

it was important to let the fly sink a bit before starting the retrieve. The stripers seemed to want it just a few inches below the surface, and a sinking or sink-tip line might have worked better than the floater I was using. Next time!

A Bossa Nova rhythm began floating through the air as the striped bass turned up their own tempo a notch or two. Meanwhile, we had been joined by several of Binger's proteges, Wall Street types hooked on this striper bonanza. Soon everybody was catching and releasing fish. No keepers were taken; fish of 3 to 5 pounds were tops.

Several times couples stepped outside the nearby dance hall for a bit of fresh air and stopped to watch.

"What you doing, fishing?" one fellow asked.

"No, I'm playing golf," I was tempted to say, but remembering I was in New York City, late on a Saturday night, I decided not to risk misinterpretations and play it straight. So I admitted that, yes, I was fishing.

"Catching any?" came the inevitable follow-up.

"A few," I said, an answer I hoped would limit further spectator inquiries.

Bight, but the physical discomfort would hardly be worth it. Trout fishing? Forget it. The streams are far too low and warm.

Still, the angling urge is hard to suppress. There had to be a way to satisfy it. Why not try a charter?

I left a message on Capt. Joe Shastay's answering machine and got a call back in less than an hour. We made a date for Sunday evening.

Shastay runs more than 200 guided trips a year in the waters around Manhattan and New York Harbor. Striped bass and bluefish are his target species. He's fished the area since childhood, but readily admits finding new "hot spots" every year.

Fly fishing for striped bass in the shadow of Miss Liberty.

A Bossa Nova RHYTHM BEGAN

FLOATING THROUGH THE AIR AS THE STRIPED BASS TURNED UP THEIR OWN TEMPO A NOTCH OR TWO.

Soon the big illuminated clock across the river read 2:15 a.m. Amazing. I didn't even feel tired. The Wall Street gang, satisfied they'd caught and released enough stripers for one night, departed around 3 a.m., but fish were still working so we lingered on. By the time the big clock hit 4:20, we were finally ready to quit—but the bass weren't. They were still working as we headed for coffee and a prune Danish.

The Latin music had finally ended, too. It had been a November morning to remember. Olé!

Change of scene: Now it's mid-July, too darn hot and sticky to fish. It might be possible to take a few large-mouth bass from under a dock or weedbed, or a few fluke from the edges of channels in the New York

