

INVICTA FFC

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NEWSLETTER 161

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

Sackcloth and ashes time

We have let you down! The last Newsletter appeared way back in August of last year and that is not good

Your Committee knows this and significant changes were brought in at the recent AGM. It is intended to include all of the information which appears in the Newsletter online but as some members don't have computer facilities or just prefer to have hard copies publication of the Newsletter will continue. Communication is the bedrock of any organisation and that is our aim.

Summer Programme

Monday 2nd April - Pitsford

Sunday 13th May - Rutland

Friday 22nd June - Eyebrook

**Sunday 15th July - Grafham
(President's Cup)**

**Saturday 18th August-Pitsford
(Carl Hunter Bowl)**

**Saturday 1st September -
Ravensthorpe**

**Tuesday 2nd October
Hanningfield
(to be confirmed)**

**Elinor Fur & Feather event
Saturday 10th November.**

**Tuesday Evening League
8th May to 14th August**

Annual General Meeting

This event was well attended and members present passed a Resolution to amend the Club Constitution to include both a General and Minutes Secretary and an additional Committee member to cope with our ever increasing club activities. Lawson Wight, having served five years as Chairman, assumed the role of General Secretary, with Paul Stevens Minutes Secretary and Graham Williams taking the Chair

Having given up angling long term member Henry Lowe was awarded Hon. Member status in recognition of his service to the sport and to Invicta.

Annual Dinner

Forty members and guests were present at this our 34th dinner. Once again this event was held at the Lion Hotel, Buckden.

Ably organised by Alan Prevost and his wife Brenda. As usual trophies were awarded followed by a raffle and slightly bawdy entertainment provided by Bob Ayres and sidekick Steve Middleton.



David Moore receiving the Carl Hunter Bowl



John Mees receiving the President's Cup

Cliff Waters

By David Jones

Cliff was a photojournalist for 14 years before he "retired" 8 years ago. I seem to recall that he made a significant contribution to the Anglian Water "Hooked" magazine. A couple of years ago he was approached by Total Flyfisher to contribute an article and this has blossomed into 11 pages a month. He was aware that he had visited us about four years ago and thought that on this occasion he would talk about how a magazine feature is assembled.

Firstly you have to decide who would make a good feature. Consider for example the most respected competition fly fishermen (not persons?) ever: who would you select?

The top three living anglers under 80 nominated by Cliff was John Horsey, the most capped International angler ever, Ian Barr, a World Champion and arguably the best competition angler of his generation, and Dave Shipman, possibly the most successful competition angler over the past 30 years. That is not to forget many other stars including Tony Curtiss, Jeremy Herrmann, Phil Dixon, Brian Thomas, Dave Grove, Simon Robinson, Jim Crawford, Rob Edmunds, Brian Leadbetter, Jim Robinson, Chris Ogbourne and so on. No mention of Martin Introna who is the new England Team manager. Many of these fine anglers are now overlooked (try Googling some of these names).

Cliff was probably influenced in selecting Dave as he had never fished with him before. In some ways he was taking a (small) risk as Cliff had discovered in the past that some really good anglers can crumple when a camera is shoved in their face. No fish – no feature. By selecting Rutland Water there was little chance that Dave would fail to deliver (although at the end of the day only 4 fish were caught).

Fishing magazines are season led and it is quite likely that a feature would have been prepared the previous year in order that it had some relevance to the time of year. January, February and March are difficulty issued to produce as the reservoirs are closed at that time.

