

The Dallas Post

SportsWeek

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Splitting the defense

Lake-Lehman's Amanda Turner split Courtney Gauntlett, left, and Karen Wisnieski of Dallas during last week's soccer meet between

the two local teams. Holly Mannear eventually scored the lone goal as Dallas won 1-0.

POST PHOTO/RON BARTIZEK

Fishing's more fun where the wild trout are

By ED BELLIS
PA Fish Commission

As trout season approaches, are you, like thousands of other Pennsylvania anglers, poring over the stocking schedule and getting geared to stand elbow to elbow with fellow anglers and sling worms and lures at schools of pale-fleshed, farm-raised fish on opening day? Well, it's not too late to kick the tame fish habit. Move up to fishing for Pennsylvania's bountiful but challenging wild trout.

What is a wild trout? It is a true inhabitant of its aquatic environment. It is free living and always has been, having been hatched and reared in a stream or lake from an egg deposited there by its mother. Since it has the potential to breed, it is also a renewable natural resource. It is usually more colorful than a hatchery trout and it tends to fight harder. A wild fish indicates a healthy stream.

Since 1983, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, realizing that natural populations provide higher quality fishing and a diversity of experience for our anglers, has surveyed and designated more than 700 miles of Commonwealth streams as Class A wild trout fisheries. These waters are not stocked, so that hatchery fish will not interfere with natural reproduction and growth. Protecting a natural habitat and providing year-round fishing opportunities, rather than providing a short term put and take fishery, are the main objectives of the program.

Potential wild trout waters with significant populations of breeding fish are systematically being identified by Commission biologists and put into the wild trout program. Some of these streams have been stocked for a long time prior to their Class A designation, thus their removal from the stocking list often rouses strong pro-

tests from anglers used to harvesting hatchery-raised fish from these waters. That's understandable, but wild trout streams currently make up only a small percentage of the 10,000 miles of Pennsylvania waters that can sustain trout; also, the Commission is stocking as many fish as it did before the wild trout program began; they are just putting more in historically stocked waters and adding new ones each year. Meanwhile, both limestone and freestone streams that have the potential to grow and reproduce viable populations of trout are doing just that, to the benefit of many of the anglers who like to get away from the crowd and cast over truly wild fish.

Recognizing that many streams could better be managed for wild trout and that hatchery fish interfere with wild fish growth and reproduction, several states have developed wild trout programs in recent years, including Maryland, Wisconsin and Michigan. Indeed, Montana and the Province of Alberta no longer stock any streams, reserving them all for wild trout. (They do stock lakes, ponds and reservoirs). In the 1970s the National Park System increased its emphasis on protecting wild and native fish from stocking, as currently practiced in the Great Smoky Mountains and Yellowstone Parks.

Does this mean that Pennsylvania should terminate its hatchery program and go completely into managing for wild trout? Certainly not. Stocking hatchery-reared fish on a put and take basis is necessary, for many of Pennsylvania streams will not sustain wild trout for extended periods. Unfortunately, these waters have been degraded to the point where they will remain hatchery fish only for brief periods and are not of high enough quality to provide for significant natural reproduction. These many miles of water, stocked with farm-raised trout which have been bred

for tameness, ease of handling and faster growth in the hatchery, but not for survival in the wild, provide the meat and potatoes of our Pennsylvania trout fishing. Hatchery fish simply provide recreation in the many streams where wild fish cannot sustain the fishery at desired levels. Hatcheries, then, do improve short term fishing. But they are not the answer to providing long term, sustainable, high quality angling for trout.

Should hatchery trout be stocked in wild trout waters? Except in cases where fingerlings are being introduced to rejuvenate a wild trout stream, stocking should be curtailed. Hatchery trout interfere with growth and reproduction of wild trout and tend to draw armies of anglers to the stream, thus creating an overharvest of wild fish. Also, most important, why turn a wild area into a farm? Putting hatchery-reared fish into a proven wild trout stream makes as much sense as stocking Jersey cows among the abundant, wild game herds of Africa's Serengeti Plain.

How are Pennsylvania's wild trout waters regulated - how many can you catch and of what size and when? In order to protect the resource and to provide a diversity of angling experiences, the Fish and Boat Commission employs a variety of regulations, depending on the stream. Some streams have the eight fish maximum, seven-inch minimum regulations common to most stocked waters. On other size and creek restrictions are tighter. A few are catch and release only, with gear restrictions. The ones I like best are the "trophy trout" waters which are catch and release for all trout except for two measuring more than 14 inches. (It's nice to grill a big one once in while). Many wild trout streams are open to angling only during the regular season but those with special regulations are open the year round. On some bait fishing is excluded and on others fly fishing only rules apply.

For those anglers willing to walk in to them, Pennsylvania also has many miles of designated "wilderness trout streams." These are unstocked waters of exceptional value in remote, unspoiled watersheds. All have self-reproducing populations of wild trout, although not always dense concentrations of them. Brook trout predominate in most of these streams but large browns are sometimes taken, especially on spring creeks. Wilderness streams provide quality wild trout angling in remote areas for the patient angler who wants to fish in solitude and take the time to "smell the flowers".

Whether remote or accessible, limestone or freestone, wild trout streams are out there waiting for Pennsylvania's anglers to explore and fish. Preliminary results of a trout angler telephone survey reveal that 40 percent of Pennsylvania anglers say the wild trout fishery is actually more important to them than the stocked fishery; and only 30 percent said the reverse. Apparently wild trout fishing is really catching on.

