

# First Coast Fly Fisher

May, 2001

Jacksonville, Florida



## First Bonefish

Dick Choate holds a very healthy bonefish he caught this month in the upper Keys. See related story on Page 4.

**COMING**

**SOON**

JON CAVE  
CASTING DAY, SAT., APRIL 28

SALTY FEATHER DAY  
SUNDAY, APRIL 29

FFF SOUTHEASTERN  
CONCLAVE  
MAY 17-19

STRIPER FISHING, ROANOKE  
RIVER, EARLY MAY  
HIWASSEE RIVER TRIP JUNE  
6-9

### MEETING TIME AND DATE

SOUTHPOINT MARRIOTT  
MONDAY, MAY 7  
CASTING PROGRAM 6 PM  
MEETING 7 PM

### SPEAKER

JIM DOYLE  
AND CAPT SAM LANE

### TOPIC

Fly Fishing The Outer Banks;  
Flats Fishing Steinhatchee Area

# Three Must -Do's Coming Up

1. The *Jon Cave Casting Clinic* on Saturday, Apr. 28, at the M & M Dairy. Jon is one of the great casting instructors and can help you perfect your stroke.

2. Sunday Apr. 29, *John Bottko, Randy Lanier, and Bob Minke from the Salty Feather* will be at the M&M Dairy to teach you fly casting, fly tying and rigging. A special guest, distance casting specialist and Polar Fibre owner Paul VanReenen will teach distance casting and specialty fly tying.

3. Next month: A group of us are traveling to Gulf Shores, AL, for the *Southeast Council Federation of Fly Fishers annual Fly Show and Conclave*, Thursday through Saturday, May 17-19. It's always lots of fun. Come on with us. Email me or Dick Michaelson for information.

And . . .for the more adventurous: Contact Bud Larsen to sign up for *Roanoke River striper trip* and the *Hiwassee River trout trip* in May and early June. Bud's number is 389-0055, or email him at <larsentl@excite.com>.



For the next few months I'll be using a substantial part of this column to provide casting information to club members. I'll answer questions, re-hash basics, and introduce some new stuff. I hope you find it helpful. This month's topic?

## The Roll Cast

Long a staple of trout fishers, the roll cast is often overlooked in salt- and warmwater fishing. I consider it to be one of the most useful casts in your casting quiver, second only to a well-practiced sidearm cast. A roll cast can help you quickly reposition a fly, lift a sinking line from the depths, or help free your fly from snags or grassy hang-ups.

Since a roll cast doesn't employ a standard back cast, you can use it to fish areas where trees, banks, bushes, or other impediments prevent a backcast.

The roll cast uses a standard forward cast, just like a basic cast. This method moves the fly line forward at eye level or above and creates a tight, wind-cheating loop, which unrolls in front of you then falls to the water.

Here's how you do it:

1. Remove slack from your line. Begin with the rod pointed at your fly. Slowly, slowly raise your rod tip up to eye level, then sweep it gently to your side and behind you so that your elbow extends and your rod tip points up and behind you, away from the target. Perform this movement correctly and will see all of your fingernails and the side of your thumb. *YOU will not see* your lower knuckles, the back side of your hand, or your full thumbnail.
2. **Stop!!** Wait for at least a full second before you begin your forward cast. The fly must stop completely in the water. Count out to yourself, one-one thousand. The line should hang (not sag) from your rod tip and the surface tension of the water will grab it.
3. Begin the forward cast just as you would any other; your hand pulls the rod butt section faster than the rod tip. Make the rod tip follow a straight path, parallel to the water. Continue until your hand is well in front of your shoulder, then perform a **sharp** snap-stop. A sharp rod-stop is essential. Your line will roll out in front of you, above the water, not on it. As in most forward casts, your rod tip should increase slowly in speed, then stop to get maximum loading and unloading motion of the rod.
4. Practice roll casts on the water. Grass doesn't have enough surface friction to grab and stop the line properly before the forward cast begins. You can, however, tie your leader end to a brick (or a nail in the ground) and then practice the roll cast.