Cliff decided that the Dave Shipman feature was to be instructional. Consequently it was necessary to photograph as many aspects of the tackle as possible. Dave set up two rods, one a conventional floater and the other with a midge tip. I noticed that, according to Cliff, Dave preferred Sightfree G3 leader material, a liking expressed by several other speakers at our meetings. Leaders in excess of 20 feet demand a long handled landing net to save having to stand on the seat or prow in order to get the fish in the net. I don't think he disclosed what rod(s) he used but reckoned that most competition anglers preferred stiff tip action rods. A notable exception was the current holder of the

Brown Bowl, Dave Hoppe, who firmly believes that soft actioned rods resulted in less lost fish. One of Cliff's photos showed that, far from using Shipman buzzers, Dave employed a bung. I wuz shocked! In an interview at the end of the day Dave said that he thought that Fritz had the greatest impact on fly fishing over the last 10 years. I am really out of touch. Lines were marked with a coloured whipping at intervals to assist depth control when the hang method was employed. Cliff has a preference for Canon cameras using a pair of EOS SLR bodies with a range of lenses including a 70-200mm general purpose zoom, a 300mm prime lens for working at a respectable distance, a 10-20mm wide angle for in-boat shots and a 60mm macro for 1:1 shots of flies and similar fine detail. A Canon Speedlight flash helps to minimise deep shadows, under peaked caps for example. Although the lenses are image stabilised a sturdy tripod is advisable when taking group shots. Less stability is provided by a monopod but it may substitute as a useful Dave Shipman's flybox was described as the most untidy ever with a random array of well used flies covering nymphs to quite large lures. Cliff reckoned that there would be moves to ensure only manufactured barbless hooks will be allowed in catch-and-release-fishing. Apparently there have been a number of cases where barbs of conventional hooks were simply crushed with serrated forceps and were not sufficiently smooth to pass the snag test causing anglers to be disqualified.

The photojournalist usually divides the task into boat-to-boat and in-boat sessions So readers will see the features angler taking off and perhaps returning triumphant, catching and landing fish. There is no doubt that Dave knows every inch of Rutland Water. Even so he religiously plumbs the depth of the water at the start of every drift with a 30 foot surveyors tape. He is looking for something like 13-15 feet of water which is indicative of the start of a drop-off where trout tend to patrol. The day started in a deep hole in Sailing Club Bay and a stockie was soon in the boat. Spooning showed the fish had not been feeding. Perhaps there was no food? Off then to New Zealand Point, a few hundred yards to the west near the woods at Berrybutts. A few fish were taken here on a blackish fly which I assumed to be a cormorant derivative, Then on to Hideaway Bay near Egleton. A fish caught here excited an angler in a moored boat which was quickly manoeuvred into Dave's drift. A bit rash that considering the array of cameras on board! Incidentally Dave's drift is maintained in a straight path with the aid of 3 loops in the attachment rope (somewhat more substantial than that provided with commercial drogues) which enabled the path to be finely controlled with minimum effort.

wading stick. A feature article can result in 2500 images so there ought to be a few of use. He generally whittles this package down to 200 and by the time the editor gets his hands on them this are reduced to 20 with maybe 10 finding their way into print. From this the advantages of digital over film cameras is obvious

The quality of magazines has improved beyond recognition thanks to the digital era with image processing(Photoshop), desktop publishing (quarkXPress and InDesign) and vastly improved printing techniques. Cliff is possibly unique in that he produces the whole feature from fishing, writing the copy (typically 2500words), manipulating the images and text, and presenting the result to the Editor. Angler have also become skilled at producing excellent images of flies and self portraits holding specimen fish . Tidy yourself up, stand or kneel without a hunched back, remove sunglasses and hats. Cliff advised holding fish to one side, tail out with the head towards the anglers body. Roll the fish towards the camera so that a slight degree of darkening occurs on the fishes back. This helps to avoid white-out of the scales and also avoid holding the fish too far away from your body which makes the fish look larger but also produces the effect of abnormally large hands. Wipe any blood or debris from the fish and incline the fishes head slightly towards the camera. Examples of Cliff's work may be seen on his website www.fishpics.co.uk

Ideally flies are photographed embedded in a cork handle, in a vise or resting on a coloured card. A macro lens is not absolutely essential as quite reasonable results can be achieved with a compact camera providing it has close focussing facilities although this is best done manually using the shutter delay. There are mini studios available which include lights and a mini tripod for about £30.00.

