

KLAMATH FALLS, OREGON, SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 1963

Klamath Anglers Brave Opening Day Snows To Catch Wily Trout

By GEORGE ALOTRICO

After a hard winter of 40 and sometimes 50 degree weather spring finally broke, with 16 inches of snowfall in the Klamath Basin, and brought with it opening day of trout season.

Opening day this year looked more like one would expect it to look in Cortina, Italy, during the opening of the winter skiing season or at Lake Winnebago, Wis., when the anglers first start to drag their ice shanties out on the ice for sturgeon spearing.

And how did this affect the spirit of the local opening day trout angler? That's right... it didn't in the least.

Opening day has that magnetic kind of pull that makes Joe Doaks get up at 2 a.m., put chains on all four snow tires on his four wheel drive, arrive at his favorite fishing hole behind 250 other intrepid, and be as happy as any half frozen man could be because he's glad he's "at least beaten the crowd."

So it was with opening day in Klamath County, April 20, 1963, as man and his pickup cut swaths through the virgin snows to Lake of the Woods, Fish Lake, Hyatt Reservoir, Thompson Valley, Crescent, Odell and the fish only know where else.

Fishing was good on the opening weekend, by and large, with the lakes winning handsily over the streams in fishing success. Streams were, for the most part, very cold, with Seven Mile, Fort

and Crooked creeks at about 36 degrees, Spring Creek at its usual 41 and some of the Williamson tributaries as high as 44. Fish feed very little when water temperatures dip much lower than 40.

Another thing that hurt stream fishing was that the rivers were only lightly stocked before the opening, the major ones getting between 500 and 1,000 (and probably closer to the lower figure).

The major rivers were to be stocked again with legal fish this past week. The county's allocation is 60,000 fish, Art Gerlach, district state biologist, indicated.

Some areas that will still be hard to stock due to the bad weather include the Sycan and upper Sprague and tributaries.

Few fish were caught on Spring Creek during the opener, but there was a report that some browns, one as big as five pounds, were taken. Plenty of hatchery rainbows should be available this weekend.

Only a handful of fish was taken on the upper stretches of Seven Mile, but again, some big browns were caught trolling the Seven Mile canal.

Success at Crooked Creek was the best with quite a few rainbows, both big and small, coming out of the stream below the hatchery. A few fish were taken out of Fort Creek, sizable browns again, and some rainbows were reported taken from the lower Sprague.

Lake fishing was better, and

Howard Prairie, with the Dead Indian Road free of snow, drew throngs. Fishing success was terrific there and almost everyone caught several.

Hyatt and Thompson Valley were the next best producers, but access wasn't quite as easy.

A few big fish between four and six pounds were taken troll-

ing in Klamath and Agency lakes. Crescent Lake was slow, but the boys who knew how to fish Lake of the Woods and Fish Lake took limits of rainbows.



FOUR BEAUTIFUL FISH — These four beauties, all over 15 inches, were only a small sampling of the fine catch coming out of Howard Prairie on opening weekend of trout season. Thousands of fishermen brought their families and trailers and made a three-day stay out of the

opener. Both boat and bank fishermen were successful using worms and salmon eggs. The brightest colored salmon eggs were most appealing to the fish it seemed. The dark colored trout on the right is a typical Howard Prairie spawner.



YOUNGSTERS IN THE ACT — Even youngsters got into the act at Howard Prairie. This cute freckled girl took these 16 inchers from the bank while her father went fishless. I wonder what he'll tell the fellows back at the lodge? Several kids with spinning gear reached productive waters with ease and hauled them in with facility that embarrassed their luckless dads.



ONE IN HUNDREDS — Leroy Pemberton, 327½ North Ninth Street, was the only angler out of hundreds that Herald and News reporter, George Alotrico, interviewed April 20 that had fish. Leroy displays his catch, the larger rainbow was 15 inches, at Spring Creek. The angler said he caught the fish earlier at Crooked Creek. Most anglers who took fish in Klamath County streams made their catches quite early in the morning.



SPRING CREEK HARDLY FISHED — Only a sprinkling of anglers ventured to Spring Creek for the opener and not many of those stayed very long. The creek wasn't stocked before the opener and very few fish were caught, but the state planned to stock the stream during the past

week and angler success should soar in the coming weeks. Some of the most successful of the Spring Creek anglers fly fish using nymphs almost exclusively. If there are any California anglers still in the area, stay a while, and try Spring Creek again this weekend. Bring a big creel,



ACTION FROM THE BANK — Bank fishermen at Howard Prairie had plenty of action although most of the anglers were out in boats. Here a youngster watches his father land a fat 15-incher. These fishermen were using bobbers to keep their worms off the bottom, which is full of snags. Many boat anglers who were having slim luck trolling beached their craft and took fish from the shore.



TWENTY TROUT IS PLenty — A group of bank anglers were hauling them in fast and furiously from a productive hole in Howard Prairie not 100 yards from the ramp where anglers were launching their boats to speed a mile down the lake to less productive haunts. Most bank fishermen had huge bonfires roaring in the 10 inches of snow that fell during the week and when the sun came peeping out from behind the clouds it was plenty warm.



LAUNCHING SITE CRAMMED — The launching site at Howard Prairie Reservoir was jammed with boats of all descriptions as anglers sought the wary trout on opening day of fishing season. There were 1,700 cars checked in at the Jackson County park last Saturday, April 20, and a good portion of them were pulling boats and campers. Some of the cruisers with dual 50 horse outboards looked capable of an Atlantic crossing while some of the other craft appeared better suited for a bathtub.