

The Barbless Hook

October 2021

Edited by Mark Spruiell



tri-valleyflyfishers.org

October Meeting

Liz Weirauch – Fishing Heenan Lake and Surrounding Areas

Liz is an Owner, Guide & Instructor at the [Anglers Edge Fly Shop](#) in Gardnerville NV. She's no-nonsense and a straight shooter.

Heenan Lake can be a challenging place to fish. Liz is going share her local insights on fishing this lake.

Liz has been fishing her entire life, from the warm water fisheries of Michigan where she was born to the Rocky Mountains of Colorado and with her husband on the Pacific Ocean for big game fish and surf fish. A decade plus of fly fishing in the Eastern Sierra and teaching her love of the sport has given Liz a unique look at trout psychology and habits that will increase your knowledge and love of fly fishing. Liz loves fishing and is more than willing to pass on her excitement and gratification of enticing a fish to take a fly.

"Fly Fishing is the only hunting endeavor where the quarry can be released unharmed to be hunted another day."



Future Meeting Info

- Nov Meeting Speaker – still in progress
- Dec Meeting Speaker – **Devin Olsen** on Euro-Nymphing – Don't miss it!!!

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President's Message

Albert Mansky

Hi Folks,

Well, today Wednesday, September 22nd, is officially the start of Autumn. You could fool me by the weather, but I did notice some of the trees are losing their dark green color. The fire season never seems to end as we go into Fall. Every year with the climate change as it is, it seems to get worse and worse. Next year if we don't, or even if we do, get any amount of normal rain, we are really going to be in a world of hurt with another drought and severe water restrictions. Looking at the tables in the East Bay Times of our state water reserves, things don't look good, to say the least. This is going to have an impact on all our lives, not to mention the fish in our rivers and lakes. We may just not have a spawning season this year, with the river levels so low. This will have an impact on the years to come with no Steelies and Salmon returning to spawn.

In the last three months I've had a knee replaced and eye surgery. Needless to say, I haven't done any fishing at all. I'm looking forward to being able to walk without any pain and be able to see where I'm going, without walking around in a fog. Like they say, it's hell getting old.

I'm looking forward to doing some fishing this Fall on the Lower Sac for rainbows and maybe some Steelhead if they're in the river, as well as the Feather River for Steelhead. As soon as I hear back from Jim Roberts, I'll be putting a trip together on the Lower Sac for later this Fall. Keep an eye on our web site event calendar for this trip, it should be a blast. From what I've heard the fishing has been great on the Sac for rainbows.

Till next time, stay safe and healthy. If you haven't gotten all your vaccine shots yet, please do so. I'm waiting to get my booster shot as soon as it's available.

Al

Raffle Information

For the club's next meeting on Thursday, October 7th, winning participants in the raffle will have their choice of the first six items below. Item 7 (the MaxCatch rod) will be awarded last. As always you must be present, or in this case still online, to win.

2021 TVFF Board of Directors

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Auction	Open Position
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Fly Tying	Jim Broadbent
Member at Large	Ron Dueltgen
Member at Large	Tom Vargas
Membership	Todd Hyrn
Newsletter	Mark Spruiell
Publicity	Open Position
Raffle	Open Position
Refreshments	Gary Prince
Speakers	Dave Fontaine
Trout in Classroom	Daniel Kitts
Video Library	Steve Johnson
Webmaster	Mark Spruiell

Tickets must be purchased online through the [club store](#) by end of day on Tuesday, October 5th. An email will be sent to you prior to the meeting with your ticket numbers. If you have not received the email by noon on the day of the meeting please contact me, Steve Johnson, at 925-980-5433.

Cost of tickets are \$5 for 6 tickets, and \$20 for 25 tickets. The raffle items are listed below.



