



LARRY BYBEE (21) of Reynolds captures a rebound in last Friday's Sandy-Reynolds basketball game despite efforts of Sandy's Jim Martin (32). Others in the picture are Jim Wolf (45) of Reynolds and Doug Moffitt (42) and Bob Ihrke (44) of Sandy. Ihrke was high scorer as Pioneers triumphed, 73-59. (Post photo)

FROM The RIVER'S EDGE

RIVERS OF HOOD
(The Sandy)

- continued from last Week -

Downstream from Zig Zag a few miles is Brightwood, another village. Just below Brightwood a major tributary of the Sandy, the Salmon River, enters the system. This river normally runs bright and clear, except in times of abnormal high water or when greenish snow tinted water is running off. This important angler's water heads up in its uppermost reaches with minute beginnings. The tiniest glacier on Mt. Hood is the source of this river's beginnings. This first small creek rapidly tumbles downhill 2000 vertical feet in about a mile of stream bed before it levels out in the

extensive Salmon River meadows at about 4000 feet or less elevation.

When this glacial beginning first enters the meadows, it is not an overlarge creek once the snow is gone from the slopes above. Numerous small creeks vein this expansive meadow which drain, not only the timbered upper slopes of Hood itself, but also the surrounding lesser mountains which encompass the meadows.

At the lower end of the meadows, Mud Creek used to meander through a marsh. Under the auspices of the Forest Service and the Isaac Walton League, the stream was dammed and a very pretty bluewater lake now stands where once was the marsh. This is Trillium Lake. Campgrounds were constructed and the Game Commission keeps the lake well stocked with trout. Some good fly-fishing is to be had at the upper end of this lake and also in some of the meandering creeks in this meadow.

The middle section of this Salmon river below the meadows is in a roadless section of the mountains and is accessible on foot by trail. Here the river swings through a wide loop around 180 degrees to wind up heading north at its junction with the Sandy. Access to this part of the river is from the Skyline Road down the Limney Creek trail. Heavily timbered slopes and steep walled ravines and small canyons where tiny feeder creeks enter the systems make this middle section of the Salmon from Welches at the lower end of this almost roadless area.

In this portion, the Salmon is a picture book, mountain river containing rapids, pools, chutes, falls, and deep, slick-surfaced glides and narrows flowing through the wooded mountain valley. A number of small creeks enter the Salmon in this wooded area, but none are of significant size to attract an angler. Some of these, though, are used by Spring Chinook and Steelhead for spawning purposes and nursery streams.

At a spot about three miles up from the mouth of the Salmon, while it is still flowing through the timber, the character of the river changes as its valley starts to broaden

and level out. Here the river starts to slow down at the same time it enters civilization again. Being a fertile stream, much insect life abounds in the Salmon, and in these lower three miles it is fished hard. But here also it is bounded by both summer homes and permanent homes strung along its banks as well as by the village of Welches. It is bridged frequently here and in general well used.

The Salmon passes under a bridge on Highway 26 a few hundred feet above its confluence with the Sandy. All through this stretch of lower mountain between Brightwood and Zig Zag, the Sandy too, is bordered with Summer homes and a few permanent residences. To fish many stretches of either river through here, one should get permission from the land owners to avoid trespassing.

Below Brightwood, the Sandy really went on a rampage during the December floods of 1964 leaving its course entirely and making new channels, undercutting banks and shifting its bed sideways, and in general moving property lines whose limits were tied in to the river banks. A number of homes and, yes, even the homesites were completely obliterated by this flood. After it was all over, and the river had subsided, it no longer flowed in its original bed in many stretches.

The Corps of Engineers stepped in in the late spring of 1965 and large bulldozers, trucks, and a small army of men, and restored the river to its old channel, doing much filling, dyking, etc. to get it to stay put. The river still has an artificial look in some of these areas as the carefully graded channel is still in evidence. But, with each high water, the river alters these man-made grades and continuous uniformly sloped riffles. In time, holes, rapids, chutes, and all the other natural characteristics of a river flowing naturally will be restored.

Alder creek and Wildcat creek enter the Sandy below here. The latter is an innocent little kitten of a creek flowing down through its fast falling stony bed most of the time. But during Chinook winds in winter when heavy snow melt comes cascading down from

Wildcat Mountain above, it is a veritable tiger. This pleasant looking little rill has been responsible for loss of property and lives during its rampant periods.

