



# The World's *Fussiest* Sport

By COREY FORD

Dry-fly fishermen  
aren't like any other sportsmen.  
Who else comes home empty-handed after  
a completely successful day?

This was the stream a dry-fly angler dreams about. We had traveled hundreds of miles up the coast of Hudson Bay to get here, but Tom Wheeler, the flying sportsman of St. Jovite, had assured us that it was the best fishing water in all Quebec. He was right. Every cast rose a three- or four-pound squaretail; my partner, Jim Perkins, and I must have hooked and released several dozen trophy trout in an hour. We reeled in, took down our rods and carried them back to the plane.

"Sorry," we told our puzzled host. "Too good."

There's no explaining a dyed-in-the-wool dry-fly addict. Everybody agrees that fishermen are a little crazy, but the devotee of the floating lure is somebody that even fishermen think is crazy. He belongs to an exclusive clique in the angling fraternity, a sort of circle within the circle. He's the purest of the purists. He's also the world's worst snob. He looks down his nose at plug fishermen, he snubs spinning fishermen, he regards worm fishermen with icy contempt. The difference is that all the others fish for fish. He fishes for fun.

The object of a dry fly, its advocates will tell you, is to simulate a natural insect on the water in order to hoodwink a trout. Don't you believe them. In the first place, no trout in his right mind would confuse this

Photograph by George Lozarnick

feathered imitation with any known species of edible bug. Experts who have spent a lot of time lying around the bottoms of pools, looking at things from the fish's point of view, report that a dry fly floating downstream is so magnified by the water that it resembles a Catalina flying boat coming in for a landing. The leader is approximately the size of an eight-inch hawser, and clearly visible behind it, if the trout pauses long enough to look, are two enormous hobnailed brogans and a pair of ballooning waders, past which the stream foams and gurgles warningly. To make the deception even more apparent, the face of the fisherman himself is mirrored upside down in the water, his expression distorted by the current into the leer of Frankenstein's monster. My theory is that the whole spectacle strikes the trout so funny that he laughs until the tears come to his eyes, thus blinding him, and he inadvertently inhales the fly while gasping for breath.

The real object of a dry fly is not to please the fish but to please the fisherman. He selects a particular pattern from his fly box because it happens to appeal to his mood of the moment. Maybe it has some sentimental association, maybe it just matches his shirt. His satisfaction lies in dropping it cocked at the head of a run, and watching it

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## The World's Fussiest Sport (Continued from Page 37)

ride back down the swift current, bobbing lightly over a riffle, gliding around a boulder; reversing its course and halting poised for an instant in a back eddy under the bank. If a trout happens to share his enthusiasm for the fly, well and good. The angler plays his adversary on a taut line until the fish is exhausted, and leads it carefully to shore. Then he kneels beside it and grips it firmly around the body—first wetting his hands so he will not damage its protective oily coating—and removes the barb from its upper lip. He holds the trout facing upstream a moment longer, until its gills begin to move regularly, and then he spreads his hand and watches it dart back into the current with a farewell flick of its tail.

But the dry-fly angler does not come home empty-handed. His creel may be barren at the end of the day, but he brings back other things: the sound of running water and smell of wet rocks, the memory of a grouse drumming on a log, a beaver's V-shaped wake as it crossed the pool, the sudden skirl of a kingfisher, like a winding reel. They will last longer than a fish curling in a pan.

Dry-fly enthusiasts have long since given up trying to defend this position to nonfishermen. When a passer-by suggests with a condescending smile that the angler could get his limit much quicker if he used a live shiner instead of a bunch of feathers, he does not argue. He simply hits the intruder over the head with his own minnow bucket and goes on fly fishing in sullen silence.

A friend of mine, an ardent purist, was challenged once by a golfing acquaintance as he turned loose a large trout he had just netted. "Why go to all that trouble to catch a fish," the exasperated golfer demanded, "if you don't want to eat it?"

"Do you eat golf balls?" my friend inquired pleasantly.

The answer, of course, is that fly-fishing is a sport, just as golf is a sport, with its own self-imposed rules. Granted that the angler could take more fish if he used night crawlers or dynamite. By the same token, the golfer could achieve a hole in one if he picked up the ball, carried it across the green and dropped it in the hole. The bigger the handicap, the better the contest. A purist uses a split-bamboo rod that weighs only a couple of ounces; he ties his fly to a leader as fine as a cobweb; he even files the barb off the hook to lengthen the odds against himself. I suppose the trout think he's crazy too.

