

On Friday, April 28, customer Rick Brill caught his personal best trout on a chartreuse/black sinking FatBoy. The trout weighed 7 3/4 pounds and was 30 1/4 inches long. Kudos to Rick for fishing hard and producing such a fine specimen on what was otherwise a slow and tough day.

At the time Rick caught the fish, I suspected it might be the same one my friend Jason King had caught in basically the exact same spot 5 days earlier. Jason had reported the length and weight of the fish (it weighed 8 3/4 pounds when he caught it) and had given me the precise location where it bit. I sent Rick and his buddy to that part of the area specifically because of the report.

Having now had the chance to talk to Jason and also to look at the pictures taken on both occasions, I can now confidently say the two men caught the same fish! Jason caught it on a Super Spook Junior.

A couple of points come to my mind when I mull over these events. One is the obvious importance and value of catch and release. Because Jason did not kill the fish when he caught it, it not only lives on and can continue to reproduce its kind, but it can also be caught again by other anglers who might consider the catching a once-in-a-lifetime event. Because Rick also released the fish, both those possibilities still exist.

The events also help undermine what I call "the smart fish mantra". Trout, even big ones, are basically stupid; they are fish with bbs for brains. They do not remember events and learn behaviors and strategies based on those memories. Of these things I'm convinced.

Earlier this season, I caught what I believe to be the same 7 3/4 pound trout two days in a row in the same place on the same lure!

To read more about strange events like these which I've experienced while fishing, check out my upcoming article in *Texas Saltwater Fishing Magazine*.

The pictures on the following pages can be used to verify the truth of the events related to the 30 incher twice caught.



The picture Jason took (he was alone). Notice the line wear on the fish's back and the specific pattern of the dots in it.



The same line wear abrasion is apparent in the picture of Rick with the fish, and the dot pattern is identical.....