

Better than Bridge - Continued

Well no matter now, the time for worrying was over and time to pull was here.

The bass finally came free of the weeds pulling a long string of them with it under my boat. I put the tip of my rod in the water and worked the line around to motor to the other side of the boat. The fight was sealed as the fish had nothing to do but tire itself out in the open water of the pond. I reeled in the line and finally landed the six-pound bass, along with about ten pounds of pond weeds.

Most bass come up from under the fly and gulp it down in a torrent of white water as this one had. Some even go airborne as they rocket up into the air after chomping the fly. Many an otherwise stately, Christian fishing friend has uttered words not fit to print here when their topwater bug was eaten in such a manner. You know who you are. Prevention doesn't seem to work. Forgiveness after the fact is the only option.

Other bass slip up behind the fly and suck it in without so much as a

ripple. One second the fly is floating on the water. The next second it just simply isn't there. It always seems to happen when I take my eye off the popper to swat a mosquito or watch a bird fly by. Sometimes I feel the tug on my rod from the fish that is already hooked. But more often than not, I look back down at the water from whatever distracted me to find my popper has disappeared. I lean back and set the hook. Most of the time, I'm rewarded with a solid hook-up.

Still other bass come from the side making a 'V' wake in the water all the way to the fly. These last bass are the most difficult for me to get the hook into. I usually get too excited and strike too soon, sending the big, hair frog flying right toward my face.

I have a standard saying when this happens, "Well when I don't get excited about it anymore, I'll take up Bridge!" Bass flies aren't the only things that get nervous when the pond is still on those late summer evenings.



Nothing gets a big bass moving like a big frog. Drop it by a lily pad or near the bank and let it sit. One twitch and BOOM!



After recovering from shock, Steven Bridges holds up a nice Mills County largemouth bass for the camera.