sonar reading and finding fish, your own fish that aren't being harassed by a bunch of other anglers.

Another area where pros think differently is with lure choice. It seems

that the weekend angler tends to get stuck on a technique and they use it whether it's producing or not. It's easy to get locked into one presentation because it's the technique you've used enough to get good at, but techniques are only as good as the conditions that make it a good or bad choice.

Here's how the pros think. It is in fact more detailed than this, but if you understand the basic program you can fine tune as you gain experience.

When fish are tightly grouped you use techniques that target them, like a vertical jigging presentation or a Roach (live bait) Rig. If the fish are spread out you need techniques that allow you to cover some ground, like a crankbait or a spinner rig.

An example would be walleyes that are spread out and suspended over a deep hole next to a sunken island. A Roach Rig would keep the bait on the bottom and the fish are suspended, but a crankbait trolled through the scattered fish would work great.

Here's another example. Largemouth bass are in the lily pads. The best pads are those that are shallower and surrounded by thick mats of milfoil. Time for a topwater lure. Even a spinnerbait would be no match for this heavy cover, but a floating topwater bait will generate some bites. If those bass were on the deeper pads that had sparse cover on the edges I would tie on a jig and just make short pitches to the edge of that cover.

We pros are always thinking about how we can tailor our presentation to match the condition of the fish, not the structure. Let the fish dictate what you tie on.

The average angler tends to not only use the same technique whether the situation calls for it or not, they also fish at the same speed no matter what the mood of the fish.

I've witnessed anglers continuing to put live bait on their jigs when the walleyes were biting like crazy. I switch over to a scented plastic trailer to tip

that jig with because when the fish are aggressive I can catch three to one if I don't have to rebait after every fish.

When the bite gets tough you just have to slow way down and add a whole new dimension to what you qualify as finesse. When the weather shuts down the fish I'll use the liveliest bait, because lively bait catches fish, dead or lethargic bait won't.

I will also sit right on top of fish. On a tough bite you have to coax bites. That can mean leaving a struggling minnow in front of a fish's nose until it decides to commit. Once you understand that a negative bite requires determination and concentration you're thinking like a pro.



Finding fish is the first priority of the pro-angler. We use our sonar to make sure we are putting the bait in front of fish. Then we look at how the fish are positioned, stacked up or spread out, to determine the lure choice and if the weather or some other factor has put the fish in a negative mood we modify our approach to compensate for that. You can all fish just like we do, but if you start thinking like a pro, you will not only be fishing like we do, but catching like we do too.

WORLD ANGLING RECORDS GRANTED

1st QUARTER - 2009 UPDATE

NOTE: World angling records are updated quarterly and the ultimate synthesis is published annually in book form each April, distributed free to members, media, manufacturers and world fisheries as a public service.

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"KEPT" WORLD RECORDS LIST

DIVISION #1 - ROD/REEL

Fish	Line Class	Lbs./Ozs.	Angler	Where Caught	Date
SPLAKE (Hybrid Trout)	16 lb.	10-12	Chris Kubichek	Lake Michigan, Michigan, USA	10/18/08

DIVISION #4 - ICE FISHING, TIP-UP

Fish	Line Class	Lbs./Ozs.	Angler	Where Caught	Date
BULLHEAD Brown	Heaviest (Only)	2-8	Todd Matera	Jenkins Pond, Massachusetts, USA	2/6/09

"C&R" WORLD RECORDS LIST

DIVISION #2 - FLY FISHING

Fish	Line Class	Length	Angler	Where Caught	Date
MUSKELLUNGE Natural	20 lb. Tippet	51"	William Ludwick	Lake of the Woods, Minnesota, USA	7/25/08

DIVISION #4 - ICE FISHING, POLE/LINE

Fish	Line Class	Length	Angler	Where Caught	Date
CATFISH/ Flathead (Mud Cat)	Longest (only)	42"	Walter Matan	Pistakee Lake, Illinois, USA	2/3/09



APPLY FOR A WORLD RECORD, GO TO OUR WEBSITE AT WWW.FRESHWATER-FISHING.ORG, CLICK ON WORLD RECORD APPLICATION, LEFT NAVIGATION. THE NECESSARY RULES AND FORMS ARE EASILY DOWNLOADED. IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, CONTACT US AT FISHHALL@CHEQNET.NET OR AT 715.634.4440



KEPT FISH



Chris Kubichek
Splake, 10-12,
Lake Michigan, MI,
USA, 10/18/08.



