

CATFISH DERBY

Down South they're off and running each summer to hook the world's biggest "cats"

Most of us think of catfishing in the Tom Sawyer sense . . . a cane pole, a bent pin and a sleepy afternoon catching little, whisker-faced fish. Such a mind's-eye picture is valid for most of the country, but not in Savannah, Tennessee, which calls itself the catfish capital of the world. Here the gentle art of catfishing is transformed into a hair-raising, backbreaking sport. The reason is Savannah's catfish. They're big—a yard long and almost that much around.

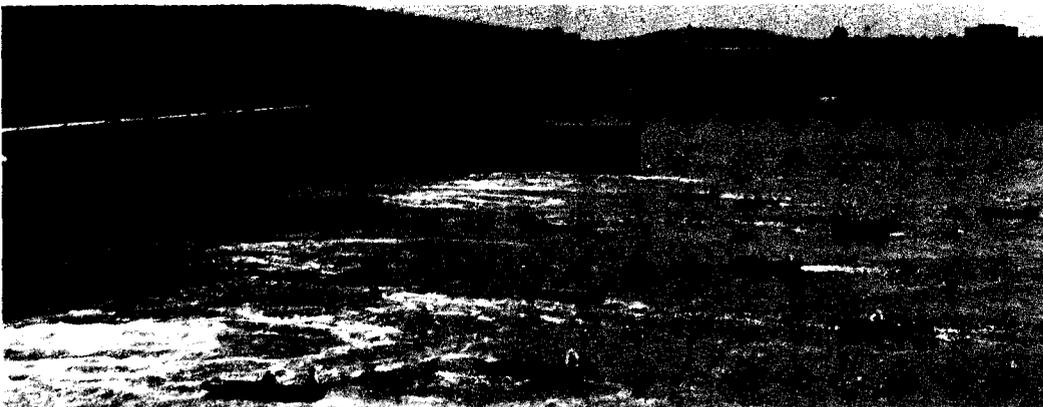
Old-timers at the favorite fishing hole below the giant Pickwick Landing Dam regularly haul in 40- to 60-pounders. The record fish to date is a 130-pound whopper, and local legend insists that 150-pounders lurk in the depths of the Tennessee River. This July, Savannah is holding its annual month-long Catfish Derby with prizes awarded for the largest fish caught and other special events.

These outsize catfish owe their heft primarily to an abundance of shad which are stopped by the dam. They mill about in confused hordes in the waters beneath the dam. About all the catfish have to do is lie with their mouths open and food is thrust down their throats.

The biggest fish, say the experts (who use regular deep-sea tackle), are caught on the edges of the "boils" of turbulence created by the turbines. Keeping a skiff just alongside—but not on top—of the erupting water calls for tricky boat handling. But when a fish in the 50-pound class takes your line, you soon forget the perils close by.

Savannah's catfish are possibly the biggest in the world, but they're still quite a good bit short of Huckleberry Finn's fictionally record catch . . . "a catfish that was big as a man, being six feet, two inches long and weighed over 200 pounds."
—PETE BARRETT

Fishermen wait just downstream of Pickwick Dam for force-fed, fattest catfish



PHOTOGRAPHED BY WILLIAM VANDIVERT



Catfishing is backbreaking—in the Tennessee River (left) when they're too big to be hauled in by line



Catfishing is hair-raising—when you balance a skiff on wild water near the dam (left) while hauling in 50-pounders with deep-sea tackle (above). But at the hot, long afternoon's end, bent backs aren't too stiff, arms too leaden that they can't straighten up to lift the weighed-down rope for the final, smiling photo (below) which proves that Tennessee's catfish can be longer and wider than the stories of any angler



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WHY WOMEN LIVE LONGER THAN MEN

Continued from page 23

diets and the incidence of coronary disease in various parts of the world. For this, in half a dozen years, he and his colleagues have run up travel mileage that would do credit to an airline crew. Teams have gone out from the Minnesota laboratory to, among other places, England, Italy, Spain, Finland, Sweden, South Africa, Japan and several sections of the U.S.

In each of these countries, detailed information was gathered on three points: the composition of the national diet; the frequency of coronary disease; and the concentration of cholesterol in the blood. This is what was found:

National diets varied surprisingly little in most of these countries in essential nutritional characteristics. The exception was the proportion of fats. The U.S. had the "fattest" diet, 41 per cent of calories from fats. In Great Britain, the percentage was about 35. Spain and Italy were at the other end of the scale, 22 and 20 per cent of calories from fats.

MALE CORONARY DEATHS and blood cholesterol levels were found to be in scale to the fat intake of people in the various countries studied (see chart below). In Italy, for example, the coronary death rate for men was only one fourth of ours.