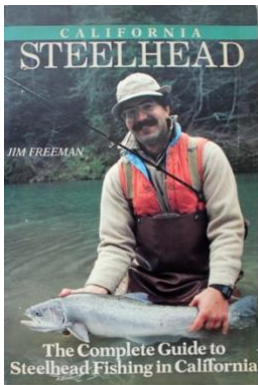
3 MaxCatch 9' tapered leaders 1 ea. 4X, 5X, and 6X



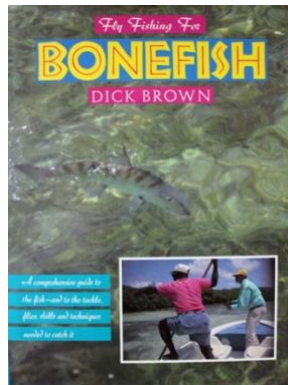
Double sided Fly Box - 3 x 4.5 x 1.25



StreamTime Mattole River and Navarro River Access map



"California Steelhead – The Complete Guide to Steelhead Fishing in California" by Jim Freeman



"Fly Fishing for Bonefish" by Dick Brown



Bass Pro Shops Extreme Waterproof Boat Bag – Bag is used and in good condition



MaxCatch Premier 9' 4 piece 10 weight rod

Club News

TVFF welcomes new member **Phil Reggiardo**. Glad to have you Phil!



Outings and Activities

We have two new outings:

Back by popular demand, on March 5th and 6th next year we will have access to the UC property on the Yuba River. The event is limited to 19 each day so don't wait to sign-up if you're interested.

This week I'll be posting our Fall Delta outing to be held the Sunday before Thanksgiving, November 21st, 2021. This fish-out is for members with access to a boat and any members they wish to bring along (usually 1). The posting for signups will go up this week. If you don't have a boat and want to go, send me your name and on a first come basis, I'll pass it along to members who have space available.

I'd like to help a member who would like to coordinate a fish-out on the same date, November 21st to organize a float tube outing on the Grant Line Canal, just North of Tracy. Send me an email if you're interested in this event and if you'd like to help me organize it. I can't attend since I'll be fishing with the boats further North.

Anyone who hasn't organized an outing and would like to do so, I'll team you up with an experienced Fish Meister. You don't have to be an expert, you just need to be interested in the activity to organize and coordinate.

Let's go fishin-

Martin Plotkin

Outings Coordinator

Fishing with Eggs – Lance Gray – October 5

Lance will be doing an online presentation directly via Zoom on "Eggology", the study of eggs. His presentation will explain the when, what and how of fishing with egg imitations in the valley rivers. Fishing eggs is more complex than fishing nymphs. The presentation is straightforward and easy to understand. Cost is \$10 and you can sign up in his [online store](#). Note that you should choose "On the Stream Pickup" during checkout for shipping, otherwise you will be charged for shipping.

Lower Yuba River – March 5-6, 2022

Our club events on the Yuba will be on the private property owned by the University of California. We have contracted for TVFF's exclusive use of the facility for the weekend, with a maximum of twenty anglers per day. There is approximately 2.5 miles of available river that is the tailwater section a mile or so below Englebright Dam. The river has easy and level access, so it's ideal for those less comfortable in heavy current wading situations, although that is also available for those Euro Nymphing.



The UC facility is on many acres in a pastoral valley leading down to the river. Most of the research here is for cattle, grazing land management, and erosion control so it is very quiet with no nearby roads, ranches, or houses. There is a covered picnic area for use that sits above the river with 8-10 picnic tables and a restroom that is also available on site. All in all, it's a very scenic and serene site.

BBQ lunch included! Visit our [event calendar](#) for all the details.

Member Reports

Reel Life Montana Adventurers – Denis Haire

Well, this was it. I finally get to check off from a long bucket list of trips; fly fishing in Montana. The stories of the legendary fishing from others in the club made me feel optimistic but didn't get my hopes too high for the fear of disappointment. Surely, I would arrive to hear talk about how I should have been there last week... or next week. The first challenge for the week was getting our group of six to the base of operation outside of West Yellowstone, Montana. Our group for the week included our host Jim Roberts, Patrick Donovan, James Williams, Ron Dueltgen, Betty and Greg Blandino, and myself.

Five of us taking similar routes travelled the 1000 miles to West Yellowstone by automobiles. The routes typically took two days with stops in Idaho Falls or Twin Falls, Idaho. With all the smoke from the fires, there was some urgency to get far away and to fresher air! James arrived by plane at the West Yellowstone airport. We all soon descended on Saturday afternoon to a house located on Hebgen Lake. What a tremendous location and accommodations for the week! Jim had worked tirelessly to clean up and restock from the previous week's group. With enough rooms for everyone and a fully stocked kitchen and bar, along with Jim's reputation as a great cook, we were ready for the adventure to begin!