### **Don't Chop Down!**

Some casting instructors teach the proper method of roll casting is to 'chop' downward on the forward motion of the roll cast stroke, like chopping wood with a hatchet, or cutting meat with a meat cleaver. This is an inefficient method of roll casting. It produces few positive results and usually ends up with the line collapsing on itself in a tangle 25 feet in front of the caster.

Here's why! *The fly line always goes in the direction the rod tip was moving during the speed-up-and-stop!!* With the chopping motion, the water's surface tension grabs the line and impedes the forward motion, stealing its energy.

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### NEWSLETTER

David Lambert

# Basic Charlie

## Easy Fly = Lots of Species

# Fly Tiers Corner

with  
*Kevin Cohenour*



Quite often we fly fishers will want to find a new, better pattern to fish the upcoming season; be it for reds, speckled trout, pompano, or whatever. Often we already have in our arsenal an effective, yet forgotten pattern.

The Crazy Charlie is one such perhaps forgotten pattern. Originally tied for Bahamas bonefish, the Crazy Charlie has proven itself effective for that tough quarry. It is a “go to” fly for bone fishermen, not just in the Bahamas, but in our own Florida Keys. Many derivatives of the Crazy Charlie have been tied and proven effective.

Over the (what seemed) long winter, I managed to get out and night-fish the Pensacola area a little. Well, ok, I did some day fishing too. We discovered that a size 2 Crazy Charlie with a white wing enticed the hungry trout. Since it looks like a shrimp, any fish that will eat a shrimp will take a Crazy Charlie. Redfish, trout, and even flounder have fallen for it.

Perhaps, one species that you may not think of fishing for with a Crazy Charlie, is pompano. But, the pompano cannot resist a Crazy Charlie tied with a tan wing. Whether they take it as a shrimp, a sand flea, or baitfish is immaterial. The key is they take it.




The Crazy Charlie is a simple pattern


that can easily be mastered by the beginner. So, as the pompano begin their run, toss them a brown Crazy Charlie. Try it...you'll like it. Tying instructions follow:

### **Basic Brown Crazy Charlie**

**HOOK:** Mustad 34007 (equal), sz.2 to 8  
**THREAD:** White monocord or size G”

**EYES:** Bead chain or lead dumbbell  
**TAIL:** Pearl Krystal flash  
**OVERWRAP:** 20 lb. Clear mono or body wrap  
**UNDER BODY:** Silver mylar tinsel  
**WING:** Brown calf tail, w/ optional Krystal flash

1. Secure hook in vise and wrap thread to 1/3 hook shank position back from hook eye. 
2. Using 10 diagonal wraps in each direction, secure the eyes at the 1/3 shank position. Make 5-10 horizontal wraps around the base of the eyes (and above the hook shank) to lock in. 
3. Wind thread to the bend. Attach a sparse amount (about 10 strands) of krystal flash (approximately 1/2 hook shank length) at the bend. Wind thread to behind the eyes and attach the mono, long end rearward. Hold up on the mono to keep it on top the shank, and wind the thread back to the bend to secure mono to shank. Wind thread back to behind eyes. Cut mylar tinsel on a sharp angle and tie in behind eyes. 

4. Wind the tinsel back to bend and then back over itself to behind the eyes. Tinsel “edges” as you wrap should just touch but not overlap. Secure tinsel behind eyes and cut excess. Overwrap with mono in tight wraps. Secure behind eyes and cut excess. Coat mono and tie in point with head cement. 
5. Turn hook over in vise (point up). Wind thread to just in front of eyes. Cut, clean, stack, and attach a sparse clump (matchstick size) of calf tail hair. If desired, add a few strands of krystal flash on top the calf tail wing and slightly longer. Build a tapered head, whip or half hitch, cut thread and cement.