It is because they're so generally misunderstood that fly-fishermen tend to be antisocial, and stick by themselves in small groups at social gatherings. There's nothing like the joy of a devout angler when he finds a dinner companion who shares his hobby. A couple of antique collectors are delighted to discover a mutual interest in pewter snuffboxes; a pair of camera bugs will talk each other's ears off; but when two dry-fly fanatics get together, the rest of the guests might as well go home. Long after the party is over, the anglers will still be huddled in a corner, discussing the technique of the roll cast or debating the comparative merits of the fan wing versus the spent wing, while their wives drum their fingers on the arms of their chairs and the hostess glances significantly at the clock on the mantel. This is why fly-fishermen don't get asked out to dinner much.

They speak a language all their own. Don't call the purist's rod a pole, for instance, or refer to his reel as a pulley or his line as a string. Don't say he "caught" a trout; he "takes" trout and "kills" salmon. Above all, don't ask him why on

earth he has to buy another rod when his closet is bulging with them already. No matter how much equipment an angler has, he always needs more. Hunting tigers with elephants may represent a large initial outlay as a sport, but once you've acquired a string of pachyderms your investment is largely over. Not the fisherman. He may possess a thousand feathered lures, stuffed into aluminum cases or empty tobacco tins or old typewriter-ribbon containers, but he can't pass a tackle store on his way home without adding a half dozen new ones to his collection. Every evening when supper is over, he dumps them all out on the dining-room table, like a miser counting his hoard of coins, fluffing and primping and combing out their hackles, and putting them back in individual compartments with their names on the covers: Royal Coachman and Gordon Quill and Whirling Blue Dun, Wickham's Fancy, Pink Lady and Hare's Ear. He never fishes with them, of course. When the time comes, he'll tie on the same matted fly that he's been using for the past ten years.

Every angler has his favorite pattern. Some like light flies, some prefer dark, some go in for large White Millers and others swear by minuscule Black Gnats.

One fisherman may employ a full-bodied tie to suggest a female insect ovipositing on the water, another fisherman will try to imitate a nymph. (There's nothing sillier than a middle-aged fisherman trying to imitate a nymph.)

Personally I have a pet fly called the Corey Ford, which was tied by Walt Dette, of the Beaverkill, and which has heavy gray hackle and a cream-colored body. My own hackle is rather sparse, particularly on top, and my body is more or less the conventional pink, but otherwise it is a good resemblance. I haven't taken a trout on it yet, but I like the looks of it in the band of my hat.

A real purist, of course, ties his own flies. This is a very intricate process, and I won't go into it here, except to mention that the amateur needs a metal vise, forceps, tweezers, a bobbin, a bodkin and at least seven fingers on each hand. The body of an artificial fly is usually wrapped with silk thread or mole fur or a split quill, the wings are sections of webbing from a stiff tail feather, and the legs are fashioned by winding a rooster's neck hackle at right angles to the shank of the hook. The fly tier garners this material by devious means, pilfering a few spools of thread from his wife's sewing basket, unraveling the baby's sweater for worsted or stealthily slitting his host's sofa cushions in search of (Continued on Page 98)



## You be the Judge

By BRUCE M. JONES

A competitor accidentally rammed Mike's delivery truck and put it out of service. The garageman, after repairing it, refused to release it until Mike paid his bill of \$200. Mike, broke, could not do so. Without his truck, he couldn't earn a cent. Months later, he sued his competitor not only for the \$200 in damages but for an estimated \$3000 in income that he lost because his truck was tied up.

"The accident was the direct cause of my not being able to earn that money," Mike argued. "Therefore I am entitled to it as part of the accident damages."

"Nonsense," his competitor replied. "I'll pay the \$200, but your other loss was caused by your being broke and unable to pay your garage bill. I had nothing to do with that."

If you were the judge, would you award Mike the extra money?

... ..

Mike collected every cent. The court ruled that as he was "financially unable to make expenditures" necessary to repair his truck, he could in this instance recover the damages resulting from loss of its use.

Based upon a 1944 California case.

(Continued from Page 96) feathers. One fisherman I know made a habit of visiting the poultry show each year, until the management complained to the police that several rare East Indian gamecocks were missing bits of plumage which had evidently been snipped off by some vandal through the wire of their cages. Another flytier of my acquaintance, even more unscrupulous, used to carry a pair of manicure scissors to Easter services, and augment his stockpile from the bonnets of parishioners kneeling in the pew ahead.

