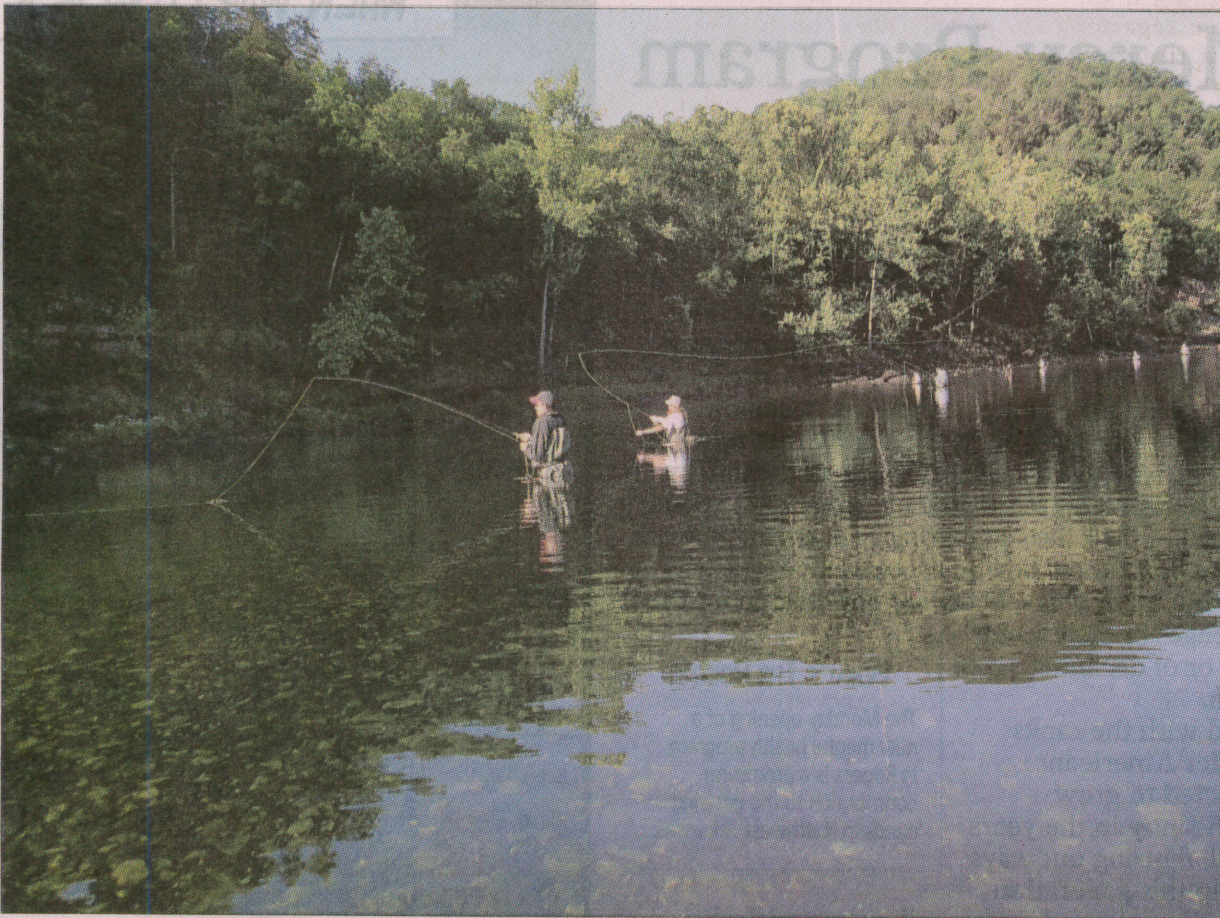


## TESTING THE WATER



STAFF PHOTOS FLIP PUTTHOFF

Anglers test the transparent water of the White River below Beaver Dam during the One-Fly trout fishing tournament on June 8 to raise money for the Reel Recovery fishing retreat program. Team and solo categories were part of the tournament.

# ONE-FLY TIME

## EVENT RAISES MONEY FOR REEL RECOVERY PROGRAM

By Flip Putthoff

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### BEAVER DAM

There was a catch to the One Fly charity trout tournament and it didn't have much to do with fish.

As the name implies, anglers in the contest at the White River below Beaver Dam could use only one fishing fly during the four hour tournament. Lose that fly and it's game over. You're done.

That is, unless anglers shelled out some folding money and purchased "mulligan" flies for \$5 each when they paid their \$20 entry fee. Those "mulligans" were insurance in the event of a break off.

So the One Fly tournament, held June 8, could be a two-fly, three or more fly tournament. Just show 'em the money. The contest was all for fun and to raise money for the Reel Recovery fishing retreat program for men with cancer and cancer survivors.

Selling these extra flies sweetened the donation pot for Reel Recovery.

A little before 7 a.m., Wayne Patton stood on the tailgate of a pickup truck and announced the rules for the One Fly. Each of the 30 fishermen could use only the fly they were given at registration or identical "mulligan" flies. The fisherman catching the most trout wins.

There was a division for individual anglers and a two-person-team division, called the pro division. Fishermen in each respective division used identical flies. Anglers in the individual division were given a size 18 brassie and extras if they were purchased. Anglers in the



Bryce Cadion shows one of five rainbow trout he caught in the One Fly tournament.

team division fished with size 18 burlap caddis flies.

