

ACTION & ADVENTURE IN UPSTATE NEW YORK

PART I IN A SUMMER LONG SERIES

by Vince Zandri

A trophy brown trout makes an all out run down a flat stretch of stream... The darkness of the underground cave leaves you breathless with fear — you never knew darkness could be so black ... you float above the earth with your hang glider, over the flat waters of a lake reflecting the light of the mid morning sun...

Who says you still can't find action and adventure in upstate New York?

With its mountains and park lands, streams and rivers, lakes and forests, upstate New York remains a haven for exploration and outdoor adventure. This summer, I will be exploring just some of the fun that awaits you in your own back-yard and bringing it to you here in *The Source*, in the form of personal experience essays and how-to reports.

We're not talking run of the mill past-times, but ventures that go beyond the usual weekend round of horseshoes... way beyond.

With my reports, I'll enrich your lifestyle with a morning of fly-fishing on the Postenkill, or challenge your physical condition with a stint of rock climbing in the Adirondacks.

Listen: I want to put your life on the line with hang gliding in the Catskill valleys.

The Source pass-word for summer 1994 is *Intense!*

Think of it: While your friends spend the weekend glued to the couch, you can be enjoying the adventure of a lifetime.

Be the next Indiana Jones. Boldly go where few people have gone before, and let *The Source* lead the way.

So grab your bull-whip, flip on your fedora and fuel up the Jeep. I'll get you there and back safely... Trust me.



William Parker, Jr.

FLY FISHING

Picture the scene on a cool June morning somewhere in upstate New York: The young man rolls over in his bed and turns off the alarm clock before it sounds at five A.M. This is not a work day. This is Saturday. The man is wide awake and has been for a half-hour, while dreams of hooking and landing brown trout with a fly-rod have invaded his imagination, affecting his blood stream like a dose of caffeine.

The young man slips out of bed easily. He does not want to wake his wife. Gently, he walks past the small bedroom where the baby and three year old are asleep. Then it is downstairs and out of the house and into the darkness of early morning. He loaded his Jeep the evening before with all the essentials for a day on the stream — two fly-rods (in case one breaks), fly vest, Neoprene waders, fedora, lunch (smoked turkey and Vidalia Onion on thick slices of soft Italian bread, and beer kept cold in a mini Igloo).

Thirty minutes later, the young man is stepping gently into the gin-clear waters of the Postenkill, the stream that originates in the foothills of Rensselaer county and empties, ultimately, into the Hudson.

The stream flows fast and loud. He feels the pressure from the current and the shock of cold against his waders and legs when he steps into the water. He feels the gravel bottom against the soles of his boots and the balls of his feet.

The man reads the stream for pockets of slow, deep moving water, where only the largest trout can be caught. He knows most of the deep pools by heart since he has fished here at least once a week for a half a dozen years. He is using a May Fly imitation even in late June. Looking upstream, he can see a cloud of insects rising above the water as the sun also rises, red-orange above the mountains to the east.

The man begins his first series of casts with his fly rod. He is aiming for a deep pool about twenty feet upstream. Using his right arm, he swings the graphite rod as though mimicking the arm of a metronome — 10 O'Clock, 2 O'Clock; 10 O'Clock, 2 O'Clock. The young man feels his heart beat, his adrenaline pump in the early morn-

ing. There is the inexplicable feeling of confidence. The man knows he will catch a trout very soon.

He sets the fly into the water that runs fast and white and empties into the deep pool below it. The water comes alive. The trout has taken his fly. The man sets the hook, but the trout makes an all-out run down stream. The fisherman takes in strips of line, careful to keep the pressure even between fish and rod. There is the noise of the reel, as the fish takes more line out with its run. The fish jumps and settles in a pocket of the stream. The fish is never still, always pumping the rod, the man always keeping the pressure on the fish.

Holding the rod straight and perpendicular to the stream, the man is conscious that he must not exhaust the fish. He brings the trout in close beside him, the rod bowing as the fish comes nearer. He watches the fish, as it fans its gravel colored tail in the clear water. He reaches into the stream and saturates his hand with water so that he will not damage the fish's external mucous coating when he touches it. He has seen dead fish along the bank of the stream in the past, their bodies covered with fuzzy fingerprints. Seeing a fish carelessly killed is always painful. So he wets his hands thoroughly and takes hold of the fish. There is the alive, squirming feeling of the fish against his palm and fingers. With his right hand, he unhooks the barb and he allows the fish to slide away from his hand and slip back into the stream.

The fish sinks deep into the water near the man's foot, until he moves his foot and the trout races away like a bullet upstream. The man is happy, because the fish is alive. And if he is lucky the man will catch the same fish another day.

The Place: I won't tell you exactly where I fish, but I will tell you this: The Postenkill, especially on Creek Road in Eagle Mills, is still a prime location for catching wonderful trout both indigenous and stocked. Also, try the Little Hoosick in Berlin. And there is always the famous Battenkill and its trophy section off of NY Route 22, near the Vermont border.

The Equipment: Starter fly-fishing packages are available for less than \$200 from both Orvis and L.L. Bean. The standard package consists of one five weight fly-rod and reel, one spool of medium floating line, as well as leader and tippet materials. More importantly, the packet will include a learner's manual and accompanying video tape. Of course you'll need a fly vest. Both items purchased together should run you no more than \$140. If you have deep pockets, try out the Orvis Fly-Fishing school in Manchester, Vermont. From beginners to experts, one flat fee buys you three meals a day, luxury accommodations at the Equinox, instruction with Orvis outdoor guides and all the fish you can catch and release for an entire weekend.

The Season: In New York State, the normal trout season runs from April 1 to Sept. 31, with the exception of the Battenkill Trophy section and a variety of lakes and ponds which may be fished all year round. Remember to practice catch and release!