Dr. Keys was aware some American specialists might snort skeptically that he must have studied underfed Italians, or that Italian doctors don't know how to diagnose coronary disease anyway. The Minnesota professor made sure his Italian subjects matched the U.S. weight norm. (One group, composed of Bologna policemen, even exceeded it.) And he persuaded Dr. Paul Dudley White—dean of American heart men long before President Eisenhower became his patient—to visit Italy to check on the standards of Italian diagnosis. Dr. White found Italian doctors as ready and able to diagnose coronary disease as U.S. physicians.

A particularly provocative study was carried out in Capetown, South Africa, by Dr. Keys and four South African colleagues. Capetown's population contains three distinct groups—Europeans, Cape colored (mulattoes) and native (Bantus). Europeans consume twice as much fat as Bantus; the Cape colored fall in between. Blood cholesterol levels and the incidence of coronary disease, age for age, had the same distribution: high in Europeans, intermediate in Cape colored, exceedingly low in Bantus.

"Now," says Dr. Keys, "here is the kicker. If race were responsible for coronary disease. American Negroes ought to be like the Bantus. But American Negroes match other Americans, not Bantus, in coronary disease.

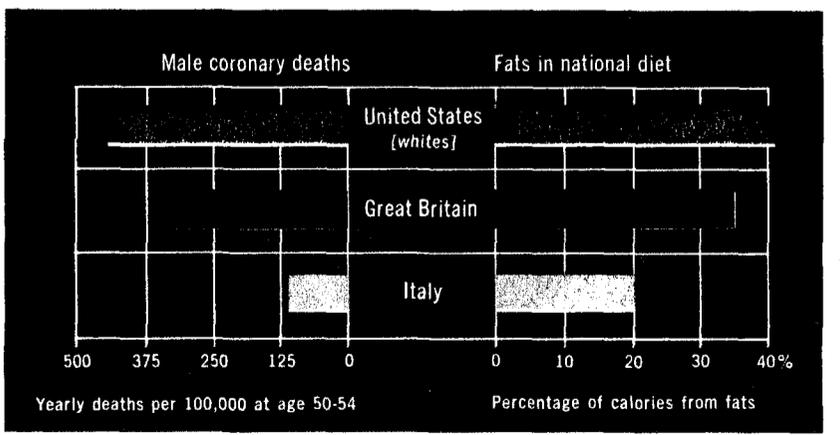
"This is clearly the result of something in the way we live. I think the high proportion of fats in our national diet is to blame.

"Our own U.S. figures," Dr. Keys adds, "also suggest that excessive consumption of fat is involved in our coronary epidemic. During the past 45 years, the fat content of our diet has increased steadily through greater consumption of fat-rich gravies, dressings and desserts, fried foods, meat and other fat-rich foods.

"According to the Department of Agriculture, in 1910, 31.8 per cent of the calories in the U.S. diet were derived from fats. In 1925, the figure was 35.1 per cent, and in 1940, 38.3 per cent. Today, the national average is above 41 per cent, and there must be many families where it is 45 per cent.

"The rise in fat consumption coincides exactly with the emergence of coronary disease as a great public health problem. I believe that a diet overabundant in fat is a major factor in the high incidence of coronary disease among American men."

By no means all of Dr. Keys's fellow scientists are convinced that there is a significant connection between excessive dietary fat and coronary



Dr. Keys and his colleagues, on the basis of studies here and abroad, have found a relationship between the figures on male heart deaths and national diets

disease. Some are critical of his use of statistics, especially statistics from abroad; they regard some of the latter as unreliable. They are fearful of precipitating changes in our diet for what they regard as a still unproved theory.

Dr. Keys's conclusions, on the other hand, are supported by a number of distinguished authorities. Dr. Fredrick J. Stare and his colleagues at Harvard have found, for example, that high-fat diets induce artery disease in monkeys. Dr. Louis N. Katz, director of cardiovascular research at Chicago's Michael Reese Hospital, adds, "We have no final answers on coronary disease, but I think excessive dietary fat is definitely involved."

Dr. Keys's studies are also given support by other research. In 1951, Army doctors carried out a remarkable study which showed that vast numbers of American males not only have high blood cholesterol, but also the kind of artery damage that probably goes with high blood cholesterol. Autopsies were performed upon young American soldiers killed in battle in Korea. In case after case, men in their twenties, and some even younger, were found to have coronary arteries seriously blocked by fatty deposits.

The interesting findings of Dr. Keys by no means tell the whole story: Other elements of the diet besides fat may be involved. Moreover, American women and men eat from the same table. What about the odd circumstance that not only do women have less coronary disease than men, but diets that send the blood cholesterol levels of men soaring have little effect on the blood cholesterol levels of women?

