

Mr. and Mrs. John Hogan from Santa Cruz, Calif., former residents of Brookings are house guests over the holidays at the home of Mr. and Mrs. C. A. Mat Kenzie.

Mr. and Mrs. Walter Darger from Sioux Falls, South Dakota, are guests for the holiday season at the home of Mr. and Mrs. John Darger. Walter Darger is an uncle of John's.

TELL OF 20 POUND CUTTHROAT NEARLY TAKEN IN CHETCO RIVER

The article below was first printed in the Oregon Northwest Angler and Hunter in 1946, and written by C. H. (Tommy) Thompson.

Entitled "His Majesty, The King", it refers to the "grand daddy" of all Cutthroat trout. The author claims that the fish is the biggest ever in that category—and it still may be lurking around in the Chetco river.

In late June in the year 1924 (some of us fishermen, L. J. (Jim) check, now a well-to-do contractor; George Thomas, my brother and myself made a boat trip up the Chetco River, which empties into the Pacific Ocean near Brookings, in Curry County, Oregon. At that time the Chetco was little known, and seldom fished, owing perhaps to the fact that most of the entire length was utterly inaccessible, except by boat and there were few boats. As a matter of fact, it still is. The present road leaves the river at the first summer bridge about 3 miles upriver, and does not come even remotely close until it dips down to the river again at the foot of Long Ridge, some 15 miles upstream from Harbor.

Looking back over the many seasons' streams that I have fished, I believe it is the coast's most beautiful stream. It descends lazily in a series of riffles, succeeded by long deep holes, through surroundings of most unmarred beauty, of lush green verdier and clean gravel bars.

It is quiet, remote and even now is not over fished when one gets away from the road. During the fall and winter months it enjoys a wonderful run of Chinook Salmon and Steelhead, but in the summer gets low and glass clear. It is then that the river is seen at its best as far as beauty is concerned.

We three men had a boat transported up river to the last ranch on the south side, about 8 miles up stream from Harbor, then leading our duffle into the boat we took off up stream. To describe the fishing we encountered would mean going into the realm of unbelievable things as compared to present day fishing. Within an hour after leaving the ranch we had pinched down the bars on our rods and were reeling with fish as fast as they were brought to boat.

The larger fish were taken on small double bladed spinners but after the first day we used fly only, a large silver doctor, fished deep and was just as effective. One of the remarkable features of this trip was the scarcity of small fish, as I recall it, we didn't get anything smaller than a foot long, with exception of those taken in the very shallow riffles. I took my casting rod and a

number 3 spinner, tipped with a generous piece of cray-fish tail and I began casting into the deep pool. I made several casts across the pool (about 50 yards), allowed the spinner to sink well to the bottom, then slowly reeled in the line, normally each cast would have brought several savage strikes from good sized fish. After making several casts without a sign of fish in the pool, had I given it a moments thought, I should have been better prepared for what was to follow, for in a river that is teeming with fish, the lack of strikes should have warned me that this pool was inhabited by one or possibly two monstrous trout that had either killed or driven off all other smaller fish.

At any rate, disgustedly, I decided to call it off. I made one last cast across the pool and having lost interest, looking up river watching Jim cast flies for pan fish, glancing idly back to see how near I had reeled my lure, I was frozen to the spot, for there, directly behind my spinner was such a fish as all old timers dream about and wake up screaming in the night. It looked like a large Chinook Salmon, deep of belly, broad in the back, but it was dark, very dark and speckled with black spots.

His mouth was open—He was going to strike! Through a somewhat checkered career, I can look back over many bonehead acts, but right here I committed the prize of them all. I stopped reeling. The spinner wobbled and started to sink, hastily I picked it up again but it was too late. His Majesty turned ponderously about and swam paunchily back into the deep blackness of the pool. Feverishly I cast again and again until full darkness was upon me, but in vain, once in a decade could a person hope to fool this wise old monarch into striking.

That night around the campfire, I told the boys what I had seen and we determined not to leave three more weeks, at least had another look at this record breaking Cutthroat, for Cutthroat he was and without a doubt the largest of his species in all the world.

The next morning we waited until the sun was high above the pool, and taking the boat we rowed out and then we quietly drifted, all eyes peering down into the water. Then we saw him, almost motionless, in about 15 feet of water, lazily fanning his fins, huge and unafraid, master of all he surveyed. We were directly above him, but if he noticed us at all, it was only with the utmost indifference. The water was dead calm, glass clear and well lighted so that every detail of his size and marking were plainly visible to us all.

