

The Dakota Fly Fisher



Fall 2010

Club Officers and Directors for the 2009/2010:

President: Todd Pope (mkpope@ndak.net)

Vice President: M. Byron Grubb (mbgrubb@srt.com)

Secretary Treasurer: Clint Baxter (thudchkr@min.midco.net)

Board of Directors:

Scott Renfandt, (scottrenfandt@srt.com)

Mark Olinger, (flytyer@ndak.net)

Randy Olson (flycst@gmail.com)

Murray Greer (greer3@srt.com)

Mike Kroh (mikeandjoy@srt.com)

Lee Brend (shirley_brend@hotmail.com)

Editor: Bob Morenski (rmmorski@rtc.coop)

Nominations for Club Officers

Our 2009-2010 cycle for elected officers and board members is coming to a close. Our current President, Todd Pope, has moved to Bismarck. So, we will require someone to run for the post. We also need to see which of our current officers and board members are planning to stay on and who will be stepping down. If you are currently an officer or director, please contact Todd Pope with your intentions. If you would like to serve or would like to nominate someone for a post, please contact Todd, as well. All terms are for two years.

Everybody is a DFF Membership Chair!

Maintaining a sufficient number of club members is always a constant struggle. This is one area where everyone can pitch in a little. If you know someone who fly fishes or would like to learn, just ask them for \$10.00 and get their address and email address Send it to **Clint Baxter** and forward me their email address. If everyone made it a point to sign up one person, we would easily hit all of our membership targets. Clint's address is as follows:

Dakota Fly Fishers
c/o Clint Baxter
1520 Burdick Expressway East
Minot, ND 58701

If you would like to send me any written material, fly patterns etc., my address is as follows:

Bob Morenski
PO Box 32
Parshall, ND 58770
rmmorski@rtc.coop

2010 Fly Fisherman's Rendezvous June 4th - 6th, Northgate Dam was a success!

Our 2010 was big success. In the future, we need to get more advertising out for the Rendezvous but we still had a very good turnout. The trout fishing was good and got better as the weekend progressed. I landed 16 on Sunday morning before I tore my camper down and went home. Kevin Jeffrey from Grand Forks stayed an extra day and the fishing was real good on Monday, as well.

I would like to give special thanks to **Randy Olson** from Sydney, Montana for once again coming out and putting on a great casting demonstration. It is great to have a world class fly caster as a member of our club. I also want to thank **Mark Olinger** for once again doing an entomology lesson and **Bob Morenski** for giving a lesson on pontoon boats and equipment. Last but not least, I would like to thank **Mike** and **Joy Kroh** for doing another great fish fry. A storm was moving in around the time of our fish fry and pot luck dinner and the caretaker, Melvin let us use the club house. I do not know his last name but if anyone sees him up there at Northgate, please thank him once again.

All the efforts of those involved in putting this event on would be in vain if nobody showed up. So, I would like to thank all of you who came and participated. While it is early, we will probably have a Rendezvous at the same location, next year. So, mark the weekend after Memorial day on your calendar and we will see you there next year.

Musky on the Fly

(Below is an email and picture that I received from Adam Dittus and I thought that our readers would like see this. Thanks Adam for sharing this with us.)



I fished a local lake in MN last weekend and caught this muskie on an 8 wt and 14" long fly I tied. Ted Hoffman took the picture using my phone because no one had brought a camera. The hook up was awesome. I cast next to a fallen tree and made one quick strip then out of nowhere this musky savagely inhaled my fly. My fly was only down about a foot so I was able to watch the take. Then the battle was on. Luckily, it thought deep water was a better place to go then into the downed trees. Landing it from a toon was the next issue. After a few failed attempts of using my stripping apron as a cradle Ted was able to somewhat trap it in his large trout net just long enough to hoist it up onto my lap. After a wrestling match to get my fly out of its mouth I held it up for a couple of pics and it was released.

Confessions and Advice of a Spoiled Angler

By Chuck Loftis



Our buddy Chuck displays a nice Patterson Lake brown trout.

It was upon the occasion of one more internal tantrum that I wiped away imaginary tears, having hiked another futile mile into Colorado's high country only to be greeted by dozens of others who had the same idea.

"Am I ever going to find a place of solitude here?" I pray to myself.

Silence.

God must be thinking the same thing.

If Minnesota is known by frustrated anglers as "The Land of 10,000 Lakes... and One Fish!" then Colorado has to be "The Land of 5,000,000 Anglers... Who Share the Same Day Off!"

Confession

Confession, they say, is good for the soul, so let me be confessin' that I must be one of the world's most spoiled fly anglers, if not "the most."

