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Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:00:09] Well it all started in my case with my grandfather my mother's father. He was a big outdoorsman big hunter and fisherman but Bait fisherman not fly fisherman. So I started being a little kid about 6 years old and bait fishing. I'm originally from Buenos Aires province from a city called by Bahia Blanca which is a coastal city in Buenos Aires. And we used to fish a lot in the sea with bait. And when I was a little bit older I got to go to the mountains. They're not too far away from my homeland. in Buenos Aires and I discover rivers and I fish there for quite some time with bait. And then little lures. And that's how I started.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:01:03] Well for me fishing. Well you know that fishing is particular for every single person for me. Fishing is what disconnects me of the world. When I'm out there in the river in the water I'm Zen and in total communion with nature and I'm totally disconnected. I. It doesn't matter. You know all the struggles or all the problems that I could have in my life when I'm there is probably the only thing that allows me to leave the moment purely. So that is what fishing really means to me. Jim

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:01:48] Well definitely that has a lot to do with it. You know and for some reason I got interested in fly fishing because since been a little boy when I got to know the rivers in the mountains. I there was something about it that helped me and I was totaly crazy about rivers and when I met a guy a little bit later in my life that was a fly fisherman he explained me that he fished in rivers. That was it for me. I just thought this is what I got to do. And absolutely you know it's it's a big part that trout lives in so many gorgeous places.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:02:31] Well it was. It was my chance because I was I was a soccer player. Being an Argentinian kid you know I was a soccer player when a kid and I had to get across a big public park. You might see did go play soccer. And when I was about eleven years old I was getting across the park and there was a big artificial lake in it in the park. And this guy was casting a fly rod and being crazy about fishing at the time. I was so intrigued because I never saw anything like that before in my life. So I just you know hid myself behind a tree and waited until he finished. And then I approach him and I ask his I'd So what are you doing with that. And because the line everything was totaly weird to me. And he was a very kind gentleman and he explained to me show me the flies and he explained that what he was doing. And again like I told you before. That's when I thought I made immediately the link between the streams in the mountians and how hard those fish that sometimes could see and couldn't get with my bait were. And I thought this is what I need to do. And that was it. That was how I started. But the funny part is there was no fly fishing tackle in my town. So I I knew about it and I couldn't get the tackle but I used to attend to an English school. And in the English school there was a small collection of fly fishing books that were donated by a gentleman that used to work an English gentleman that used to work in the railroad in Argentina. And I only read about fly fishing for like six years until the first tackle got to my town. And well the rest is history. Never touched my bait here anymore. Well I'm I'm a guide. I'm a part of of the staff of guides of PRG and my. What I enjoy about guiding is probably teaching something that I didn't have when I started. And I had I really struggle a lot because I had to sort of figure it out by myself. In those days there were no Internet where you could find you know technical articles or stuff that could lead you you know of how doing things. So with a little reading of these books that were not actually about technical stuff we're more about stories and where I could imagine. I try to put everything together. So I really struggle. It took me a long time to my first trout on a fly and so certainly one of the things I enjoyed the