Now, the river is slowed down into a long pool by Marmot dam. This is a power company dam put here to divert water through a flume over the Roslyn lake on the lower end of Marmot ridge. This lake is the forebay for the power plant on the Bull Run River which flows along the base of the ridge at this point. The water drops several hundred feet from the lake through the turbines below.

A fish ladder is provided at this dam to pass the migrating Salmon and Steelhead runs upstream around this barrier. During the late summer and fall, the results of this diverted water is apparent by the low stream flow between the dam and the union with the Bull Run twelve miles downstream. A large part of this low water river, as it is sometimes referred to, flows through canyons and steep-sided timbered ridges.

Sheer cliffs arise here and there along its course. Large eddying pools with wide beaches occur wherever the valley widens out, and these are connected with steep, fast-falling rapids and downhill chutes. The river loses elevation fast between the dam and Dodge park where the Bull Run flows in.

A short way below the dam at Marmot, Badger Creek enters the river. Not a long, nor a large creek, Badger Creek is hard to find along parts of its course. Its bed is badly choked with logging debris and parts of trees cut down and rolled into the creek, as was often done in the old days of wasteful cutting.

In some places you can locate the creek by hearing it rather than by seeing it. An interesting place to fish, occasionally you get quite a surprise by the size of the native cutthroat trout you have wangled out of a narrow slot between two logs. The dark beauty of these fish may surprise you. Never getting much light because of all the woods junk overhead, these trout color darkly and richly in their gloomy, never well lit haunts under the logs.

Down over the cliffs behind the town of Sandy, a large creek, Cedar Creek, flows into the river. The Oregon Fish Commission has a Silver Salmon hatchery on this creek, which has increased the sport fishery for this species in the lower river during October and November. Phenomenal success has attended the efforts of this hatchery and returns are most gratifying.

This is an area of winter Steelhead fishing as well as fall Salmon angling and many of the holes have picturesque names. Among the better known holes are the Pipeline hole, The Henhouse hole, Pothole, Garbage hole, The Chute, and Gravel Pit hole.

The Bull Run tributary system is for the most part locked up in the Bull Run Reserve, source of the City of Portland's water supply. The Bull Run starts as the outlet of a large lake of the same name. Several other lakes in this same basin also contribute. It has one major tributary stream, The Little Sandy River which heads up in the Goodfellow Lakes another lake basin inside the reserve. Even though this system has no bearing on the Portland water supply, it is also locked up in the reserve and is inviolate for recreation purposes. No travel is permitted inside the reserve except by authorized personnel.

From Dodge Park downstream, the Sandy flows through a deep canyon for most of the rest of its course to the Columbia. This course contains many great large pools, long riffles and boulder strewn rapids.

Three more small creeks

enter the system before the Sandy's waters lose their identity in the great water volume of the Columbia. These are in order going downstream, Trout Creek, Gordon Creek, and Beaver Creek. Of these, Gordon Creek is notable as it is quite long, commencing on the southern slopes of Larch Mountain. Trout Creek comes downhill fast off the plateau immediately east of the River. Beaver Creek flows entirely through farming country to the west of the lower river, and it too drops precipitously into the final canyon of the river. Some autumns, good runs of Harvest trout run this creek.

Finally the river enters the treacherous sand delta from whence it enters the Columbia. When Vancouver sailed up the Columbia, this Delta was quite prominent. Some of his sailors tested it and found no bottom to the vast watery sand fan and named it the Quicksand River. This was shortened to Sandy River by early mapmakers as it isn't a quicksand formation in the true sense of the word, but just a vast accumulation of the sandy burden the river has carried down from the mountain and dumped where its waters have slowed by running into the resistance of the fast flowing Columbia.

The outer edge of this sandy fan approaches a half mile in width, and the channels the river follows through this desert change almost daily as the sand is constantly shifting and moving from the pressures of the percolating water flowing through it. In a period of two weeks the main channel has been known to move gradually from the extreme downstream end of the delta to the high cut bank at the extreme Eastern end of the fan.

In a straight line, the distance traveled, from glacier at 7000 feet to the Columbia at about 18 feet, is about 35 miles. In the meanders of the main Sandy and all its tributaries there must be several thousand miles of bankside. All these combined to make the Sandy one of the most interesting river systems you can encounter.



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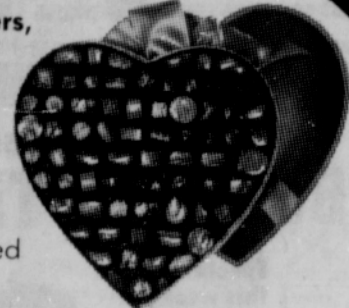
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