Todd Matera Brown Bullhead, 2-8, Jenkins Pond, MA, USA, 2/6/09.



CATCH & RELEASE FISH



William Ludwick
Natural
Muskellunge, 51",
Lake of the Woods,
MN, USA, 7/25/08.



Walter Matan Flathead Catfish, 42", Pistakee Lake, IL, USA, 2/3/09.

CRANKBAITS TIPS AND TACTICS By Legendary Angler, Roland Martin

There are a lot of bass fishermen in this country who think of crankbaits as dummy baits that anyone can use to catch fish with.

They think that all you have to do is throw it out and retrieve it. But there's a great deal more to crankbait fishing than that.

I've used crankbaits to catch big bass from California to Connecticut. From Canada to south Florida. I can tell you these diving baits are among the versatile lures an angler can fish. But knowledgeable fishermen know there is a real science involved in getting the most out of a crankbait.

Generally speaking, I fish crankbaits about 25 percent of the time and catch about 25 percent of my fish that way. In tournaments, I catch at least a third of my bass on crankbaits. Crankbaits are an excellent way to locate and quickly catch a limit of fish, which makes them ideal weapons for tournament fishing. Over the years, I've refined my system of crankbait fishing and, as a result, at least four of my national tournament victories can be attributed to that particular skill.

The average angler often doesn't take water temperature into account, but that's one of the main factors in my crankbait success. That's one reason why crankbaits are especially productive in pre-spawn situations when the big female bass move up adjacent to the spawning areas. They'll get on points and ledges of creek channels and in shallow timber and brushy areas — areas where the water is slightly warmer than other parts of the lake.

The fish in these warmer areas are a little more aggressive than their cold-water counterparts, creating a deadly crankbait situation. Generally, I don't use crankbaits in real cold-water situations.

As far as water clarity, I prefer to fish crankbaits in slightly dingy water. A prime example of a good cranking lake is the typical Tennessee Valley Authority reservoir, which is slightly turbid. I just don't like to use crankbaits in clear

water, but they can be effective in some clear-water situations.

If you fish a crankbait enough, you'll discover that these diving plugs are among the best possible tools for covering a lot of water and finding fish. If you're on a good pattern and know the color of the lure to use and the right cover to fish, you can cover more water with a crankbait than you can even with a spinnerbait. Crankbaits are high saturation lures. If the bass are feeding for only 20 minutes in the morning, you can make more casts and show the bait to more fish in that 20 minutes with a crankbait than any other lure. That's one of its biggest advantages.

During the last few years, I've traded in the traditional casting tackle for heavy tackle for my crankbait fishing. I'll often throw a big deep-diving crankbait on my flipping stick with a high speed reel. The big 7 1/2-foot rod gives me several advantages over the type of rod used by most crankbait fishermen in this country.

First of all, I can make a longer cast with the long rod, which means I'll be able to get the lure to run deeper and, potentially, reach more fish. Secondly, it enables me to use heavy line. And, importantly, it gives me the ability to set the hook better after a long-distance cast.

For fishing clear water, I've developed a system of fishing crankbaits of combining light line and heavy tackle. I know that sounds strange, but Roland Martin doesn't do conventional things. A lot of people talk about fishing ultralight tackle and light line. They believe the two have to go together. But why?

In clear water, you'll often need the light line to attract bass. But you can fish 10-pound line on gear other than light tackle. With enough practice you'll develop a feel for fishing light line on a flipping stick, for example.

Again, the longer rod allows me to make longer casts than more conventional shorter casting rods. And the other side of the coin was that the flipping stick

enabled me to set the hook faster and harder from a considerable distance. If you're using a 5-foot wimpy casting rod and a 5-pound bass hits your lure from about 70 feet away, it's a real chore to set the hook. You've got to take into account that the wimpy rod will only give you about 2 pounds of pressure and the line will have some stretch to it. Under those conditions, you can't control a 5-pound bass at all.

With enough practice, you will develop a feel for just how much pressure you can apply with the big rod to the line without breaking off. And DuPonts new Prime gives you a big advantage over monofilament lines on long casts where line stretch hurts your hook-setting ability. Because it has very little stretch, you can set the hook better and quicker with Prime. It's an excellent choice for long-distance fishing.

