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## THE PLUM LINE

The Official Newsletter of The Plum Island Surfcaster

P.O. Box 364 – Newburyport, MA 01950

<http://plumisland.surfcaster.com>

APRIL 2006

### TYLER'S FIRST FISH

It was a hot, sunny mid-July Saturday, and Chris' (my son) best friend Tyler was visiting for the day. After a full morning of doing the kid stuff that 7 year-olds do best, their enthusiastic play faded quickly into boredom. I suggested the beach – but was voted down, too many Greenheads on Plum Island. I offered up fishing for some schoolie stripers, a radical idea given the audience, but both boys were ready to go in record time.

We grabbed a dusty 6' spinning rod from the junk pile corner of the garage. The reel was of questionable quality, not serviced since the VP's name was Bush, but that really didn't matter, as the frayed and salt stiff line was of indeterminate age and test anyway. After a quick stop at Surfland for a half-dozen seaworms, we headed down Route 1A to the Oldtown CC dock on the Parker River, an easy platform for the kids to fish from. I figured that after the worms ran out, or (more likely) the schoolies didn't cooperate, the cool saltwater pool at the Club would be a welcome relief.

Tyler had never been fishing before, so a quick lesson on my part was necessary. I showed him how to hold the rod, work the reel, and then had him carefully thread a worm onto the somewhat rusty hook. (Tyler was rapidly losing interest at this point). After checking for incoming boat traffic, (this was a Saturday afternoon on the narrow confines of the Parker) I made a short, exploratory cast to the edge of the mooring lane and handed the rod to Tyler. I left him with a few words, carefully chosen to instill some hope in catching a fish. "Hold the rod tight, don't let go, and if you feel something tug on the line, pull back, you probably have a fish".

I sat down with Chris on one of the overturned dinghies that were stored on the float and we quietly joked about what Tyler would do when (and if) he actually got a fish. Before we could figure this out, Tyler was calling for help – he had a fish on, or at least he thought he did. The small rod was bent in a ridiculous angle, and Tyler was grimly holding on, fearing that the rod would be pulled from his white knuckled grasp. Not thinking that he had actually hooked a fish, I pried the rod from his hands and gave it a good yank, expecting to feel someone's mooring line. The sticky, abused drag started to give out line in a herky-jerky but forceful manner, and it was obvious this was no mooring cable that Tyler had hooked into. It had the heft and feel of a good sized bass. I quickly handed the rod back to Tyler, and started to coach the kid on what to do next, hoping that the bass wouldn't wrap the line around the nearest channel marker or have the drag freeze up on him.

After 5 minutes, Tyler was beat and the tackle straining, but the fish wasn't beat, not by a long shot. At Tyler's suggestion (make that plea) we decided to tag team the fish with Chris taking over for his arm weary, cramp fingered friend. But after another 5 minutes with Chris at the controls, he also begged for mercy and thrust the rod at me, half in pain, half in fear of losing the fish and everything with it.

A few moments later, the fish changed tactics and came to the surface, it's broad, dark back glistening in the sun, fining ever so slowly, making it's own little wake in the rushing incoming tidal flow. It was surely a keeper, and my thoughts turned pious - God don't let me lose this fish. As if on cue, between us and the bass, comes a sweet old couple in a restored Chris Craft (looking all the world like Norman and Ethel Thayer, just down from Golden Pond ) completely oblivious to the epic battle being played out in front of them. I thrust the rod, reel and all of my arm down into the cool, brown river water, hoping that the line would clear the prop and rudder of their approaching boat. As the Thayers glided slowly past us, I could only guess what they were thinking as they looked at the fellow lying down on the dock with his face in the water and the two kids jumping up and down yelling at them to stop, go, anything but run over our fish.

It seemed that this was the turning point in the battle, as the fish seemed resigned to its fate and came in the rest of the way fairly easily. Norman added a postscript by waving good-bye to us, glad to get away from the nitwits on the Club dock. As the bass slowly rose from the murky river, I slid a hand carefully under the gill plate and eased the fish up onto the float. A chorus of cheers erupted behind us, as the early cocktail crowd on the screened porch of the Oldtown Club, had watched the drama and witnessed our victory. The tale of the tape said 37" but it was a fat 37, and the Chatillon confirmed my earlier hunch at 22.5 pounds. I asked Tyler if he wanted to keep his fish for dinner. He looked astonished at first, (similar to the look on the bass' face), then thoughtfully and solemnly asked if it would be OK to let the fish go. I gladly obliged him and gently lowered the fish into the water, moved him back and forth a few times and we all watched him swim strongly away, minus a bit of his dignity. Chris tossed the rest of the worms into the Parker, we congratulated each other on our vast skill, superior knowledge and unparalleled sportsmanship, and ran to the pool to celebrate the perfect afternoon.

