



SANTA CLARITA CASTING TIMES

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LOWER OWENS TRIP: YA SHOULDA BEEN THERE

By *Kevin Larsen*

Friday morning, February 6, began like any other incredible day on the Lower Owens: Mike Henderson and I stopped in at Jack's for breakfast; we hit the river around 8:00; at 8:30 we experienced some snow flurries; and around 10:00 we started taking fish in what would be the beginning of an unbelievable trip to the fabled Eastern Sierras brown trout fishery.

With a hatch coming off, I picked up a few browns near the bridge around the concrete mill near five bridges. Mike then hammered one on a Prince Nymph followed by a brown measuring 16 plus inches taken on a dry. And so it went until we met up a few hours



later at a good-sized pool having caught 15 or more between us fishing both sub-surface and on top.

I talked Mike into changing rigs to a large black and green Woolly Bugger and we proceeded upstream still on the hunt. Almost immediately, I picked up two or three fish while Mike picked up a nice rainbow. We picked up a few more—just to be greedy—and then headed back to the motel, exhausted.

On Saturday, after the obligatory breakfast at Jack's, we tried our luck float tubing the Pleasant Valley Reservoir. That turned out to be an equally good choice (understatement) since fish were boiling everywhere...and I mean "everywhere."

Out on the lake, I had a fish on within the first three casts. Shortly thereafter, I caught and landed a 24-inch rainbow (see photo). From there, we proceeded to catch 20 plus fish each in the first hour; yes, you read that right, the first hour. On a tip from some nearby bait fishermen, I cast to a large feeding fish and was rewarded with a 23-inch rainbow on the third cast. >>> *on page 2*

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President's Message

SCCC IS FOUR YEARS STRONG

It's hard to believe that another year has gone by and we are at Membership Renewal time again. We've had an outstanding, fun year and hope you want to come back. We look forward to an election in April with a new Board and new faces with new ideas and projects.

In a short four years we've gone from five members to 60 members, which speaks volumes about the interest in our wonderful sport of fly fishing. In today's economy and the work world, we need to find as much joy and pleasure as we can--and it truly rests in the Santa Clarita Casting Club. So get your membership renewals in as soon as possible so we can keep our club active and enjoyable.

I look forward to more club trips and joint ventures with other clubs and organizations. Thanks for your continued support and enthusiasm. <<

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Besides seeing some bald eagles and hooking up with some fly fishers from the Long Beach Casting Club, we—I hesitate to mention this for fear some members won't believe me—proceeded to catch 150 fish between us—mostly rainbows and at least one 16-inch brown. Were we laughing the entire time? You bet we were.

Outstanding 60 degree weather on Sunday greeted us as we trekked out to do battle with a few more browns on the Lower Owens near five bridges. Blue Winged Olives and Prince Nymphs were again the ticket to incredible fishing. I pulled in eight fish from one 40-yard stretch and six from an adjacent stretch of water while Mike picked up a 16-inch brown on a dry fly. By 2:30, we were fished out—Mike, at least, was fished out; I was sick. However, with over 200 fish between us, this was quite a memorable weekend. And it should only get better on the Owens with the next few weeks.



If you're into lots of great fish, wild fish, browns, rainbows, no crowds, dries or nymphs, beautiful scenery, and the possibility of catching a trophy-sized fish on light gear, you need to make tracks north for "Winter on the Lower Owens." Remember: you snooze you lose—lots of great fish that is. <<



NEW PRODUCTS

by Bill Creitz

While the economy may be temporarily under water, fly fishers continue to demonstrate a remarkable resilience when it comes to buying new stuff. Combine that with the eternal optimism and curiosity displayed by most fly fishers, and you have the perfect climate for those new spring purchases. And to help you with your contribution toward pulling the economy out of the doldrums, several equipment companies are offering new or improved products to help lure you to the cash register.

So, let's wade in and take a look at what 2009 brings to the angler's already packed equipment closet.

