



Small Worlds Around Us

By LYNN M. WATKINS

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Billfish and Needlefish Names Are Appropriate

In the clear water just below the surface, and directly under the dock, a small school of billfish and needlefish seemed to be sewing two indistinguishable areas of water together. Their exceedingly long and slender bodies, like silver streaks, flashed in and out with the rapidity of flying javelins.

As each slender fish turned in the water, its silvery sides caught the sunlight and flashed with a brilliant sheen. A hovering gull overhead detected the flash and swooped down with wide open mouth, ready to snatch the fish from the water's surface.

The gull missed, the target disappeared before his very eyes as the fish suddenly turned. The silvery flash was gone, only the dull, greenish side of the fish, which matched the color of the water, was turned toward the diving gull. The back of the fish was an olive green and it seemed to know when to turn this side toward its enemy.

Correctly Named
It is easy to see why these long, slim, pencil-like fish acquire the name of "needlefish." It is readily understandable why one of the species is called "billfish" too, for this close relative of the needlefish has exceedingly long jaws which is its most prominent feature.

The long bills are armed along their lengths with tiny teeth which give the slender little creatures an almost ferocious appearance when viewed at close range. One of its relatives, the "houndfish" often reaches a length of nearly five feet, but most of the common species seldom exceed 20 inches.

The needlefish, apparently fearing the boredom of "getting in a rut" constantly vary their swimming procedure by often progressing through the water in unorthodox positions. Instead of swimming horizontally, like fishes are expected to, these odd-balls frequently become vertical, and ply along with their stomachs as a cleaving edge, at the same time moving forward with amazing speeds. Sometimes they move head up, at other times with the head downward. It seems to make little difference to the fish which end is up, or which is down; either

way they swim equally well.

To carry the unusual into the outer edge of the utterly ridiculous, the needlefish lay the most freakish eggs of any fish in the sea; eggs that are like nothing else in the world. Each egg of the many that are laid in the early spring or as soon as the water warms up, has tufts of tiny hairs scattered over its surface. These hairs, or what could better be called, strings, entangle their strands in and among the sea weeds, or mat together and hold the precious eggs in one place against the surge of the tide, or the push of the waves, until they hatch.

This arrangement assures the mother needlefish that her eggs will not be scattered over the seven seas. Her family will all be together when they have to face their aquatic world as very tiny, thread-like youngsters with long bills, and the ability to move like darting slivers of light just below the water's surface.

They will grow fast, and with good luck, reach a length of some 20 inches, but no larger in diameter than a wooden clothespin, with their upper and lower jaws forming into long, ridiculous looking beaks.



CHIEF EXECUTIVE—Actress Angie Dickinson receives a kiss from actor David Niven after she was sworn in as the chief executive of Universal City, Calif., by deputy mayor Niven. Mayor Dickinson succeeds Doris Day in the mayoralty post of the community, which consists entirely of a motion picture and television studio and has had its own mayor since 1927. Universal City's 408 acres makes it 28 acres larger than the domain of Monaco. (UPI)

Gambling—III

'Gamblers Anonymous' Organization Last Refuge for Compulsive Gambling

By HARRY FERGUSON

Washington — (UPI) — Telephone directories in many big American cities have a listing of "Gamblers Anonymous." This organization is the last refuge of the compulsive gambler, the man in whom the urge to gamble has become so strong that he is a psychiatric case.

The other day I looked up Gamblers Anonymous in the Washington telephone book and dialed Regent 7-6300. Ninety minutes later I was sitting in a parked car talking to a compulsive gambler who found his own salvation while poised on the dark brink of suicide.

The "anonymous" in Gamblers Anonymous means what it says. No member of the organization is allowed to reveal his identity or that of any other member in a newspaper story, a magazine article or a television broadcast. They are trying to make new lives for themselves, many of them hold good jobs and they don't want anybody to rake up the past and use it against them.