The average of our estimates

Bowling Leagues Take Vacation

League bowling takes a vacation this week, except for the Peaverettes on Thursday night who took last week off. Judging by the talk around Azalea Lanes most previous high scores will be beaten come 1955.

Sunday night mixed doubles resulted in the return of Ricky and Homer Haggerty to the winners circle after a long absence. Betty and Art Guthrie placed second with Bertie and Ken Pratt third.

The junior bowling league is developing some good bowlers. Jimmy Campbell, Tommy Evans, Jim Darnell, Jerry Anderson and Stanley Gribble all have averages of 140 or over. Sylvia Gates, Jo Anne Renhard and Carol Rausch are leaders among the girls.

fishermen, familiar with coastal fish species and we knew him for what he was—a giant Cutthroat.

We had to start back that day, so there we left him. How long it had taken nature to raise him to that unbelievable size, and how much longer would he live? Would he grow larger as time went on?

It was not until twelve years later, in 1936, that I again visited the beautiful Chetco, but those years had wrought the usual, inevitable changes. A number of guides were operating on the river and no longer could one stroll casually up to a deep pool and within a minute be fast to a large fish. One of the best known of these guides was a certain Hiram Hight, and told him the story of the big trout. He had me describe the place in detail and he knew of its location, remarking that it is now known as the "S" bends. He also related that the year previous he had been bringing two fishermen down the river by boat and that on passing this particular hole, one of the men had a tremendous strike. The strike was so terrific it broke the light split bamboo rod just above the grip, then the line broke and was that he was close to 50 inches long. His girth was difficult to estimate from above but he looked to be at least 6 inches across the back at the widest point. His weight we guessed to be at least 20 pounds, understand that in late June there's no possibility of Salmon being in the Chetco, and such Steelheads as are landlocked—there are the usual pale-colored "snakes" that everyone is familiar with.

We three were experienced an instant later a huge fish that looked like a salmon broke water about 100 feet astern. He told me that he had puzzled over this strange occurrence for the past year, but thought perhaps his eyes had betrayed him into thinking the fish to be larger than it really was. He swore to take that huge Cutthroat but he never did and no doubt no one else has, for if they had, the news of this monster would be common knowledge, at least locally.

I have never been back there, since as time in recent years he not permitted but some day I'm going to—soon I hope. Does his Majesty still rule that dark, deep stretch as he must have done for so many years before we first

Cal-Cre League

	W	L	TP
B. P. O. E.	41 1/2	18 1/2	36820
Mellons	33 1/2	26 1/2	34809
A. Lanes	30 1/2	29 1/2	34473
S. R. Leg.	27	33	32212
Westbrook	24 1/2	35 1/2	32306
Rod & Gun	23	37	31179

High Team Series	
B. P. O. E.	2649
Azalea Lanes	2568
Mellons	2474

High Team Game	
B. P. O. E.	930
Azalea Lanes	923
Mellons	877

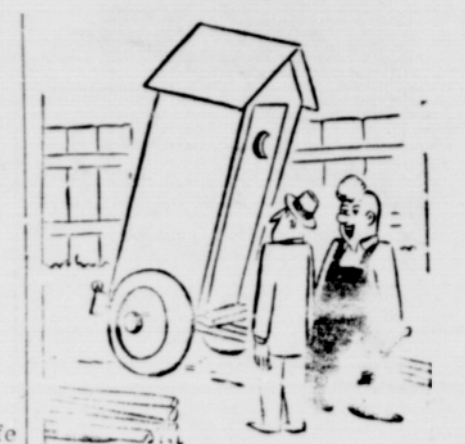
High Ind. Series	
Toby Mello	629
Pink Nilson	590
Ed Edson	587

High Ind. Game	
Toby Mello	254
Bill Darnell	245
Ray Gadberry	235

Christmas Holiday Driving Is Safe

The holiday season was a safe one in Brookings, according to Police Chief Bud Cross. No wrecks were reported in the city limits, and only two arrests were made. The police department wishes to

thank the people who in some cases thought better of driving their own car and used a taxi. They are asking all motorists and pedestrians to be careful over New Years, and hope that the residents can be as successful in driving as they have in the past.



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