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REVIVAL OF INVICTA BANK FISHING EVENT AT ELINOR A SUCCESS



Images from Elinor. Top left Chris McLeod receives advice from John Mees lower left the secretary poised for action and main picture shows the treasurer - in deep water again!

I am not sure how many years it has been since Invicta last held a bank fishing event but by the success of the event at Elinor on 15th November I feel that the next one will not be so long in coming.

The weather was kind with broken sunshine and a steady wind and on a small water members kept re-meeting with chats and exchange of information, a very 'clubby' day much enjoyed by all.

Paradoxically the largest bag was taken by the smallest competitor and all credit to him for battling into a strong wind for most of the day.

Final results were:

- 1) Kieran Bonas - 6 for 20 lbs
- 2) Gary How - 6 for 12 lbs
- 3) Peter Oldham - 6 for 10 lbs 6 oz
- 4) John Caldwell - 6 for 9 lbs 12 oz
- 5) Adam Worker - 6 for 8 lbs
- 6) Ian Wilson - 4 for 7 lbs 12 oz

- 7) John Mees - 3 for 7 lbs 8 oz
- 8) Kieran Caulfield - 4 for 7 lbs
- 9) Ryan Worker - 4 for 4 lbs 9 oz
- 10) Roger Featherstone - 3 for 4 lbs 8 oz
- 11) Peter Reeves - 2 for 3 lbs 14 oz
- 12) = Bruce Arnold - 2 for 3 lbs 12 oz
- 12) = Mark Searle = 2 for 3 lbs 12 oz
- 14) Simon - 2 for 2 lbs 8 oz
- 15) Paul Stevens - 1 for 1 lbs 4 oz
- 16) = Chris McLeod - 1 for 1 lb
- 16) = Alan Prevost - 1 for 1 lb
- 17) Dave Hardick - 0

The turn out for the day was very good and as it proved so popular pressure from sociable anglers could very well result in a similar gathering at another small water locally before the 2009 trout season proper bursts upon us.

Watch this space.

invicta calendar of forthcoming events 2009

Dec. 11th	INVICTA DESTINATION FISHING & XMAS SOCIAL. Harston Village Hall.	7.45 for 8 pm
Jan. 8th	VICE NIGHT Fly tying at Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Jan. 22nd	Return of a favourite CHARLES JARDINE Harston Village Hal	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb. 5th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & Tackle auction Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb. 19th	Return of a favourite - CHARLES JARDINE Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb. 21st	INVICTA ANNUAL DINNER & TROPHY PRESENTATION Lion Hotel, Buckden.	7.30 for 8 pm
Mar. 5th	FLY FISHING FORUM. Come & get your questions answered. Harston V.Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Mar. 19th	INTER-CLUB QUIZ NIGHT. Can AW wardens win again?? Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Apr. 26th	GWFFA/EDFF INTER-CLUB COMPETITION Grafham Water	tba

*** PLEASE NOTE THAT THE DATES FOR CHARLES JARDINE AND JOHN WADHAM HAVE BEEN SWITCHED
John's talk will be 'Dry fly from the bank - everything from Boobies to Bob's Bits.'

Details of Invicta's boat outings in 2009 will be circulated in our summer programme and for those interested in competition fishing our club captain will be in touch in the new year.

FLOATING AND SINKANTS.... Part 2, now with a solution.

In the previous issue I bemoaned the fact that despite trying most of the propriety products on the market, I had found no satisfactory method of presenting a dry fly on calm water without having the leader floating or failing to penetrate the surface tension of the water.

Following this I received two suggestions, both from members with a science background. Peter Thomas wrote " You have tried Fullers earth but have you tried mixing a paste with a good quality biodegradable washing up liquid? If that fails try Fullers earth paste made with water and some sugar soap as used by decorators. If that fails try soaking the casts prior to use overnight in a good aggressive biological washing powder in case its some sort of dressing on the surface from drawing the filament. If that fails along the same track try wiping with Nitromors paint stripper but keep it off your hands it may be carcinogenic the jury is out on it, follow with soap and water and test the line for strength before using it. If that fails we need to get technical with it whatever the result please let me know."

Well, I didn't actually try this chemical approach since David Hardick also e-mailed me "Like you I have been frustrated with floating leaders having spent some hours on Rutland a couple of weeks ago with several trout coming to the fly only to boil underneath and move away. This was with flies

slimly dressed on size 14 hooks and 4x tippet. The water was essentially flat calm though and probably I should not have been using dries in the first place. Getting the leader to sink was a real pain despite almost constant degreasing with Fullers Earth/ detergent mix. I don't think fluorocarbon makes much difference either, especially with the finer tippets. What I have seen but never tried myself is the use of lightweight tippet rings. These are fine 2mm rings that you can attach to the end of the tapered section before tying on the tippet (say fluorocarbon tippet to copolymer tapered leader). These can help sink the small section (say 2ft of fluorocarbon) leading up to the fly itself, but they reputedly do not sink the fly. If you get the chance give it a go and I would be interested to hear of the results."

Well, I tried these rings (Riverge - 10 for £1.99) and found them to be absolutely brilliant on calm still water taking the degreased leader through but not the fly. An additional benefit is that when renewing the tippet you do not gradually work back through the main leader. The problem was not noted so much on the rivers with faster currents but on the smoother glides, more favoured by Grayling I am given to understand, they may well have a valid application. I can thoroughly recommend these little rings as an ideal solution without recourse to potentially harmful chemicals.



THE INVICTA FLY TYING COMPETITION

Although I thought I had made it quite clear last year, this competition is not only for participants in the fly tying group but to all members, except for the president who is donating the prize and myself who is handling the entries.

It is hoped that more members, particularly those who may be deemed to be 'more established' will take part this year, after all - you can take it seriously if you wish but it is viewed more generally as a bit of fun and supporting the club's activities. Neither should you feel that if not as dexterous as you may wish the entry will embarrass you since only I will know which is which - except that the winner(s) will be announced. So please dig out that vice, ignore the football on the TV for an hour, and tie up a few flies which you will find very useful next season.

This years competition will call for three consistent examples of two patterns, a nymph and a dry fly - and patterns which you will find very useful later in the year once the boats are again floated on the reservoirs - if not previously on a few rivers for the 'G' fish.

