

Facebook Memory – A “Fish Tale”

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Friends:

Facebook has begun pestering users with recaps of old posts. This morning I was greeted with a “fish tail” I posted four years ago. I thought you might enjoy the recap, so here it is again for the first time in this newsgroup:

July 12, 2012

Ah, yes!

Went fishing yesterday. What an adventure. First of all, the only access is via a “minimum maintenance” dirt road. “Minimum maintenance” means they don’t grade or plow, ever. I think that, when the holes get deep enough, county forestry people hide in the bushes and wait for a big truck to come by, wallow down into the hole, and then, while the driver is struggling to get out, the forestry people begin throwing large rocks on the truck until it is buried to the point where the former hole is level with the rest of the “road.” I don’t know if they let the driver get out. I suspect not, since my theory has not yet been proven.

Getting in wasn’t really all that difficult. I had to slowly crawl the truck over a few blow-downs, but other than that the way was relatively clear. At this point I should tell you that I was pulling a small trailer upon which was perched a 14-foot 1953 Alumacraft rowboat I had bought for \$50 at an auction last year but had not yet put in the water.

I was headed for Blacksmith lake, which is managed by the DNR as a trout lake. Rainbows only. Fun fish to catch and even more fun to eat. The surface water around here is 80 degrees right now, and trout can’t survive long in that kind of heat. I was headed for two deep holes, one 40 feet and the other 35 feet deep. I knew the trout would be down there in that colder water.

When I put the boat in the water I learned that it came complete with a miniature fountain! I found a piece of wire the correct diameter, forced it into the hole and thereby thwarted a potential sinking. I was ready. I loaded the boat. Rod ? check. Net ?check. Tackle and bait ? check. Cooler and hard cider ? check. Live net ? check. Line ? check. Life jacket ? check. Oars ? check. I shoved off and began rowing toward those fruitful deep pockets of water.

It was on about my 12th stroke when the starboard oar broke just above the oar lock.

Not one easily deterred when going after trout, I began to experiment with using the blade end of the broken oar as a paddle. Cumbersome, but modestly effective. That mode of

locomotion required ample sweat equity in the 85-degree afternoon, but I need to lose weight anyhow. I decided to view this small inconvenience as a good thing. I hadn't counted in the effect 14 feet of aluminum hull acting as a sail in the ten- to fifteen-knot southerly wind. More sweat equity, perhaps more than I could afford.

I missed the first strike because I was in the middle of learning how to counter the wind. No problem. One night crawler down, eleven to go.

Over the next hour I landed two nice ten- to twelve-inch rainbows. Good "eatin' size!" Then it was time to go.

Yeah, right.

Remember that wind? It had shifted a tad to the SW. I was being blown away from the landing by a now nearly 20 knot wind. It required almost thirty minutes of exertion to cover the 100 yards of open water between my boat and my truck, but I finally made landfall. While positioning the boat for loading onto the trailer I accidentally stepped into a length of fouled line. Unaware of my misfortune, I tried to move my feet.

Judges of Olympic quality would have been proud of how I managed to become absolutely parallel to the surface of the water before executing a perfectly flat back-flop.

Did I mention I had my brand-new cell phone hooked to my belt?

Soaked head to toe, my new cell phone disassembled for drying on the seat of my truck and the contents of my wallet similarly arrayed, I managed to load the boat onto the trailer and strap it down. I began my egress, acutely aware that our Wednesday night poker game was getting under way in half an hour.

I was not aware that the strap I had run athwart the boat had come loose until the trailer encountered a particularly large rock which resulted in the boat leaping to the right and landing on the gravel road, where it immediately began to raise disproportionately large clouds of dust as a result of being dragged over a mixture of sand and one-inch rock.

Fear not! I reloaded the boat onto the trailer.

Perhaps I should mention here that loading a boat onto a trailer requires significantly less physical exertion if the process is aided by having the weight of said boat being primarily supported by water.

Once again I checked the positioning and securing of the boat. Satisfied that all was well, I continued my egress via the previously mentioned Minimum Maintenance Road. I successfully negotiated several deep holes, probably disappointing a host of hidden county forestry employees in the process. Eventually I made it to County Road 4, a nice bituminous roadway that would eventually lead to the poker game scheduled to begin just ten minutes into my future. The only problem was that the game was 25 minutes away from that particular geographic locale.

Not to worry! I could use my cell

Oh, crap.

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