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Prizes
and
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1918
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Fishing
Contest





May

Edited by Warren H. Miller

1918

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mind you—the Factor told Tom what we suspected about him without mincing matters.

"Tom," he said, 'we know that you robbed David MacGregor's traps last fall, but we are going to pass that up. What we want to know now is about Joe Marquard—what did you do to him after you fought with him yesterday? Tell us straight, and don't lose any time about it.'

"Indian Jim interpreted this to Tom, and expanded it some on his own hook, we judged, by the way they grunted and snarled over it in Indian talk. And then Jim explained things to us.

"Tom, he fight with Joe yesterday," said Jim, 'and he lick him good, because Joe tries to get Tom's medicine on the birch bark. Joe run home to get his gun, he say, but Tom he watch all night with his gun, and Joe not come. Tom, he say, he don't know where Joe is, but he not give him the birch bark. He kill him first.'

"So the whole cause of the quarrel, it seemed, was that birch bark 'medicine.'

"Let's have a look at the infernal thing, anyhow!" the Factor said to Jim. "Tell him to hand out that bark."

"But when Tom understood what the Factor wanted, all the Indian devil in him came to the surface. Instead of handing over the bark, he jerked out his hunting knife, backed into a corner, and stood there with his beady eyes glittering death at us.

"I kill!" he kept snarling at us through his teeth. 'I kill! Kill!'

"BUT there was the Factor, fingering the hammer of his big blue Colts; and over against the door was old Mac, squinting over the lock of his 'Trade' gun, with the muzzle pointing at the region of the Indian's belt; and there were the muzzles of half a dozen other rifles pointing right into the Indian's corner, with their owners standing very quiet, but not looking pleasant at all. It wasn't the kind of a peace party that even a red-hot Indian would care to argue with.

"Tom took this all in, standing there in the corner fingering his knife for a minute or two. Then he grunted, shoved his knife back into its sheath, dug into his shirt front and handed out the piece of bark all wrapped up carefully in doe-skin.

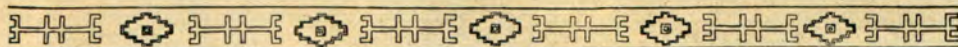
"The Factor took the bark, adjusted his glasses, and carried it to the light, turning it first one way and then another. He couldn't make anything out of it at first. Then the queerest expression came over his face, as he moved his lips spelling out the words. Finally he handed the bark back to Tom without any comment. And then, to our astonishment, he went behind the counter, set out a bag of powder, a bag of bullets, some caps and a plug of tobacco and motioned for Tom to take them and go.

"The Indian was as much astonished and dumbfounded as the rest of us; but he gathered up the Factor's presents and started for the door. As he did so the Factor said to Indian Jim:

"Tell him that his 'medicine' is certainly good medicine—for it saved him his life to-day.'

"And that is the truth, too," he added, speaking to the rest of us. 'For the words scrawled on that piece of bark convicted another man than Tom. They read:

"I, Joe Marquard, robbed David's traps."



Avalon, the Beautiful

By
Zane
Grey

IF you are a fisherman, and aspire to the study or conquest of the big game of the sea, go to Catalina Island once before it is too late.

The summer of 1917 will never be forgotten by those fishermen who were fortunate enough to be at Avalon. Early in June, even in May, there were indications that the first record season in many years might be expected. Barracuda and white seabass showed up in great schools; the ocean appeared to be full of albacore; yellowtail began to strike all along the island shores and even in the bay of Avalon; almost every day in July sights of broadbill swordfish were reported, sometimes as many as ten in a day; in August the blue-fin tuna surged in, school after school, in vast numbers; and in September returned the marlin or round-bill swordfish, that royal purple swash-buckler of the Pacific.

This extraordinary run of fish appeared like old times to the boatmen and natives, who could look back over many Catalina years. The cause, of course, was a favor-

able season when the sardines and anchovies came to the island in incalculable numbers. Acres and acres of these little bait fish drifted helplessly to and fro, back and forth with the tides, from Seal Rocks to the West End. These schools were not broken up until the advent of the voracious tuna; and when they arrived the ocean soon seemed littered with small amber-colored patches—each of which was a densely packed mass of sardines or anchovies, drifting with the current. It has



An Avalon Long-Finned Tuna

not yet been established that swordfish feed on these schools, but the swordfish were there in abundance at any rate; and it was reasonable to suppose that some of the fish they feed on were in pursuit of the anchovies.