most about guiding is being able to have the input in someone else help someone you know to improve their game or just do it or just do a little better. Well I would have to say this is very very OK. It has not a scientific backup but I. For my experience I could say that women tend to pick it up a lot easier basically because they have a missing gene which is the muscle in their brain. And man we try to muscle everything up when things are not going our way. You know we try to for some reason our brain says like turn the switch muscle on and we just try to whack it. And that's when things go downhill. So again in my experience James I think women are more prone to become proficient faster than men.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:06:27] Definitely. Well I have like MSU. I. I collect. I love collecting books and through the years I've been able to gather you know a very little collection of books in of different authors but certainly authors that I love to read are. Roderick Haig-Brown his stories are just absolutely mesmerizing. Ernie Schwiebert who else technical stuff Vince Marinaro absolutely I think that guy the work that that that guy put the scientific approach that he put his input in the sport is invaluable all those are probably some of the best you know that I've I've read. Yeah. And then Gierach you know a lot of really good authors that I really enjoy reading McGuane but certainly the ones I named before are kind of you know the ones that stand out as my favorite.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:07:31] I think they're vital. James I think they're vital because that's I mean keeping public water. It's the best way to preserve and the best way to allow people to get involved into the sport. And I think the more people we could get. This is my personal philosophy. I could be totally wrong but I think the more we could involve people and teach them you know how to fly fish and how. How rewarding is putting back that fish that you enjoy so much catching respecting your quarry. I think that's the best chance we have to preserve the hope for the future generations. So I think the national parks have a vital role in the whole thing in the whole picture because certainly protects they control. And again they keep access you know to the public to get to spectacular resources that if there would be private probably it will be shame you know because we want to be able to get in there.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:08:44] Yeah, certainly technology I mean the gear. It's been the leap in. I can almost remember wearing you know neoprene waders and I I mean I love hiking and I remember had to bring a big bag to unpack my waders. You know big hike to the spot then put the waders are so certainly you know one of the biggest changes I've seen in the sport over the years it's been through technology much better gear rods reels you name it. You know although I got up say like Glenn I'm a tea stick guy. I love bamboo. So besides that being objective I think you know the the biggest change is that. And another change that I'm seeing is the role of women into a sport too. When I started I never got across a woman in the stream and now. You see you know girls women all over the place doing it. And I think it's great. You know because women also have a much defined sense or sensitivity to towards protecting you know stuff and they have a natural approach to this to the catch and release you know that we love you know in the sport. So those probably are the two most important changes I've seen over the years.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:10:16] Well certainly. You know I have a huge respect and love for Glenn Brackett. You know and I'm proud to say you know that I consider him my friend although I haven't met him in person but we've been sort of pen friends for I don't know like 10 years or so. And what I love about bamboo is there's something about bamboo. And there's nothing that can be compared to it. So I'm a romantic by nature and the romance behind a bamboo rod and and fishing a bamboo Rod is just something else. And I always when people ask me you know what. You know how

you compare a bamboo rod to a graphite rod. I always say you know like most people or most men love cars. This would be like you know having 1937 Duesenberg, driving a 1937 Duesenberg, and a brand new Ferrari. The input that the driver will have in the Duesenberg will be the feel of driving will be totally different. Of course you know we won't they're incomparable side by side. But the bamboo has a beauty within itself that is unmatched and fighting a fish with bamboo. There's absolutely no graphite rod in the market period. And I don't think that there will ever be that can give you that feel and I don't care about size when I'm fishing and that's what that's a beauty of bamboo you can get a 10 incher and enjoy the same way you could enjoy 25 incher. And that that's what I love about me and I'm a freak for it so it probably is not. I'm not a very objective guy about it but but but that said you know and going back to who I respect I do I've read you know about many makers. But again I had the chance to share information and asked a lot of questions to Glenn and he is just. Such a fine fine gentleman and such a great teacher. He shared with me you know all the knowledge and valuable knowledge that he has. And so that regards all my respect.

James Thull [00:12:36] Glenn's an incredible guy.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:12:37] Oh my god.

James Thull [00:12:38] One of the nicest people I've ever met.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:12:39] You know what to picture what kind of guy he is. Again we haven't met in person. But last year I got an e-mail from we change you know Christmas cards and that's you I got an e-mail from him and said little is done for you to get about one of my bamboo rods. And I said Well Glenn sadly you know I would love to have one of your rods but now is not the time. he said well now it's that time. Well all you got to do is give me the name of one of your clients and I'll send you a rod and just tell me one thing because I love because I make rods bamboo rods myself. So he said I know you make hex rods. I was thinking about sending you a pan so you could see you know what the difference could be with it with a hex. So that was that was it. So that shows you what kind of guy Glenn is. Well you know probably only about you know all the things you name you know really concern me because I this is a way of living. You know I love the sport and I have two daughters and they are Fisher women and I would love them to have the same chance that I had. You know to get to love the sport and enjoy the same way. Yes I have. So I think you know climate change it's having certainly a big impact because of very dry summers very low waters. How he changes you know the coarses of you know of of many aspects of a river and how that affects the fish and the fishing and pollution certainly is probably number one concern you know because for example we don't have to go very far to get awesome fishing the stream we have right nearby town. Here is a blue ribbon stream. But the amount of pollution it gets by the sea itself it's outrageous you know. And unfortunately which is very hard to get that politicians to understand. You know the impact that that has on the river and you know the funny thing is mostly when you try to talk to them about it they'll say Oh because you're a fishing guide and you care about fishing it's like no. I mean you're not getting the full picture of this. This is not about fishing. This is not about trout. This is about rivers fresh water. I'm a big believer James that fresh water is you know that the future gold. So we've unfortunately sometimes we don't realize about it as a society as a whole. And we don't protect it the way it should be protected.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:15:38] Well that that is a great question. It is a great question because you see changes that it's hard to give an attribution. You know with it. And for example last winter we had the biggest snowfall in the last 40 years in the national