"Just call me Ed W.," said the man sitting next to me in the parked car. "I know I'm cured now and it wouldn't hurt me personally to be identified, but it's the rule of our organization."

"I'm retired now and have

a small income. But I'm still paying off my gambling debts so I've taken a part-time selling job. I might as well be frank about it, I was a compulsive gambler for 30 years. Any kind of gambling, horses, craps, cards, roulette, but mostly at the horse tracks. I don't think I missed a track in the United States, and I figured out the other day that I must have lost between \$75,000 to \$100,000.

"Anyway, a couple of years ago I owed about \$10,000. I had done everything. Sold my war bonds, borrowed from the bank, put my life insurance in hock.

"Sometimes you win, but most of the time you lose. Once I had a big day at the Pimlico track and won \$6,000. I owed money all over the place. It never occurred to me to settle up with my creditors. I was saving that \$6,000 to gamble some more and eventually my bookie got all of it. I lost it all in four days.

"That was my last stop. I began to develop suicidal tendencies. There wasn't much communication between me and my wife. I went to a clergyman and a doctor, but they didn't seem to help much. Then one day my wife was reading in a magazine, something about gambling called

'A Tiger On His Back,' and it told about Gamblers Anonymous.

"She called them up and took me to a meeting. I listened to those men tell about their troubles. Don't ask me to explain how it happened but right there in that meeting I got cured. I haven't touched a card or been to a race track since. I'm still in debt for about \$5,000 — this car isn't even fully paid for — but I'm cutting down the debt all the time. And, brother, do I feel like a new man. I'm really living now for the first time. As long as I live I'll never forget April 6, 1962. That's the day my wife took me to Gamblers Anonymous."

Psychiatrists know compulsive gamblers are sick men and they have all sorts of fancy names and explanations for the ailment. Ed W. doesn't know about those things, and his explanation is simple: "You just don't give a damn about anything except gambling. Day and night it's the only thing on your mind and nothing else matters."

National headquarters for Gamblers Anonymous is in Los Angeles (Address: P.O. Box 17173), and it was founded in 1957 by Jim W., who previously had been a member of Alcoholic Anonymous. There are no dues and the or-

ganization exists entirely on voluntary donations. A financial statement for last February showed expenses of \$747.67, which left the headquarters \$300.42 in the red for the month.

Next: The fixers and the odds against the player.

GIRL KILLED

Sweet, Idaho—(UPI)—A 20-year-old Huntington, Ore., girl, Jackie Aldridge, was killed near here Tuesday when the jeep she was driving skidded on loose gravel, overturned and crushed to death.

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Burton, Taylor Announce Plans To Be Married

London—(UPI)—Elizabeth Taylor and Richard Burton have said they plan to get married as soon as they can, the London Daily Sketch reported today.

Neither Miss Taylor, 31, nor the 37-year-old Welsh actor the met while filming "Cleopatra" were immediately available to comment on the story.

Fergus Cashin, the Sketch's entertainment writer, said Burton told him:

"I want to marry Elizabeth and I will marry her."

"There have been all kinds of rumors, but this is what is going to happen."

"No ifs. No buts. She wants to marry me. I want to marry her."

"I'm so happy Richard has told you," Miss Taylor was quoted as saying.

The actress' husband, crooner Eddie Fisher, said when informed of the story in New York: "I wish them all the happiness. My plans are, and always have been, to accommodate the lady."

Board Favors Care In Foster Homes

Portland—(UPI)—The board of directors of United Good Neighbors (UGN) in the Portland area has voted for a resolution favoring foster home care rather than institution care for normal infants.

The resolution affects, in varying degrees, the Alberta Kerr Nursery, Waverly Baby Home and Our Lady of Providence Nursery. These are said to be the only "baby homes" in the 11 western states which care for normal children.

The UGN resolution means that eventually the placing of normal children in a baby home for any length of time will be eliminated, with the children to be placed in foster homes instead.

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