Note: For variations try using gold tinsel, various colors of flashabou, krystal flash, etc. for the body, then overwrap with the mono.

You may use white, tan, pink, yellow, chartreuse, etc. calf tail for the wing. Try using colored “swannundaze” or clear “V” rib instead of mono. You can even make a krystal flash body coated with epoxy instead of mono.

Until next month...Good Tying and Fishing!



# A Month Full Of Firsts For FCFF Fly Angler

by Dick Choate

Some friends who live in the Keys invited my wife and I to visit a week or so ago, so my wife Maureen and I drove down to take them up on their offer. We stayed on the ocean side of Lower Matecumbe Key, near Channel 2.

I took Martin Smithson's "Fishing Guide to the Upper Keys & Florida Bay" with me and saw in it that bonefish were found on the beach behind us. The afternoon we arrived, we had spotted about a 30" bonefish swimming within 10 feet of the shore. We were told that wasn't unusual. We had planned to rent a boat and go bonefishing, but when we arrived, we found that my friend had picked up a stomach virus and didn't feel like going out.

I thought I'd take a shot at fishing on my own the next morning. It was pretty windy during the day, but I thought it might be calm at sunrise. Before turning in, I put a new 12-lb. leader on my line and tied a Gotcha on the tippet and set it outside the door. I was in the water by 6:45 AM and waded about 30 yards out. It was high tide and I was waist deep. It was too dark to see anything in the water, so I just blindcasted in a circle. The sun peeped over some clouds on the horizon at 7:15 and I casted parallel to the shore, gave the fly a few seconds to sink, then made about two strips.

I felt a slight tug and thought I had hooked seaweed. I tried to strip again and realized I had a fish. I no sooner got the line on the reel when he took off. I was palming the reel and noticed something red go through the eyes of my rod. I was watching the fish run and subconsciously wondered what I had seen and realized it was red thread from the loop on my backing. . .and half of my backing was gone.

