

Published August 7th, 2019 Catfish gets reprieve By Jennifer Wake



Christopher Paganelli, 12, with his prize catfish Photo provided

At 12 years old, Christopher Paganelli has caught dozens of fish, but he never expected the beast he hooked recently at the Moraga Country Club golf pond. "I had the fish on for about three minutes," he said. "At first I thought I had gotten caught on a rock or weeds, but then as I was reeling in I realized that there was something on my line." At the end of the line was a catfish, he said, weighing between 15-20 pounds. "This was my biggest fish I have ever caught; I had never even heard of catfish in the MCC pond."

Christopher saw that after he hooked it, it didn't look like the fish was doing very well and it looked like it needed help, so he jumped in the water to save it.

"It's hard to find the hook right away because I did not hook the fish directly; I had hooked it near his fin on the right side of its body," he said. "It was hard to take hold of the fish because it was really big and catfishes' bodies

are slimy."

According to Christopher's father, the young fisherman stayed with the fish until he was confident the fish was OK before he released it.

Moraga Country Club General Manager Ron Haas doesn't encourage fishing at MCC and noted that fishing in the pond is only allowed when the golf course is closed and all fishing is catch and release only.

"I went back to the pond the next day with my family," Christophor said, "but have seen no traces of the catfish."

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