For more information see-

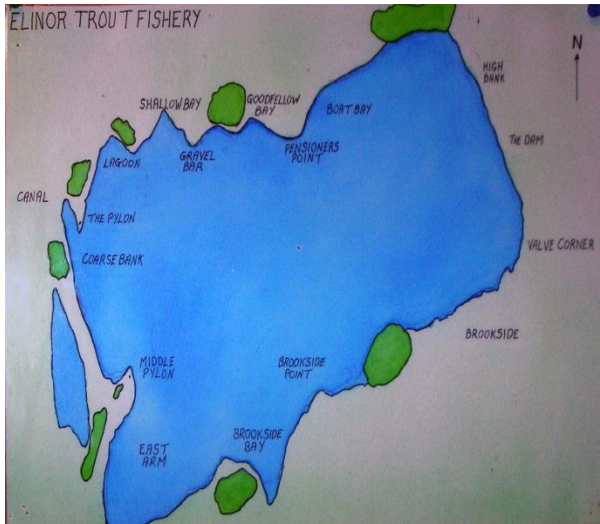
http://www.amazon.co.uk/studio-including-lights-stands-tripod/dp/B000NHBN7E/ref=pd_rhf_p_t_3

<http://globalflyfisher.com/gallery/digitizing/digital.html>

Fur & Feather at Elinor

By Dave Jones

My last visit to Elinor was 35 years ago when I caught my limit on a size 14 Greenwells Glory tied during Les Beecroft's lessons. I suppose I should also recall that my wife produced twin lads the very next morning! Coupled with the capture of a 6lb brownie at Grafham the previous Friday, it was a weekend to remember.



35 years ago there were no dual carriageways running from Cambridge virtually to the door of Aldwinckle. I well recall difficulty in finding the water, but do not remember the long bumpy track down to the Lodge, never mind the hundreds of geese. My arrival caused a stir as I have not, according to Steve Middleton, been on a club trip for 18 years and that was a trip to the Dee at Bala in extremely severe weather. The lake was completely shrouded in fog early on and I struggled to get my bearings. At least it was fairly warm but could have done with a bit more wind. According to the bailiff the wind had been blowing into the dam for a week or so and most catches were coming from that area. One guy was leaving as I tackled up, he had fished the dam and got his limit on an olive green damsel imitation with a gold head. He opined that all point flies should have a tail and that unweighted flies were worse than useless.

I moved down to the Boat Bay area. Peter Oldham, fishing on the edge of the cluster of trees, had already bagged one fish and went on to lose a couple more, possibly through the use of barbless hooks but landed 3 over the day. Roger Featherstone caught one fish and experienced a number of plucks; he responded by cutting the tail around, from his fly – bad move Roger! There were fish some quite close in, but were not keen to play ball. It was “encouraging” that most boats seemed equally fishless, the exception being a cluster of craft in the NE (Valve) corner where one angler bagged 31 fish on an olive Woolly Buzzer which is a fair imitation of a damsel. It was fished fairly fast just under the surface but I’m not sure the pattern was as important as the fact that stocking had taken place the previous day in that area. Newish member Duncan Tait, fishing Pensioners Point (west bank) and Chris McLeod positioned on the east bank opposite the harbour (Brookside Point) were probably at the limits to which the newly introduced fish had spread. Chris

ended up with 5 fish having returned a manky looking rainbow and Duncan caught 3, including the heaviest fish of the day at 3lbs. Interesting to note Chris was using an AW fly line @ £7.00 and Duncan, a fan of furred leaders, in place of ghost tip lines. Top rod was Ron Lusadi who managed 6 fish on a Woofter Booby from the dam area. Steve ANNOUNCED TO THE WORLD every time he landed one of his 4 fish on a TEQUILA BLOB. The fish seemingly not interested in imitations but wanted to chase something. Even I, in desperation, had given up on nymphs and resorted to pulling a big black minkie which broke my duck with about an hour to go. In all 12 anglers caught 27 fish – a bit below our normal total. Bob Ayres, noted for walking round the lake several times in search of fish, blanked along with Alan Prevost. Nice to see someone using a line tray Alan!

