

INVICTA FFC

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FEBRUARY 2014
NEWSLETTER 169

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Affiliated to the **Angling Trust** and the **Federation of Midland Fly Fishers (Anglia)**.

Editor's Notes

My thanks and appreciation for the many enquiries, cards and visits to the hospital and my home over the last few weeks.

Our social night at the Arundel House Hotel was well attended, and by all accounts, will be repeated next year. Our thanks to Mark Searle and his staff for the excellent buffet and service.

I must record our thanks to David Jones, Founder member, first Hon.Secretary and currently Club scribe. David is ever present at Club winter meetings and writes-up each guest speaker's presentation for the Newsletter.

Renewal of Club subscriptions became due on January 1st. If you have not yet re-joined there is a renewal form at the end of this newsletter.

On the strength of Peter Oldham's superb first winter meeting programme it is surely worth the subscription fee for this alone.

Final applications for the Annual Dinner are now imminent. Alan Prevost is committed to letting the venue have a complete menu list a week in advance.

Peter Oldham and the Committee endeavour to provide an interesting and balanced programme of speakers but if members have any ideas for next winter please contact either Peter or Paul Stevens

ASAP as popular anglers are booked early in the year.

Peter p.oldham111@btinternet.com or Paul faith.paul@virgin.net

Winter Programme 2014

Thursday 6TH February

James Lewis of the Angling Trust

James will explain the system of the National Fishing League and schemes of the Trust

Thursday 20th February

Annual General Meeting

A chance for you to air your views or, better still, get yourself nominated for the Committee, come on board and show us where we have been going wrong!

February 22nd February

Invicta Annual Dinner at St Neots Golf Club. Menu and application form with this Newsletter. A reminder that wives, partners and friends are welcome.

Thursday March 6th

Adrian Freer. "Valuable Information from the Fishes Mouth".

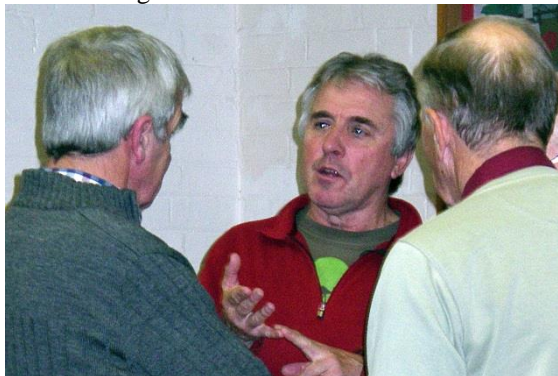
Autopsies and Matching Food

Thursday 20th March

Quiz night with Chris McLeod in the chair.

Martin Cottis,
How to succeed with light lines and
and dry flies
by David Jones

Martin's passion for angling germinated at a very young age thanks to a dad who was a keen coarse angler, and an inherent love for natural history. The family lived in the London area where there were plenty of gravel pits, not to mention the River Thames. However, it was a trip to Ireland and an unexpected encounter with a sea Martin Cottis on light line dry fly fishing on reservoirs trout which initiated him into the world of fly-fishing. He had decided to be a teacher and attended a college in Kent conveniently near to Bewl Water . In those early days when the reservoir had just opened, there were prolific hatches, especially of sedges, in the evening. I wonder if he met Brian Harris – the former editor of Angling – and a life-time exponent of light tackle fishing for reservoir trout?



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His teaching career took him to Devizes and his fishing was spent on the Upper Avon. He felt it necessary to purchase a cane rod in order to fit in with the other anglers! No doubt this experience helped perfect his dry fly fishing habit. He moved

on to the Bristol area and fished Chew and Blagdon, initially, mainly from the bank. He noticed that fellow anglers were using heavy kit. Although he gave this "recommended" tackle a good innings and even winning many competitions in so doing, he felt it "wasn't working for him". He started making trips to the large lakes in Ireland where he met Padraig Monroe who castigated him for using such heavy tackle which by then had dropped to AFTM 6's or 7's. He started to experiment and within couple of years later settled for a 9ft Orvis "Zero Gravity" (now superseded by the Helios 2) and a 5 wt line. He reckoned that catches improved so logically he went down to an AFTM 4. Comparisons with fellow anglers suggested that the number of takes increased 4-fold which he attributed to the reduced resistance of the line in the water. Our own Henry Lowe interjected and said that his own experiences on Grafham fully endorsed Martins comments. It was important to cast above the surface of the water and not to slap it down. Similarly, the lift off should be controlled and not cause a slurping effect. He has never found that landing fish on this light tackle took longer than on heavier gear. When necessary he even pointed the rod more or less down the line directly at the fish!