The nymph will be familiar to old hands who may have forgotten it recently in the face of the love affair with the Diawl Bach (in its myriad forms) and a worthwhile discovery for newcomers to the sport and it is the Iven's Brown & Green nymph. This pattern works in many sizes, good for sedge pupae (or even cased caddis) in smaller/medium sizes and can take fry feeders pulled in larger sizes.

Since we started our winter programmes with Steve Skuce of the Grayling Society, the dry fly will be a fly which Stephen Rhodes, the chairman of that Society, states "has caught me more fish than any other dry." This pattern being the John Storey Variant. Although the original John Storey is a famous traditional grayling fly, the trout do not know this and will take it just as readily (when they have a mind to that is!)

Because I would wish to encourage as many entries as possible and if you are to use the flies later in your own fishing, the materials are all common, simple to obtain (if you do not already have them) and inexpensive whilst I am not specifying any hook size or pattern... use what you like for the waters that you tend to fish. Thus I am not giving anyone an excuse for NOT entering this year..

Flies should conform to the following dressings:

IVEN'S BROWN & GREEN NYMPH

Hook: Any

Thread: Any

Tail: 4 or 5 strands of bronze peacock herl (approx. ¼ inch or 5 mm on a 12/14 hook) which may be pinched off to size. (The remainder of the herls are left on to form the back and thorax later.)

Rib: fine gold oval or wire.

Abdomen: Dyed green and dyed brown ostrich herl wound together along the shank (not twisted together) ribbed with the gold ribbing. The back is covered with the strands of peacock herl.

Thorax (or head): the strands of peacock herl twisted and wound on.

JOHN STOREY VARIANT

Hook: Any

Thread: Any

Tail: Red game cock hackle fibres

Abdomen: Bronze peacock herl (with a very fine optional rib if desired.)

Wing post: White poly yarn, Aerowing or similar.

Hackle: Red game tied horizontally (parachute style.)

So, three examples of each fly please, with each fly tied on the same model/size hook. The hooks for each pattern may be varied though. Please let me have your finished entries in an anonymous container without your name - I will apply a number to the entry for blind judging. The winner will be announced at our AGM on 5th February. Dressing these patterns will be demonstrated at our **VICE NIGHT**, currently scheduled for 8th January but this may vary since as any organiser knows, speakers are like 'Will 'o the wisps.' Entries will be accepted up to the start of the AGM but I will accept them at any time before.

If you are wondering what the original John Storey pattern is, A. Courtney Williams gives it as

Hook: size 14 down eyed

Silk: Black

Whisks/Tail: None

Body: Bronze peacock herl

Wing: Small whole feather from Mallard breast tied in with a distinct forward slant, bunched - not split, (i.e. not divided.)

Throat Hackle: Rhode Island Red dark red cock.

.....Happy tying!

THE AMFC FUN DAY - INVICTA B TEAM CONQUERS ALL AT EYEBROOK.

One of the most enjoyable events of the year normally but sadly towards the end of it. Not for many on this occasion though as fish were hard to impossible to find and many blanks were recorded. Normally an event I love taking part in as Eyebrook seems to suit my style but on the day (12th October) I was in northern Montenegro. However, I have news of the event and class and true character will always shine through.. or so the Invicta B team advises me.

Comprised of such stalwarts as Bob Ayres, Paul Stevens, Steve Middleton and Alan

Taylor what can you expect? The day started in true fashion with a monster breakfast at 'The Greedy Pigs' where the 'B's' felt perfectly at ease and in harmony. Fortified by this our heroes then went into full event mode commencing with a Health & Safety address prior to the start. Profiting obviously by this Steve Middleton then promptly drove his boat full tilt into a semi-submerged fence almost capsizing it and risking giving Bob an unscheduled bath. Clearly Steve was inspired by the H & S pep talk and was endeavouring to check that the lifejackets provided functioned correctly. How careful can you be?

The day was remarkable in that there was no correct or consistent method and of the limited number of fish taken - all were apparently taken on different methods. On such occasions carefully constructed experience and skills got the short shrift they deserve and consummate good luck, not to mention flexibility (or should the be instability) of approach reigned supreme. This suited Invicta B right down to the ground... well water actually, even to the point of that common experience we all encounter at some time when motoring back up a drift Steve's net flipped up, caught the wind and went overboard. Now anticipating such an occurrence Steve had carefully avoided



All smiles here but not too many for the other teams. Invicta B celebrate their unpredicted victory at Eyebrook... where the going got tough!

catching fish for some time previously and thus it was perfectly dry. As such it floated well enough to allow the boat to be turned around and retrieve it before it sank. I ask you, how many of the other teams paid such meticulous detail? No wonder that Invicta B secured yet another richly deserved victory. Well done lads, the East of England is proud of you but Invicta A is still a bit sniffy about their defeat so I would avoid them for a while if I were you. Mind you I understand GWFFA, whose performance on the day was somewhat uncharacteristic are on record as saying, with regard to the day, that they did not wish to discuss it.

1. Invicta F.C. 'B'

Steve Middleton	1	11lb 13oz
Bob Ayres	2	4lbs 2oz
Paul Stevens	3	6lbs 5.5oz
Alan Taylor	1	2lbs 14oz
TOTAL		15lbs 2.5oz

- 2) Hanningfield
- 3) Odds & Sods
- 4) The Committee
- 5) Bob's Bits
- 6) Invicta A
- 7) GWFFA

No doubt all concerned are looking forward to next years event!

AMFC GROUP THREE - HOW DID WE FARE

In our previous issue the Invicta A team were a mere two points from the lead and promotion to Group two with one match to go.

However, despite a valiant attempt Invicta A finished a mere one point behind the leaders of the group, The Royal Navy/Marines.

The final placings were as follows

- | | |
|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1) Royal Navy/Marines | 27 points |
| 2) Invicta A | 26 points |
| 3) Crawley F.C. | 14 points |
| 4) Soldier Palmers B | 10 points |
| 5) Invicta B | 9 points |

However, by way of compensation for this narrow defeat, John Mees of Invicta A did win the Lew Cass cup for the largest fish in the lowest group. Better luck next year lads!