We all took a quick run to various locations on the Madison River to at least get our feet wet before dinner. After a wonderful dinner of Chicken Florentine, we talked over the plans for the week. Jim's first thought was Rule #1: always have fun no matter what you do! We discussed the rivers in the area, including the Madison, Gallatin, Ruby, and Soda Butte. The typical strategy would be tightline nymphing (anytime), hoppers and dry flies (afternoons). Typical nymphs included prince, pheasant tails, red zebra midge, WD40 and even bird's nest. In the end it was angler's choice as there was no wrong way to approach the river. Daily departures would vary depending on the travel time to the river. Lunches would either be prepared in the morning or sometimes bring leftovers to prepare lunch at the river. Planned return would typically be around 5 so that dinner would be ready by 6:30 to 7. Rinse and repeat. I think we all knew we were in for a busy week.... The evening ended with Patrick and Ron playing cribbage until late. Little did I know this would become part of Rule #1.

Our first day (Sunday) was a 30-minute drive to Reynold's Pass on the Madison River. Before setting off, we spent some time tying nymphing leaders. Over the years, Jim has developed a leader configuration that is very effective and rarely breaks off. I won't give away the formula but there are perfection loops, 15lb. mono and OX tippet, optional sighter material and swivels and split shots. After finalizing our rigging and stocking up on flies, we loaded up the vehicles and it was off to the river. The water was reported low, so wading became a little easier option. Although the air was clear, it was hot so those that were wet wading definitely had an advantage. For me it was a slow start nymphing whereas others seemed to have greater success. Now and then I would feel a tug but no strong sets. All part of the learning curve, but all the time enjoying the scenery and smiling thinking of Rule #1.



After dinner we discussed going to Soda Butte in Yellowstone Park. As Yellowstone requires its own fishing permit, we all scrambled to our phones to secure one. After setting up accounts and securing payment we all had digital copies and felt ready to go. Again, Patrick and Ron continued with the cribbage but gaining some attention.

Our second day started with a 2.5 hour drive to Soda Butte in the Lamar Valley of Yellowstone. Rising at 0530 for breakfast at 0600 was eased by the excitement of what laid ahead. We departed promptly at 0630 in two vehicles and headed out in the twilight towards the West Gate entrance. We breezed through and continued east while being greeted by a brilliant sunrise. Being my first time to Yellowstone, I was truly in awe of the sights and wildlife. I also had forgotten about the wonderful aromas associated with geothermic activity... We arrived at Soda Butte to find a fairly full parking lot and flows in the river a little lower than expected.



We all fanned out on the river, with most of us headed up stream. While being slow in the morning, a hatch started about 10:30. James and I were fishing together and had fish jumping at our feet! We both ended up catching a couple fish in a nice pool and inside bend. Those Yellowstone cutthroats are stunning.

Heading back to the vehicles for lunch we found that most of the group was having great success! After lunch some of the group switched to dry flies and hoppers and seemed to have continued success. After lunch I went downstream to find success and even some larger fish. One of the best learnings from Jim for me was to land the fish without a net and to confidently handle the fish to remove the hook. At the end of the day everyone had good numbers but not quite to the norm per Jim. Hard to imagine what that would be like. As

the smoke began to haze the skies in the afternoon, it was time to call it a day. We did see some interesting characters on the way home.

Due to the long drive home, we ordered pizza for pickup on the way back to the house. After a long day that pizza and a drink were so satisfying...

Our third day started out with a casting lesson from Jim. He wanted to review our casting skills prior to doing dry flies on the Gallatin. After about 90 minutes of practice and reviewing casts and aerial mends, it was time to head to the river.

It was a short drive to the river and as we arrived the wind began to pick up. The wind did prove challenging, but most people stuck it out with dries but to no success. Greg did switch over to nymphs and caught a whitefish! After about an hour and a half the wind became too much and we decided to head back to the house for lunch. The return trip turned exciting as the wind was blowing so hard and the rate of travel of the vehicles caused the magnetic rooftop rod carrier (with rods) to rip away and go flying to the side of the road! Product testing at its best. Definitely created some excitement and something I will always remember.