Obviously for this tactic to be successful then the terminal tackle must be fairly beefy. He liked Orvis Super Strong co-polymer typically with a breaking strain of 8.5lbs. However, he now has a preference for a clear high strength nylon "Ultra" available by mail order from Gigafish (www.gigafishline.com). 0.22mm Ultra has a claimed breaking strain of 13lbs. He has found that fluorocarbons sink too quickly for effective dry fly presentation although I have heard it claimed that when casting to specific fish, the fly is not on the water long enough for this to be a problem. He likes leaders as short as 10 feet and even reduces this further to 7 or 8 feet in windy conditions. He had little time for tapered or braided leaders. He didn't like braided loops either!

He did not express any preference for lines and both DT and WF suited his style which, in general, did not involve casting further than 2 or 3 rod lengths. Similarly reels were selected on colour – black or gun metal finishes out of choice.



The dry fly preferred at Chew was generally reddish in colour. There was nothing clever about the design which most anglers would recognise as a variation of a Bob's Bits tied on a lightweight hook and using seals fur as the ideal body material. Flies were water proofed with the occasional application of Gink. A maximum of 2 flies were used on a cast.

His Orvis rod looked quite nice and actually had a fine tip which looked as though it was designed for handling a 4 wt line whilst retaining a reasonable action. These rods cost upwards of £650. A review in Salmon and Trout magazine (July 2012) rated the Sage 1 a much better tool (also £650+) although the article covered 10ft models.



I did notice that there were lure-like patterns in his box. He agreed that there were times when even a sinking line was necessary albeit a 6 max. Sometimes dry flies only become effective in the last few hours of day light. My opinion is that if you are planning to spend a day booked ahead, then it is necessary to go equipped with kit which can deal with all conditions. I am sure that in advocating the wider use of lightweight tackle Martin recognises that kit solely balanced with a no.4 line will not meet these requirements particularly from the bank.

Apart from his professional guiding services on Chew and Blagdon, Martin has spent time in New Zealand and Tasmania and has also caught barbel in Spain on flies. He offered to answer members questions and can be contacted on martin@troutguide.co.uk

Cliff Waters (fishypics)

By David Jones

Our last meeting of the year hosted Cliff Waters who spoke on his photographic career in the fishing business. His first image said it all "Fishypics snapper Cliff Waters signs off with a look back at some of his memorable photo shots". Yes – he is about to retire and is moving to the New Forest

area. He has already joined Salisbury and District AC and will be sampling the chalk streams in the area. Not only that he had bought a kayak which he has already tried out chasing mullet on Christchurch harbour.

Cliff is best known for his assignments for Total Flyfisher and Anglian Water. He will be producing "Hooked" for the last time in 2014. Cliff went digital in 2002 with the advent of the Sony 5MP camera equipped with a 10x Carl Zeiss lens. Difficult to imagine that this cost around £900 at the time! Since then there has been a race to increase the MP – anything up to 20 is common place and according to Cliff, Cannon have a 75MP model under wraps. High resolution pictures require a PC with lots of memory especially if images are captured in the RAW mode. Cliff advised us, as amateurs, to stick with JPEG's. Judging by the discounts on offer, the market in standalone cameras is collapsing in favour of phone jobbies which offer so much by way of convenience.

It is impossible to describe every picture. Here is a list of venues which may be of interest: I must admit that I had not heard of many of them never mind fished them.

Cliff has been a member of *Cromford Fly Fishers* which has water on the Derwent. It is a mixed fishery but with good head of large grayling and brown trout. One section features a sewage outfall which discharged every 20 minutes or so at which time the fish went mad presumed to be munching on some hitherto unidentified delicacy or other. A mini netting operation by John Emerson (Unique Flies) showed that the food form was what match anglers know as "jokers" – a bloodworm. A weighted imitation tied on a size 20 Hamak barbless hook, subsequently christened the Minute and fished a few inches under a bob fly, proved deadly.

Boringwheel is located in Sussex. Cliff's attraction at the time was a bevy of talented lady anglers who showed the men how to fish. Alas the fishery has since changed hands and reports on the web suggest that it has gone downhill somewhat.