Another tip that will help your ability to hook bass with crankbaits from considerable distances: I change the hooks on my crankbaits. I'll put big No. 2 treble hooks on the small Fat Raps and Shad Raps. That greatly increases my hooking ability.

I prefer fishing larger crankbaits, although there is plenty to be said for the small diving lures like the Deep Wee-R and the small Rapalas, which catch a lot of small fish. But I seem to lose more fish on the little crankbaits, which can be attributed to using lighter line and the small hooks on the lures. But I hardly miss a bass when I'm using 1/2- and 5/8-ounce Hellbenders or Fat Raps, which have bigger hooks.

Although active bass will often hook themselves on crankbaits, it is very important to sharpen regularly.

One reason I have to sharpen the hooks on my crankbaits regularly is the kind of cover I fish with the lures. Unlike many bass enthusiasts in this country, I run crankbaits through some of the nastiest, roughest cover you can find, like tree tops.

For more tips and tactics by Roland Martin visit his web site at www.fishingwithrolandmartin.com.



LIVING ONE'S DREAM By Legendary Guide Tom Neustrom

How to put an explanation point on accomplishing one's dream is pretty tough.

Living the dream and being recognized by your peers for your value to something, so simple as teaching people how to fish, is a humbling experience.

Taking a moment to reflect back on where it all started is mind boggling at best and there are times when you ask yourself "If I had to do it all over again, would I have chosen this path?" I know the answer would have been, yes!

For me, it's always been about fishing, and learning, and teaching others how to fish. From the early days of pedaling my bike on a daily routine to Belmont Harbor in Chicago to catch perch and rock bass, being the trusted net man for my Dad fishing the Chain of Lakes in Antioch, Illinois for whatever came along, I was haunted by water and what it would teach me.

I went to every tackle shop and bait shop imaginable and used to collect pop bottles and deliver papers to fuel this hunger I had for fishing. My Dad would take me to sport shows and I would listen to the likes of Art Mercier and Jim Thomas, who were the Al Lindners of that era. I have always been a person that does it my way and tries to reverse the obvious when it comes to fishing. It was probably why I drifted away from my fishing mentor, my Dad, when I was about twelve. I wanted to figure out things for myself and create my own techniques.

Having the opportunity to go to Wisconsin, north of Hayward every summer, had a huge impact on my future in fishing. Being on the water everyday made me better and developed strategies that even amazed me at times, but it has all mattered in the end.

I have been gifted with a relentless pursuit of accomplishment in fishing



and guiding has been one of the most satisfying moments. From that first trip on Lake Geneva in Wisconsin to now, every guide trip was about people and how I could impact their day on the water to be a lasting memory. Truly, isn't that what guiding is all about? Exhibiting skill, teaching, and patience is all needed requirements for the job of being a fishing guide.

It's not for everyone, but for me it has been living a dream. Late suppers, long hours, broken equipment, battling weather conditions of everything imaginable, cuts that don't heal, sore arms and knees, and trust me there is no disabled list for guides, I wouldn't trade places with anyone. My clients have become friends and now I even have second and third generation of customers that I have grown with.

I have been truly blessed with the internal drive that I feel separates the field of guiding to the select individuals that have dedicated their lives to being the ultimate teachers of their sport. Creating positive memories for clients

and being able to share in their moment of accomplishment is very special. It's their home run, their touchdown, their hole in one, their feeling of belonging to something special when they hook and land a fish. The pride is almost overflowing from my personality when I say to customers "good job", for the thousandth time.

Being inducted into the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame was never on my mind decades ago. This was never my goal and I am humbled by the acceptance to a fraternity of gifted anglers. I will, when my time comes, accept the award for all the guides in the country that will probably never be able to have this honor. All the hard work and dedication to my job as a guide, teacher, promoter, and a caring individual has made this happen.

I would like to thank all the people in the fishing industry that have supported me and gave me the opportunity to live a dream. My three mentors, my Dad, Al Lindner, and Gary Roach who taught me the meaning of being the best at your trade and instilling the values that I live by today. Lanny Orvalla, from Lund Boat Company, gave myself and others, the opportunity to have equipment to better serve our job on the water.

Becoming a Hall of Famer is a crowning achievement that will live forever in my heart and mind. I am very humbled and proud of this accomplishment in my life and in closing I would like to thank my customers for without them this would not be a reality.