Speaking of waders, Patagonia has introduced "Hip High" stocking foot waders for those anglers needing to wade the shallows or who just don't want to be bothered with folding their chest high waders down to the waist. Hip Highs reach just below the crotch and fit snugly to avoid slipping.

The waders are made from the company's three-layer waterproof, yet breathable, Hydrostorm Barrier fabric and feature anatomically correct neoprene booties, gravel guards, stainless steel lace hooks, rubber cuffs, scuff panels that are abrasion resistant, and a nifty khaki color. Those features, combined with adjustable nylon belt straps, quick-release buckles, and what is described as a "wrap-around internal shock cord drawstring and adjusters" system, provide you have a nice alternative to those hot chest waders we all love to wear. At \$180, the new Hip Highs look like a practical—and cost effective—alternative to Chest Highs. Check 'em out at www.patagonia.com.

I've found the solution to traveling with your fly fishing gear on a plane: it's called the "Dakota Carry-On Rod & Reel Case" from Fishpond.

The new Dakota 1,390 cubic inch carry-on case accommodates a lot of stuff: try four rods, four reels, an extended

stay's worth of leaders, tippet spools, extra fly lines, flies, travel tying kit, floatant bottles, sunglasses, and more. The case is constructed of 1,680 Denier ballistic nylon; measures 31" by 9" by 5"; and features a waterproof molded bottom, adjustable and removable interior dividers, padded shoulder strap, and both mesh and see-through interior pockets.

The Dakota Carry-On Rod & Reel Case comes in a brown and blue color scheme and, at \$159, it won't take all your hard-earned green to bring one of these cases home in time for that summer Alaska salmon trip. Check out www.fishpondusa.com if you're interested.



What do cell phones and fly boxes have in common? The new Meiho M70 "Cell Phone" fly box from one of Japan's leading box manufacturers can answer that question: it's the one-handed, flip-top, ease-of-operation concept that we've become so accustomed to when using cell phones that prompted this manufacturer to develop the "Cell Phone" box. This product may not help you dial up your declining investment portfolio or call your spouse to report that 24" rainbow that you just coaxed to the net on a 6x tippet, but it will make sorting through flies while on the water much easier.

This fly box will fit in your shirt pocket, and it can be opened with one hand--the clear, flip top hinge design opens just like your cell phone. It is made from high-impact plastic for durability, features five compartments in varying sizes on one side and a large streamers-sized compartment on the other. At under \$10, this fly box is both innovative and reasonably priced. Go to www.anglersportgroup.com to view the fly box. I think you'll be impressed. Just don't try making calls with it. <<



Fly Fishing for Trout, Volume One – Special Techniques by Lefty Kreh

By Bill Creitz



If you're a Western fly fisher, you should be proud. According to veteran author and fly fishing sage, Lefty Kreh, "...most of the refinements being made in trout fishing, at least today, are being made by fly fishermen on our Western waters." Given that accolade, you may well be one of those

West Coast innovators that Lefty is talking about. If so, keep reading to find out about even more tricks you can add to your arsenal.

In terms of fly fishing books, this is an awesome find. This little jewel by expert Lefty Kreh packs more practical, useful advice for the trout fisherman, pound-for-pound and page-for-page, than any other book I've read—and I've read a few fly fishing books.

Fly Fishing for Trout, Volume One – Special Techniques (Odysseus Editions, 1993) is one of several must-own volumes that comprise "Lefty's Little Library of Fly Fishing." I'm not sure that how-to fishing books get much better than this.

Dispensing such practical advice as "If you want to know what types of flies you should be matching with your imitations, shake the bushes along the banks and you'll often find and identify insects awaiting the egg-laying process," and "Fish the Gold-Ribbed Hare's Ear; I've caught more trout on that pattern than any other three nymph patterns combined," Lefty sets the stage early on for prodigious amounts of information and tips useful for all levels of fly fishing expertise.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

San Gabriel or Piru	March
Fred Hall Show	March 4-8
Santa Ynez	April
Annual General Meeting	April 15
Lower Owens	May
Elizabeth Lake Picnic	June 7
Mammoth	June 27-28

The decades of on-stream experience that the author draws upon in each of "Lefty's Little Library" series are a boon to the fly fisherman interested in refining his technique, learning the nuances of this fabulous sport, and mastering the art and science of fly fishing for trout; this volume is no exception.