He accompanied Dave Hoppe to *Rutland*. Cliff reckoned Dave was one of the top anglers in the UK at the moment. He won the Brown Bowl at Grafham a couple of years back. I noticed that he is a consultant and uses Sonic tackle which must make it a brand worthy of further investigation if a new rod or reel is on the cards. One of the pictures showed David's unusual fishing style where he held the rod handle higher than the tip and looked down the rod rings for any sign of a take.

North of the border he found himself on the *Braham Estate* north of Inverness. The lake was the home of well-built spotted trout.

Back at *Eyebrook*, Andy Miller instructed him in the use of popper lures. Their resemblance to sticklebacks was remarkable.

Cliff has visited a number of small waters in both NI and the Republic. *Straid*, 11 miles north of Belfast, *Woodford*, 11 miles NE of Belfast, *Mullingar* 50 miles NW of Dublin, and *Rathbeggan*, 15 miles NE of Dublin, are all picturesque lakes which produce attractive fully finned trout. I am not sure I would deliberately visit them unless I was travelling in the areas.

Closer to home *Lakeside Fishery* at Wymeswold, Leics. contains some pale blue trout, apparently due to the fact that they are sourced from a chalk stream.

Withern Mill, near Mablethorpe (Lincs.) is also a fish farm so expect a few giant fish to be introduced on a regular basis.

Litton Lakes are near to Chew and offer 2 lakes for exclusive use so book ahead. Only a rowing boat is available so take an electric drive unless you are feeling strong!

Woodington Fishery, near Romsey in Hampshire, is unusual in so far it offers a chance of catching carp on a fly.

Graiglwyd Springs offers fishing in North Wales for trout up to 30 lbs. Whilst you are there, try a 2 hour hike in Snowdonia to *Llyn yr Adar* for a bit of wilderness fishing!

At the bottom end of Wales there is *Whitehouse Mill*, a spring fed lake in picturesque surroundings. Floating lines and a single small fly only.

No members recognised *Carsington Water*! The fishing is now being run by the sailing club and the water is reputedly well stocked and worth a visit (Peak District).

The *Moorhen trout fishery* is located in the Meon Valley. This is a well-manicured water with mown banks. The water is so pure that it is drinkable although the owners are said to bring coffee and tea around to anglers!

Now I have actually visited *Haywards Farm* (Reading) but it was for an exhibition rather than fishing. It is the home of Sportfish and rods can be taken from the shop and evaluated on the water. One of our members observed a phenomenal mayfly hatch here. Similarly at *Barn Elms* nearby, mayfly hatches were also described as prolific.

Finally we ended up at a local water namely *Larkwood* at Bury St Edmonds. I know some of our

members have fished it. I had no idea it was so heavily wooded.

On these trips Cliff and his colleague claimed to have experienced only 1 blank (*Manor Farm!*). He has never doctored an expedition by, for example, having a group of anglers fishing alongside and handing over an active rod to the celebrity! Rods can be made to bend by hooking onto a polythene bag! When it comes to photographing an angler holding a fish he definitely doesn't like holding the fish horizontal in front of the body possibly at belly height. He prefers that the angler holds the fish to one side and look at the fish. The length of the body of the fish must be tilted towards the camera so that there is no direct reflection back into the camera otherwise scales will be obliterated. Looking into the camera is regarded as a no-no! Blood on the fish must also be removed. The trick is to get all the gear together with a bucket of water: plunge the fish into the water – adopt the pose and take the photo. The fish should then look as though it has just been captured.

The meeting concluded with much mutual back slapping and we wished Cliff a long and happy retirement

Tenkara with Philip Sheridan

By david Jones

Most of the Invicta audience would have known that Tenkara was a technique of fly fishing using only a rod and no reel or conventional fly line. The name may mean something like “from heaven” possibly referring to the gentleness with which the fly lands on the water. The technique originated in the high mountains on the islands of Japan possibly thousands of years ago. It was first recorded by explorer cum diplomat Earnest Mason Satow in a book published in 1878. He discovered not only Tenkara but that the river valleys were often isolated and Tenkara technique specific to local regions had developed. Being Japan, Tenkara was as much a philosophy as an angling technique. I did not realise that the method was entirely developed for commercial fishing. A skilled angler with the capability of processing fresh catches to the preferred skin texture was much respected and earned a good wage for several days hard graft. Three species of salmonidea are present, one a char and other two related to the Atlantic salmon. Typically these were somewhere between 10 and 14” in length. The density of fish was described as prolific at one time to the extent that it was possible to “cross the river on their backs”! The last of the commercial fishermen disappeared by the end of the 20C thanks to multiple dams on the rivers, easy

access to the mountains, and the building of resorts. Tenkara became a sporting activity.