Here the Lew Cass cup is being accepted by Alan Taylor on behalf of John Mees.

CASTING CLINICS - your opportunity to have your casting technique treated & cured.

Last spring we were fortunate enough to have Peter Hartley offer to extend his GWFFA casting clinic sessions to Invicta at very affordable cost. Many of you then took advantage of this to get some small group tuition therapy and have one or two casting faults identified and remedied.

I have been asked by some who benefitted from this and who feel that some unwanted habits are creeping back into their fishing if these sessions could be made available again this spring. I did broach the matter to Peter who tells me that he is quite agreeable to repeating the exercise this coming February. In fact bearing in mind the interest some members have in river fishing he would also be prepared to run a separate session

on casting under river fishing conditions which could include, if required, the deployment of double handed salmon rods.

The format would be similar to last year I understand so in order to progress this opportunity further would all of you who are interested in improving your casting for still or running water please in the first instance record your interest with me in order that I may assess the likely numbers involved, pass on to Peter and then get back to you with some more specific proposals on dates/costs etc.

I can be contacted by phone (01223 511992), mobile 07510 556619 or by e-mail at piscator2003@yahoo.co.uk.

DESTINATION FISHING 2009

In 2008 as those of you who read the previous issue or attended the Xmas Social meeting will be aware, two Invicta groups went on organised trips to the River San in south east Poland.

Additionally I enjoyed myself on the north west coast of Scotland at Inchnadamph. Two members showed an interest in repeating that trip this summer but that is a disappointing response for some excellent wild fishing. If any more are interested please let me know. Now for some hot news! I am hoping to receive information of some largely unspoiled,

affordable fishing in rivers and also lakes in Europe in a Country not presently known for its fly fishing. This is coming from someone with detailed inside knowledge and promises to be a great opportunity for memorable fishing.

I cannot say more at the present time but expect more information early in January. I will e-mail this to members on receipt but anyone not on e-mail, please signify your possible interest with me now as per contact details above and I will ensure that you receive details as and when received.

WINTER MEETING REPORTS. David Jones gives you his take on meetings to remind those who attended and inform those who for some reason didn't.

STEVE SKUCE ON GRAYLING

The Invicta Club has had a long association with the grayling. One of our first meetings was with Reg Righyni who appeared at Comberton Village College with a large bundle of Bruce and Walker rods. In those days B&W specialised in glass rods and produced an interesting range of rods which were modelled on cane rods for a variety of applications. These rods went out of fashion partly because so-called expert reviewers failed to understand that they were not intended as out and out distance irons. Later Ron Broughton visited which resulted in an invitation to club members to fish the Hodder at Newton in the Forest of Bowland. I was totally out of my depth as I was only equipped with reservoir gear (I should have gone to Stocks Reservoir which was just up the road!). The late Phil Gee, well attuned to the required methods, was the star of the day. I always remember Ron, chatting to the mainly fishless anglers at the end of the day, suddenly casting to the far side of a pool and landing a splendid grayling – one of the first I had ever seen.

Both Reg and Ron were founder members of The Grayling Society along with a few friends in 1977. The Invicta club boasts quite a few members of The Grayling Society and although grayling occasionally turn up in (coarse fishing) matches in the Thetford area, regular visits are made to the Dee in North Wales and various waters in Derbyshire. More recently there has been two Invicta trips to the San.

Our speaker, Steve Skuce, accompanied by partner Honor, had a 300 mile round journey from deepest Wiltshire in order to visit us. He has been secretary of the Grayling Society since 1998 and is well known for his defence of Lancastrians against all comers!

I was interested to learn that the fish we know as the grayling has at least another 20 names in other countries...Asche, Mutema, Lipsan, Jigan, Harr, Ombre, Khariious, Mittler, Stalling..... remember these for the next club quiz and don't let on to the GWFFA lot. Of course, it is often poetically referred to in the UK as the "Lady of the Stream" because of "her refined beauty". The most obvious feature

is the disproportionately large dorsal fin which can be brightly coloured in the male fish during the breeding season, and is used to good effect in resisting capture in fast flowing rivers.

Although the body is silvery, the scales seem to alternate along the body in dark and light spots. The lower jaw is underslung which may

account for splashy, misjudged, rises to dry flies. Another distinguishing feature is the pear shaped eye with the narrow end pointing to the snout, possibly improving long-range forward

vision. The grayling is also known as the "Canary of the rivers", because of its extreme sensitivity to pollution.



Steve Skuce makes a point

The grayling is a creature exclusive to the northern hemisphere despite a fish of the same name existing in the Antipodes. Its range truly extends between 40° and 70° north. The fish is found extensively in the UK and the European continent but not in Ireland or Holland. Reg Righyni has managed to catch grayling in 200 different locations. Grayling are also to be found in Russia, and parts of Asia including Mongolia. The Arctic Grayling can be found in Sweden and Lapland, Alaska and Canada and also the USA state of Colorado. Although grayling have a preference for clear, fast flowing cold rivers, they are also found in some still waters. Bala has a fair head no doubt entering via the Dee: L. Baikal boasts 4 varieties: fish in the Great Bear Lake in Canada tend to be darker than usual.

Fish in Alaska have been found to live for at least 30 years, but their life span in the European area is probably very much shorter – maybe of the order of 5 years. In truth, there is not much known about the grayling. The UK record was at one time in excess of 7 lbs but I

see that it is now revised to 4lb 3oz from the River Frome in Dorset. An entry in Wikipedia suggests that grayling grow to a length of 60cm with a weight of 15lbs although it has been suggested this was a case of mistaken identity (I would have thought that grayling were amongst the most distinctive of fish?). On the other hand our own Norman Shippey landed a 50cm specimen from the San this summer so that another 20% increase doesn't seem to be beyond the bounds of possibility.

The attraction of the grayling in the UK is the fact that it feeds on through the winter when trout are distinctly dour. Grayling spawn in the spring which means that they are covered by the coarse fishing closed season March – June. Grayling have not always been a welcomed species. They were regularly culled en masse on the southern chalk streams because they allegedly competed with trout for food and even ate their eggs. Thanks to The Grayling Society this attitude has changed, possibly aided by the fact that some fisheries have discovered that they can charge £35 for a day ticket.