The day ended with a small celebration and gift exchange at the Fox Inn at Thorpe Waterville. Everyone agreed it was an excellent social event: thank due to John Caldwell for organising and Peter Oldham for getting the pub to open early and paying for the chips! I must not let another 35 years elapse before my next visit!

First Trout



This delightful picture is of Maya Wight, surely not Lawson’s daughter, having caught, carried it from the water with her finger in its gills in the prescribed manner.

Watch out Scottish Ladies Team! Maya was almost three at the time (June last year) and the

fish was caught on a Deer Hair Emerger from the River Polly.

Subscriptions

At the AGM it was agreed, on the Committee's recommendation, that Club subscriptions should remain at £17.00.

We believe this to be excellent value considering the combination of a full Winter and Summer programme together with the opportunities for social and competitive events which are now available for a very reasonable 33 pence per week. If you haven't renewed your membership or know someone who would appreciate an introduction to Invicta FFC please contact our Hon. Treasurer, Alan Prevost who also has a range of colourful caps, metal badges and car stickers on offer.

Mick O'Farrell

by Dave Jones

Mick has roots in the town of Cahir in southern Tipperary, on the banks of the Soir. Not the sewer but phonetically, the shure. The river, at 114 miles, is the 2nd longest river in Ireland and flows into the sea near Waterford on the south coast. The river is renowned for its salmon: it holds the Irish fly caught record at 58lbs. Between the 17th March and the end of September the river is regarded as a centre of excellence for dry fly fishing particularly at the back end of the season. His book contains 35 different dry fly patterns specifically for the river including many of which he has devised himself. This is wild brown trout fishing at its best but is regarded as a very difficult venue with the fish very easily spooked. The secret of success is very short lining with light tackle plus years of tuition under his father. Soir brown trout are typically of the order of 1lb. However, much larger trout lurk in the deeps but these are only caught late at night when they may succumb to a sedge fished under bankside trees.

His interest in salmon was reinforced by the fact his daily trip to school crossed the weir where salmon jumped seeking their spawning grounds. He showed an interesting slide of the event depicting the salmon preferring to leap rather than use the purpose built fish pass. This was the venue where some years later he landed a 32lb springer after 2.75 hour battle which necessitated running a mile downstream to maintain contact. The fish took a brown and gold devon.

Eleven years ago he discovered Lough Carra. If I die and go to heaven and I had a wish, this is where I would like to end up, he said! Carra is a limestone lough, about 4000 acres in extent and located to the NE of the giant Lough Mask.

Lough Carra is the first of the Irish waters to experience the mayfly hatch when it is usual to dap

a live fly. The Green Peter appears in June which although larger at one inch, is dwarfed by the even larger sedge, the Murragh, at one and a half inches. The latter has a strange habit of skittering in circles rather like rowing with a single oar. The larger trout are driven wild by this action but tend only to be caught at night. The technique then is to slowly retrieve the fly figure of eight style so that takes can be felt. It is interesting to see that boats are equipped with 2 engines, a petrol powered effort to cover large distances to the feeding area, and an electric motor which is employed when fish are being stalked. Fish lurk in the shallow water at the edge of reed beds.

Mick tries to fish L Carrowmore at least twice a year. (factoid – there seems to be 2 Loughs named Carrowmore - before setting your sat navs, he means the one north of Bangor Erris). The lough is generally recognised as the best salmon and sea trout water in the country to the extent that the brown trout are ignored. In May – July Mick reckoned that you could be fishing over several thousand salmon. The Sea Trout run in mid June with fish up to the 14lb record. The downside is that the fishing is finished by late July – August. Heading back to the south-east corner there are the lakes of Killarney. Lough Lein at 4000 acres, the largest of the group, is the location for the National Flyfishing Championship. With 240 anglers on the water, it is no mean feat to qualify. Mick's dad won it 57 years ago, Mick won the event twice 2005/2006 back to back. The water is peaty and is generally looked upon as a wet fly water. The trout are picky and success comes to the angler who continually changes flies until a successful pattern is found. There is an invasive weed problem from May onwards in some areas. The brown trout are long and slim with small heads, well coloured and generally weigh in at about a pound although fish up to 22lbs have been caught by anglers trolling for salmon. Mick urges caution on all of these large waters near the west coast as the weather can change tranquil lakes into raging seas in a very short period of time. Should this occur, head for the sheltered bays.

