

GIANT BROOKIES OF THE MINIPI

This is simply the best dry fly fishing for large brook trout in the world. It's a special environment which produces hatches that defy the imagination and is home to a special strain of brook trout.

Some of you are old enough to remember the old outdoor adventure TV series, The American Sportsman. Probably the most famous of their TV shows was the one in which Lee Wulff flew Curt Gowdy into an isolated river system in Labrador. They would take video of Lee and Curt catching these big, beautiful brookies on dry flies. Several times during the series, they featured this river system and it's tremendous brookies. What made this particular series so fascinating was Curt Gowdy and the entire show staff were sworn to secrecy and not allowed to divulge the location of this river. Lee Wulff had vowed not to let the location be known until the Canadian government had set up a method of protecting the uniqueness of these fish and their habitat. Today, this is one of those special places that fishes "the way it used to" because of the protections that have been established and enforced by Lorraine and Jack Cooper, who operate three lodges on the system.

This is a destination that my son and I have visited four times during the last seven years and have our reservations set to return again in '06. On our last trip in the month of July trip, we experienced brown drake hatches daily that were so intense that they covered the water as far as we could see. It was an incredible experience! They started around 11:00 each morning and built until peaking about 2:00. One time I attempted to count the number of drakes sitting on my fly line and got to 27 before losing track of where I was! There were other mayfly and caddis hatches also, but on this trip, the brown drakes totally overwhelmed everything else.

On our first trip (1997) to this special area, we were later in the summer and caught a green drake hatch that was similar in scope, but different in some ways. However, just like the brown drakes, it really got the big fish moving. Basically, this is sight casting to large cruising, sipping fish. A wonderful experience!!

The catch/release totals of our (two fishermen fishing together) last four trips may be the best way to illustrate just how unique this fishery is:

Total pounds (all fish over three pounds are weighed before release) of fish caught: 687

Number of fish over five pounds released: 71

Number of fish over seven pounds released: 19 with two topping 8 pounds

The great majority of these fish were taken on dry flies.

This is a "Jack London type" experience in an area that is isolated and only fished by the clients of Cooper's Camps. The primary challenge is getting space during the "prime hatch season."

TRIP REPORT

Fly Fishing Adventures

888-347-4896

flyfish@napanet.net