There are a number of books specifically on grayling although some I suspect might be difficult to find: "Grayling Fishing on the Southern Chalk Streams", "The Book of the Grayling" (Pritt c. 1888), "Grayling" (Reg Righyni), "The Grayling Angler" (John Roberts), "Fly Fishing for Grayling" (John Roberts), "Grayling – the 4th Game fish" (Broughton), "The Lady of the Stream" (Broughton), and "Czech Nymphing" (Krivanec). Articles in the monthly magazine "Fly Fishing and Fly Tying" are also useful and are frequently accompanied by excellent photographs of flies (especially see the November 2008 issue). These sources will tell you that grayling will eat almost anything. Traditional wet flies intended for trout will be successful: Steve particularly liked the combination of the partridge & orange, waterhen bloa and snipe & purple when upstream nymphing even in the Wessex area. The ultra slim Sawyer nymphs were also praised. Wet flies specifically designed for grayling include the red tag, treacle parkin, orange otter, grayling steel blue, double badger and grayling fiddler. The Klinkhammer was considered to be the best ever dry fly for grayling. More recently the interest has focussed (but not by Steve it seems) on bottom fishing (Czech nymphing) which inevitably means super heavyweight

bead heads of some kind tripped along the bed of the river. It has been claimed that if you do not lose a dozen or so flies in the course of a days fishing then you are not fishing deep enough!

Flies as small as 18's are sometimes essential: hence rods for traditional fishing need to be fairly soft and capable of handling lines down to a 4 and leaders with a b.s. of a few pounds. Mind you, Czech nymphing rarely involves more than a few feet of line on the water and the nymphs are lobbed out rather than cast in the normal sense of the word. Where conditions are unsuited to fly-fishing then stret pegging was recommended using a centre pin reel and a light match rod. Berkeley Fireline was recommended as a reel line (Wow! Dyneema doesn't sound too traditional – however, it floats without greasing and is thus easily mended and with zero stretch, contact is maintained at long range) terminating in a short length of nylon for the hook length. A special balsa float with a piano wire stem, presumably aimed at achieving stability in swirling water, was suggested. Sweet corn was, by all accounts, an effective bait, maybe pandering to the graylings sensitivity to colours at the red end of the spectrum.

One of the objectives of the talk was to drum up interest in The Grayling Society (www.graylingsociety.net) which is now in its 31st year. It boasts around 1200 members of which 200 come from overseas including 16 from Holland where there are no grayling. There is no doubt that the GS has raised the profile of grayling so that it is no longer regarded as a pest. The Environment Agency, for example, now has a trout and grayling strategy. The GS also partly funds conservation projects either through research in universities or restoration of rivers. Members of the GS receive 2 journals a year containing high quality articles, often with an international flavour, far beyond those normally found in the angling press; my congratulations to the contributors and the editor. There are also 2 newsletters which provide up to date information on happenings within the world of grayling fishing. One publication identifies waters which hold grayling and another details a preferred code of conduct to adopt when grayling fishing. Merchandise includes flies, caps and THE float as well items such as leaders. A 10% discount is available for members for fly tying materials through Flytek. The Society is

divided into 12 areas throughout the UK: fishing trips are regularly organised and often permits access to waters not normally accessible to the individual angler. Local area secretaries can frequently provide fishing information for the visiting angler. Last but not least, there is the annual symposium which features lectures from well-known personalities and ends in a fishing session on local waters.

Membership of The Grayling Society is £28 pa; details from Mike Tebbs at [HYPERLINK "mailto:miketebbs@blueyonder.co.uk"](mailto:miketebbs@blueyonder.co.uk)

MICK BEWICK - NOVEMBER 2008

Good to see Mick back at the Invicta after a break of 5 years (it may be 6! Ed.), a popular guest as indicated by the near record turn out. His activities have not changed much, still running a tackle shop, competition fishing with the Queen Mother team and, his first love, regular trips to Ireland.

This season he has spent 36 days fishing on the Irish loughs – mainly Corrib – one the world's premier wild brown trout fisheries. Note Corrib, with a length of almost 30 miles and a maximum width of 8 miles, dwarfs our local reservoirs. Indeed, on a bad day, you could be forgiven for thinking you had reached the Atlantic coast. Corrib is a limestone lough and is relatively shallow, perhaps reaching a depth of 30 feet. The water is exceptionally clear although local mud patches appear during a blow. The northern half of Corrib features ~300 islands around which some of the best fishing is to be found. The season opens in February when, in the past, the locals resorted to trolling and caught lean and hungry fish returning from the rivers after spawning. The fishing is free and it was not uncommon to see up to 6 rods poking out of the back of the boat. The rules have changed of late in order to conserve stocks. There is now a 4 fish limit and only 2 rods are allowed per boat: in addition, the spawning streams are out of bounds. The zebra mussel is regarded as a potential threat in case there is a massive extinction and the residue pollutes the lough. However, experience in the northern loughs suggests that they may be beneficial in so far that they seem to devour algae and improve the water clarity. Another invasive species in the "curly water weed" which was probably introduced from the contents of an aquarium. Unrestrained, the weed thrives and grows to a length of 8 feet with a stem thickness of half an inch. The fishing in some bays has been

severely curtailed as the result of this infestation. Weed cutting operations are in hand. Last year there was an infestation with cryptosporidium bacteria in the lough. Drinking the water, however inviting the natural stuff looks, is inadvisable unless you fancy a severe dose of the runs.

The weather in the west of Ireland, with the exception of a few weeks at end of September, has been dire this year. Nevertheless, after waiting 15 years to catch a fish over 3 lbs, Mick managed 30 fish between 3 and 5 lbs over the April/May period on buzzers and dry flies. The season progressed as normal. March features the Duck fly, an olive hatch arrives in April, and a mighty green midge and sometimes mayflies arrive in May. Caenis hatch in June/July and August but often at 4 am, which seemed to interfere with Mick's drinking schedule! These flies have a strange habit of balling up and blowing over the water like tumbleweed. This attracts some really big fish, which can sometimes be tempted with a large palmered fly drawn across the surface. If this takes place in shallow water the subsequent fight can be spectacular, comparable even with bonefish, according to Mick.