The development in the west can be attributed to Daniel Galhardo, who married a Japanese lady, and, on a visit to Japan, was hooked on Tenkara and upon their return formed Tenkara USA. Regular trips to Japan has ensured that the company is the premier source of gear and the latest information. Their web site, particularly the forum, is well worth a read.

The original tackle was based on a bamboo cane rod. Lines were made from horse hair and the tippet was silk. Hooks were fabricated from sewing needles: a silk loop acted as the eye of the fly. Fly patterns could be traced back through generations of families. A common style incorporated a palmered body hackle wound so that the fibres face forwards.



Modern rods incorporate telescopic carbon fibre blanks such that rods up to 17ft in length collapse down to 20" or less. Rods are invariably single handed although in the estuary regions double handed rods are not unknown. Without the encumbrances of rod rings and reel seats, the rods on display felt like wands. The tip on one of the rods looked less than a mm in diameter and was described as fragile! The rod itself was very tip actioned. Rods came from Japan, the USA and the Isle of Man. There are of course many other sources.



Phillip used fluorocarbon from Yamatoyo in 0.285mm (3kg) and 0.31mm (3.5kg) as the main line. Some anglers prefer a furred leader which is claimed to assist casting for beginners and fishing in confined places but is more difficult to keep off the surface of the water and less readily cut to length as the circumstances dictate (typically 1 to 2 times the rod length). A 1kg tippet was employed.

Hooks were barbless such as the Kamazan B911 and Matrix 144 carpet baggers. These are both spade ends which facilitates the tying in of a red silk attachment loop. The patterns used by Philip were fairly simple in the Tankara style and used the normal range of natural materials found in UK flies. I noticed one was very similar to a red tag and another had a sedge-like profile. The flies shown are, I think, wet flies incorporating very soft hackles. Dry flies are also used. Leaded flies are not widely employed because they can readily damage the fine tips on the rods. Philip recommended the use of a tungsten bead with a diameter no more than 2.5mm in diameter



The Tenkara method was perfected in order to allow tiny fish-holding areas to be explored on rocky streams. One might, for example drop the fly into a foaming region ahead of a smooth glide – or under the far bank. Japanese exponents of Tenkora have a range of special techniques including induced takes and another where a dry fly is repeatedly and rapidly dropped onto the surface which causes the fish to think that a hatch is about to occur. Philip showed us a video where he impressively got 3 takes in 3 casts and finally landed one. Playing the relatively small fish on the Wharfe was not a problem. There have been reports of salmon to 17 lbs and even tarpon being caught using the Tenkara method. Successful casting required a snappy wrist action.



Philip was quite relaxed about the Tenkara method and regarded it as a useful extension to other light line techniques used in the Yorkshire Dales. Phil runs courses and has a very informative web site www.tenkaradays.com. It was not obvious that Phil was disabled as the result of a motor cycle accident. I have to congratulate him on his stamina as I didn't see him sit down the whole evening!

Following this visit we received an email from Philip expressing his pleasure at the warm reception he received from our members. It is always good to learn how visitors respond to us and we to them. I am sure that Andy Newman, our Chairman, will be equally pleased to reply as Philip came over as a thoroughly nice guy with a good handle on his subject. Incidentally he travelled from somewhere in the Leeds area on the night with the prospect of a return journey at the conclusion of the meeting circa 10.30pm.

The Next Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 13th March 2014. Questions for the Committee should be with the Paul Stevens, the Minutes Secretary well before that date.

Disclaimer

Statements, opinions and claims expressed in this document by contributors are not necessarily those of Invicta FFC.

Membership Renewal Form

Dear All

A reminder that the annual membership fee of £17 will be due soon, January 2014.
Please send your cheque payable to Invicta FFC to me at the address below.

**If you would like to pay your subs straight into the Bank the
Sort Code 20-43-63 Account Number 70514004 A email receipt will be sent**

Could you also supply your latest contact details below:

Name

Address

.....

.....

Post Code

Tel No

Mobile No

e-mail:

(To enable us to send the club newsletter)

If you do not wish to re-new your club membership could you let me know by e-mail or post.

For those who are not re-joining the club it would be useful to us if you could tell us if there are any particular reasons for not re-joining. Eg. Economics/giving up fishing/club not meeting your needs/any other reason.

We would like to have your feedback in order to enhance the service that the club provides. E-mail any comments to me at the address below

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