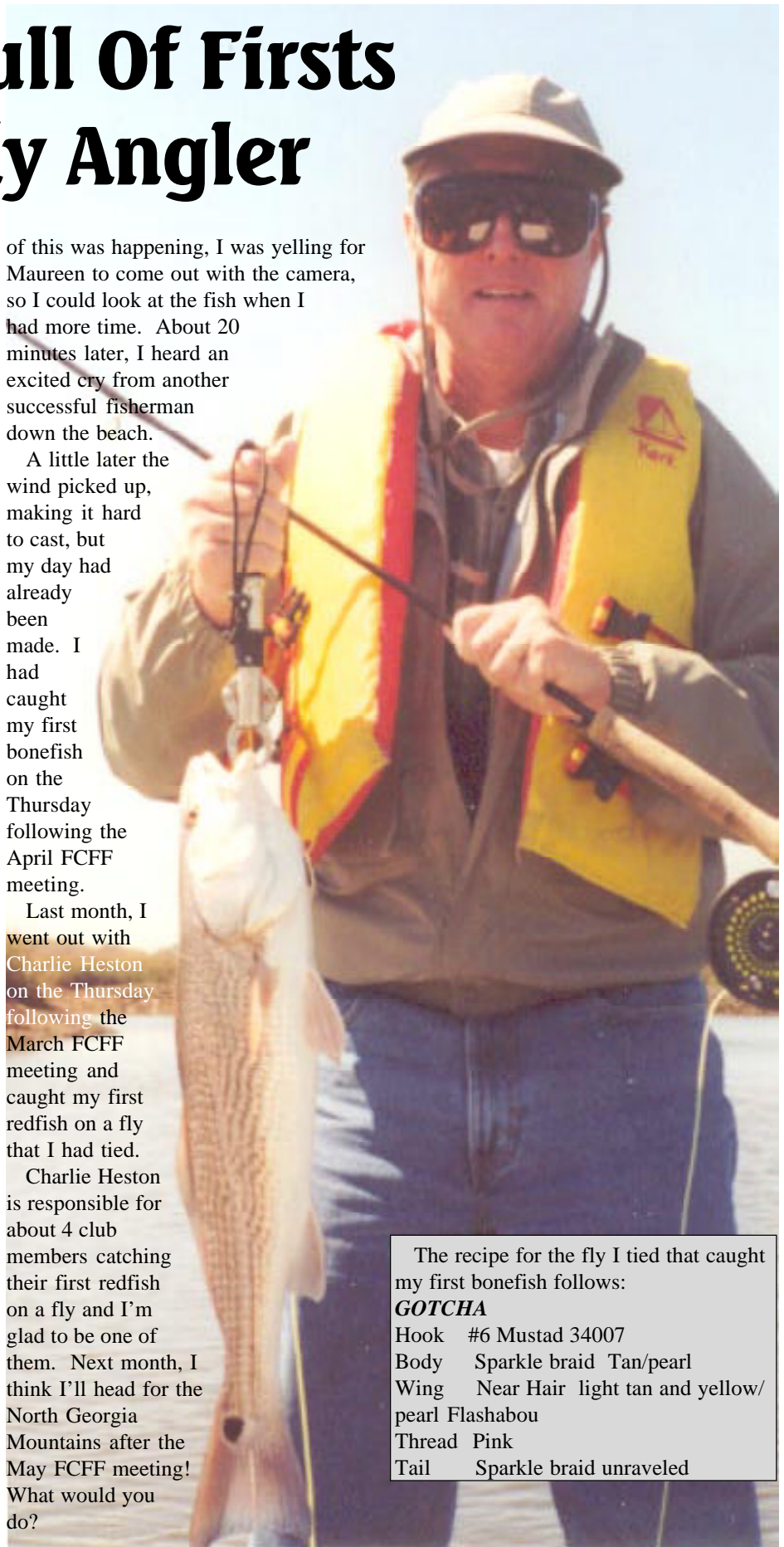
Wow, now I know why bonefish are considered great sport fish. Several times I reeled him in within a few feet of the leader and he would turn and run out my fly line and half of my backing. While all

of this was happening, I was yelling for Maureen to come out with the camera, so I could look at the fish when I had more time. About 20 minutes later, I heard an excited cry from another successful fisherman down the beach.

A little later the wind picked up, making it hard to cast, but my day had already been made. I had caught my first bonefish on the Thursday following the April FCFF meeting.

Last month, I went out with Charlie Heston on the Thursday following the March FCFF meeting and caught my first redfish on a fly that I had tied.

Charlie Heston is responsible for about 4 club members catching their first redfish on a fly and I'm glad to be one of them. Next month, I think I'll head for the North Georgia Mountains after the May FCFF meeting! What would you do?



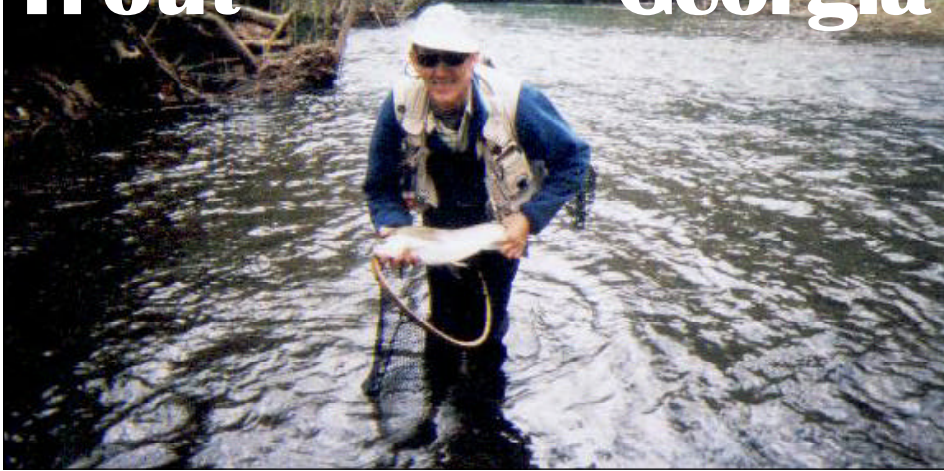
The recipe for the fly I tied that caught my first bonefish follows:

**GOTCHA**

Hook #6 Mustad 34007  
Body Sparkle braid Tan/pearl  
Wing Near Hair light tan and yellow/  
pearl Flashabou  
Thread Pink  
Tail Sparkle braid unraveled

# Rainbow Trout

# North Georgia



by Mike Head

At 2:30 a.m. my wife and I arrived in Helen, Ga. We were in bed by 3:00 a.m. We met the Unicoi Outfitters guide John Cross at 8:30 a.m.

After checking in at Unicoi, donning waders, boots, and vest, we put rods in John's truck and drove to the streamside.

At streamside, John recommended we change my 6x tippet to 4x to keep from losing fish. Adding a strike-indicator and double nymph rig, we entered the stream. After a couple of casts to get use to the rig, we started fishing. Talk about 180 degrees from our normal cast. We used open lob casts to keep strike indicators and nymphs from tangling.

I was making the casts where they needed to be, but missed the first few strikes. I found I needed to react like I was fishing for sheepshead; then I started hooking fish. The first one caught about 1 ½ lbs. I hooked a nice fish and pulled the hook. Then the largest fish of the trip which jumped and pulled the hook; it was between 8 to 10 lbs.

I felt snakebit on big fish; they were all getting off. I landed several up to 2 ½ lbs and asked John if he saw anything I was doing wrong. His answer: "Some days you can't keep any on the hook, others you don't lose any. You're doing fine. Keep casting."

A few minutes later I landed one about 3 ¼ lbs., then another about the same size.

This was Nymph Fishing 101 and it finally came together.

As we moved up to fish another undercut

bank, I told John, I would normally fish the faster cut behind us. He laughed and said, "Most of my customers don't want to get near that spot. They consider it to fast."

I told John, "I consider that to be at minimum speed, a lot slower than in the Smokies."

ESPN had filmed a brown trout of about 15 lbs. in that run a week earlier. I was told to see if I could catch him.

The first one about 2 lbs. A couple casts later the rod folds up. I keep the fish off a tree in the stream, then chase it downstream, then back upstream around the tree. A few jumps more then I follow him back downstream.

John said, "I'm not use to people who can fight a fish." I worked the fish in the current to tire it, then worked it into an eddy to be netted. This was the fish of a lifetime. A lot of hollering, hand shakes, and a couple of photos later and we released the fish.

I said "Maybe 6 lbs?"

John said, "Conservative aren't you. Now catch that brown."

After several casts and one rise to the indicator-(looked like a log), we called it quits.

Best day I ever had on a trout stream! I would recommend John Cross 706-878-3083 <[flyfish@unicoioutfitters.com](mailto:flyfish@unicoioutfitters.com)>Helen, Ga.

Thanks to my wife Barbara and my daughter Michelle for my getting me this great trip for my birthday.

## Please Support These Contributing Guides, Instructors, and Fly Shops

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# OUTINGS, TRIPS, AND EXPEDITIONS

## May's Mill Cove Outing Will Produce Lots of Species of Fish

by *Mike Head*

FCFF fly anglers will gather Saturday, May 26 at 8 a.m. to fish Mill Cove for redbfish, sea trout, tarpon, spanish mackerel and whatever else will hit a fly. Meet at the ramp at the end of Rogero Rd., north of Ft. Caroline Rd. At the end of Rogero turn right, go two blocks to the ramp. Many of us will be there at 7:30 to pair off boaters and non-boaters.

Bring rods 7 wt. to 9-wt for most fishing, although 11-wts. and 12 wts. are needed for the tarpon which usually are here in May. Last year pompano and spanish were here also. Flies for this trip include clousers, deceivers, crab patterns.