Like Warden Hazen told Captain Knauer in 1974's *The Longest Yard*, "The gravy train is over!" At least it is for me, since I relocated from Bismarck, ND to Fort Collins, CO last year. I've developed a new credo since becoming what **Tim Brubakken** calls a "Green

Plater” (in reference to Colorado license plates): “*Here I sit broken hearted. I want to fish but can’t get started.*” And why? Because it is B.Y.O.R. (Bring Your Own Rock) in the Centennial State, I assure you.

One should be able to imagine the liberation I felt after having lived in a state as crowded as Oregon for 23 years before moving to South Dakota’s Black Hills in 1989. I didn’t matter where I went with fly rod in tow... *aloneness* was the name and *lots of fish* were the game. Outings when I had entire stretches of Spearfish Creek, Rapid Creek, Box Elder Creek, Castle Creek, Ditch Creek, Spring Creek, Crow Creek or Lakota Lake to myself (or nearly, in the case of Lakota) were common. One should also imagine the hey-days I enjoyed at stock dams on private land chasing trout, bass, panfish and pike.

How could this sort of arrangement get any better? Well, hard to imagine that it could but it did.

I and my family were set to relocate from Spearfish, SD to Bismarck in the spring of 1996 when I picked up an issue of *Dakota Country Magazine* and read the late **Jon Devlin**’s article about ND trout angling along the I-94 corridor. Suddenly, the prospect of an adventurous move somewhere new had become even sweeter.

My third pre-move business trip to ND afforded me an evening to prospect that trout angling my friend Jon had written about. A quick trip to Dakota Tackle for a nonresident license; a lengthy conversation with owner **Wade Anderson** (is there another kind?); decisions concerning his direction and advice, and away to Fish Creek Dam in Morton County we went.

With was a USC grad who was interning alongside me in the summer of 1996 and we arrived out at Fish Creek around 6 PM, and, to our knowledge, there were only two other anglers around and they were fishing from shore. The tubes were inflated, so we waded-up, strung the 5-weights, selected some Buggers, donned our fins and berthed from shore in our float tubes. It didn’t take long – perhaps 5 minutes – and I landed a healthy 13-inch rainbow trout. That was the last trout... for awhile. After that rainbow, I enjoyed the next two hours catching and releasing dozens of crappies and smallmouth bass. In that entire time, that intern, **Matt Smay**, never landed a trout and we were beginning to scratch our heads, him being no novice fly angler either, wondering if Anderson had been pulling our fins a bit, but at 8:30 PM, nature threw her switch and the lake began to boil with subsurface sort of takes. On the heels of that action, the lake was alive with rise rings from surface-breaking trout taking caddis. It was an awesome sight equaled only by the setting sun and hot action landing and releasing approximately eighty 12-18 inch rainbow and brown trout between us. We finally had enough around 11 PM and, while on the way back to the launch, I twitch-trolled a huge dragonfly nymph imitation and nabbed a 12-inch black crappie.

That Wade ... he’s no kiddier!

That first opportunity of ND fly angling – no matter the species – was lived out over and over and over again in the next 13 years. I loved just about every moment – heat, cold, wind, calm, sunny, rainy and snowy – no matter the conditions... even fishing flies through the ice!

What was not to love: 20-60 fish days at Fish Creek, Raleigh, Sheep Creek and Lightning Lake; 100+ fish winter days at Lake Nelson; 10 fish days chasing carp along the banks and backwaters of the Missouri River; those incredible days of chasing obese tailwater cutthroat trout in 2000 and 2001... and on and on and on I could go.

Just when I thought angling life couldn't get better, along comes **Tony Dean** with an invite to travel with him to Manitoba for the first annual Parkland Trout Festival held, that year, in Russell, MB. What an incredible introduction to an incredible place. If you haven't ascended the Parkland yet, now is the time. Angling for trophy trout is at its peak again. The Golden Years are NOW!

And I would be remiss in forgetting to say how blessed I was to do a couple of very important things. One, was to, along with **Jim and Matt Grenstiener**, be a co-founder of the *Missouri Valley Fly Fishers Club* and be associated with the likes of **Don Newcomb, Rick Nelson, Bob Olheiser, Joel Wood, Rich Barrios, Tim Brubakken, Jim Tysver, Tom Tysver, Mike Scully, Brian Barrett, Ted Hoffman, Adam Dittus** and **Gary Mourhess** just to name a few; two, to be hired on staff of *Dakota Country Magazine* and, more importantly, have the privilege of counting **Bill and Jon Mitzel** as my close friends; and three, to associate with and become a member of the Dakota Fly Fishers where I finally got to know fly angling and tying masters (literally, *heroes*, to me) such as **Bob Morenski, Mark Olinger, Lee Brend, Marc Vogel, Dave LaFrance** and **Byron Grubb** just to name a few.