Mick went on to tie a couple of flies.

The first was a parachute dry devised by ex-pat Dennis Moss (author of "Trout from a Boat" – anyone have a copy?). This was tied on a size 12 B100, using 12/0 silk. The abdomen was built up from fibres taken from a goose quill. Dark grey



Mick Bewick at the vice

Antron floss provided the wing post and buoyancy. 3 turns from a grizzle saddle patch was wound around the post. Peacock herl was used for the thorax. The body colour could be olive, black or grey, ribbed with green silk. Grease the hackle and allow the fly to float upright in the surface film with the body dangling underneath in similar fashion to the Klinkhamer. This fly was claimed to be excellent anywhere that buzzers were hatching.

The second was called the Dog Fly, also in a size 12 but tied on a B420 sedge hook. This fly featured a Canada goose herl body which Mick reckoned was less brittle if it was wound without twisting. A fine wire ribbing reinforced the body. A wing was inserted made from a few fibres from a bronze quality Greenwell Hoffman cape. The thorax was peacock herl and it was finished off with a few turns of badger hackle. This fly was fished slowly at the surface or up to a couple of feet down.

Successful fishing on the Irish loughs needs inside information for consistent success. Mick offered to provide this*. Boats are readily available in most villages around the lough. The mere size means that it is easy to get lost; portable GPS devices would seem advisable. The weather can change in an instant: beware! The lakes contain huge boulders, which sometimes break the surface in a wave and have been known to penetrate hulls. Vast areas seem devoid of fish and it is not unknown to fish for a week without so much as a touch. (*I can vouch for this having done it - Ed.*) Hence Mick recommended that initial trips should be made with an experienced gillie. Limited travel allowances and the need to hire a car, have made air travel uneconomic. The best ploy, according to Mick, is for a group to drive to Holyhead in one car and take the ferry. He advised paying the extra £14 for club class, which ensures that you are 1st on and 1st off the ferry and have access to more comfortable seats. Typical overall costs of a holiday can be found on the web. A down side at the moment is the weakness of the £ against the €.

We then had a few other demos.

Mick liked to space his flies out more than most. Point to 1st dropper 8 feet, another 7 feet to the 2nd dropper and a further 5 feet to the line. A landing net with a long extension enabled even fish on the point to be landed easily. He used a very soft nylon "Red Ice" to demonstrate knots. This was said to be ideal for shooting head

backing. He reckoned that the small end of leader material poking out of the knot towards the reel was responsible for many catch-ups during casting. Hence he tied a single overhand knot to ensure that the free end pointed down towards the fly and was less likely to snag during casting. He also put a single overhand knot in the dropper causing it to stand out at a right angle so that when there was a take it was obvious which fly the fish had been taken. (Note this is for practice days when he also clips the hook bend off of flies so he doesn't have to boat the fish and thus give away info to competitors. I recall Dave Barker used to play fish with the rod held underwater to avoid attracting unwanted attention.)

Mick showed us how to make a fused loop on the end of a fly line. You need about 1" of heat shrink tubing (£1/m from Maplins if you like black) through which the line is threaded to create a small loop. The ends were secured with crocodile clips. A blast of hot air from a paint stripper gun served to shrink the tube and melt the plastic coating on the line. The assembly was allowed to cool and the shrink fit tube peeled away. If you got the conditions right then you should have a welded loop. Practice on an old line I think. It is a lot easier if you use transparent shrink tubing!

Mick raved on about Farmoor. We have had some club trips there in the past. The full concrete bowl is not to everyone's taste. If I recall rightly, the water depth increased in steps and the fish were invariably caught when the fly was retrieved over the step. Boobies on a short leader were the order of the day. Mick demonstrated what he considered to be a useful pattern. This was tied on a size 8 wet fly supreme. Black marabou incorporating a few fibres of twinkle about 1" in length was tied in for the tail. The fibres were taken from the tip of the plume where they were less dense. It is easy to overdo the density of the tail and limit its flowing properties. The body was constructed of black/silver microfritz. No wing. Smallish eyes, black in the demo, were trimmed from a short plug of Plastazote. The idea is not to overdo the buoyancy. A wide range of other colours could be selected. The booby was fished as a single fly on a 10 ft leader, cast to the horizon with a 45 ft shooting head system.

There is a choice of two waters at Farmoor. The smaller of the two is a catch and release water which, according to Mick, is hardly fished because local anglers like to remove fish. These

typically weigh 4 pounds or so and 10 pounders have been caught. The evening drew to a close with a discussion on the merits of catch and release. Mick and several members doubted if fish survived, especially if specimens are removed from the water to be weighed and or

photographed. An area for future discussions maybe?

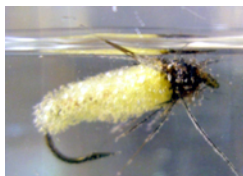
* If you are considering fishing in Ireland and wish to avail yourselves of advice from Mick, let me know and I will let you have contact info. - Ed.

INTERNATIONAL FLY TYING WITH STANISLAV MANKOV

Those who surf fly tying sites and fly fishing bulletin boards will soon come across the name of Stanislav Mankov. Stan is a prominent member of the Bulgarian national fly fishing team. He is also studying in Cambridge for a couple of years and an Invicta member. During his demonstration to us it seems that our normal winter meeting scribe got so interested he forgot to take notes. Well that doesn't happen very often! Anyway, we have some photos and let them speak for themselves. Thanks Stan for an inspirational evening.



Stan had a very attentive audience watching his every move very closely indeed in the session.



Peter Thomas decides to get in very close and personal in Stan's fly box.

INVICTA FASHION NOTES - or getting shirty again. Look smarter on the water next year.

By popular demand, or so I am informed, Chris McLeod is arranging for a further supply of the Snowbee/Invicta fishing shirts. These are in the ultra fashionable shade of pale blue with Invicta FFC. Cambridge and your name embroidered over the left breast pocket in dark blue. I have one and they are very good shirts indeed, wash well and dried on a hanger do not need ironing! They are also generously cut allowing plenty of freedom of movement.