To keep things honest, anglers fished in pairs so each catch had an eye witness. Anglers kept track of the number of trout they caught on a score card. That didn't take much scribbling, tough as the fishing was. The water was so clear as to be transparent. There wasn't a cloud in the sky and no breeze.

If that wasn't enough, Table Rock Lake was backed up into the river because the lake is high. There was no current. Trout fishing conditions don't come much tougher.

### CASTING FOR A CAUSE

Bryce Cadion of the Beaver Dam area won the One Fly tournament last year by catching 10 trout. He returned this year to defend his championship. If he won again, that'd be fine with

him, but his primary mission was to donate to the Reel Recovery cause.

SEE **TOURNEY** PAGE 7A

### AT A GLANCE

#### REEL HELP

The mission of Reel Recovery is to help men in the cancer recovery process by introducing them to the healing powers of fly fishing. Reel Recovery fishing retreats provide a safe, supportive environment to explore their personal experiences of cancer with others who share their stories.

Other than transportation costs to the retreat site, Reel Recovery retreats are free to participants.

Information: [www.reelrecovery.org](http://www.reelrecovery.org). Telephone 800-699-4490.

SOURCE: REEL RECOVERY



STAFF PHOTO FLIP PUTTHOFF

Blair Ernst of Bella Vista lofts line in a casting contest to break a three-way tie June 8 and determine the winner of the individual category. Ernst was closest to a target and won the contest.

## TOURNEY: Anglers Could Fish Anywhere On White River

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6A

At Reel Recovery three-day fishing retreats, cancer battlers and survivors are paired with guides who are experienced fly fishers. Cadion was a guide at a Reel Recovery retreat last year.

"They said it would be a life-changing experience and it was," Cadion said. "I was going through a tough time myself, but it taught me that my problems were nothing compared to what these guys were going through."

Reel Recovery gives cancer battlers and survivors an opportunity to meet others going through the same things, the same difficulties. Conversations about cancer become deeper, sometimes more emotional, as the retreat progresses, Cadion said.

Toby Vaughan helped organize the One Fly and has guided at Reel Recovery retreats. He proudly showed off his fishing cap emblazoned with the autographs of Reel Recovery fishermen he has helped.

Bright sun beat down on the squinted eyeballs of anglers. The 7 o'clock hour arrived. Time to fish. Patton honked a car horn to

signal the official start. Some anglers waded into the river near the dam. Two took off in small pontoon rowboats to fish. Others got in their vehicles and drove to access points downstream.

Anglers could fish anywhere on the river as long as they were back at the registration area by 11 a.m.

I paired up with Jeremy Lowe of Conway at the One Fly. Lowe and his wife were enjoying a weekend in Eureka Springs. Lowe got wind of the One Fly and signed up. We opted to start our fishing immediately below the dam with about eight other contestants. Our plan was to fish some water downstream later. That way Lowe could see more of the river on this, his first visit.

### PHOTO FINISH

I made sure the tiny size 18 brassie was secured to my line with a good knot. I dropped the three "mulligan" flies I purchased into a plastic film canister and stashed it in my fishing vest.

The water was so clear that we could see the outline of every pebble around our wader boots. The fly lines of anglers up and down the river stayed mostly limp. I

think Lowe and I saw two trout caught the first hour.

Defending champion Cadion had the hot hand. He and Toby Vaughan were partners in the team division. At about 10 a.m., they'd caught five trout between the two of them.

While we fished, I asked Cadion what he'd be using right now if we weren't in the One Fly.

"I'd have on a blue dun, size 16," he said. "They work here year 'round." Olive or black woolly buggers in size 12 or size 14 are good to use below Beaver Dam as well.

Cadion said he always uses 7X tippet in water this clear. The line is about 2-pound test and is spider-web thin.

Cadion and Vaughan were sure they had the team division won with their five trout. They left the water early to go chit-chat back at the registration area where the results would be announced. Lowe and I moseyed back about 10:45 a.m., skunked, but happy to be fishing.

The contest was over at 11 a.m., but wait. There was a three-way tie for first place in the individual division. Bill Bahr of Rogers, Blair Ernst of Bella Vista and Alex Marshall of Springfield-Mo., had each

caught two trout. The winner was decided by a casting contest for accuracy.

One of the tournament officials pulled a dog bed out of his vehicle and set it on the ground. This was the target for the casting contest. The three finalists stood about 30 feet away from the target. Each launched one cast. Ernst's toss landed closest to the dog bed to take first place. Bahr was second and Marshall third.

Results of the team division may teach Cadion and Vaughan not to count their chickens so fast. They did not win the team division with their five fish, as they were so sure. They finished second. Carl Caso and Jim Sinclair had seven trout to win the team competition.

There were hot dogs and hamburgers to enjoy, washed down with ice cold water on the hot day. A bevy of donated prizes were given away and an auction raised more money for Reel Recovery. In all the event raised about \$2,500.

No matter how many flies one used, the One Fly tournament offered a fun Saturday morning of fishing for one great cause, continued support for Reel Recovery.