

While fishing clear water in an area I've been frequenting lately, Jason King hooked, fought and lost a monster trout this past weekend. Jason's not the kind of guy who's always complaining about the one that got away, nor is he prone to exaggeration. Furthermore, he runs a Shallow Sport and sees plenty of big trout in skinny water, and has sight-cast and caught 32-inch trout. This fish, he says, was not a 32. I paraphrase his commentary on the event:

I was casting down the edge of a sandy gut with grass on its edge. I didn't feel the fish bite, but noticed slack in my line, which started moving fast to my left. Once I reeled up tight to the fish, it took off faster than any trout I've ever hooked. I thought it was a giant ladyfish. Then it jumped. Over and over again, like a tarpon. I could clearly see it was a monster trout. It kept jumping out of the water and reentering nose-first. I've never seen a trout act like this one did. At first, I thought I had no chance of landing it, since I couldn't really control it at all. But eventually, I succeeded in leading it over to a shallow area with a hard sandy bottom. Then I had the fish circling me repeatedly and was able to get her in a little closer. I could tell she was heavy by the feel of her weight against the rod, and because I could clearly see she was fat. I got the fish up as close as perhaps twelve feet or so before the hook just popped loose. Once she was free, she just sat on the bottom for a bit. I even tried casting back at her to see if she'd bite again, but after resting for a short time, she just swam off real slow. I have never had a sicker feeling in the pit of my stomach while fishing. I'm telling you this was not a 31 or 32. I had started to think maybe fish of that caliber were all we have left to dream about catching. But that's clearly not the case. This trout was mid-30s, and she had weight on her frame. The trout of a lifetime, for sure.

Jason fishes hard and catches a lot of big trout. In a way, I'd say he "deserved" to land this one. Doesn't matter what I think, though. The fishing gods giveth and they taketh away!