Albacore feeding on the surface raise a thin, low, white line of water or multitudes of slight, broken

splashes. Tuna raise a white wall, tumbling and spouting along the horizon, and it is a sight not soon to be forgotten by a fisherman. Near at



The Coast of Avalon—

hand a big school of feeding tuna is a thrilling spectacle. They move swiftly, breaking water as they smash after the little fish, and the roar can be heard quite a distance. The wall of white water seems full of millions of tiny glinting fish, leaping frantically from the savage tuna. And when the sunlight shines golden through this wall of white spray, and the great bronze and silver and blue tuna gleam for an instant, the effect is singularly exciting and beautiful.

All through August and much of September these schools of tuna, thousands of them, ranted up and down the coast of Catalina thinning out the amber patches of anchovies, and affording the most magnificent sport to anglers.

These tuna may return next year and then again may not return for ten years. Sometime again they will swing round the circle or drift with the currents in that mysterious and inscrutable nature of the ocean. And if a fisherman can only pick out the year or have the obsession to go back season after season he will some day see those wonderful schools again.

But as for the other fish—swordfish, white seabass, yellowtail and albacore—their doom has been spelled, and soon they will be no more. That is why I say to fishermen if they want to learn something about these incomparable fish they must go soon to Catalina before it is too late.

The Japs, the Austrians, the round-haul nets, the canneries and the fertilizer plants—that is to say, foreigners and markets, greed and war have cast their dark shadow over beautiful Avalon. The intelligent, far-seeing boatmen all see it. My boatman, Capt. Danielson, spoke gloomily of the not distant time when his occupation would be gone. And as for the anglers who fish at Catalina, some of them see it and many of them do not. The standard raised at Avalon is to haul in as many of the biggest fish in the least possible time. One famous fisherman brought in thirteen tuna—986 pounds of tuna—that he caught in one day! This is unbelievable, yet it is true. Another

brought in eleven tuna in one day. These fishermen are representative of the coterie who fish for records. All of them are big, powerful men, and when they hook a fish they will not give him a foot of line if they can help it. They horse him in and if they can horse him in before he wakes up to real combat they are the better pleased. All of which is to say that the true motive (or pleasure, if it can be such) is the instinct to kill. I have observed this in many fishermen. Anyone who imagines that man has advanced much beyond the savage stage has only carefully to observe fishermen.

I have demonstrated the practicability of letting marlin swordfish go after they were beaten, but the boatmen will not do it. The greater number of swordfish weigh under two hundred pounds, and when exhausted and pulled up to the boat they can be freed by cutting the wire leader close to the hook. Probably all these fish would live. A fisherman will have had his fun seeing and photographing the wonderful leaps, and conquering the fish, and when all this is over it would be sportsmanlike to let him go. Marlin are not food fish, and they are thrown to the sharks. It seems a pity to treat this royal, fighting, wonderful, purple-colored fish in this way. But the boatmen will not free them. My boatman claimed that his reputation depended upon the swordfish he caught, and that in Avalon no one would believe fish were caught unless brought to the dock. It was his bread and butter. His reputation brought him new fishermen, and so he could not afford to lose it. The fault then does not lie with the boatmen, but with those men who are responsible for the present system and standard of fishing at Avalon.

This is one of the facts that have spelled the doom of Avalon as a fishing resort. Reform is needed. But even if a reform were taken up (which is something that will never happen in Avalon) it would come too late to save the fish.

The Japs are the greatest market fishermen in the world. And some five hundred boats put out of San Pedro every day to

scour the ocean for "the chicken of the sea," as albacore are advertised to the millions of people who are always hungry. It must be said that the Japs mostly fish square. They use a hook, and barbless hook at that. Usually four Japs constitute the crew of one of these fast, eighty-horsepower motorboats. They roam the sea with sharp eyes ever alert for that thin, white line on the horizon, the feeding albacore. Their method of fishing is unique and picturesque. When they sight albacore they run up on the school and slow down.