SMALLMOUTH BASS



Legendary Guide Tony Rizzo proudly displays a 7 and 3/4 pound smallmouth bass that he caught and released in May of 2008 near his home in Vilas County, Wisconsin.



OL' TACKLE TALK

Chris Slusar

THE CREEK CHUB BAIT COMPANY

The early 20th century will forever be known as a classic era in fishing lure development. While many entrepreneurs contributed to the evolution and commercialization of the lure, few meet the credentials of The Creek Chub Bait Company (the "CCBC").

The exact origins of the CCBC are debated even today, but certain researchers date the beginnings to as early as 1906. It is clear that three fishermen; Henry Dills, Carl Heinzerling and George Schulthess formed the new enterprise with a goal of revolutionizing the fishing tackle industry. The CCBC began slowly in the basement of Schulthess' home in Garrett, Indiana. Lures were made in small numbers and sold to local hardware dealers. The Wiggler was the first success and quite innovative for its time. Known for its natural action, it introduced a new lip design and is recognized as a forerunner of today's crank bait.

Serving as its principle location for more than 60 years, the business moved to a remodeled Garrett hotel in 1916. With a workforce of eight, the business expanded to include three lure models in seven different colors. In 1919, the company patented what has become a CCBC trademark, the scale pattern. A game changer during its time, the scale painting process was licensed to other companies.

Throughout the 1920's the company continued to innovate and grow. The famous CCBC Pikie Minnow came to life during this era. The most prolific of the company's offerings, the Pikie was offered in 18 cataloged colors and many more custom variations. The Pikie is well-known for "specials". Frequently, fisherman would request one-of-a-kind color patterns, most were

accommodated by the company (a minimum order quantity, usually one dozen, was required). As more than 1 million Pikies were manufactured, most "experienced" tackle boxes will hold at least one.

The 1930's continued the success of

CAN YOU ID?

Roger Ebert of Morris, Illinois provided the following for consideration:



Roger, you've got 1940's era, Mercury Minnow, manufactured in Detroit and Grosse Pointe, Michigan. As its name implies, an inner pocket of the tail end holds a drop or two of Mercury, which is intended to provide a unique action when pulled through the water. Definitely not the most environmentally friendly lure around! The lure is valued at \$10-\$20 alone and \$30-\$40 in the box. For your reference, the correct box is pictured below.



Please do forward your questions or requests for identification to slusar@krlynk.com. Alternatively, send your queries to Chris Slusar in care of the Fresh Water Fishing Hall of Fame.

Until next time, enjoy an old lure!

the previous decade and growth pushed the company workforce above 40 before World War II. Although challenged during the depression, the company was well-respected for not having had a lay-off. Again, the company led the marketplace with new inventions. Developments included the improved lip and thru-wire construction, both setting an enduring standard for heavy duty fishing tackle.

As the Great War consumed the United States, production at the CCBC factory was limited, awaiting return of its buying public. In the years immediately following the WWII, demand was great, but production was slowed by the lack of materials. It took a few years before supply fully met the needs of expanding demand.



#1- The CCBC Wiggler with introductory box. Generally, introductory boxes carried a black or red-lined image of the bait presented and pre-date 1921. This combination is valued at \$150-\$250.



A #708 Pikie with the appropriate and typical CCBC box. The "08" combined with the #700 model number indicates Rainbow color. As its condition is exceptional, this piece is valued at \$70-\$100. (Photo courtesy of Mitchell Slusar)

THE CREEK CHUB BAIT COMPANY



Two CCBC Injured Minnows displaying the innovative scale patterns. At top is a #1600 Baby Injured Minnow in red-side finish (color #05), this early body style is valued at \$40-\$60. At bottom is a #1500 injured minnow in golden shiner (color #04), valued at \$20-\$30. (Photo courtesy of Nick Kostman)



A #818 Giant Jointed Pike. The "18" combined with the #800 model number indicates the Silver Flash color pattern. One of the larger baits ever mass produced, this monster measures over 12" and is pictured in its correct CCBC box. The combination dates to late 1950's and is valued at \$80-\$120.

The late 1940's and 1950's saw the introduction of many new models and the expanding use of newer materials, including plastics. Around 1950, a son of an original founder, Harry Heinzerling took an active role in sales and championing changes at the CCBC. Harry was a proponent of spinning and saltwater tackle, both of which achieved great popularity in the United States during the 1950's.

