



Newsletter April 2011



Pictures from opening day: Dennis Martin cooking, Rollie Johnson with a first fish, Ray Capobianco with a nice rainbow, Dennis Martin with another nice rainbow (photos by Roy Swartz and Bob Lynch)

April Meeting on the 21st

The March meeting will be Thursday, April 17th at 6:00 PM. At 6:00 we will have a roll casting clinic led by Roy Swartz. As Roy is an excellent caster, this is a good opportunity to get some pointers on this important skill. The grill will be on for a little dinner during the

clinic. The business part of the meeting will start at 7:30. After business Bob Rifchin will give us a presentation on the worm hatch. Bob knows his stuff, in salt or fresh, so don't miss this if you plan to chase stripers this spring.

Property News

The spring cleanup day on April 2nd was a great success. We had one of the best turnouts in years - 17 members came out on a cold Saturday morning and they did some great work. In addition, several members have been working on their own over the past several weeks to spruce up the property. Thanks to all for participating!

We had the parking area and part of the driveway repaired and re-graded with new material before opening day. Some teetering stones on the dam wall were also

repaired. This cost the club \$1,300. The results look great.

One winter casualty at the clubhouse was the left-hand front steps. A snow plow got a little too close and a couple of steps were damaged. Bob Proctor repaired the steps. Thanks Bob!

One more improvement project is in the works for this spring. The deck of the front porch needs to be replaced. We'll be organizing a crew to do this at the April meeting.

Opening Day Recap

Dennis Martin and a team of cooks prepared a great breakfast that fortified us before the opening bell. Turn-out was very good - 31 people showed up for breakfast. Rollie Johnson, as last fall's "first-fish" winner, was offered the honor of ringing the bell, but he declined, hoping

to defend his title. Rollie landed the first fish again this year (how does he do it?). However, another angler hooked and lost a fish at the same time. Fishing was a little slow at first, but it picked up later in the morning. Overall, it was an excellent opening day.

Needham Fishing Derby

On Saturday May 7th the Needham recreation department will host their annual kids' fishing derby at the Needham Reservoir (behind the public works buildings at the corner of South St and Dedham Ave). The reservoir will be

stocked by the state the week before. The club traditionally lends a hand by offering assistance to kids (and parents) with little fishing experience. The derby is from 9:00 AM to Noon. If you have a couple of hours, drop by and help out.

Membership Renewal

It's time to renew your membership. The board is leaving the dues unchanged for 2011:

\$125 for adult members, \$50 for junior members.

Cards for members who paid but did not pick up their cards by opening day will be mailed out.

Please display your card when fishing the pond.

Roll Casting

By Roy Swartz

The roll cast is an incredibly versatile tool for the fly-fisher. For those of us who fish the Needham trout pond, it's almost essential for consistently catching trout, since so much of the surface feeding occurs at the rear of the pond, where the trees prevent back-casting. The roll cast is the only true one-part cast, because you

don't have to make a back cast in order to execute the roll cast. You're basically starting with some line on the water in front of you, and that's one of the key points: the line must be in the water (you can't even practice roll-casting without water!). Then, you basically just cast it out with a normal casting motion.

This is obviously very handy if you've got brush or trees behind you. But there are other advantages to the roll cast. If there's a strong following wind and you can't easily throw a back cast tight into the wind, the roll cast is your best option because it uses the wind to deliver the fly. You can actually "shoot" line through the guides when the wind is at your back, and throw the fly even further than a conventional cast. We can also use a roll cast just to get the line out straight on the water before making our first conventional cast, and for bringing a retrieved line out of the water to more efficiently start the next cast. The roll cast has many uses and variations, and you will become a more versatile and successful fly-fisher as you add these to your repertoire.

The key to the roll cast is the starting position. Start with a few feet of line in the water in front of you (you'll gradually add more line with successive casts, until you have enough for the distance you may need). The cast begins by pulling your rod back slowly, with a slight tilt away from your body. This will prevent the line from flipping up and hitting you in the face when you make the forward cast. A small amount of line will come out of the water in front of you and roll back behind you in a wide arc. Then, before this nice arc collapses, just execute the forward part of the cast. Essentially, you can pretend your line is nicely straightened out in the air behind you, and take it from there. The forward cast should be just like a regular cast, with a gradual loading move,

followed by the speed-up-and-stop. Think about hammering a nail horizontally into a door or deck railing, so you'll use only the forearm with a bit of wrist at the end of the stroke. The line should then just roll out in front of you. The important thing is to make that nice abrupt stop when you forward cast, just like you would (or should) if you were making a conventional cast. If you practice this enough with the roll cast, you might even improve your conventional casting!

So far, we've only covered the standard roll cast, which starts over your right shoulder if you're right handed (reverse everything if you're a lefty). You can also do a backhand roll cast, which would start over your left shoulder. The advantage of the backhand cast is that you can angle the line in a different direction. When you cast over your right shoulder, you can easily direct line straight out or to the left, but it's difficult to go to the right. What do you do when a nice fish has just taken a midge with an inviting swirl 20 feet to your right? Switch to a backhand roll cast and you can cover that rise. Finally, what do you do when there are tree branches hanging down in front of you? Again, the angle of the roll cast can be adjusted, just like you can with conventional casting. That's called a side-arm roll cast. This one is more difficult to execute because the line is starting closer to the water. You'll need more speed to prevent it from collapsing onto the water before the fly reaches the target. I hope to see you April 21st at 6:00, for some roll casting!

Fishing Report

Fishing since opening day has been good. The fish are already starting to focus on midges in the surface. However, streamers and woolly buggers are taking fish. The next month should have some great fishing.

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