In the stern of the boat stands a huge tank, usually painted red. I have become used to seeing dots of red all over the ocean. This tank is kept full of fresh sea water by a pump connected with the engine, and it is used to keep live bait—no other than the little anchovies. One Jap, using a little net, dips up live bait and throws them overboard to the albacore. Another Jap beats on the water with long bamboo poles, making splashes. The other two Japs have short, stiff poles with a wire attached and the barbless hook at the end. They put on a live bait and toss it over. Instantly they jerk hard, and two big, white albacore, from fifteen to thirty pounds, come wiggling up onto the stern of the boat. Down goes the pole and whack! goes a club. It is all done with swift, mechanical precision. It used to amaze me and fill me with sadness. If the Japs could hold the school of albacore they would very soon load the boat. But usually a school of albacore cannot be held long.

You cannot fish in the channel any more without encountering these Jap boats. Once, at one time, I saw one hundred and thirty-two boats. Most of them were fishing! They rant to and fro over the ocean, chasing every white splash, and they make an angler's pleasure taste bitter.

Fortunately, the Japs let the tuna alone, for the simple and good reason that they cannot catch the wise blue-fins. Yet they drive the schools down and that is almost as bad. As far as swordfish are concerned, it is easy to see what will happen



—And a Leaping Swordfish Off Shore

when the albacore become scarce. Broad-bill swordfish are the finest food fish in the sea. They can be easily harpooned by these skilful Japs. And so, in a season or two, they will be killed and driven away. This misfortune may not come next year, but it will come.

In this connection, it is interesting to note that I tried to photograph one of the crews in action. But Capt. Dan would not let me get near enough to take a picture. There is bad blood between Avalon boatmen and these foreign market-fishermen. Shots had been exchanged more than once. Capt. Dan kept a rifle on board. This news sort of stirred me. And I said: "Run close to that bunch, Cap. Maybe they'll take a peg at me!" But he refused to comply, and I lost a chance to serve my country!

The Japs, however, are square fishermen, mostly, and I rather admire those albacore chasers, who at least give the fish a chance. Some of them use nets, and against them, and the Austrian round-haul netters, I am exceedingly bitter. These round-haul nets, some of them must be a mile long, and they sink two hundred feet in the water. What chance has a school of fish against that? They surround a school and there is no escape.

Clemente Island, the sister island to Catalina, was once a paradise for fish, especially the beautiful, gamy yellowtail. But there are no more fish there, except a few marlin swordfish in August and September. The great boiling schools of yellowtail are gone. Clemente Island has no three-mile law protecting it, as has Catalina. But that Catalina law has become a farce. It is violated every day in broad daylight, and probably all night long. One Austrian round-haul netter took seven tons of white seabass in one haul. Seven tons! Did you ever look at a white seabass? He is the most beautiful of bass—slender, graceful, thoroughbred, exquisitely colored like a paling opal, and a fighter if there ever was one.

What become of these seven tons of

white seabass and all the other tons and tons of yellowtail and albacore?

That is a question. It needs to be answered. If some one with courage did not take up the perplexing, unpleasant questions, would they ever be answered?

In California you hear of a \$10,000,000 fish business. Ten million a year! Instead of doubting it, I imagine a still higher figure. This year at Avalon you heard many things. The fish canneries were working day and night, and every can of fish—the whole output had been bought by the Government for the soldiers. Very good. We are a nation at war. Our soldiers must be properly fed and so must our allies. If it takes all the fish in the sea and all the meat on them and we must and will win this war.

But real patriotism is one thing and misstatement is another. If there were not so much deceit and greed in connection with this war it would be easier to stomach.

As a matter of cold fact, that round-haul netter's seven tons of beautiful white seabass did not go into cans for our good soldiers or for our fighting allies. Those seven tons of splendid white seabass went into the fertilizer plant—where many and many a ton had gone before!

It is not hard to comprehend. These Japs and Austrians get \$40 a ton for fresh fish and \$50 a ton for rotten fish! When they work for the fertilizer plants they do not need ice—they do not need to hurry to the port to save spoiling—they can stay out till the boat is packed full. So a greater part of the magnificent schools of white seabass, albacore and yellowtail—splendid food fish—go into the fertilizer plants to make a few foreign-born hogs rich. Hundreds of aliens—many of them hostile to the United States—are making big money, which is sent abroad. There is law in California. But there is also graft. The latest news this summer was that the Fish Commission intended to revoke the three-mile limit for nets around Catalina. This is to be expected, considering that \$10,000,000-a-

year business. They claim the contention of all Avalonians, and anglers, that Catalina is a natural spawning ground for these fish, is unfounded.