Sizes are small 36/38" medium 38/40" large 40/42" XL 42/44" XXL 44/46". The negotiated price, which includes the embroidery with your own name is £30 each so if you would like one (or more) contact Chris advising him the size, the name you wish embroidered and sending him £30 for each shirt ordered.

Chris can be contacted by e-mail at mdkg78@dial.pipex.com, telephone 01832 270058 or by mail at Chapel Farm, Ashton, Peterborough. PE8 5LD.

All shirt orders must be received before the end of January.



Our shirts are not in this colour but are in pale blue. Our treasurer also has 2 shirts on hand in XL size, one plain and one embroidered "Invicta FFC. Cambridge" if you cannot wait.

MODERN COMMUNICATIONS - ARE YOU TAKING ADVANTAGE

Some years ago I could not understand why people needed e-mail - now I would find it impossible to function without it.

Nearly all of our newsletters are sent by e-mail and many messages are sent by me to members for whom I have an e-mail address. It is not practical for me to contact those without in any other way with last moment information. Post is too slow and phone too time consuming and costly.

So, if you do have an e-mail address and have not disclosed it, please do let our membership secretary (Alan Prevost alan@prevost.net) know. Of course if you change your e-mail

address it follows also that you should advise him otherwise you will no longer receive the newsletter and other items of information. So be better informed and ensure that Alan has all of your details and every change of them recorded as they are changed.

As you know, subs (a paltry £17) are due as at 1st January 2009, when you renew please advise him of any addition or amendment as I will be circulating contact details early in the new year and it does help to have them correct. If you are unsure as to what the current listings for you are e-mail me (piscator2003@yahoo.co.uk) and I will send you a copy of the latest membership list for you to check.

AGM - TACKLE AUCTION

At our AGM, scheduled for February 5th 2009, don't worry you will be reminded, in addition to the announcement of the winner of our fly tying competition, it is proposed to hold a tackle auction.

We all have items of kit which are surplus to requirements but which would be appreciated by others. Please let me know details of any such items you wish to be entered in this

auction, including realistic description of condition and reserve price if appropriate, in order that I may prepare a catalogue of items.

To boost club funds, 10% will be deducted from the final gross price as commission. Remember also when attending the AGM meeting to bring along your cheque book plus items for auction so that you will not miss out on a real bargain as I have no doubt there will be many on offer.

INVICTA ANNUAL DINNER & TROPHY PRESENTATION - The social event of 2009

Our president, who has been 'persuaded' to organise our Annual Dinner once again - that's the penalty of making a good job of it in the past - has this to say to you.

A reminder that our annual bash will be held on the 21st February 2009 . For this event we have a new venue, The Lion Hotel at Buckden which should please our members to the west of Cambridge who have dutifully journeyed to the Cambridge area for the last decade or more.

Plenty of atmosphere here as the Hotel is 15th century and is said to have been built as the guest house for the Bishop of Lincoln's Palace.

We would like to emphasise to our newer members that this event is historically regarded as our Ladies night so all wives, partners and girlfriends are welcome as are all of your friends. Careful thought should be given if you happen to have a wife and girlfriend but as they say 'you know your own business best and will act accordingly!'
A full menu will arrive early in the new year for the meal for which the cost will be circa £25.00 per head.

So, soon you will have all the details but make that note in your diaries now to record the date. Also if you are a current trophy holder you may wish to start looking for it.



FOREMOST AT FOREMARK

That inveterate competitor Chris McLeod (Far left holding lunch) took part in as a guest in the English Youth Captain's day event at a very windy Foremark.

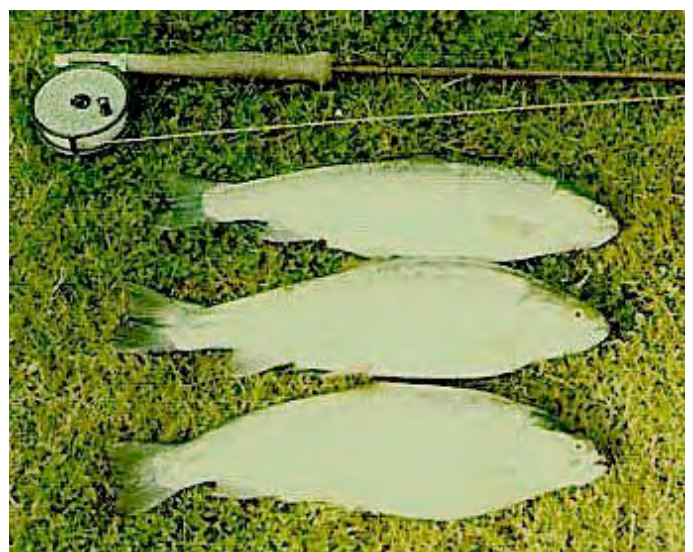
Chris was partnered by Tom Gott, current youth champion and together they took top position with 7 rainbows on a very blustery day. The event was hosted by EYFA Team Manager. Martin Dixon and nearly raised £450 for EYFA funds.

Well done Chris & Tom.

QUALITY GRAFHAM FISH

The invasion of cormorants has been a mixed blessing with larger fish being stocked everywhere as a result. In growing on some fare better than others and Grafham has a well deserved reputation for top quality strong fish but this is not a new phenomena.

Pictured right is a bag from an afternoons fishing at Grafham in summer 1972 when they were stocked at smaller sizes but just look how deep bodied these fish were. I can even remember the fly they were taken on, a squirrel & yellow - now that's something you don't see much these days!



MEMBER'S PROFILE No. 14 - Peter Waterhouse is interviewed Peter Reeves.

PR - Peter, do you remember when you first started fishing?

PW - Yes - I only started fishing seriously when I moved to our current house in 2002. Having settled in we began to explore the district with the dogs - so of course discovered Grafham, when my wife, bless her, suggested that I should try it. So after attending a AW beginners course the rest is history.

PR - In your early years (supposing you can still remember) was fishing readily available to you?