For the dry-fly fisherman, Lefty offers the following:

- Dry flies are sometimes fished better down or down-and-across-stream. This permits the fly to approach the fish before the leader does
- When properly designed for most dry-fly fishing conditions, the tippet section of a commercially manufactured tapered leader should not be longer than about 20 inches
- The Griffith Gnat is the one fly all fly fishermen should always carry with them to be prepared for difficult times
- When fishing hoppers, drop the fly to the surface, twitch it several times, and then allow it to float drag-free. This imitates the initial struggle displayed by the real thing
- If a trout is lying close to the shore, never cast your dry fly (or even nymph or streamer) between the trout and the stream bank

Tips for the nymph fisherman include:

- Many times it is more effective fishing nymph patterns that are slightly larger than the nymphs the trout are actually feeding on
- Unless they are fished on very calm waters, few nymphing leaders should exceed nine feet, and

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should usually be shorter than that. Thus, a leader that is seven feet long, or less, is often desirable

- When fishing sinking lines, the deeper you want to drive the fly, the shorter the leader should be

And for the streamer enthusiast Lefty suggests:

- A good streamer trick when fishing pools on smaller streams is to throw the fly upstream to the head of the pool, while you stay hidden at the lower end. Then allow the fly to sink nearly to the bottom and then bring it back briskly

- Brown trout, especially, are usually not interested in midges, small nymphs, or dry flies. But sweep a big streamer past them, and they'll frequently take a whack at it

- When fishing in current, the most popular method of working a streamer is to throw the fly across and at a slight downstream angle. Keep the rod tip low to the water and gently rock the tip up and down, causing the tip to undulate no more than a few inches

Within the first few pages into this book, the reader quickly sees that Lefty Kreh was predestined to teach. His manner, observations (as noted above), writing style, love of detail, and frankness are the perfect antidote for the sports writer who parrots fly fishing clichés and reconstituted popular opinion. Learning from a Lefty Kreh book is like attending a stream-side college course.

In his own words, Lefty describes his little book: "Whether you are fishing dry flies or nymphs, most of the time on most waters, about a dozen flies (in different sizes) plus a few streamer patterns, if properly presented, will catch most of the trout. So that's simply what this book is all about: how to achieve good presentations and successful hook-ups on trout with dry flies, nymphs, and streamers."

Taking a cue from one of the book's concluding statements that "Trout are almost always either close to the bottom or near the top," I'd say that, with respect to all the available literature for the fly fishing enthusiast, every one of Lefty Kreh's books is "near the top"—the top of the list of "must read" books that is. And *Fly Fishing For Trout, Volume One – Special Techniques* is just another addition to that list. <<

"Famous Fishermen's Favorite Flies"

"The best year-'round fish taker, in the fastest-moving western streams in particular, is the Hare's Ear in size 14." Georges Odier

"If I had to choose three flies to use the rest of my life, forever and ever, and I couldn't change, it would be a Woolly Bugger, Sculpin imitation, and a Bead Head Pheasant Tail nymph." Chris Bailey

Student to John Van Derhoof: "If you were limited to three flies to go fishing, what three would you choose?" John: "An Olive and Black Woolly Bugger streamer, an Elk Hair Caddis dry fly and a Bead-Head Hare's Ear nymph." <<

"Blast from the Past Quotes"

The sport of fly fishing has matured and evolved significantly over the last forty to fifty years. As such, it is fun to look at some quotes from famous fly fishers and noted publications that reflect how we have progressed over the last several decades. Hope you enjoy the trip back in time

"The Double Haul is still thought of as a tournament caster's gimmick in some circles. It is not that at all." - Jerry Gibbs, *Outdoor Life*, January 1976 <<

