

HCA GEAR BAG

BY BRIAN LARUE

ASPEN REELS AT HOME IN THE ROCKIES AND BEYOND

In a world where fly reels can run the gamut from \$50 to \$8,000, it's easy to get lost along the way. Aspen Reels comes to the table with unbelievable American-made quality at a wallet-pinching price with its latest—Aspen Reels RE-1057.

Tipping the scales at 5.8 ounces, this 3¼-inch, mid-arbor model can help you tackle small trout in the smallest creeks, yet it is stout enough to load up with 7-weight line and your favorite sink tip to throw streamers on bigger waters like the Colorado. I found this reel ideal for managing

6-weight Rio sink tip with an Umqua Stanley Streamer this past summer. I hit the Yellowstone and managed a 24-inch cutthroat, topping off a day filled with 18- to 20-inchers in the park.

The reel performed like a champ. The strong, simple and lightweight fish tool proved itself thanks to its solid 6061-T6 aluminum body and smooth operation. This fishing partner will be around for years, thanks to superior construction—the reel foot being machined as one with the body. The Aspen features four stainless steel ball bearings, and offers a fully-sealed yet serviceable drag mechanism for trouble-free operation.

Bringing the 24-inch cutthroat to my net in the high runoff waters of the Yellowstone was made easier thanks to this reel's large disc drag system featuring extreme-temperature PTFE drag, which reduces friction. Adding to this reel's advanced features are a sure-grip-drag-control knob, and custom stainless steel/aluminum one-way clutch for reduced weight.

The RE-1057 also features a pop-on, pop-off spool for easy cleaning and line changing. Featuring a retail price of \$180, the RE-1057 also has a bigger brother which is available for \$200. Ask for your local shop to look into Aspen Reels, or check them out yourself at www.aspenreels.com.