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Work commitments brought Mick to the Midlands reservoirs. Not surprisingly he brought his hard won Irish techniques with him and that meant, for the most part, fishing dry flies. Typically his tackle would consist of a 10' Orvis rod, a DT #6 line and a 16' Rivege fluorocarbon leader (7.5lbs) carrying 3 flies at 4' intervals, supported by a film of Gink. Did I hear of some competition anglers taking 30 – 40 lines onto the water?

Mick's tips for dry fly fishing

MATCH THE HATCH – vital

*Fly spacing: 5ft to top dropper, the remaining pair at 4ft intervals.

*Trim underside of hackles so fly sits on the surface film.

*Gink top fly only. Keep Gink off leader.

*Short casting, perhaps 15yards, all is needed from a boat. This allows rapid lift-off to cover rising fish and facilitates fan casting.

*Aim high when casting. Mick thinks fish can see the flies in the air and follow them down onto the water. This may explain why takes sometimes occur almost as soon as flies hit the water.

*Fish wind lanes.

*The point fly is critical. If fish come to the other flies, move the successful fly to the point.

*Changing fly size from 10 > 12 > 14 may make a significant difference.

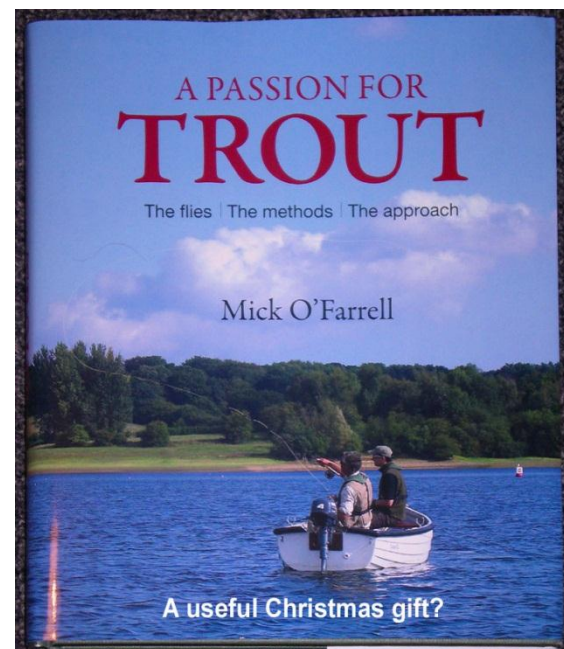
His flies are tied on Kamasan 175 hooks which have never let him down. He has recently taken a liking to the Hamak brand who market a nice line in barbless, his preference being for sizes 12's and 14's. He has been accused of departing from slimline modern traditions by tying loose bulky bodies. Seals fur is the favoured material although suggests that this is improved markedly by the addition of UV straggle. Ribbing is avoided to keep weight down and avoid compressing the body materials. The more ragged the fly the more effective they have proved to be. Mick would never put a freshly tied fly on the point. Another of his innovations is to mix CdC with deer hair for the wing which produced an attractive dappled appearance and, should the fly submerge, the combination traps a dispersion of micro bubbles which creates a natural glow. Top notch hackles were, in his experience, absolutely essential. Mick described many of the patterns in his book. A black hopper, devised at Monteith, with red legs he considered an improvement over conventional versions. His Shipmans is so overdressed it is barely recognisable. A large red buzzer with red and orange seals fur body with glister mixed in was very successful at Grafham from June onwards. A damsel with a detached blue body was particularly effective at Elinor.

Dry flies proved to be deadly even when no fish were showing and tended to catch the larger fish. The method probably accounted for over 500 fish during the season even though the predominance of northerly winds took the edge off sport at Grafham this year (2011). He had demonstrated in recent sessions that 70% of fish came out of the blue.