The early 1960's marked a transition from glass to tack eyes and, in the face of cedar wood shortages, a move toward more plastic bodied baits. Although wooden bodied lures would make a comeback in later years, by the mid- 1960's, only a dozen CCBC lure models were manufactured in a wooden variety.

The later 1960's and 1970's ushered in an era of greater competition, alternate production methods and materials. Under the careful guidance of Mr. Heinzerling the company continued to be competitive until its sale to the Lazy

Ike Corporation in 1978.

Today, the Creek Chub name survives along with certain of its early lure models, the famous Pikie Minnow and Striper Pikie among them.

As you might imagine, the Creek Chub Bait Company has a very long and storied history. Those interested in more details or looking for some help with identification are welcomed to contact me anytime.

TRASH AND TREASURE By Legendary Communicator C. Boyd Pfeiffer

The preamble. Phillippe, Payne, Edwards, Thomas, Leonard, Orvis, Uslan - aficionados of fine and classic fly rods know these names.

They are the names of classic split bamboo rod makers, the rods crafted by taking bamboo culms, splitting them, tapering strips on "V" blocks to make them into equilateral triangle strips, almost needle-thin on one end. Six of these - or sometimes five or eight - are glued together make the basis for a split bamboo fly rod.

The costly, labor-intensive process was developed by Easton, PA gun smith and violin maker Samuel Phillippe in the mid-1800's. Others soon followed his lead. The above pieces, now museum-quality and museum desirable, became the standard of beautiful hand-crafted rods. They are understandably expensive with prices well into the thousands of dollars.

The story. My friend Bob was dragging his trash out to the front curb. He knew that the garbage pick-up came shortly, so he hurried after his morning coffee and paper.

As he positioned the cans holding a weeks worth of human detritus, he glanced across the street. Cans were already in place, no doubt placed there the night before by the single elderly resident. Her husband had died some time ago, but she continued to live in the same house.

But what were those things sticking up out of the trash can, Bob wondered? Curtain rods? Old wood dowels from a workshop? Ribs from a blown-out umbrella?

Bob went across the street to check. The sticks poking out of the trash can were fishing rods. Perhaps there was a good rod among them, or they could all be post-World War II Japanese imports when the country was flooded with cheap toys, cheap hardware, cheap fishing tackle and cheap everything else.

Or they could be early Montague rods which were split bamboo, but used in everything from fly rods to boat rods. They also were cheap, well enough made to fish, but not fine enough to collect or ever command anything beyond Salvation Army or Goodwill prices. Bob did not check further, rightly thinking that the lady resident should know of his concerns.

She answered the door on his second knock.

"Ma'am," he started, "I was putting out my trash and noticed some sticks poking out of your trash. I checked them and found that you have some fishing rods there. I didn't take them out but some of them could be worth something."

"I don't want them, that's why I put them out in the trash," the lady responded. "My late husband was a fisherman. He had stopped fishing before you moved here a few years ago. But he is gone now, and I am cleaning out the house. I found these and don't want them. They are old. Some of them belonged to my husband's father."

"But ma'am," Bob continued, "some of those rods could have some value if you were to take them to a flea market or auction them off. I'm a fisherman. I'd be glad to help you and try to check them out or find someone who could price and sell them for you."

"I really don't want to fool with them," replied. "Thanks for your offer, but I just want to clean house. If you want them, you can take them and do what you want with them."

"Are you sure?" Bob asked.

"Yes," I'm sure, she replied, "just take them out of the can before the trash man comes and do what you want with them. I don't want them."

Bob, his conscience and ethics clear, his morality and fairness-to-fellow-man still intact, walked out to the curb. He pulled out and saved all the rods. The trash truck could be heard banging and clanging cans farther down the block, men throwing the contents into the crushing maw at the rear of the truck.

Once home, with the two- and three- piece rods assembled, he discovered that he had seven complete split bamboo fly rods. All were in good to excellent shape except one that had a damaged but replaceable snake guide. The old man across the street had been a fisherman, a fly fisherman, as apparently had been his father. The rods were all 7- to 9-foot long, fly rods of a time long past, perhaps the late 1800's.

You guessed it - they were early, rare and valued rods by the likes of Payne, Edwards, Thomas, Leonard, Orvis, Uslan, and others of that early period. By then, the garbage men who might have collected this trash that was really treasure had emptied Bob's trash cans, and the cans across the street and had moved on to another block.

