

# Brown Trout Record Shattered!

Oklahoma Department of Wildlife



It has been said that records are made to be broken, but on April 10, 2005, Oklahoma's state record for brown trout of 9 pounds, 12 3/4 ounces, was not only broken, it was shattered!

Jason Archie of Broken Bow, Oklahoma caught a brown trout that not only surpassed the old record, it nearly doubled it with a catch of 17-pound, 4.64-ounce.

It all began Sunday evening around 5:00 p.m. just before a storm front hit the area.

"I've been fishing the Mountain Fork River ever since I was little bitty and when spring comes I fish everyday. I really didn't expect to catch a record brown, I was aiming for a record walleye," said Archie. "When I first hooked the fish, I thought I had a really big walleye, and then as I was reeling it in towards me it rolled on its side in front of me. When I saw all that gold coloring, I thought, 'Whoa, now that's a big fish!'

It then took off down river and I was stripping line out as fast as I could, thinking how thankful I was that I wasn't using my ultra-light because I would have ran out of line. Before it turned around, it had made about an 80 yard run."

The self proclaimed "River Rat" Archie went on to say that the battle lasted 35 minutes before he finally landed the monster just below the re-regulation dam on the lower Mountain Fork River.

"When I finally got the fish up to me, and could see for sure it was a trout and not a walleye, I just knew it was a state record. It was a little hectic getting it on a stringer and trying to get a rough weight on my digital scale by myself," said Archie. "I then called our game warden and had him meet me at the Frontier General Store in Hochatown to officially weigh it on certified scales."

"I always check the Farmers Almanac and the moon phases (as he points to his moon phase watch on his wrist) so I know when it's a good time to fish," said Archie.

Archie was fishing with an Ambassador 5600 DS baitcasting reel and a Berkley Bionix rod with 10 lb. test line. The lure of choice was a shad-colored Lucky Craft Pointer 78 Tennessee.

"A record trout of this size is truly a feather in the cap of the Wildlife Department's trout program," said Paul Balkenbush, southeast region fisheries supervisor for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. "Brown trout were provided to the Wildlife Department by the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service in the early 1990's to help offset the impacts of the altered flow of the natural river caused by the Broken Bow Lake dam," Balkenbush said. "A fish this size produced by this river is likely to be between eight and twelve years old."

Archie decided to release his record fish back into the Mountain Fork River since Womack's Taxidermy in Hochatown has offered to donate a replica mount to him.

"By releasing this fish I can hopefully pass on the excitement I've experienced to another angler someday, because I believe this fish will just get bigger," stated Archie.

Balkenbush commended Archie for his valiant efforts to keep the fish not only alive, but in excellent condition overnight.

"I stayed up all night long and every two hours I would change the water in my homemade livewell to make sure this baby would stay alive," Archie said.