You can always tell a dry-fly fisherman, but, as the old saw goes, you can't tell him much. For one thing, he is usually irrational and slightly absent-minded, and when he meets his wife on the street during fishing season he is apt to tip his hat politely and walk past her with a faintly puzzled glance. He'll sit at his office desk by the hour, drawing little fish doodles on his blotter or winding his typewriter ribbon with a preoccupied smile, or else flipping the pages of his desk calendar ahead to May and circling a date with a red pencil.

If somebody calls him on business, he'll reply briefly, "O.K., sell a thousand shares," and bang the receiver; but if it's a fellow angler on the phone, he'll argue for twenty-five minutes about the advantages of a turned-up versus a turned-down eye on a trout hook.

At night when he gets home from the office he ignores his family and sits in the living room in moody silence, gazing dreamily at the stuffed trout over the mantel with its scales peeling and a chunk of plaster missing from its nose. It occurs to his wife that he has the same glassy expression.

There are other sure ways to detect a dry-fly fanatic. His necktie may be grease-stained and faded, but it has a pattern of trout flies or leaping fish, and he wouldn't



wear anything else. His paperweight has an artificial fly embedded in plastic, his mail basket is heaped with fishing catalogues, and instead of a photograph of his wife and children in the easel frame on his desk, he has a snapshot of that six-pounder he took last year in Agojumpiney Lake. He will absently snatch a flying insect out of the air, inspect it thoughtfully, and murmur, "Light Cahill, size sixteen," as he releases it again. If the day is hot and sweltering he remarks happily that this weather ought to start the big hatch in Junction Pool, and if everybody else complains about the heavy rain we're having, he observes that it's just what we need to start the trout rising. I have a friend, a true maniac, who puts a few drops of citronella on his handkerchief every morning before he goes into the

city. Says he likes to sniff it nostalgically during a business conference.

No matter how much time he spends preparing his tackle, of course, a dry-fly fisherman is never ready when fishing season finally arrives. He may have put in the whole winter greasing his line and varnishing his rods and rearranging his flies, but for some reason the eve of opening day invariably finds him in a frantic state of last-minute preparation. All night long the house echoes to the slamming of bureau drawers, the thump of tossed boots, and an occasional bellowed inquiry from the second-floor landing: "Who's deliberately hidden my wading socks, the ones with the red tops?" His bedroom is littered with freshly dressed flies and looks like the aftermath of a pillow fight. His waders are hanging in-

side the shower stall, turned inside out and filled with water to see if they leak. His sticky trout line zigzags back and forth in a cat's cradle down the staircase, his newly varnished rod sections dangle from the living-room chandelier, and his leaders are soaking in the kitchen sink. The entire contents of the coat closet have been tossed into the front hall in a frenzied search for his canvas fishing jacket. His temper is not improved when he discovers that the children have been using his landing net for a badminton racket, and his wife has given away his old hat to the Salvation Army. Along about midnight he decides to grab a little shut-eye and finish packing in the morning, as a result of which he sleeps through the four A.M. alarm, and gallops downstairs, pulling on his waders as he runs. He is halfway to the stream before he remembers that he left his rod on the hall table.

It is long after dark when he staggers home. He collapses into a chair in the living room, extends a foot wearily for one of his offspring to pull off his wading boot, and accepts a highball from his wife with a deep sigh. The bridge of his nose is sunburned a lobster red. His lips are puffed and cracked. One eye is swollen shut where a black fly nailed him, and he has rubbed some insect repellent into the other. He has worn a blister on his heel because a pebble got down inside his socks, and he skinned both knees when he climbed a tree to retrieve his fly. His arms ache, his knuckles are raw, he stuck a fishhook in his thumb, and he's caught a severe cold from falling in a stream. He hasn't seen a sign of a trout all day.

Don't waste your sympathy on him. He'll be right out there on the stream again tomorrow. If you must feel sorry for somebody, consider his wife. Poor lonely gal, she's married to a dry-fly fisherman.

THE END

# All the \*reasons in the world



## Hollywood's Oriental Fad (Continued from Page 29)

location in Japan. Both pictures, incidentally, were well received by Japanese audiences. An earlier film, a cops-and-robbers clunker called *House of Bamboo*, almost created an international incident.

If Hollywood has left its mark on Japan, which it has, Hollywood itself has not escaped unscarred. Not since the American military occupation has there been such a resounding clash of cultures.

Less than three weeks after his arrival, Wayne swore he was a foot shorter than his normal six feet four inches—from forgetting to duck when passing through Japanese doorways. Speaking of doorways, Wayne made one for himself by hurling his 220 pounds against the fragile wall of a hotel cottage when the room boy failed to show up with his key. Wayne off screen is very much like Wayne on screen.