On a recent trip back to ND, Bill Mitzel and I had Alkali Lake near Streeter, ND all to ourselves; on a second trip back – this one to MB – “crowds” on waters such as Tokaryk still provided anglers an average of about 12 acres apiece. I don't know about you but, that's not much of a crowd, to me... before I moved but especially now.

Fly angling action on the northern Great Plains is a spoiler.

I deeply miss those who were my closest friends and fishing buddies...

Then there's the incredible quality of life Dakota living affords...

Then there's the growing, vibrant economy...

Well, it should be clear how I became a spoiled prairie angler.

Advice

My advice to you, My Fellow Fly Flingers, is to enjoy every minute of what you've got and never – I repeat NEVER – take it for granted.

Every cast; every fish; every outing that the only sounds you hear are the encouragement rearward geese honk to the leader of their V-formation or the song of a red-winged blackbird clinging to a cattail or evening yips of a distant coyote or the intense vibration of a banking Nighthawk's wing feathers or the violent and shocking splash when a diving Osprey hits the water or even the low-level whirl of a far-off combine.

Also, enjoy every moment spent on the water or off with family, friends and like-minded anglers. The value of discussions frivolous, serious, spiritual, sociopolitical, relational and those on just plain ol' matters of fishing are PRICELESS!

I'm going to continue with my quest here in Colorado; the quest to find waters that don't require a reservation or \$20,000,000.00 in gold bullion to fish as a "member" and those where the average fish wasn't, just the day prior, swimming about in a truck tank before being liberated by a net-toting field tech. I don't mind chasing stockers that have a chance to firm up and sport pinker flesh while adding a pound or three.

Perhaps I'll find solace in Wyoming... where last year I was berated by a resident for – being a nonresident from Colorado (in particular) – ruining their fishing by making it crowded.

Oh, God, for even a quick return home to the northern Great Plains!

They're greater for more than just their size.

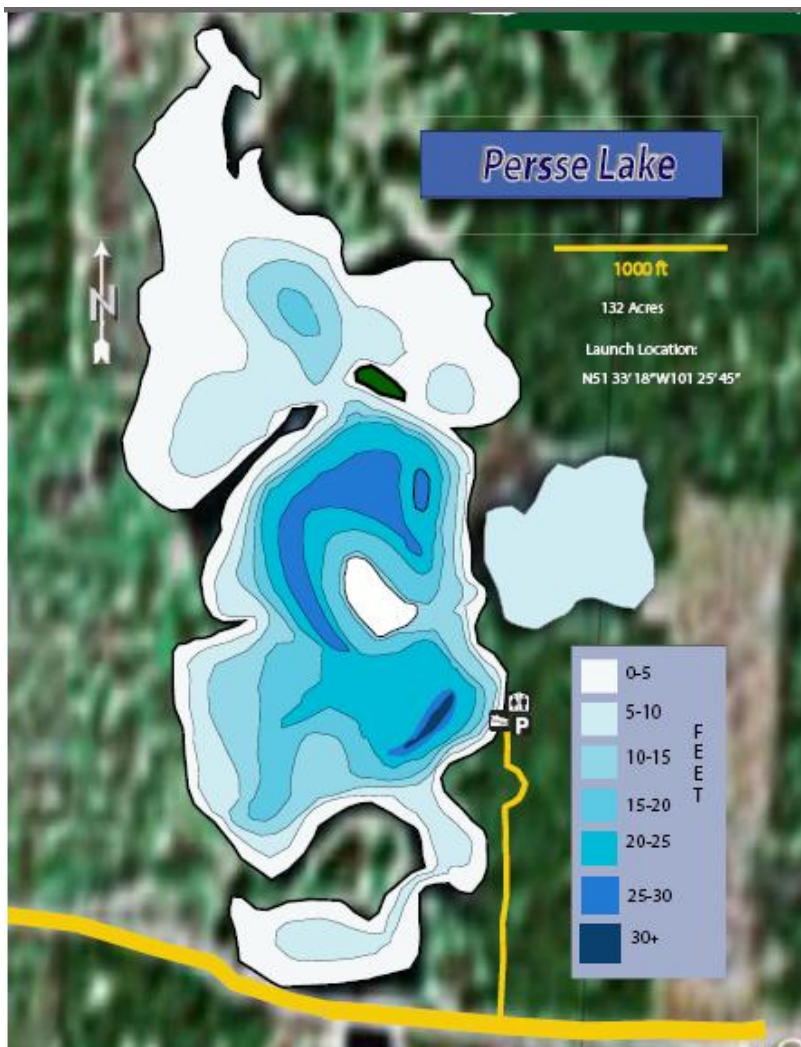
FLIPPR News!