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STOP THE BLEED - BECOME AN EMT

By Legendary Angler Bill Siemantel

You just finished that big turkey dinner with the in-laws and the wife hands you the Christmas list for the kids, but all you can think about is getting out on the water. Why? Because this stuff is interrupting some of the best fishing of the year.

We fishermen do not have the time to go shopping for presents unless it's 6 feet long with a great looking section that can handle a big bait; no pun intended. Then taking the time to wrap a gift, are you kidding me. That's why the guy who made the paper bag and stick on bows is my hero!

More to the point, this is the time of year that one can truly have some epic days out on the water. From spooning, big baits, swimbaits, to the lonely but always dependable drop shot Robo Worm. All of these lures can be Deadly from time to time, and there is a pun intended on that statement. For all of the time and effort we put into trying to catch a single bass, are we willing to take the next step in keeping it alive? Through the years of fishing we have all had those moments that the fish we pursue just get hooked wrong, and with more pressure on our lakes than ever before, these fish are taking a beating. Years back when I started really trying to figure out how to catch big bass and build on the concepts of the BBZ mindset I learned that thinking outside of the box was not trying to re-invent the wheel, but to find simplicities in targeting bigger bass with more constancy. As I was doing this I found out that catching a monster bass was just one piece of the puzzle, returning it back to the water healthy was the final piece.

After Ray Scott started the Catch and Release craze in the early years of B.A.S.S (this is after seeing how effective it was with our brethren the Trout fishermen). Then with creel limits, slot limits, and the start of CPR (catch, photograph, release) in the early 90's; we still see and or hear of those little mishaps that take a toll on the

ecosystems of the lakes we fish. Case in point, your favorite lake does a little "Blue Stoning" to get rid of the weeds and spreads the chemical in the wrong place and at the wrong time; with in a few days Voila, a turkey vultures buffet. Or have a Bass Tournament down in Southern Texas where the average size of the bass in your limit is over 6 pounds, with inadequate live wells to hold 30 to 40 pounds on each side of the tanks or releasing procedures that are not ready for the sheer numbers of big bass; and you can feed the entire Elite Tour with fish tacos made out of tournament bass. I know that this does not happen all the time and these are extreme examples. But if we could all do our part and take baby steps when we have a chance to save just one fish's life; those days that bad placement or timing with blue stoning, or tournaments gone wrong just might not be so overwhelming.

From fishing rods to fishing baits, screwdrivers to wrenches, and everything in between; today's bass boats are nothing more than an anglers dream tool box. Fishing competitively, you will find that many of the pro's will carry the necessary tools to not only win a tournament, but enough to complete all the honey-do's that could ever be dreamed up. Some bass pro's take tools one step above the rest by including one of the most versatile tools that could be carried, PRO's Soft Bait Glue (this IS NOT superglue). The addition of one small bottle of PSBG can not only save money on tackle, but could save a badly hooked fish one day, to even winning you a tournament.

Many articles have been written on the use of glues for saving money on baits and tackle, and the stories of boat repair I am sure are endless. But what if there was a product out on the market that was capable of pretty much doing it all? Would that get your attention?

To say that I have had my moments out on the water where I have turned into the Yoda for thinking out of the box is a

50/50 shot (OK 75/25); oh trust me I have been way off the mark sometimes. But it was one night tournament a few years back that the real appreciation for PRO's Soft Bait Glue really set in. Remember, understanding what your tools are capable of will set you far apart from the other guys.



After catching a great limit one night I picked up a crankbait and within minutes a beer-keg with fins inhaled the bait so ferociously that it was lodged at the back of the throat, partly detaching one of the gills. After placing the fish in the live well and determining that without care the fish would bleed out and die. I looked at my partner and told him we were not going to lose this tournament because of a dead fish penalty. Not only was the tournament at stake, but the Angler of the Year race was also on the line; oh and I hate killing a Bass (I enjoy Stripers for my fish tacos). So I reached for the PRO's Soft Bait Glue and placed a small amount on the top end of the detaching gill and just let it run over the bleeding wound. Within a second I just made a liquid bandage and stopped the massive bleed. After ten minutes in the live well, ¼ bottle of Catch and Release, and my partner saying that could never work;

STOP THE BLEED - BECOME AN EMT

the fish went from struggling on its side, to upright and active and ready to be released. It made it until the end of the tournament 4 hours later; it helped secured the win, AOY title, big fish honors, and a little pride for taking the time to save a fish's life.