Tarpon flies will need to be dark, purple or black usually work, and bring sinking lines for the poons. Use glass minnow patterns for spanish (they did not hit till the end of the out-going tide last year.

For more details, call Mike Head, 388-8590, [flytier326@aol.com](mailto:flytier326@aol.com), or come to the May meeting to sign up at the welcome table.



DR. LEE HINRICHS HOISTS AN EARLY SPRING  
REDFISH CAUGHT WHILE FISHING W/ MIKE HEAD

## Hiwassee Trout Trip Is Great Way To Open Summer

by Bud Larsen

This year FCFF will again trek to Reliance, TN to fish the beautiful Hiwassee River. We will make the trip June 6-9.

The Hiwassee tailwater is judged to be one of Americas 100 best trout streams by Trout Unlimited. The stretch we will fish is classified as a "Tennessee Scenic River" and there is no commercial development. There are big holdover rainbows and browns, especially in the special regulations, 3.5 mile trophy section

The Hiwassee has an excellent insect population, so your chances are good for afternoon dry fly action, using a 4 or 5 wt, and streamers or nymphs, on a 6 wt, between hatches. TVA "guarantees" sufficient water releases for recreational purposes after Memorial Day, hence our first week in June scheduling. The guides charge \$300 per full day for two fly fishers. Last time we were able to rent a large lodge that slept 10 people (two doubles and three over-and-under bunk beds). This kept our group together and added to the camaraderie.

Numerous freestone trout streams exist in nearby Cherokee National Forest and the Great Smoky Mountains National Park if you want to extend your trip.

If you want to be a part of this fun trip, make a commitment at your earliest convenience to ensure that you will have a guide and boat available. Call Bud Larsen for more information at work 398-0055, or home 724-9187.

Please send e-mail to [larsentl@excite.com](mailto:larsentl@excite.com)

## Last Call For NC Roanoke River Trip

by *Bud Larsen*

FCFF will be returning to the Roanoke River to fish for stacked up, spawning stripers at Weldon, NC the first week in May. . The first week in May is the peak of the season, the number of good fly fishing guides is limited, and the better ones book up early. The guides charge \$450 per day for 2 fly fishers. On the other hand, if you will be fishing on your own without a guide, you can wait until the last minute to decide to go because there are plenty of motels nearby.

On a good day this river can yield 100 stripers per boat for two fly fishers, during the peak season. This is a unique opportunity for a beginning fly fisher to experience many tugging lines to strengthen a newly forming habit. If you want more information, contact Bud Larsen, at work 398-0055, or home 724-9187.

# Unicoi Outfitter's Jimmy Harris Inspired FCFers To Try N GA Trout

(Ed. Note: Mike Head's Article on Rainbow Trout In North Georgia on Page 5)

by Bud Larsen

Our March presenter was Jimmy Harris, owner and operator Unicoi Outfitters in Nacoochee Bend, two miles from Helen, GA. Jimmy has the exclusive lease to 1.5 miles of the Chattahoochee River and the same footage on the Chestatee River, a half-hour away.

Both rivers are first-class trout streams, managed for a quality population of rainbow and brown trout. The fishing is catch-and-release, and for a fee of \$90 per half day, and \$150 for a full day. This does not include guide services.

Jimmy has found the most effective presentation to be "high sticking," the use of a 10' 6 wt rod, weighted nymphs, and short casts directed to holding areas.

The Chattahoochee, like most free stone streams, does not produce the prolific insect hatches found in richer tailwater streams. Therefore, the Chattahoochee trout are opportunistic feeders. The season is best during March through June, then again in mid-September through December, but the area is fishable all year around, although July and August can be slow times with lower water conditions.

Jimmy has observed that visiting salt-water fly fishers typically cast too far and have a problem recognizing drag and correcting it. Using a guide for your first day should accelerate your learning curve and lessen your frustrations.

