

Winter Evening Report

Dave Southall – 05/11/15



Dave Southall is a regular contributor to Fly Fishing and Fly Tying and is a well-known exponent of the Tenkara technique and the use of tiny flies. Living in North Yorkshire he has access to the chalk streams in the area and, now retired, fishes 4 or 5 days a week. However he has found time to visit many parts of Europe (including Harston!), and travelled to the States and even down under.

The objective of the slide show was to illustrate his ramblings and show how he perfected his fishing techniques to be widely applicable wherever he fishes.

Initially he took us to Austria where in the alpine streams were home to naturalised brook and rainbow trout. The

Tenkara technique enabled flies to be held close to the side of boulders where the flow of water was slightly less than in the main stream.



Buoyant imitations proved effective: an elk hair winged caddis and a black foam beetle were recommended. In the valleys, the tributaries resembled ditches but nevertheless were full of brook trout. These shoaled-up fish seem to have a suicidal habit of not being spooked by one of their colleagues being caught and apparently it was possible to catch a whole shoal providing the angler remained concealed.

Changing altitudes can result in a massive change in temperature, which on one occasion varied from -6 to +26°C on successive days. Visitors need to be suitably attired.

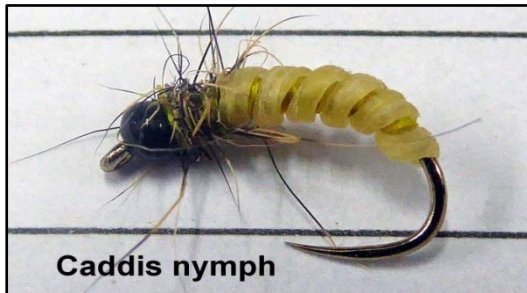
<http://www.tenkaratimes.com/tenkara-blog/archive/tenkarafishinginaustria>

Meanwhile back in Yorkshire he took us on a tour of various waters local to him. Thornton Beck is a narrow tree lined stream which he fished with a conventional rod (6ft) and line. He almost exclusively used a dry daddy with a detached body to catch the resident brown trout.

The Derwent above the Ladybower reservoir is a stretch of syndicate water dedicated solely to the Tenkara method although the river lacked the rocky appearance of the Austrian waters. Fishing for non-members is available on a guided basis - search "Discover Tenkara". Dave is not a fan of the reversed hackle style of traditional Tenkara flies but is a great advocate of foam bodied flies with a high viz post on the top usually fluo pink in colour.

The Driffeld Beck fishery has declined considerably over the past 50 years much due, in his opinion, to cormorant predation. However, the attitude to grayling has changed enormously and they are no longer killed as vermin. The case caddis is the predominant food in June, July and August.

The imitation employed cat gut for the body which had a beautiful translucency when wet.



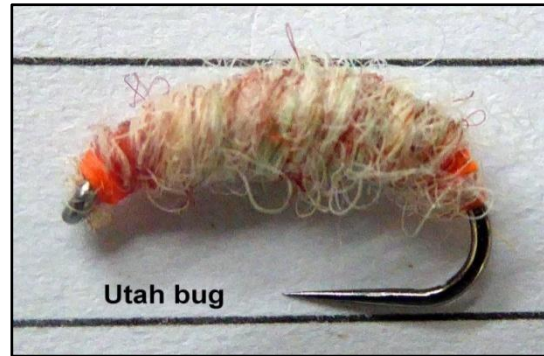
Caddis nymph

Earlier in the season, a hawthorn imitation does the trick tied on a 14 hook.

An instantly recognisable fly was the Utah variation of Sawyers killer bug. The body was made from Jamieson's Shetland Spindrifft (oyster) available from Great BritishYarns (www.greatbritishyarns.co.uk/)



Shrimp



Utah bug

Inevitably the Upper Tees got a mention with a preference for the stretch below Cow Green reservoir. Here he found a 13.5 ft Tenkara rod ideal for the tree lined stretch bearing in mind that wading was considered to be treacherous.

Trips to the USA have covered the wild rivers of Wyoming and Montana.

Further south, the Florida lakes can be tackled for bass, blue gills and pan fish. Foam poppers were the order of the day slapped down on the surface to attract the fish from their lairs in lily pads.

Slovenia offers brilliant fishing and in these days of no frills flying, really is on our door step. The fishing can be relatively expensive at €35-100 a day. Apart from rainbows and grayling, given the use of suitable tackle there may be a chance of landing a 20+lbs marble trout.

Dave has been to the San in Poland. He fished just below the reservoir with an 18-20# dry fly supported by a single plume of CDC and a tail consisting of white poly yarn. He remarked on the colourful appearance of the fish.

He went up to Sweden pursuing his favourite grayling before tripping down to the South Island of New Zealand, the land of lunkers. I was quite interested to hear his assessment - low fish density, no stocking, and expect long walks to productive areas. His advice was to fish in the company of a spotter - taking it in turns to fish.

He had some other tips to offer. Many of his flies were based on a clump of CDC providing flotation.



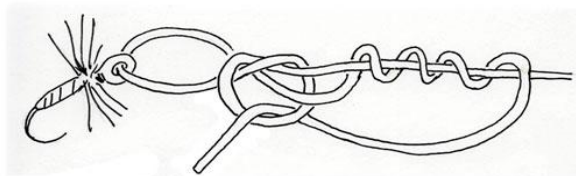
He reckoned that the buoyancy could be restored by drying the fly between sheets of tissue followed by the sparse application of Roman Moser Miracle Flotant. This site makes very interesting reading

<http://uktenkara.proboards.com/thread/837/frogs-fanny?page=1>

He was a fan of Italian Style casting. Have a gander at the promotional video https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k_s_pIBdOtMo

My understanding is that it requires a 7'6" #5 rod casting a #3 line. For those looking for a practical demo then attend the BFFI meeting at Stafford in February 2016.

He likes to use a loop knot (Rapala) for joining flies to the leader as it gives much more freedom of movement. (note that the tiny flies are fished on 1.5lb bs leaders!)



Regarding further info on Tenkara he recommended

<http://www.tenkarausa.com/>.

Many of his flies are illustrated in http://www.yorkshire-dales-flyfishing.com/dry_flies.htm and a few taken from his fly box are shown here.



He finished with a fly tying demo showing his minimalist style.

He was certainly deft at handling tiny hooks. He mentioned Trout Line which is a Romanian outfit, <http://www.troutline.ro>, as a source for cat gut used in his caddis nymph. Their website and Facebook entry makes interesting reading as a source of unusual materials. The tiny hooks he used were Hends BL 454 which were barbless, forged and were made from a decent gauge of steel wire although he also sources hooks from Fulling Mill (aka Hyabusa).

Note: in the fly photographs above the spacing between the horizontal lines is 8 mm.

Finally, although he did not mention it at the meeting, he does run a guiding service - for details search Dave Southall.

DGJ - 05/11/15