It is not unfounded. It has been proved. Personally, I proved it myself, being naturalist enough at least for that. Moreover, my colleague, Dr. Riggan, of the University of Pennsylvania, and a scientist, demonstrated that the great kelp beds around Catalina were the spawning grounds of these fish in question. And not only a spawning ground, but—what is more important—a feeding ground.

And now the kelp beds are being devastated. The Government needs potash. Formerly our supply of potash came from Germany. But now that we are not on amiable terms with those nice, gentle Germans we cannot get any potash. Hence the great huge kelp-cutters that you hear cut only the tops of the kelp beds. Six feet they say, and it all grows up again quickly. Well, our Government must have potash, for we must win the war. But what Dr. Riggan and I saw was that the once vast, heaving, wonderful beds of kelp along the Clemente and Catalina shores had been cut deep and mostly destroyed.

Happily neither war, nor business, nor fish-hogs can ruin the wonderful climate of Catalina Island. Nature does not cater to evil conditions. The sun and the fog, the great calm Pacific, the warm Japanese current, the pleasant winds—these all have their tasks, and they perform them faithfully, to the happiness of those who linger at Catalina.

Avalon, the beautiful! Somehow even the fire that destroyed half of Avalon did not greatly mar its beauty. At a distance the bay and the grove of eucalyptus trees, the green and gold slopes, look as they always looked. Avalon has a singular charm outside of its sport of fishing. It is the most delightful and comfortable place I ever visited. The nights are cool. You sleep under blankets even when over in Los Angeles people are suffocating with the heat. At dawn the hills are ob-

scured in fog and sometimes this fog is chilly. But early or late in the morning it breaks up and rolls away. The sun shines. It is the kind of sunshine that dazzles the eye, elevates the spirit, and warms the back. And out there rolls the vast, blue Pacific—calm, slowly heaving, beautiful and mysterious.

During the summer months Avalon is gay, colorful, happy and mirthful with its crowds of tourists and summer visitors. The one broad street runs along the beach and I venture to say no other street in America can compare with it for lazy, idle, comfortable, pleasant and picturesque effects. It is difficult to determine just where the beach begins and the street ends, because of the strollers in bathing suits. Many a time, after a long fishing day on the water, as I was walking up the middle of the street, I have been stunned to a gasp by the startling apparition of Venus, or Hebe, or Little Egypt, or Annette Kellerman, parading nochalantly to and fro. It seems reasonable and fair to give notice that broadbill swordfish are not the only dangers to encounter at Avalon. I wish they had a policeman there.

But the spirit of Avalon, like the climate, is something to love. It is free, careless, mirthful, wholesome, restful and serene. No one pays the slightest attention to who you are, what you are, or



A Marlin Swordfish

what you do. The resort is democratic and indifferent and aloof. Yet there is always mirth, music and laughter. Many and many a night have I awakened, anywhere from ten to one, to listen to the low lap of the waves on the beach, the soft tones of a Hawaiian ukelele, the weird cry of a nocturnal seagull, the bark of a sealion, or the faint, haunting laugh of some happy girl, going by late, perhaps with her lover.

Avalon is so clean and sweet. It is the only place I have been, except Long Key, where the omnipresent, hateful and stinking automobile does not obtrude upon real content. Think of air not reeking with gasoline and a street safe to cross at any time! Safe, I mean, of course, from being run down by some joy-rider. You are liable to encounter one of the Loreleis or Aphrodites at any hour from five till sunset. You must risk chance of that!

So, in conclusion, let me repeat that if you are a fisherman of any degree, and if you aspire to some wonderful experiences with the great and vanishing game-fish of the Pacific, and if you would love to associate with these adventures some dazzlingly white-hot days, and unforgettable cool nights, where your eyelids get glued with sleep, and the fragrant salt breath of the sea, its music and motion and color and mystery and beauty—then go to Avalon before it is too late.



Cut-throat Trout on the Dry Fly

By
Bartle
T.
Harvey

IT was on the 28th day of January. The "Hell Gate" at Missoula had just ceased belching from the East one of those three-day blinding blizzards, in the face of which men and animals, without shelter, chill and perish within a few hours' time. Myself and others, delayed by the storm, were comfortably seated before a cheery fire on the "Cozy M" ranch in the Bitter Root Valley. Toward evening the weather moderated rapidly and soon, from the Japanese current of the great Pacific, balmy whispers of spring came tumbling over the Rockies. It was the cattleman's friend, the winter Chinook. Before long, rivulets of water