So string up your rod and head for those wild trout streams. Avoid the brief, often crowded, feast or famine angling for farm raised, short-lived fish. You may not always catch your limit, in fact you might even get skunked, but you will fish for more colorful, harder fighting, wild trout in beautiful surroundings. And if you do get skunked, they (or their offspring) will be waiting for you the next time round.

You might even get addicted.

Note: This is the second in a series of editorials published by Pennsylvania Trout, a Council of Trout Unlimited. Ed Bellis chairs PA Trout's Environmental Committee.

Joan Greulick-Byron takes five medals in NY swim meet

Joan Greulick-Byron competed in the New York State Masters Swimming Meet held at the U.S. Military Academy in West Point on March 26-28.

Swimming in the 40-44 year old age group, she placed 1st in the 50-yard free and 100-yard individual medley (setting a new meet record). She was second in the 100-yard breast stroke, 200-yard IM and 50-yard breast stroke. She earned bronze medals in the 100-yard free and 50-yard butterfly.

Greulick-Byron swims on the 1776 Colonials and will be participating in the Zone Championship in Rutgers May 6, 7 and 8.

She also participated in the February Fitness Challenge. Each swimmer logged as many yards as possible for the month. Byron swam 82,500 yards which placed her 10th in the 40-44 year old age group nationwide.



JOAN GREULICK-BYRON

SportsShorts

Lehman spikers sweep two opponents

The Lake-Lehman Volleyball team completed another successful week, handing traditional powerhouse Tunkhannock and Coughlin their first losses.

The Black Knights under head coach John Baranowski, dominated Tunkhannock last Tuesday, winning, 15-3, 15-9. The Knights then downed Coughlin 15-3, 15-9.

The Black Knights, 6-0, are once again ranked in the PA State Coaches Association Poll, 10th in the East and 19th in the entire state.

Back Mt. Soccer sign-up May 1

Back Mt. Youth Soccer Association will hold registration for the upcoming Fall '93 Intramural Soccer season on Saturday, May 1, at the Dallas Elementary School Cafeteria from 9:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

The age divisions are: U-8, U-10 Girls, U-10 Boys, U-12 girls, U-12 Boys and U-14. All first time registrants must have a copy of their birth certificate and all who are registering must have their Social Security number.

Dallas Junior Football meeting April 26

Dallas Junior Football Association Cheerleading Parents meeting will be held Monday, April 26, 7 p.m., at Dallas Junior High cafeteria. Parents and girls are invited to enjoy guest speakers and hear all the changes.

Back Mountain Baseball opens April 24

Back Mountain Baseball Inc. will hold opening day ceremonies on Saturday, April 24 beginning at 9 a.m. All current players, managers, coaches, volunteers as well as former players, managers, coaches and the general public are invited to attend.



L-L Junior Football signups Thursday

The Lake-Lehman Jr. Football Club will hold a second registration for the 1993 season, on Thursday, April 22, at the Lehman Senior High Cafeteria from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. Registration is open for 7-13 year old boys. Fourteen year olds may register if their weight is below 110.

Cheerleading roster is full with the exception of 12-13 year old girls. Fourteen year olds may register if their birthday is before August 1, 1993.

Registration is \$15 and a family activity fee of \$10, both to be paid at time of registration.

Barket on all-county track team

Brad Barket of Dallas, a sophomore at the Peddie School in Hightstown, N.J., has been selected by the Trenton Times as a member of the All-Mercer County Indoor Track Team for the 800-meter run. The only sophomore selected, he was also a second teamer on the 4 x 400 relay squad and an all-area selection for the indoor 1600-meter run. He will be participating in the Penn Relays at Franklin Field on April 24.

Adult swim lessons at Misericordia

College Misericordia will offer an Adult Swim Program in the new Anderson Sports-Health Center Auditorium.

An Adult Lap Swimming Class will be available beginning Monday, May 3. Cost of the program which is open Monday-Friday from 6-7 p.m., is \$30 on a monthly basis.

A five-week Adult Swim Instruction Program will also be offered beginning Wednesday, May 5 from 5-5:45 p.m. Cost of the program which runs on five consecutive

Wednesdays, is \$35.

Senior Citizen Lap Swimming will also be offered beginning Monday, May 3. Cost of the sessions, which will be held from 9:30-11 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays is \$25.

All programs will be held in the six-lane, 25-yard, NCCA regulation pool. To register, call 675-3862 or 674-6289 or stop by the Misericordia Continuing Education Office in the Administration Building.

Heart Ass'n sets Golf Tourney for May 10

The Luzerne County Division of the American Heart Association will hold their 11th Annual By-Pass Open Joseph Brennan/Joseph Ressa Memorial Golf Tournament on Monday, May 10.

The annual event is chaired by Dennis Garvey. Cost of entrance fee is \$125 per golfer which includes green fees, lunch, cocktail hour, dinner, \$2,000 in flighted prizes and trophies. Each golfer has a chance at the following hole in one prizes: \$25,000 cash, Florida vacations, Lufthansa tickets, and Mizuno metal woods.

Shown in photo are several members of the planning committee: seated, Gerry Leehan, Dallas. Standing, from left, Dennis Garvey, Dallas and Tom McGrath, Wilkes-Barre.

For more information on registering to participate in the tournament, call the American Heart Association Office at 822-6247. Space is limited, don't delay.

Proceeds from the tournament benefit the Luzerne County Division of the American Heart Association.