Nor has anything been said of the role that lack of exercise may play in the male heart problem. Modern technology has made nearly all jobs in America sedentary. The male worker on the assembly line today (no less than his office boss) may find his job nerve-racking, but he sits down at it and does not use many of his muscles. Many heart-disease researchers (including Dr. Keys) believe that lack of exercise is a major factor in the upsurge of coronary disease. Careful studies in England suggest that sedentary work predisposes people to heart attack.

IT IS IDLE, however, to dream of turning the clock back to an era when more of us had to perform rigorous physical labor. The trend of everyday living is in the opposite direction. As for transferring women's built-in resistance to coronary disease, experiments in which female hormones were given to men have dropped their blood cholesterol level, but have also produced bizarre results (such as the development of breasts) and so far have been tried on only a few patients who have already had heart attacks.

The fact that men cannot absorb excess fats in their diet as well as women, however, points to the possibility that a simple and practicable means exists for doing something about the alarming gap between male and female life spans. To cut the huge coronary toll among American husbands and fathers, it is not necessary for our men to go on near-starvation diets or live like Bantus. Dr. Keys himself points out that such high-fat foods as milk, meat, poultry and eggs are nutritionally desirable in other respects. A moderate reduction in fat-containing foods need not and should not sacrifice good nutrition.

Dr. Keys has not recommended a fat-free diet, but rather one containing a 20 to 30 per cent proportion of calories from fats. Thus a modest adjustment in the daily eating habits of American men might add substantially to their life expectancy.

There is evidence that some fats (olive, peanut and corn oil, for example) may be less troublesome than others. And experiments are under way looking toward processing and cooking methods which will render high-fat foods substantially inoffensive. In the meantime, Dr. Keys feels that most American men would benefit by cutting back their percentages of obviously fatty foods, fat-rich gravies, dressings and desserts, and reducing fried foods in favor of broiled.

"Holding down the proportion of fats should greatly improve your chances of seeing your children through college personally," he says. "That is certainly preferable to seeing them through on the proceeds of life insurance."

THE END



Professor Ancel Keys, facing camera, carries on his research in Minnesota's Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene

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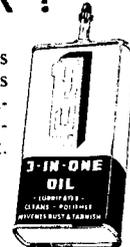
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Ordeal by handcart

The Mormon Trek: They were strange-looking pioneers—sallow men and women of the cities, old people, frail children—but they struggled indomitably on foot across 1,400 miles of savage prairie and mountain, through blazing heat and howling blizzards, defeating death itself in one of the most stirring episodes in the expansion of the West

In all its history, the American West never saw a more unlikely band of pioneers than the 499 who were camped on the banks of the Iowa River at Iowa City in late May, 1856. They were not colorful—only improbable. Looking for the bronzed and resolute and weather-seasoned among them, you would have seen instead starved cheeks, pale skins, bad teeth, thin chests, all the stigmata of unhealthy work and bad diet. Spindle-legged children loud with new-found freedom picked around camp goggling at strangenesses. There were many gray heads and white heads, many women. They looked more like the population of the poor farm on a picnic than like pioneers about to cross the plains.

Most of them, until they were marched from their crowded immigrant ships and loaded aboard trains and rushed to the end of the Rock Island line and dumped here at the brink of the West, had never pitched a tent, slept on the ground, cooked outdoors or built a campfire. They had none of the skills that make frontiersmen. But they had some of the stuff that makes heroes.

Mainly Welshmen and Englishmen from the depressed collieries and mill towns, mainly the unsuccessful and poor, they were life's discards. But their intention was so impudent it was almost sublime. Propertyless, ill equipped, untried and untrained, they were going to chance the Mormon Trail across 1,400 miles of Indian country to the Mormon Zion in

By WALLACE STEGNER

Great Salt Lake City. And they were going to chance it on foot, hauling their belongings in handcarts.

This was the true climax of the historical movement known as the Mormon Migration, one of the great human rivers that poured into the West and peopled it. Oregon, California and Great Salt Lake City were the three goals of the earliest Western pioneers; the Mormon sanctuary at the edge of the Great Basin attracted fewer immigrants than the other two, but those upon whom it exerted its pull came like filings to a magnet, drawn by intense religious zeal and the faith that once they were "gathered in to Zion," near to the Temple and ordinances of the church, they would be readied for inheriting heaven in the flesh. The church grew very largely by proselytizing immigrants from abroad, chiefly in Scandinavia and the British Isles. Brigham Young, pondering ways to bring settlers to the Mormon Zion when neither the converts nor the church's Perpetual Emigration Fund could raise more than a few dollars a head, had devised the handcart scheme himself. "Let them gird up their loins and walk through," he said, "and nothing shall hinder or stay them."

In the summer of 1856 between two and three thousand people, organized into five great caravans, would take Brother Brigham's word and try his method. Their faith was strong, and their church advisers told