park. I don't know if that tells you something. Most of our rivers still with we are almost at the end of January. Generally at this time of the year the rivers are low. I mean that the normal low last year at this time of the year there were low low I mean till the lower low and now they're really high because we had an incredible amount of runoff that's still happening basically because we had snowfall in December which is totally crazy here. So it could be an isolated thing probably but we see those changes. So again it's hard to give an attribution to them say OK this is because of climate change but they're happy. I don't know what is it but it is happening you know and we were in a serious drought for a couple of years here so most of our small streams really suffer a lot because of many factors temperature water level of oxygen the level of several the water. So. I think this was great because we had a serious winter for the first time in many years. And and then you know that was reflected in the summer and the rivers and it gave a great relief. So it is it is a great question. You know what you've just pop up. I am a believer that yes I think you know it all has to do with climate change you know. But again it's difficult to really prove it. Well it is different absolutely different. Fishing in Chile. Well I really enjoyed it. It is a very beautiful country is a very beautiful part of Patagonia as well. Fishing though is not nearly as good as it is on this side. One of the reasons is which the Chilean government I think you know they're really improving is because they don't have as many natural areas protected like national parks and stuff like that. And and the second thing is most of the public waters are not great quality in terms of fishing for two reasons. Again you cannot back it up scientifically. But from my experience I can tell you that that the Chilean society by nature eat fish and most of the local fishermen take their fish. There's not a culture of catch and release. So unless you're fishing in which I was lucky to do it in private area some private ranches fishing quality wasn't that awesome. And the second thing is they don't have very strong Fish and Game Department to picture this in 80 years guiding in Chile over 100 days per year. I was never checked never check while in here on the side of the border. I get checked. Four to five times for a week or so that is the difference because when people know that there are controls they may think twice you know if they're going to break rules because they do have them. They have rules in Chile. They have a license that you have to have. There is a limit you know per day and stuff. But the problem is when you cannot enforce those laws it's very difficult to get people to stay with it. So I in my experience in the two places that I work in Chile that was the case I'll be sad to say that's the general rule but that that is my personal experience.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:20:00] is doing a much better job than Chile. I think we still have a lot of things to improve. But yeah I mean certainly for for the region. We do a very good job.

Leonard Troncosco Schneider [00:20:17] Yes that is a difficult subject very difficult because again you know getting politicians to understand something when they're not involved into it is is extremely difficult. I I definitely believe of what I told you before that I think the key to really improve you know that protectionism is is getting more people involved into it. You know and that includes of course people related to power to politicians you know people you know related to ruling but it's very difficult to prove in numbers the impact that this board can have compared to other things. For example I give you a very small example the city hall here takes gravel out of the river. So the biggest responsible for the degradation of the resource is the city hall. And it's very difficult for them saying OK. You have so many glacial moraines where you can go take gravel not too far away from here. But the river is right here right in front of your house so it's very difficult. You know we've tried to talk to them. We've tried to get them to understand you know how important it is to protect their resource but they don't. And that's one of the reasons you know when they they don't truly feel. Engaged or when they don't truly understand you know

something is difficult. That's a great question man. I have so many a favorite one I don't know. Well I could tell you you know. I could tell you my first trout on a fly. OK. It's not a it's not a great fishing sorry but he's probably my greatest personally because I used to go to these spring creek in Buenos Aires province walk in and but then I didn't have a car I didn't have a car there. OK. And I had to take a bus to a nearby town to this creek and walk seven miles in. And out to the bus station to get them. Catch the bus back home. So it took me James one year and a half doing this every Saturday until I hook my first trout. So you can understand why you know this was such a big deal for me. I a I can almost close my eyes and still remember that fish he was a 13 inch rainbow OK the most beautiful rainbow you can possibly imagine. It was so big for me. That was one of those moments. One of those very few moments in life when you can almost when you feel like you touched. Perfection that I couldn't give fishing that day. I got that fish early on in the day. I sat on that bank looking at the watch until it was my time to walk back to the bus station catch the bus again to my town and just enjoy life. So that was probably my most memorable. Well. Get into it. It's such a beautiful thing you know. And. There's something about fly fishing that like you said before takes you to some incredible places and there's something about the outdoors that. You can't get anywhere else in the world. Which is. Find yourself. Find that purity of yourself. And. Anyway I found it fishing. And that's why you know I encourage people to get into the sport. You know. Do it.