PW - My childhood memories of fishing are of accompanying my brother to the Grand Union Canal in Kings Langley - and probably annoying the hell out of him. All I can remember, other than illicit cigarettes and talk of girls, is watching what looked like giant carp sculling around in the warm water outlet of the John Dickinson factory - aloof and uncatchable.

PR - What is it about fly fishing that appeals to you?

PW - In my youth I had holidayed in Wales and Wiltshire and enjoyed walking and boating. It was seeing tweed clad anglers patrolling the banks of the Avon and the Seven - so different from my childhood experiences on the Grand Union - that stayed with me. Where I ever to take up fishing this was the way that I would do it.

PR - What is your preferred method of fly fishing?

PW - I am obsessed with dry flies at the minute. In my first seasons at Grafham I frequently spent hours casting at fish on the surface with no success. I have now learnt the importance of using dries when the conditions demand it and even purchased a 5wt rod specifically for dry fly fishing this year, which is tremendous fun - particularly when you get a fit Grafham trout on. I still have a lot to learn about setting up lines and leaders for those days when having the right set up is the difference between catching and casting!

PR - Do any other species than trout interest you?

PW - Sea bass - I would love to try some estuary fishing for bass on the fly, but as yet have not had the time to try it.

PR - Where would be your dream fishing venue?

PW - I often hear people talking of bone fishing in the Bahamas - but I am not a sun lover. I would love to do more river fishing, I have fished the Derbyshire Avon and the Lyn in Devon. Again it goes back to my first vision of a fly fisherman patrolling the bank and casting at moving fish - I like to be on the move. Having said all this I have to admit that I really enjoy fishing Grafham. It is a great venue and can give some really rewarding days - by that I don't mean bagging up - but those days when you winkle out a couple of typical Grafham trout against the odds.

PR - Do you have any unfulfilled fishing ambitions?

PW - We're back to the estuary fishing - a definite for 2009.

PR - What was your most memorable fishing experience?

PW - This is always a hard question - I am tempted to say last Sunday - I had smashing day at Grafham. But there are two days that stand out one while fishing in Devon and a day at Grafham.

On my first visit to Devon with a view to having a couple of days fishing I came across a Western Water reservoir - Wistland Pound. It was stocked with some rainbows but also had wild browns from two feeder streams. It was the first time that I realized that the skills I had learnt at Grafham equipped me to tackle new waters and get to grips with them. I very quickly started getting takes and had my quota of lovely silver rainbows. However I had spoke to two lads who were trying for browns and had come specifically for the wild trout, the browns were rising in the areas where the feeder streams were entering. It was my first success on very small dries and had a terrific days sport.

The day I think I will always remember at Grafham was the first time I had seem fish focusing on daddies. It was off pylon point and the daddies were being gently blown



Peter Waterhouse



onto the water off the grassed bank. Having seen the rises and figured out what was going on I put on an ethafoam daddy and straight away there was swirl and the fly was drowned – but no fish! I learnt that day the importance of striking when using a dry fly - once you have felt that moment when a fish is taken off the surface I think you are hooked for life.

PR - Do you have any misgivings over fishing at all?

PW – No

PR - Where do you go from here in a fishing context?

PW – I still have a great deal to learn. While not being what you would call a “competition angler” I do enjoy the discipline of fishing a given venue on a given day at a given time. It is the only way you can learn, from my experience competition anglers are always pleased to share their knowledge – at the weight in, but even if they are your boat partner. I treasure a selection of some dozen flies given to me

at Chew by my boat partner when he was trouncing me and I couldn’t get a touch.

So I suppose the answer is I’ll keep practicing, when I run out of things to learn about fishing I will be too old to care about what’s next.

PR - How important has your involvement with 'Invicta' been to you?

PW- As you know I am both a member of Invicta and on the GWFFA Committee.

Both clubs have given me a great deal – joining a club seems to be an essential step to becoming a good angler. I became involved with Invicta through the Tuesday night boat league – having become reasonably proficient off the bank I needed to learn to fish from a boat and it was with Invicta and their members that I learnt this. So why GWFFA? I fish Grafham every week, every day I can – it seems logical to be involved with the club that is based there and does a lot for the fishery.

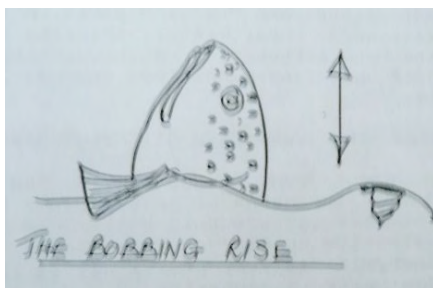
THIRTY YEARS AGO

FROM NEWSLETTER NO. 8 DATED DECEMBER 1978 - BY DAVE JONES

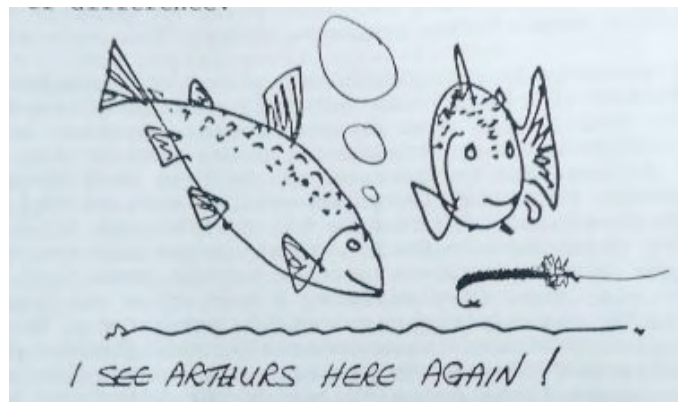
Elinor 11th June. It was a pretty blustery day when we first fished Elinor. The mercy was that there were no boats available and thus none of last years heroics were to be repeated.

. “..... I fancied that spot and was courteously allowed to fish five yards downwind. I was quite keen to try a spot of dapping. For the uninitiated it is incredible how far out from the bank it is possible to fish with four yards of floss and a 12’ match rod. No, not 7 yards but more like 20 yards. I didn’t actually catch a trout using this method.....”

