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## Autumn splendor

Now that fall is officially here, some of the best fishing of the entire year begins to take place. If you were to ask local fishing guides what their favorite time of year is to fish, the overwhelming majority would say fall.

While our summer fishing season is legendary, the two-legged people hatch can sometimes outnumber the insect hatches. During autumn, this is certainly not the case. Long gone are the crowds, leaving the rivers



ON THE FLY  
KIRK WEBB

to locals, old men, kids and those few tourists in the know about the superb fall fishing that takes place in the Roaring Fork Valley.

This past week I took my 8-year-old daughter, Madison, up Independence Pass to fish and hike along the Grottos on the upper Roaring Fork River en route to Lincoln Creek.

The crisp morning air was punctuated with vibrant hues of yellows, golds, greens and reds. Even as a local, I was impressed with the vibrancy of the fall colors.

We were both in complete and utter awe of our surroundings. As we neared the river, we both spotted several fish that were casually rising in the deeper pools.

Clean, cool air, beautiful surroundings and rising fish make me feel more alive. It's funny how Mother Nature has a way of doing that to me.

Fly selection does not need to be overly technical on these waters, as these fish are more opportunistic feeders than their relatives on the rivers below Aspen. We caught several healthy, plump rainbows and brook trout on various caddis dry flies.

The fish seemingly know that winter is on the horizon and, because of that, the fish feed more heavily, packing on weight to carry them over through the winter. This is the case not just here, but on all valley waters.

Brown and brook trout are especially eager during the fall prior to the beginning of their annual spawn. The hallmarks of fall fishing are chasing blue wing olive mayfly hatches on foot and streamer fishing the large rivers out of drift boats and rafts.

The toughest problem you might have this fall is paying attention to the fish and the river amongst the autumn splendor.

This report is provided every week by Taylor Creek Fly Shops in Aspen and Basalt. Taylor Creek can be reached at (970) 927-4374 or taylorcreek.com.



Contributed photo

New Castle resident Michele Martineau prepares to compete in the 2010 Powder Puff off-road race. On Oct. 8, Martineau will return to Barstow, Calif., to race the Powder Puff for a second time.

## Michele Martineau's

# Off-road Odyssey

New Castle woman uses racing as a way to battle breast cancer

Jeff Caspersen  
Post Independent Staff

The silence provided Michele Martineau with the perfect opportunity to reflect on a turbulent year.

From the intense lows of doctor visits and surgeries to the exhilarating highs of assembling an off-road racing team and lending a helping hand to countless women, Martineau had endured a veritable roller coaster ride of emotion.

Parked at the Powder Puff off-road race starting line, at the wheel of her green racing truck and donning a helmet that drowned out all outside noise, a flood of emotion blindsided the New Castle resident.

"It was really my first time to sit down in silence, to reflect on everything," Martineau recalled. "It was much more emotional than I expected it to be. I couldn't believe I had gotten there. I couldn't believe all the help I had getting there.

"The moment, just thinking about everything I had gone through during the year, it was dramatic."

### Team Courage Racing

**Upcoming races:** Powder Puff — Oct. 8, Barstow, Calif.; Rallye Aicha des Gazelles — March 17-31, Sahara Desert, Africa; Mexican 1000 Rally — May 5-9, Baja peninsula, Mexico

**Team Courage Racing on the Internet:** [www.teamcourageracing.com](http://www.teamcourageracing.com), [www.team-couragegazelles.com](http://www.team-couragegazelles.com) (Team Courage's Rallye Aicha des Gazelles site) and [www.courageismystrength.com](http://www.courageismystrength.com) (site has graphic content)

**Michele Martineau's Courage is My Strength site:** [www.courageismystrength.com](http://www.courageismystrength.com) (site features graphic content)

**To donate:** Visit the above websites to purchase team gear or to donate to the cause.

**Submit a tribute:** The Team Courage truck will be covered with the names of breast cancer survivors, previvors, fighters and angels. To submit a tribute, visit the Team Courage site.

She certainly had plenty on which to reflect.

In the year or so leading up to the 2010 Powder Puff, Martineau's first stab at an off-road race, she had undergone a double mastectomy as means of beating breast cancer before it ever had a chance to derail her life. She raced while in the midst of a series of breast reconstruction surgeries.

In the fall of 2009, Martineau found lumps in her breast. Doctor visits determined she had fibrocystic breast disease, a condition characterized by the presence of noncancerous lumps in the breasts that makes mammograms more difficult to interpret and, therefore, cancer more difficult to detect.

"I was going to have to have MRIs every six months for the rest of my life because mammograms wouldn't work for me any

more," she said. "That's going in every six months to find out if you have cancer."

Coupled with a family history littered with instances of breast cancer, the odds weren't in Martineau's favor. So she did something about it.

Surgeries, both to remove her breasts and to reconstruct them, followed. Complications led to a drawn-out process, one that, while draining, was very much worthwhile.

"My mom had cancer," she said. "Hers metastasized. She's had cancer for 20 years. She's a fighter and she's strong, and I can't imagine going through that. So if I can avoid it, that's what I'll do."

So Martineau opted to become a breast cancer "previvor."