Hotel space was a major problem for the Townsend Harris crew. At one time during the shooting of Harris' landing at Kawana, production manager William Eckhardt had 256 people, including thirty-one American men and seven wives staying in forty-two different hotels. Some of the "hotels" were reputable houses of ill fame, although the unsuspecting wives never knew it.

Veteran actor Sam Jaffe and his beautiful young wife had to move twelve times in three weeks. Housed in an unscreened Japanese inn they were so dive-bombed by mosquitoes that they slept with pillowcases pulled over their heads.

Being the star, Wayne was, of course, given the best accommodations—at the staid old Kawana hotel, an institution patronized almost exclusively by weekend golfers.

Twentieth Century-Fox, which produced the Harris movie, obligingly of-

fered to take over the whole hotel for its cast and crew. The management not only declined this offer but, with shocking disregard for one of Hollywood's top personalities, insisted Wayne move out to make way for the weekend regulars.

Wayne fought a delaying action. In bed with a cold, he insisted he would die if he had to surrender his room. When he recovered and the Japanese again asked him to move, Wayne demanded that he be carried out.

Finally, reduced to one room of his original three-room suite, Wayne threatened to burn the hotel down—and stayed. Two weeks after he checked out it burned down anyway. Wayne, by then royally established in Kyoto, 200 miles to the west, had a fireproof alibi.

Hollywood also had its troubles with Japanese plumbing, which is the squat rather than sit type. Dogged by complaints from cast and crew, production manager Eckhardt had his carpenters carve two wooden toilet seats to American specifications.

Two women attendants were hired to keep the place tidy, but they spent so much time watching the shooting of the movie that Eckhardt fired them. In their place he hired one woman to do the work of two. With her baby strapped to her back, she not only did her job well but brightened everybody's day by placing fresh flowers in a discarded whisky bottle.

Director Joshua Logan was also beset by lavatory troubles. One day a sign went up over one toilet door, unfortunately phrased FOR SPECIAL PEOPLE, meaning Americans. This discrimination so outraged one of the Japanese actresses that she stopped production by lining up

the entire Japanese cast before the "Special People" door.

It is quite possible that the Japanese have found Hollywood just as inscrutable as Hollywood has found them. But Kawana fishermen never let a mere \$3,500,000 production like the Harris story muddle their business instincts. One

... ..

### Thoughtful Junior

He's cruised away another tankful,  
Yet I'm expected to be thankful  
That there's enough, by calculation,  
To get me to the service station.

Laurence Eisenlohr

... ..

day, at a sound over the village loud-speaker, Huston's entire set erupted into unscheduled activity. Without bothering to shed their nineteenth-century costumes, the majority of 350 fishermen-extras leaped into their boats and headed for the open sea.

The whole operation went off with such fire-drill efficiency that the fishermen were beyond the breakwater before the astounded Huston learned what had happened. Dolphin were running in the offshore waters. Like cowboys herding cattle, the fishermen formed a crescent behind the school, beating the water with bamboo poles to keep the big fish headed landward. After neatly steering the dol-

phin through the narrow mouth of the breakwater, the fishermen closed the harbor with nets. Then, after an hour, while the fishermen rested and the dolphin tired themselves trying to escape, the fishermen methodically slaughtered them.

When the slaughter was over, the fishermen had killed 270 dolphin worth \$3500. The dolphin run lasted three days and cost 20th Century-Fox an extra \$8300 in lost shooting time each day. Huston, however, was not displeased. A hell-for-leather realist, he ordered the slaughter scene shot in color for use in the movie.

"It's always the same with fishermen," says Eckhardt. "Whether they're Japanese or Portuguese, they're a shrewd lot."

The Kawana fishermen were no exception. To give Kawana the look of a century ago, 20th Century-Fox had to pay 276 fishermen to keep forty-four modern fishing boats out of the harbor for twenty-seven days of shooting.

"We tried to talk them into fishing during the day," Eckhardt recalled, "but they said they couldn't because it was the night-fishing season. So we had to pay them to put their boats in another nearby port. Then we had to hire five buses to haul them back and forth to their homes."

At this point, production costs soared to 20,000,000 yen daily—about \$55,000. Russian-born producer Eugene Frenke, a man normally cheerful in the face of adversity, became visibly morose.

The knowledge that Wayne was getting \$666,666.67 for fourteen weeks' work on the Harris film, and Huston another \$300,000 for directing it, didn't make him feel any better. Wayne, cheerful enough, recalled that the last time he worked for 20th Century-Fox, in 1929, he was paid seventy-five dollars a week.

"And to think of all the money we're paying you now," Frenke said with a sudden attack of melancholy.

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