If you're not satisfied with just one fish story, the feat was then duplicated in a tournament two weeks later. After telling one of my very good friends, Steve Davies, (Team Davies Drop Shots) about how to save a bleeding fish, he found himself catching an tank bass on a crank bait that also separated two gills, He reached for the PRO's Soft Bait Glue just as I had when repairing the gills of the 10 pound fish two weeks earlier. After creating a bandage on the gills from the crank bait damage, the fish became active within minutes and remained in the live well unfazed for the remainder of the day and was released at the end of the tournament to be caught another day. The tournament may not have been won by Steve, but his fish was definitely not lost.

These are two examples that saving a big fish worked out. Can it be done all the time? Probably not. All I can say is that I have used this basic skill as an EMT (Emergency Medical Technician) 30 times without fail in the last 3 years.

Remember, if you catch a small limit of bass that for some reason they just ended up eating your darthead wrong and 3 of the 5 bass in your limit die from bleeding out; you can only cull twice. Yes twice, California Fish&Game rules state that you can not cull out dead game fish. Remember Mike laconelli and the American Flag? I know that was a technical error with turning on the live wells; but if you were tossing bleeding bass in your well and did not take the time to stop the bleeding and it cost you thousands of dollars in a



tournament. You better hope that your Red, White, and Blue's are hanging from another part of your boat, as you turn your light pole into a pretzel.

Just one more trick or two that can help you in the next few months. I, like most of you have been using a small needle to take care of deep caught bass for years. Still remember the days during the BASS Invitational at Shasta Lake in 1998, trying to release the bladder through the throat with my big fingers and a little needle.

I just found a tool called the Bends Mender that really gets two thumbs up from me on making a better mouse trap to help the survival rate of deep caught bass. This is another tool that should be in everyone's boat. I hope that I do not need to tell you how to deflate a bass bladder (should already be known). Kind of like tying a knot, this is one EMT skill you should be good at. But for those who skipped the class on deflating bladders, see the illustration.



While writing this article I was talking to the team of DeLynn and Steve Davies (Team Davies Drop Shot) about spooning deep bass and DeLynn tells the story that Steve caught a deep fish and needles the bass. In the excitement of the tournament and pushing a little to hard on the bladder to get the air out the bass dropped to the bottom of the live well like a rock. I think Delynn's saying from the father to the son was "great job on making a rock bass; we are going to lose points in the standings on that dead fish". Steve reached down, grabbed the bass laying on the bottom of the tank, put the needle back into the bladder and blew air back into it. Guess what? That little trick worked and the fish started to swim around upright with no problems. Talk about a "breath of life". You beat me on that one Steve for thinking way out of the box and that story gets top billings for the BBZ

mindset.

In bass fishing the story is always told that if you use the right tool in the right situation it will lead you to success. In the case of PSBG, and the Bends Mender it is surely no exception. The use of these products can not only save you money, but can also save the life of a trophy fish and possibly secure money in a game that can be separated by fractions of ounces, the game we all love, the game we call bass fishing.

Take care and Keep it in the BBZ.

METHOD 1:

1. Hold the fish by its lower jaw/lip.
2. Looking down into the fish's mouth, locate the two crushers -- usually pink -- above the throat.
3. Holding the Bends Mender parallel to the fish's lateral line, insert the tip gently between the crushers until you hear a hissing sound (about 1/2"). This is the air bladder deflating.
4. Hold the whole fish and Bends Mender under the water, which will allow you to see the air being released in the form of bubbles. Do not squeeze the fish. Allow it to equalize itself until the air bubbles stop releasing.



METHOD 2:

1. Place the fish on either side on a stable, cool, wet surface.
2. Locate the fish's pectoral fin -- the "side fin". Allow it to lie flat in its natural position against the fish's side. Locate the "corner" of the fin closest to the tail. From this point, count 3-4 scales toward the tail (this will be 5-7 scales below the lateral line).
3. Holding the Bends Mender at a 45 degree angle, gently insert the tip under the scale pointing toward the fish's mouth until you hear a hissing sound (about 1/2"). This is air bladder deflating.
4. Hold the whole fish and Bends Mender under the water, which will allow you to see the air being released in the form of bubbles. Do not squeeze the fish. Allow it to equalize itself until the air bubbles stop releasing.





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