Now at the ripe old age of 15, Tyler and Chris are no longer close friends, as will happen to kids as they get older, they go down different paths and eventually grow apart. But the three of us have a shared and unique common ground, remembering that hot, summer afternoon of Tyler's First Fish, and we will probably remember it forever. It is strange how vivid and important these images become, and how much they contribute to what we call "Life Experience". For only the price of a few hours, a few worms, some old, neglected tackle we have a great memory of that day, but truly owe it all to a fish we had no reason to expect would be there for us.

By Charles Novotny



## **Presidents Message**

April, the month seems to go by so slow. The fishing shows are over. All the reels and rods have been cleaned, built, or repaired now for two months now. I try to bye my time fishing for trout and salmon. But it's hard to get up for fish that would be the size of breakfast for a striped bass or bluefish. I tried fishing the oceanfront for cod this winter but that turned out to be a nice night with good company. Maybe I'll hit the party boat this weekend for some offshore fishing. But really I'm just trying to will May here. I really think it's going to be a great year and we've got a lot planned. The annual casting clinic is next, volunteers wanted. Followed by the invitational, mackerel fishing trip, club year long, boat, tri state ( defending champs this year) , exotic and die hard tournaments, with a few cookouts and overnighers thrown in. Take advantage of everything the club has to offer, it's going to be a great year. If it would just start. John, you think the fish are in Rhody yet?

K. Moore

## **JR's Program**

This month will be the last classroom meeting of the kids program. It will be on the Saturday the 29th and the subject will be fly tying. Last month saw another great turnout with lots of new faces and a few old faces. We tied up some bait rigs, told a few stories, and had a great time. Everyone did a great job. Its going to be exciting to get out on the beach this year with so many new kids and their parents. We're going to be a mob out there. That's what it's all about. Put them on the beach, and keep them off the streets. Kids are the future of our club and the future of our sport.

Tight lines,  
Kevin M. Moore

## **Jr's. Program Schedule**

At the Parker river wildlife refuge headquarters (classes will be held from 3-5 PM)

Saturday April 29th: Fly tying

At the Newbury upper green

Saturday May 13th: Annual casting clinic (8:30 AM -12 PM)

At Plum island point

Saturday June 10th: Mackerel fishing trip

Sites to be determined by fish

Friday June 23rd: Fishing trip

Friday July 28th: Fishing trip

Friday August 25th: Fishing trip/ possible overnigher

Friday September 29th: Plum island overnigher

Friday October 13th: Plum island overnigher

Date to be determined

September beach blast

## WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Pat Archambault, Patrick Brown with Rivers Edge Trading, Steven Chaurette, Frank Crippen, John Crowley, Erik Dahlgren, Jim Dudley, Carl Fischer, Stephen Francis, Peterr Hofstetter, John Korte, Keith Krohn, Bill Lyons, Phil Marshall, Paul McTeague, Chuck Mead, Paul Melanson. Ken Metcalf with Plum Island Kayak, Inc., Dave Poirier, Dan Quinlan, Dave Sperry, Joeseeph Stella, Keven Stevens, Victor Tamilio, Ken Taylor, Michael Toole, James Waldron and Bruce Young.

### Executive Board Notice:

A motion was made by the board to put to a vote at the next general membership meeting, a request made by Stripers Forever, to have a delegate speak to the general membership for 10 minutes at the May membership meeting.

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### REFRESHMENTS

#### NO TIME TO EAT BEFORE THE MEETING, NO WORRIES.

The refreshment committee will be offering a nice home cooked meal before each meeting for a donation of \$3.00. Below you will find the menu for the next three months. So come **HUNGRY!**

April: Homemade Baked Beans & Hot dogs \$3.00

May: Chili w/cheese

June: Spaghetti w/ meat sauce

Coffee and snacks will continue to be offered for a small donation

The refreshment committee and JR. Surfcasters Thank You for your continued support.