Experience on local waters shows that fish can be taken from March through to the end of November. Some Grafham regulars have caught on dries at the very end of the season in December.

His tackle is beefed up for wet fly fishing. Rod length of 10.6/11ft. A ghost tip line, usually a #7,

is adopted along with a fluorocarbon leader of 9lb.bs. carrying 4 flies. Line is cast, aiming high. Flies are retrieved almost immediately raising the arm to get the bob fly working in the surface as soon as possible. If a fish just plays with the top dropper, slow down the retrieve and it's possible the fish will take one of the flies further down the cast. Early season flies would be dark claret, mid-season consists of sedges and dabblers and end of season flies would reflect the predominance of fry. The Silver Sedge is a favoured top dropper fly, usually a 12, between June and the end of August. The tying is illustrated in his book. The objective is to reproduce natural features such as the white glowing body, pale wings and long speckled horns. The UV claret dabbler is an outstanding point fly. The tail is pheasant fibres dyed claret and incorporates a bit of mirror flash (which is about as near to a blob as he is going to get). The body incorporates UV claret straggle. The legs consist of a few strands of bronze mallard (tied in with a minimum number of turns) at 90degree intervals. Deep red goose biots serve for the wings. Detailed instructions appear in his book. Other recommended flies include the lime/claret Warsaw Dabbler, of Polish origin, which was effective when little green bugs were hatching at the height of summer. A Soldier Palmer modified with a bit of flash in the tail used in May and September. A Hares Ear Sedge pattern using the combination of CdC and Deer Hair with a trace of flash was highly visible to the fish. Again the details are in his book.



Mick's book, "A Passion for Trout", had its origins in 2008 when he was made redundant, and was published earlier in 2011. Its 230 pages contain 400 patterns many of which have not been seen before. The photo's are by Peter Gathercole to his

usual high standard. Chapters cover reservoirs, lakes and rivers both in Ireland and the UK. At £24.50 for a signed copy it seemed to sell very well to our members. One section dealt with the future, remarking on the fact that most fly fishing clubs here are populated by the over 60's. Louhgrea AA have a 12 week training programme for inducting youngsters into fly fishing. Most impressive, much of which would benefit more experienced anglers. Juniors in Ireland have a big advantage over those in the UK insofar that the fishing, being exclusively wild trout, is so much cheaper than in the stocked English reservoirs. Mick wanted his book to become a reference volume, an aim which, in my opinion, was admirably met.

On the way home, Roger Featherstone wondered why some anglers seem to be so effective. Read the book my son and I think you will have a few of the answers you are looking for!

Now we are asking for your help

What subject would you like to hear about in the Winter Programme? Do you have a particular Speaker in mind? Please help Lawson Wight, our Secretary, to compile an interesting series for winter 2012/13.

This Publication. Do you have any angling anecdotes, stories, incidents or pictures which would be of interest to you fellow Club members? As long as it is clean and not libellous I will accept it for printing.

A fishing trip, at home or further afield, an incident that you think ought to be recorded for our mutual enlightenment or amusement. It's your Newsletter and we need good copy to make it a success!

Your Committee is actively considering extending the Tuesday League type of event by switching to Sundays at the close of the Tuesday evening programme. What do you think about that? It will only be worth pursuing if sufficient numbers are interested.

It has been suggested that members would appreciate knowing the date of

the next Committee Meeting in order that your queries or suggestions can be brought to the Committees' notice at the earliest opportunity. A note, text or e-mail to the General Secretary would get the ball rolling.

The next Committee Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 7th June. If you have any matters to raise please contact Lawson Wight (General Secretary) well before this date.

With the season now under way at all venues John Caldwell would appreciate early confirmation of your desire to fish any specific Club Trip. John has to cancel boats not require in good time to keep our friends, the Fishery Managers, on side.

On the subject of Club Trips. These are social events with a modicum of competition if you require it. Newer members are encouraged to take part. You may specify your friend as boat partner on several events or request boating with an experienced angler.

Graham Williams would also appreciate early knowledge if you wish to take part in the AMC or any competition as soon as possible after they are advertised.

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