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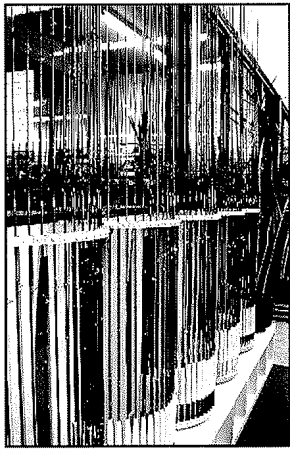
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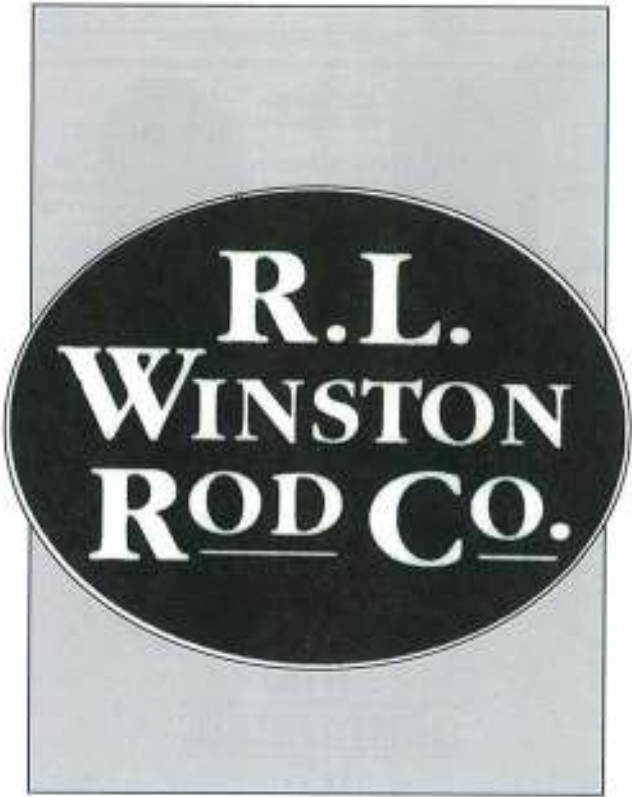
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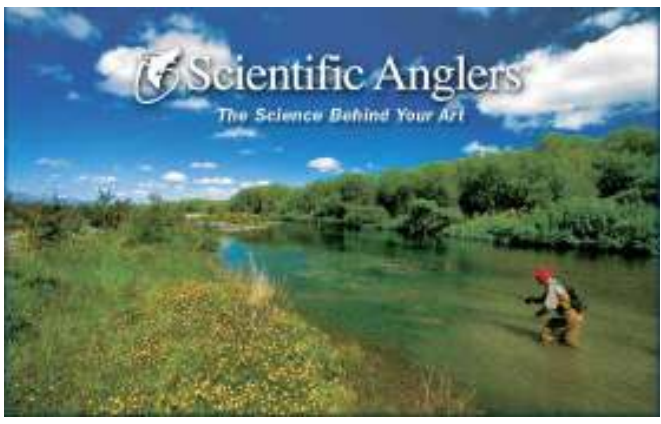
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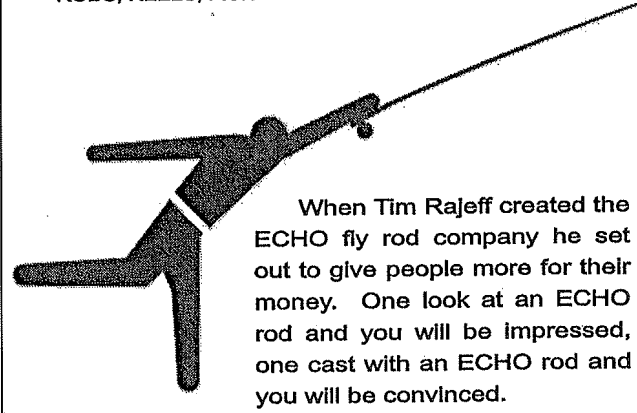
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