



A Polish angler's gift to America

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Wyoming's fly anglers have a better way to nymph for trout, thanks to an innovative angler from Poland.

Jackson anglers Jack Dennis and Jeff Currier gave a presentation at the Wyoming Angler's Symposium called "Euro-nymphing Techniques." Euro-nymphing is a style developed by Polish angler and former world champion, Wladyslaw Trzebunia.

Dennis and Currier recognized that by referring to the method as Polish nymphing.

Dennis observed most U.S. anglers prefer dry flies, mainly because fish here are so plentiful. In Europe, however, centuries of pollution and fishing pressure have rendered the good fishing holes few and far between.

The lack of fish make the Europeans, like Trzebunia, better anglers out of necessity.

"We've got the greatest fishing on Earth," Dennis said. "In Europe, they have pockets of good fishing."

There are several ways Polish nymphing differ from the way most American anglers nymph:

* First and foremost, it is practiced without a strike indicator. The technique relies on keeping the line taut so the angler feels the strike.

* The leader is short -- 6-8 feet -- and has a heavy nymph or weight at the end to "feel" the bottom. A nymph dropper or droppers are tied above it.

* A long rod -- 9 feet is a popular choice -- is used, and kept parallel to the water. The rod tip should move slightly faster than the current to keep the line tight.

* A turn of the wrist is added at the end of the run to move the fly sideways to entice any undecided fish to strike.

This is a simplified summary, but Dennis said Trzebunia's innovative method brought him instant fame over a decade ago in Finland when he arrived at the world championships "in his little homemade fly-fishing vest" and won by the largest margin in history.

Other Europeans quickly picked it up and Polish nymphing is now a standard tactic.

Dennis and Currier admitted it is not an easy technique to master, and dragging a weight on the bottom increases the risk of a snag. But since Trzebunia began teaching his methods to the U.S. fly-fishing team several years ago, the Americans have become anglers to be reckoned with.

Imagine what it can do on a river full of fish.

"Take the Hoback River as an example," Currier said of a popular waterway near Jackson. "The Hoback has a fish behind every rock. In Spain, a river that looks just like the Hoback, like some of those rivers did, as far upstream that you can see and as far downstream as you can see there might be five fish. That's a pretty big difference which is why the Europeans are so good. They've learned how to go out and find those five fish."