

Fishing



INFORMATION

By "The Crappie Catcher"

PANFISH!

HOW TO CATCH THEM

Use any equipment you want —the panfish don't care.

SEVERAL YEARS AGO I RECEIVED the kind of invitation most of us dream about, with little hope our dream will ever shape into reality. It came from one of the wealthiest men in America, a Texas oilman, an elderly but extremely active man who spent much of his time in the outdoors hunting and fishing. I had met him when I was in Texas on a writing assignment.

Now I had a letter inviting me to spend a week fishing with him, a letter that sent the imagination soaring.

"Probably on a yacht," a friend said, "with spigots in your quarters running bourbon and branch water, champagne on tap, four blondes and tenderloin steak for breakfast. Cruise outside Padre Island and probably catch some of the biggest damn marlin, tuna, swords, or whatever they have, in existence."

"A private stretch of river deep in the mountains," another friend guessed, "running thick with trout as long as your arm. A lodge 50 feet from the stream where you walk on polar bear skins, eat off gold plates and drink vintage wine from Baccarat."

I thought they were both wrong, that we would probably do some river fishing for trout in a wilderness area that we would reach by private plane.

Trout that were so wild that you'd be tired of hauling them in by 10 o'clock in the morning.

All conjecture was so far wrong that I still remember the actuality with something of a shock. My plane was met by a car, a fawn, air-conditioned, cat-purring Lincoln Continental, with a uniformed chauffeur, who said, "I hope you don't mind a long drive, sir. We're going directly to the lake where Mr. _____ will be waiting."

As I remember, the drive was almost five hours. But it wasn't a lake where my host was waiting. It was an outside pond, bordered with water lilies—a small body of water that had swallows chattering around its edges diving for insects and an air of serenity that would have sent Henry David Thoreau into a drool of envy. Adrift on its surface was one old wide-bottomed rowboat with a man in a floppy straw hat fishing from it. This was my billionaire friend on his private pond, deep in what wilderness is left in Texas—fishing for bluegills. His favorite sport.

Recovering finally from the shock of seeing a man who could have owned great stretches of trout, Atlantic salmon, cutthroat or sea trout water, perhaps even his own hunk of ocean and corralled marlin, fiddling in an old boat for the lowly bluegills, I entered into the spirit of the occasion and had more fun fishing than I have ever had.

SPORTS



Chuck Harris

BOXING

JOE CLARK and JOHNNY BROOKS, two of Nevada's leading Welterweights, tangle in a ten-rounder Main Go at the Fremont Hotel tonight (Thursday). Promoter MEL GREB really has a corker in tonight's match between these two promising young gladiators ... After much managerial troubles, JOE CLARK has definitely come into his own as a fighter to be reckoned with. To All Concerned: JOE has his hopes set on a title shot in the near future. Manager IRVIN STARR of Ace Loan Co. and Stan Tischler, trainer, (once a promising fighter in his own right) have guided JOE CLARK'S boxing career magnificently By the same token BROOK'S manager, DON COHEN of the PIZZA HOUSE, and trainer MICKEY PARKS have done equally well in supervising their fighter's career into contention as a leading prospect and a well respected opponent. From CHUCK'S Corner there's nothing but best wishes for all concerned - The Winner? -- Take Your Pick.

Like CHUCK has been saying -- Look for Open Air Theatre Amateur Boxing at BOB BAILEY'S SUGAR HILL GARDENS to begin in two weeks -- Heavyweight Champ CLASSIUS CLAY will meet a formidable challenger, KARL MILLENBERG of Germany in his next outing - CHUCK'S Corner says CLAY (or MUHAMMAD ALI as he prefers to be called) the winner in the 8th round... Best of luck, Champ.

JUAN MARIACHAL of the leading hard hitting SAN FRANCISCO GIANTS won his 9th straight victory without a defeat yet recorded for the season, and with "Hey Willie" MAY'S ailments about gone, LOOK-OUT National League - the GIANTS is the team to be reckoned with. (Ed's note) That they are Chuck, old boy, and that they always are, but tell me, what happens to those stalwarts in the stretch run.)

With SANDY KOUFAX in command, the LOS ANGELES DODGERS showing form of old, seem to be saying to all comers "Come on, if you're coming, we're beginning to move."

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For the bluegill on a light fly rod is a scrappy fighter—especially the big, fat variety that swam in his pond, some of them going two pounds. And I'd rather have a brace of them on a plate than I would a whole salmon in aspic. Sweet, butter-tender, snow-white, juicy flesh.

It took a rich man poaching on the poor man's pleasure to teach me that the American fisherman is the luckiest in the world—if he only knew it. The colorful variety of fish that are grouped under the prosaic name "panfish" offer more interesting and diversified fishing than most of us realize.

Actually most of the nearly 20 million fishermen who buy licenses each year do spend much of their time angling for panfish; but where they err is that many of them also spend an equal amount of time, while they are hauling in yellow perch, white crappies, bluegills and catfish, thinking about some day catching trout and salmon when they can afford the time and money to go to the far places to get this supreme thrill pursued by the dedicated fly-rod purist who wouldn't soil a fly with a sunfish.

This, of course, is the sheerest, phoniest nonsense. Panfish may not have the publicity agents trout and salmon, muskellunge, pike and bass have, but their devotees range from the small boy who can catch a bushel basket of sunnies without buying a license to the tottery old man who sits in the shade drifting his line in a quiet pool, away from his wife, who reminds him of his age, comfortable on a streambank where he can dream of the days when the sight of a well-turned leg made him feel good all day—and may even end up catching a mess of perch for supper.

In short, panfish do more to keep more people fishing—and happy—than all the other fish put together, from the vaunted Arctic charr to the overrated western cutthroat.

Additional factors that have been overlooked by many—by me too, until the Texas trip—are equipment, accessibility and long seasons. You can fish for panfish with anything from a 50-cent cane pole and bobber to a \$100 half-ounce fly rod; you can fish crappies as close as the neighborhood pond, ride on a bus or trolley to where bluegills swim, capture a creel of catfish just a walk from home. In most states, panfishing is an eight- to 12-month sport.

You can also use your fancy and hard-acquired fly-fishing equipment and technique (and I do prefer it, especially with bluegills) on panfish, using popping bugs or dry flies. Use any equipment you want: fly rod, casting rod, spinning; and fish with bivisibles, worms, plastic grubs, leeches, minnows, tiny frogs: —the panfish don't care. They are the most cooperative of fish.

So technique isn't terribly important; it can be as simple or as supremely complicated as you want. The point with panfishing is that such a variety of species swim in so many types of water that they are surviving in amazing numbers despite civilization's ever-increasing pollution.

Announcement

TOM SAWYER DAY -- Saturday, June 4, 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. at Carey and Webster streets in North Las Vegas.

Prizes will be given for many contestants and events....All boys between the ages of 8 and 18 years are invited....Interested boys may be picked up at 9:30 a.m. in front of the Boy's Club in the Golden West Shopping Center.

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