By Bob Morenski

At last, the aeration system for **Persse Lake** has been installed and it just needs Manitoba Hydro to turn on the switch. The same is true for **Tokaryk Lake**. I attended the last FLIPPR meeting on September 8th and learned that 2300 brook trout were stocked in there this past spring. While I was fishing on Patterson Lake, the hatchery truck arrived to stock browns in Patterson. The truck dumped the contents of the trailer into lake. Kevin, the driver, told me that he 6000 plus brook trout on board which he was hauling up to Persse Lake. Altogether more than 9000 brook trout were planted in Persse Lake in 2010. Triploid rainbows were also suppose to be planted in Persse but as of right now, that is not going to happen. I did learn, however, that 4500 triploid rainbows are going to be stocked in various special regulation lakes. One of those will be Patterson Lake.



If you know where Twin lake is, finding Persse Lake will be a breeze.



Persse is a lot deeper than most of the FLIPPR Lakes. The deepest location is 33 feet.

Parkland Fishing Reports:



Jeff Blake from Utah displays a big Pybus Lake rainbow.

Patterson Lake is fishing good this fall with good numbers of 20 to 24 inch rainbows and browns. In fact, you will catch more fish over 20 inches than under.

Tokaryk Lake is fishing slower than last fall but there are a number of big fish being caught. The Tokaryk take is still in vogue. So, be sure to bring lots of 1X tippet material if you are fishing here.

Pybus Lake is still turning out many rainbows over 25 inches. This is a tougher lake to fish. Don't expect to catch a lot of fish here. There is so much food in the lake that the feeding periods are not very long. You just have to put your time in and have patience.

Twin Lake is turning out a good number of tiger trout. The days of 40 plus fish days are over here. It is now stocked every other year but the fish are much larger with a good number of 20 to 25 inch tigers being caught. Bass poppers and Moorish Mice are bringing some hot surface action.

These are the only lakes that I have reports on this fall.

Bead Head Chironomids

By Dave (*The Bong Master*) LaFrance



Above are the four color combinations that Dave likes to use. Flies tied by Dave LaFrance. (A Bob Morenski Photo)

In the fall of 2009 I started fishing with a bead head chironomid pattern at Tokaryk Lake in September and October. The original version had a silver bead head, a black thread body, and a silver wire rib. I was surprised by the success I had. A couple friends, Rodney Jersak and Al Keffin also used the pattern that fall with good success. I mostly used it fishing from the dock at Tokaryk and suspending it under a bong (indicator). It even worked during a mini blizzard in October. This spring I decided to come up with a couple more color combinations. I used a gold bead head, a black thread body, and a hot yellow wire rib. Some days the fish didn't seem to like the silver version but they would eagerly take the gold/black/hot yellow version. Both the silver and gold versions worked great on the spawning bows at Patterson this spring.

The next model was a silver bead head, silver mylar body, red wire rib, with a white thread collar behind the bead. This fly worked very well at Tokaryk Lake this spring in water deeper than 15 feet. The fly was usually suspended below the bong anywhere from 10 to 13 feet down.

I also used a gold bead head, gold mylar body, red wire rib, with a red thread collar behind the bead and had success with this also.

These patterns were used on Tokaryk, Patterson, and Pybus Lakes. They produced many fish for me on all three of these lakes and I know I need to get my boxes restocked for this fall. Feel free to mix and match any color combos you desire.

Materials: Black & Silver Chironomid



Hook: Size 10 -12 2X heavy scud hook

Bead: Silver, use size 7/32nd for the size 12 hook and 1/8th for the size 10 model

Thread: Black 3/0

Rib: Silver, size Brassie

Material: Gold & Black Chironomid



Hook: Size 10 -12 2X heavy scud hook

Bead: Gold, use size 7/32nd for the size 12 hook and 1/8th for the size 10 model

Thread: Black 3/0

Rib: Hot Yellow, size Brassie

Material: Chromie



Hook: Size 10 -12 2X heavy scud hook

Bead: Silver, use size 7/32nd for the size 12 hook and 1/8th for the size 10 model

Thread: Red 3/0

Body: Silver Mylar

Rib: Red size Brassie

Material: Gold Chromie



Hook: Size 10 -12 2X heavy scud hook

Bead: Gold, use size 7/32nd for the size 12 hook and 1/8th for the size 10 model

Thread: Red 3/0

Body: Gold Mylar

Rib: Red size Brassie

Editor's Note: *Dave recommends coating these flies "Hard as Nails" to give the flies greater longevity.*

Equipment Corner: Buying a good fly rod without breaking the bank!