## TOURNAMENTS

Plum Island Year Long – May 1<sup>st</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>  
Plum Island Invitational – Saturday May 27<sup>th</sup> - 28<sup>th</sup>  
Tri-State Tournament – Cape Cod Leg - June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3rd, 4th  
Plum Island Boat Tournament – Saturday June 10<sup>th</sup> noon – June 11<sup>th</sup> noon. BBQ to follow  
Tri-State Tournament – Maine Leg – September 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup>  
Exotics – October 1<sup>st</sup> – November 1<sup>st</sup>  
Tri-State Tournament – Rhode Island Leg – October 27<sup>th</sup>, 28th, 29<sup>th</sup>  
Die Hard – November 1<sup>st</sup> – November 30<sup>th</sup>

## 2006 SCHEDULE:

**Apr 18- Roger Aziz, Jr., “Shad Fishing in the Merrimac”**  
**May 16- Captain Charlie Crue, “Light Tackle and Fly Fishing in the Merrimac”**  
**June 20- Dave Hadden, Editor for Fly Fishing America, “Fishing from Kayaks”**  
**July 18- Don Jalbert, “Late Summer Stripers in NH”**  
**Aug 15- Kevin Moore, “Surf Fishing the Island from the River to the Refuge”**  
**Sept 19 – Steve McKenna, “Techniques for Big Bass After Dark”**  
**Oct 17 – TBA**  
**Nov 18 – Saturday Awards Banquet/Photo Contest/Fish Stories**  
**Dec 19 – Yankee Swap – Gifts and Desserts**

**Club meetings are the 3rd Tuesday of every month at the Newbury Fireman’s Hall. Doors open at 6:30pm for setup. A short business meeting will start a 7:30pm, followed by a quick raffle drawing, and then our speaker will follow. We try to be done by 9:30pm. The hall is located off Route 1A@Morgan Ave, behind the Newbury Town Hall and Fire Dept.**



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**There is a flea market coming up in August** for those who would like to participate by paying \$10.00 for a table. The benefits from the flea market will go to help one of our local **National Guard groups fighting in the war**. It will be held at the National Guard Armory in Newburyport on August 5th. Anyone can participate by donating the \$10.00 for a table or donate any unwanted items for them to sell. This will benefit the CO-101 ENG. Family Readiness Group. For more information or to reserve a table please contact Laurie @ 603-601-0331 or 603-394-5076 or you can contact Julie @ 978-521-2348.

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March 21, 2006  
Plum Island Surfcasters  
General Meeting Notes

The President called the meeting to order at 7:35pm

Minutes for last Board & General meeting were read and approved

Sergeant at Arms reported:

50 Members  
10 Board Members  
1 guest  
1 JR

Treasures Report:

Dean Wills gave the treasures report.

Report of Committees Membership:

Total membership at time of meeting 115 as reported by Don Jalbert

Ways & Mean:

No report

Juniors Program:

Kevin Moore reported the next JR meeting is on March 25th from 3p-5p on Bait rigs.  
Aprils meeting will be held on the 29th and it will be on fly tying.  
All meetings are at the Parker River Wildlife Headquarters.

Programs:

Larry Craig reported an over sight in scheduling and our own Joe Camilliere was omitted from our program schedule. This will be reviewed and reported on. In addition the request for a Club Round Table will be investigated.

Internet Coordinator:

Bonnie Radke reported that a hacker from Turkey had gotten into Surfcaster.com and had caused some problems but everything was up and running once again. She also reminded members that orders for PISC items could be placed in on-line with her.

Tournaments:

Kevin McGrath reported that he had not as of yet sent out the invitation to the other clubs for the Club Invitational and he has no standings to report because the fish have not yet arrived.

Legislation: No report given

Old business:

Dean Wills reported that this year's fundraiser was financially the best show to date, the Silent Auction was a huge success and a check will be sent to the RFA for \$100.00 from the rod raffle at the fundraiser.

Kevin Moore spoke about the up-coming MSBA Annual Sport Fishing Expo this weekend and that 2 more people are needed to work the booth.

The Casting Clinic is set for May 13th and instructors are still needed.

A Welcoming Committee has been formed and we are still looking for a person familiar with boat fishing, this committee will run under Membership and again the goal of the committee was outlined.

New Business:

Introduction of Jean Paul Gregoire and Joe Camilliere from the Welcoming Committee.

VICE-PRESIDENT BROOKS READ A STATEMENT ON THE BEHALF OF THE EXECUTIVE BOARD.

The Refuge will be hosting a beach clean-up on Sat. March 25th from 10a-1pm, rain date Sunday March 26th.

Mark Fulton gave a brief out-line on the first leg of the Tri-State Tournament, he was pleased to report the PISC team kicked #! and the team did very well.

A motion was made to adjourn, the president closed the business meeting at 8:02pm and Al Montello, the evening's speaker was introduced.