After returning and having lunch, Betty and I went to the Quake Lake visitor center while the others headed to Raynold's Pass for a couple of hours. Amazing what a tri-tip dinner will do for one's spirit.

Our fourth day we decided to take a chance on the Ruby River. The water had been reported as turbid for the last three days, but Jim felt it was worth the chance as it is typically full of browns. After a quick breakfast, we headed west from the house. We paralleled the Madison River into Ennis and continued into the Ruby Valley until we arrived at the dam. After a quick inspection, the water still looked turbid with visibility likely less than eighteen inches. We had travelled all this way so we had to try! After gearing up we headed out, following a tortuous path that eventually got us to the river. Nymphing was tough as the moss was thick and slippery, but Betty persevered and caught one small fish! After about 45 minutes, Jim was not satisfied so we decided to go to Plan B. What was Plan B? Lunch, then more fishing back at Raynold's Pass. We stopped for lunch by the river at a small campground. Cool and in the shade, a welcomed rest and refueling. Then it was back to Raynold's Pass. After parking on the far side of the bridge, the trio of Patrick, Greg, and Betty crossed the bridge and worked upstream on river right. Jim and the rest of us went down stream on river left. We continued a distance downstream nymphing pockets and deeper runs along the way. Downstream there was limited success; however, Ron landed a nice one in a great pocket by a big boulder!





By the end of the day the count was low but spirits were high as we headed back for a pulled pork that had been smoking all day. Yummy, and the cribbage continued....

Looking for a little more success than the previous days, on our fifth day we headed back to Soda Butte in Yellowstone. Taking off at the prescribed time of 0630 we made good time through the park. We made a quick pitstop and happened to time it with a recently completed pit vault cleaning. Greg was amazed at the sounds of an empty vault, which brought some great humor to group! Our trip was then delayed for another 15 minutes with bison moving in and out of the road.

We eventually made it to the parking lot and were amazed by how few cars were there. We opened our doors and understood why! The air temp was in the low forties when we arrived so jackets were required. And entering the water at the hot spot (the bridge where many fish were spotted on the previous trip), the water was noticeably cooler. Hmmm, cool air temp and cooler water. The fish were pretty sluggish in the morning, but action improved as the day warmed up. With very few anglers other than ourselves, we had plenty of opportunity to take the time to work both upstream and downstream. I found this to be an excellent



opportunity to stop and look for those unique pockets that held fish; places that I normally overlooked. And I actually found some fish there!



Having worked upstream before lunch, I headed downstream with James and Ron to a wonderful pool that had been productive on the previous trip. I know the others had headed there first and probably had great success, so I was hoping the fish were not spooked. As we three amigos worked our way down to the river, we did catch some fish which added to the anticipation. We did well at that corner pool with James working the drift in a nice methodic fashion. James and I continued around the bend and came across some more pools, where James caught a nice 16 incher! What a great way to end the day.

After the long trip back, it was time for a dinner of carnitas (best as a street taco), beans and rice. Oh those beers tasted good!

With all of the cribbage going on, it was finally time to teach the newbies (James and myself) how to play. After a quick lesson on scoring, cribs, and team strategy, we split up the two teams with Jim being an advisor for the newbies. Ron had mentioned in all the many years he had played, this is a first with 6 players. And of course, we had to make sure we had all the Jacks (inside story)! With Patrick in charge of the board, it was off to the races. Needless to say, Jim's Rule #1 applied well. It was loud and spirited, counting was always checked and verified, and the banter was witty. We ended up playing three games to find the winning team. Lights out at 0030...



For our last day we wanted to keep it fresh with not too much travel. As Jim was working to get other things done around the house, as a group we decided to head out to the Madison River below Hebgen Dam. Jim recommended a location with an island that would be a good location. We all ventured into the river and spread out around the island.



After about an hour with no success we decided it was on to another spot. As we were leaving an incredible hatch of mayflies appear for on the main and channel portion of the river. Few fish were feeding on top, but always exciting to witness. As a group we ended up going to Baker Point, an arm off the lake that sometimes has browns moving up. It is very close to the airport so it was startling to hear the occasional jet take off.



We ended up using dry flies there but with no success. I felt good as I got one hit so for me that was exciting! After a quick picnic lunch and Patrick talking to the “local” Bozeman ranchers on the platform, we ended up going in two directions. Patrick, Greg and Ron continued into Yellowstone for more fishing, whereas James, Betty, and I headed to the Grizzly Wolf exhibit in town. After both, I think we can say we were all tired.

