

Who Was Chuck Kraft

Lefty, Bob and Flip described Chuck Kraft as the best Smallmouth guide in the country. Chuck guided Lefty Kreh, Flip Pallot and Bob Clouser many times. If you were lucky enough to be in Chuck's boat, you caught large fish. Chuck was very careful with his fly patterns. There are stories of Chuck frisking his clients when he thought one of his patterns might be hiding in someone's pocket. Chuck protected his "secrets" because he knew he was producing flies unlike any other. Chuck Kraft created the best flies to catch Trophy Trout and Smallmouth Bass. Chuck was a full time fishing guide from 1984 until 2012. Clients would book him years in advance. Many of Chuck's repeat clients would fish with him 6-25 times a year. Chuck's clients attributed their advanced skill level to years of Chuck's guidance and teaching.

Chuck designed many flies from 1961-2013. His first fly, the CK Nymph (1961), was nicknamed "The Wonder Nymph" for good reason. There was a famous article published in Field and Stream in 1971. The article was written by S.R. Slaymaker II about the Wonder Nymph. Other patterns followed like the Parakeet (1984), the Kreelex (1991), the CK Baitfish (1994), the Clawdad (1996), the Critter Claw (1998), the Curly Tail Critter Bug (2001) and the Crittermite (2013). Chuck Kraft pioneered the use of Ultrasuede in the fly fishing industry in 1993 when he was developing the CK Baitfish. Chuck used Ultrasuede in many of his fly patterns for its movement, stability and durability. Chuck was unlike any other fly designer. When Chuck Kraft developed a fly pattern, he would work on it and tweak it for years. For each of his patterns, there were often 5 to 10 prototypes developed before Chuck thought the fly was ready to go public. Chuck was even known to wear a mask and snorkel and swim in rivers to assess how his flies moved in water. By doing this, he could make adjustments to the patterns. One of the last flies Chuck created was the Crittermite. The Crittermite went through 7 years of development. It was publicly released in January, 2014. Knock offs of this fly started showing up in March of 2014. Unfortunately, some fly designers and companies have copied and "knocked off" some of Chuck's tail designs.

It's hard to find honesty and integrity in the fly fishing industry.

The Kreeel Tackle Company was the first company to manufacture Chuck Kraft's tails for his fly patterns. Kreeel Tackle was in business from 2000 to 2007. In 2010, with help from one of Chuck's longtime clients Richard Wyly, Chuck Kraft partnered and began working with William Heresniak and Eastern Trophies Fly Fishing. Chuck and William worked tirelessly bringing Chuck's tails back into production far exceeding what Kreeel tackle had done in the past.

Chuck Kraft passed away on March 9, 2020.

Eastern Trophies offers all of Chuck Kraft's fly patterns which are all tied by William. Jim Richmond, who was Chuck's best friend also makes topwater bugs for Eastern Trophies. Eastern Trophies has sold over 1 million of Chuck Kraft's tails to companies, tiers and anglers all over the world. All of Chuck's tails, fly patterns, fly tying kits and more can be found on the website.

Chuck worked many years developing his tails and patterns to help anglers catch the best fish.

William and Eastern Trophies Fly Fishing are dedicated to carrying on his legacy.

Easterntrophies.com