

"Is it Snagging Season at Taneycomo?"

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Sam Potter - www.TightLine.Biz

Each fall I take about a half dozen trips to Lake Taneycomo to fish at night for LARGE Brown trout. I like throwing big ugly stuff, mostly black and olive Sculpins that I make. My goal each fall is to catch at least 20 trout over 20 inches. Last Thursday night I caught a 23", 21" and a 20". I also caught a 19", two 16"s and several other smaller fish. Not a great night, but Ok. I usually arrive about 8 PM and fish until 8 or 9 AM the next morning depending on the water flow. It rained all night, sometimes very hard and most of the guys that were there didn't stay long.



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These are a couple of the fish I caught. There wasn't much opportunity to take pictures, because of the rain and because I was by myself most of the night. I really didn't want to get my digital camera wet, it cost too much money to ruin. I don't know what's up with the anus of the rainbow, maybe someone can tell me?

It is each fall that I am reminded why I stay away from outlet 1 and 2 in the mornings and during the day. It's "snagging season" for Brown Trout. If you fish there you know what I mean. Guys standing shoulder to shoulder at the outlets jerking their "snagging flies" out of the water. Oh, I know that there are so many fish that it is difficult not to foul hook one occasionally, but if the rod is lifted instead of jerked out of the water there wouldn't be as many foul hook-ups. Using smaller flies, like 18s or 20s also reduces the amount of foul hook-ups. It really is not necessary to jerk the fly out of the water to hook a fish in the mouth. And it is especially important not to jerk the fly out of the water if you don't have a bite. There are so many fish foul hooked just because guys are ripping the fly out of the water when there isn't even a bite. The lifting pressure and the weight of the fish are all that is necessary to set a hook.

I was amazed while watching one guy that "snagged" several big fish. He weighed them and then got his picture taken with these fish

that he had just "SNAGGED". I suppose he will go home and show off the pictures telling anyone that will listen what a great fly fisherman he is and about the big brown trout he caught last weekend. The water he was fishing in was about 18" deep. His indicator was set at about 3 and half or 4 feet. He had a couple of large, probably #2 shot about a foot above the fly. As near as I could figure out, he was using the "strike indicator" just as a reference point. The indicator wasn't going under, but he would set the hook anyway. I never did see a single fish that was hooked in the mouth from eating his fly. Most of them were tailed or hooked in the back. Everyone knows that you need to use 6x, or 7x line when they are not running water, if you want to catch a lot of fish, but this guy must have been using 1x, because he was literally dragging 6 and 7 pound browns out and never did break a fish off. It didn't take this guy 15 or 20 seconds to get those large fish in. I guess if you are "snagging" fish it doesn't matter how big the line is?

The thing that upsets me the most is that this practice seems to be becoming the norm and acceptable just like the "shuffling" that goes on. BUT I must admit that I have not noticed as much shuffling as there use to be. Hopefully if enough people start complaining about the "snagging" and fishermen realize that this type of fishing it is unethical for trout, maybe we can get it stopped.

I am getting off the soap box now, but this has been on my mind all weekend and I just wanted to express ***my opinion***.