The fishing is truly a bonus on a trip like this. The wildlife, scenery, and fellow anglers more than make up for the tough days of fishing. Bison, antelope, an occasional bear and assorted raptors are witnessed on a daily basis. Evenings and even time on the water with playful banter and the joy and agony of fish caught and lost make each moment a gem. Each trek to a new water revealed beauty and life that is so different as compared to home waters. Standing in those waters one begins to feel at peace with wilderness and for a time one's schedules and responsibilities seem to evaporate like the morning fog on Hebgen Lake....

Baum Lake – Alan Wyosnick

At the last minute, I thought I would take advantage of the lower temps and less smoke as a result of the storm that was rolling through last Thursday. Tom from DVFF joined me and we decided to fish (wade) the Lower Sac on the way up. Even though we found some nice looking water, we couldn't entice any fish to sample our flies. Woke up Friday morning to the pleasant surprise of rain and fresh air. Fortunately the skies cleared by the time we arrived at Baum and launched our float tubes at 7:30. Things started out a bit slow but by the time we pulled our tubes out of the water at 11:30 we had netted over 40 fish each. They were all between 11-14 inches. We only had on one bigger fish each, but both eventually headed for the weeds and came off (mine was between 16-18" and Tom's was between 18-20"). When I clipped off the flies that I had used all morning to pack up my rod I then realized how much they were chewed up.



James Kirchner

Not a ton to report but I fished the Stan recently right below Goodwin with a few friends a week ago. Lots of action. Everyone got fish to net and many hook ups. Even dry fly action in the evening. Was able to land a nice 16" fish skating a sz8 trout bomber in the evening. If you're over the crowds at Putah and like the option of throwing dries I would suggest checking out that part of the Stan. Probably closer to us than Putah as well. Just limited parking and wading can be tricky. Check the flows before as they release a lot of water sometimes for AG use.

Other than that, with October coming up I will likely be at Pyramid, Eastern Sierras, and Yuba/Truckee when weather and fire permitting until steelhead really kicks off. Then I will be on the coast and traditional steelhead waters swinging for chrome. Steelhead numbers this year are pretty dismal so even that is up in the air. Check out [this link](#) relating to steelhead returns this year in the northwest. I'd suggest it to anyone interested in doing some research on this year's steelhead returns and what it could mean for the future of the fish.

If anyone's interested, reach out to me – I'm happy to get casual weekend trips together.

Lassen Park Reopens



Part of Lassen Volcanic National Park will reopen Monday, October 4th following a nearly two-month-long closure due to the Dixie Fire. The majority of the park will remain closed and only the far western portion will be accessible to the public next week.

Eight miles of Lassen National Park Highway will reopen from the southwest entrance to the Lassen Peak parking area. The highway will also reopen from the northeast entrance through Manzanita Lake to Loomis Plaza.

"The highway will remain closed to vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles between Loomis Plaza and Lassen Peak parking area due to ongoing fire operations and post-fire recovery," the National Park Service wrote Thursday.

The rest of the park, including Warner Valley, Juniper Lake, and Butte Lake will remain closed.

Visitors can camp at Manzanita Lake but only loops A and B will reopen Monday. All other campgrounds remain closed and backpacking is not an option in the park until further notice.

Entering the park will cost the usual \$30 per vehicle.

Angler Types in Profile: The I've been doing that forever guy

Domenick Swentosky – Troutbitten

Fly fishing is full of it — full of anglers who take themselves too seriously, and full of others who support it. Everyone knows everything.

We have comp guys who can't help recruiting others to join their world. Because hey, if you're really serious about fly fishing then the next step is to join a team and enter a bracket with other fish-counters, right? No, not really.

We have hatch matchers who do nothing but cast to risers and tell you that it's the only way to fly fish. And while looking sideways at the rest of the pack, the truth is they never put in the time to learn any other tactics.

It's an industry that can't stop repackaging an old idea as new, slapping a fresh label on it and charging twice as much as any gear-angler would ever pay.