Flextec rods offer a great value for the money. You can find these on EBAY.

By Bob Morenski

I always hear how expensive fly fishing is. The biggest complaint is the cost of the fly rods themselves. There was a time when paying in excess of \$200 for a fly rod was mandatory in order to obtain something that would throw a decent fly line but those days have long past. Still, there are people that will shell out \$500 plus for a rod. With that in mind, it might be cool to note that I have a \$100 rule when buying a fly rod. I will not spend more than \$100 bucks for a fly rod and I am considering revising that downwards to around \$60.00 because I have not paid more than that on any rod for several years now.

My excursion into less expensive fly rods started back in the early 90's when I started visiting my brother Ray in Key West, Florida. I needed a 9/10 weight rod for use in saltwater. So, I ended up buying a Cabelas Fish Eagle II fly rod. I can't remember the exact price but I got it for under \$100. I landed tarpon to 100 pounds, blackfin tuna, kingfish, dorado, barracuda and a host of other hot species on that rod. It handled all the

punishment that I dished out and then some. During the same period, I watched Larry Dahlberg break rod after rod on tarpon of similar size to the ones that I landed. What I put the rods through was much tougher because I did it from an anchored boat and did not have the luxury of having a guide chasing the tarpon down with the boat. I still have that rod today.

Today, the Cabelas Fish Eagle fly rods have been replaced by the Traditional and now the Traditional II fly rods. They are a good value and they cast well. The only thing that they do not have is a warranty. Personally, I would rather have several spare rods than any warranty. If I break a rod, I don't care. I just grab another out of the back of the truck. If you look for sales, you'd be surprised at what you can find out there in the \$50.00 to \$60.00 range. I broke a rod 2 years ago and when I returned from Patterson, I looked on the Cabelas website in the Bargain Cave. I found a 10 foot 7 weight Traditional II fly rod on sale for \$59.95. I told my wife and she told me to buy two. Now, I always listen to my wife and so I did.

I also found EBAY to be a great place to look for reasonably priced fly rods. There is an outfit in the UK that I have dealt with three times that offers fly rods regularly on auction. I have paid as little as \$38 for a very good fly rod. I have bought 7 rods from them to date and the most that I have paid is \$60. They have all been great fly rods for the money. The outfit's name is Tackle Discounts. Shipping from the UK comes to around 25 GBP or \$38. They automatically combine shipping so it is cheaper to buy multiple rods because they ship for the same price.

There are fly rods out there that sell for as much as \$700 to \$800 but the average fly caster will see less than a couple feet worth of advantage from them. For most lake fly fishing situations, you rarely have to cast in excess of 40 feet and almost any rod will throw a line that far even if you are trying to throw running line section out the guides. (*I don't know this guy but he has the same last name as me. It must have been my evil twin.*) Put the money that you save into something where the extra cost will provide you some value like your pontoon boat, battery, electric motor or even a spare rod.

Editor's note: In the next Equipment Corner, I am going to be reviewing Airflo's new Ridgeline Clear floating, slow intermediate and fast intermediate lines. These are not available in the US yet but I sweet talked Airflo into letting me buy one of each. I am going to be field testing them all this fall. I have only used them a couple times as of this writing but my initial report is to hold off buying anything else until these become available here because these lines are the sweetest lines that I have used to date in still water. I am just waiting to see how they hold up to big fish and cold water. So far, I am impressed!

The Last Cast

The last of the regular fishing season is here. I always consider the fall my favorite time of the year to fish. The only thing bad about it is the fact that winter is right around the corner. With that in mind, it is time to get out before another long North Dakota winter is here. The Manitoba Parkland is my favorite fall place but fishing is good on just about all North Dakota trout lakes. Take along your shot gun and get in some water fowl or upland game in the morning and spend the afternoon chasing trout or warmwater species. Salmon are in and offer great opportunity throughout the end of September and October. I hear that the fish are a lot bigger this year with lots of 10 to 15 pound kings being caught. The key words here are to **get out** and do it while you still can because this will be your "*Last Cast*" until the middle of April.

Bob Morenski

Editor

P: I would like to thank Chuck Loftis and Dave LaFrance for the articles that they contributed to this issue. It made my job a lot easier.