In addition to providing guide services on the Chattahoochee, he also supplies guides for the Chestatee, Chattooga, and Hiwassee Rivers in North Carolina, as well as the Nantahala River. He also operates a well-stocked fly shop in Helen. His shop is 70 miles north east of Atlanta.

For information on fishing North Georgia, contact Jimmy Harris at 706-878-3083, or visit his web site, [www.unicoioutfitters.com](http://www.unicoioutfitters.com). Also, mention that you're from Frist Coast Fly Fishers.



RYAN HIGGINBOTHAM (L), AND C.J. RHODEN PROUDLY DISPLAY A NICE TROUT AND FOUNDER (RESPECTIVELY) WHICH THEY CAUGHT WHILE FISHING WITH CAPT. DOUG MOORE RECENTLY. BOTH FLY FISHERS ARE JR. MEMBERS OF FCF AND ARE PART OF THE FLY FISHING KIDS PROGRAM SPONSORED BY JOINTLY BY FIRST COAST FLY FISHERS AND M & M DAIRY.

## WHAT ARE YOUR FLY REELS REALLY MADE OF?

(From the Dan Blanton Bulletin Board [www.danblanton.com](http://www.danblanton.com))

A number of questions have arisen about barstock machined aluminum fly reels. I thought I would throw in some alloy trivia to throw some light on the subject. Aluminum alloys are classified into a number of series, with 4-digit numbers.

The first digit identifies the series and the major alloy components. The 1000 series is at least 99% pure aluminum, with the last two digits showing how much of that other 1% is aluminum. Thus 1100 alloy is essentially pure aluminum, and is not very strong but still widely useful.

The 2000 series are copper containing alloys. 2024 is probably the most widely used aircraft alloy and is very strong. Because of the copper content it is not as corrosion resistant as other alloys, and that is why it is not usually used in fly reels.

The 6000 series contain Magnesium and Silicon, and in proportions to form Magnesium Silicide. 6061 is the most widely used of the 6000 series. It is lower corrosion than 2024, but only about 2/3 as strong.

The 7000 series contain Zinc and Magnesium and are about the strongest of the alloys. 7075 is one of the strongest aluminum alloys used in industry and is about twice as strong as 6061, but is more corrosion sensitive.

The other designator, such as -T6 indicates the tempering (heat treatment) process, and the T6 temper leads to very good alloy strength. So 6061-T6 would seem to be the most appropriate material for machined reels, combining strength, with low corrosion, and modest cost, since it is widely used and available. The 7075-T6 and 7178-T6 alloys are less corrosion resistant because of copper and are somewhat more expensive; but strong as heck!

Every single reel maker who answered my question as to what they used, makes his reels out of 6061-T6".





C.J. RHODEN , RYAN CLARK, AND CASEY MOORE (L-R) TIED FLIES AND DREW A BIG CROWD AT THE FLORIDA SPORTSMAN S SHOW. FCFF PARTICIPATION IN THE SHOW WAS HEADED BY DON BUTLER.

## FOR SALE

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**Boat/Motor/Trailer** -- 1998 Pathfinder, Tunnel Hull, 16' 10" length, 60HP Yamaha, Great White bow mount (removable) trolling motor, poling platform, live well, Eagle depth finder with temperature gauge, seats with backs, trim tabs, custom cover, aluminum drive-on trailer. Runs very shallow. Kept clean and covered. Ready to fish! \$9,000. Contact Donn McKinnon 904 777-3649 home, 542-3142work or donnmck@worldnet.att.net

**Rod/Line**--Sage Graphite III 890 RPLX, WF8F Line 9'0", 2-piece rod and case, \$200; Dick Choate-- 223-1571

**Rod/Reel**--Loomis Mega 12 wt Tarpon Rod w/ FINNOR 4.5 reel and 400 yds. or 30-lb., backing and WF12 intermediate line; \$475 for both; call Randy Lanier, 645-8998

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