This is the sport that gave you indoor casting ponds and distance casting trophies, as though that's something that's going to put trout in the net anyway. We are an angling bunch who came up with long-arming fish selfies, the buff, rod vaults, the streamer junkie and purists of all sorts. We have musky anglers hash tagging pictures of juvenile fish and fitting four anglers into the frame, all posing like it's the beast of the year. (The gear guys chuckle at this.)

Fly fishers, all too often, are in fact a little much.

But this is also the industry that developed breathable waders. And dammit, those are wonderful. Likewise, the crazed energies of competition fishermen, streamer junkies and musky guys have spawned the development of more fishing gear and fly tying materials than could ever fit on the walls of our old fly shops. So we now have shops with taller walls and more options. More gear and materials gives rise to even greater ideas. It's progress. It's personal growth, and you gotta love it.

But, undoubtedly, this is a sport that breeds arrogance too. Everything I do is the best, and yeah, I've been doing that forever. It comes from comparisons, from all the judging, and from our fragile insecurities. None of us knows everything about fly fishing, but we all know someone who catches a lot more fish than we do.

So as fly fishing churns out newish concepts like articulated streamers and euro nymphing, it's no wonder there's some resistance to it all. No wonder at every turn we find guys with arms folded, shaking their heads and saying, "Nah, I've been doing that forever."

Stuff like this . . .

That's not a new loop knot. That's what I used as a boy. Nobody taught me any fishing knots, so I came up with this knot to tie flies to the leader.

Drop shotting? My old man fished with lead sinkers tied below the bait for lake fishing. The surf fishermen call it a high-low rig. Been doing that for years.

Jig hooks? Yeah, I've been tying flies on those forever. I bought them at the bait shop, and for the smaller sizes, I just heated up the wire and bent them into a jig with pliers.

Nothing new about your rubber legged flies. We pulled those little strings off spinner baits for bass fishing and tied 'em onto our trout flies way back in the Eighties.

Long leader nymphing? When I was a teenager, we strung up minnows or maggots and fished them with monofilament on a fly rod. I've been doing that forever.

I think we all say these things sometimes. And it's not necessarily our arrogance showing through. We say, "Yeah, I already know that," just to show that we're not an idiot. In the fly fisher's case, it's an effort to communicate our experience, to signal to someone else that we're no rookie, that we've worn out many boot soles, gone through dozens of fly lines, burned out the drag on a couple reels and filed warranty claims on as many fly rods.

But we've also fallen into the river a hundred times. So don't forget that part either.

I've been in conversations with fly fishers who need to tell me, at every turn, that they've been doing all this for a very long time. And it's not just from the retired crew. Twenty-somethings often hold up the same conversational roadblock. It's an attitude that says, *Yeah, I already know that. I already do that. Nothing to learn here, so move on.*

But a closed mind gains nothing, and old ideas grow stale. The feet-stuck-to-the-ground mentality is stubbornness that stands in the way of progress. It keeps us from opening up to new things and enjoying the fly fishing game with a fresh start.

At his best, the "I've been doing that forever guy" also keeps us grounded. He's there to remind us that every *new* thing is connected to the past. He's there to point out that fishermen like Joe Brooks and Joe Humphreys had some big things figured out too. He bridges fly fishing's future with its past. And while moving forward at an ever-accelerating pace, it's important to remember where all of this came from anyway.

Fish hard, friends.

Items for Sale

If you need contact information for a member, use the club's online [roster](#).

Gear Sale – James Kirchner

Leland Fly Co Sonoma Series Steelhead reel. Was a backup reel and only used a few times. Comes with neoprene case, backing and big game mono shooting line. Good first spey reel or back up reel. Click n pawl drag. Asking \$150



Simms wader/gear bag. Fits waders and boots in bottom compartment to separate from dry clothes and gear. Tons of storage up too for jackets, warm clothes, socks, etc. more compartments up top for access to fly boxes, reels, etc. bungee style rod tube holders on both sides. Water repellent material. These are discontinued. In great shape minus missing one stop button on handle. Doesn't affect use. Asking \$200 obo



Simms G4 waders size large king. If you know Simms, you know the G4's are what the guides use. Repaired many pin hole leaks but still going strong. Comes with opros belt rod holder. Only selling because I've grown out of them. Asking \$350 obo.



Wet fly 3/4 reel with Dacron backing \$30