Grafham 16th July. “Fish were showing everywhere even at 3 in the afternoon. However they were not easy to catch perhaps because I and most other anglers thought the fish were on buzzers or sedges when in fact, according to David Flemming-Jones they were probably eating snails . “ Didn’t I notice the characteristic bobbing rise?” er, no! Why do I always find out afterwards?”



I know exactly how you felt Dave. I was in a boat for a whole day driven mad by this bobbing rise to snails at about the same period. I ended up tying some floating snail patterns as a result and 30 years later I am still waiting to use them! - Ed.



Arthur Cove and his Cove (pheasant tail) nymphs were regular features at Grafham then - as portrayed in one of Dave’s cartoons of the time.



REFLECTIONS FROM THE WATER

PETER REEVES SHARES SOME THOUGHTS ON USEFUL GEAR.

PRODUCTS OF THE YEAR - 2008. A PERSONAL VIEW

I have in the past been in the habit of mentioning to you items of tackle that have impressed me - and after more than 40 years with a fly rod - that is not really easy. Nevertheless, new products come on the market, some of which really merit attention, but not all of these are new... just new to me.

Starting at the very cheapest end, I am hugely impressed with the Riverge 2mm stainless steel leader rings. Ten in a packet for less than £2 (mine came from Sportfish) cannot be bad and they work.... see page 2 in this newsletter. There are 1 mm rings under the Roman Moser name which I have not tried but assume to be equally effective.

Next in the price scale at under £8 is an item from Japan labeled in English "DRY SHAKE." This is a tub of small crystals into which you put waterlogged dry flies after having squeezed out excess water in a tissue or your shirt front. Keeping the fly on your leader pop it in the pot, give it a few shakes, remove the fly, blow off any excess white dust if needed and then carry on with a fly which is as good as new. The tub may seem expensive but if you replace the cap securely so that it does not spill out into your pocket (making everything smooth and slippery) it should last many seasons. Again these I have obtained from Flybuyer and Sportfish on line.

The Snowbee fishing shirts, as offered with embroidered club & individual name by Chris McLeod are I find extraordinarily good and practical. In fact I have some coming without the embroidery for normal use. Comfortable, well designed, smart and practical (they do not need ironing) they are a real find - thanks Chris... well probably John Mees really - and Snowbee of course!

Now, my next top product carries an internationally acclaimed brand name, Sage. I am of the opinion that for most trout fishing a reel is relatively unimportant with not much work to do under most UK conditions. Having said that when something is extremely well designed and executed it does enhance your pleasure in using it. I was staggered at how well the 1600 series

Sage large arbor reels handled. The weight is light, start up inertia negligible protecting light tippets and the drag mechanism the smoothest and most precise I have handled. The spool changing is the simplest ever, just push off the spool from the back and press on a new one from the front, nothing to fiddle with or drop and lose in the water or long grass. I have saved the best bit to the end though, the reel costs £65 and the extra spools only £30. As a bonus they are in non-reflective black so you can fish at short range without fish scaring reflections.

Again this year I have bought a number of rods that I truly did not really need - but what the hell! There could be some tackle bargains in our tackle auction at the AGM as a result of course. One such new rod will not be listed though and again it is effectively a Sage product, they having recently taken over Reddington. I speak of the Redfly2 rods of which I have the 9' #6 & #5 models, each of which I obtained for under £100. Now Reddington rods have always commanded respect and the Redfly2 range are firmly designed to take no prisoners. They are plenty powerful enough for reservoir use and whack the line out well. The #5 model in 9' would normally be useful for rivers also but I think it has too much spirit or ambition for this role and doubt it would be happy short casting the horizon is the main attraction for this range of rods. Mind you I did also buy a Sage TCR 9' #4 weight to fulfill this short range, accurate function..... Hmm! looking back at this selection of favoured items, I notice that Sportfish who must surely be the most consistently efficient supplier, stocks them all.

NOT stocked though by Sportsmail but I think by Anglian Water tackle shops would be my bargain of the year, if not the decade - those pale blue or pinkish beige floating unbranded (Shakespeare) fly lines. They cast beautifully and lay straight on the water and you can buy them for as little as £7 each. Fantastic value for lines which are so good I have stripped off perfectly good £45 US lines to make way for them, simply on the grounds that they just perform better - regardless of the silly low price! Next time you need a new floating line take a really close look at these. Unfortunately AW do not stock lines under #6 weight but you can get them from e-bay in lighter weights at similar prices.

FRIENDS OF THE RIVER SHEP - do you want to get involved in conservation work? by Rob Mungovan,

The River Shep is a small chalk stream that rises from springs at RSPB Fowlmere. The river flows through the village of Shepreth and on to join the Rhee at Barrington. For nearly ten years now the Friends of the River Shep (ForShep) have been working to improve the river and its habitats for a wide range of species including otter, kingfisher, water voles, wild brown trout and brook lampreys (we lost the native crayfish in 2002). Management tasks involve weed cutting through spring, summer and early autumn, gravel raking, tree management and practical habitat enhancement work. I lead the work parties and they usually take place on a "needs" basis as various tasks arise. Following an inspiring talk by Simon Johnston from the Wild Trout Trust at the ForShep AGM the Committee has been able to progress another project that hopes to involve more volunteers in practical riverwork. The reach of river running downstream from the A10 towards Manor Farm has some very nice features as a result of years of weed cutting but some parts of it are over-shaded or choked with weed and heavily silted. An improvement plan has been formulated and is sponsored by the Wild Trout Trust and South Cambridgeshire District Council.

This part of the river has a few brown trout in it together with the occasional pike and roach. The mayfly hatch is also quite a sight some years. Where light reaches the channel the banks have a variety of grasses and reeds, ideal for the declining water vole to re-colonise. Last year the trout spawning was concentrated in one of the first areas that ForShep volunteers improved back in 2003. With further habitat enhancement work this reach of the Shep could become the nice little chalk stream that it once was.

The EA have consented a habitat improvement project that will result in work spread out over a 400m length. In essence the project will involve bank re-building along 200m of river running from the A10 along the footpath towards Manor Farm. The bank re-building will be undertaken using 200 hazel faggot bundles, 600 posts and about 300m of wire. This will allow the channel to be desilted and wet ledges created to hold the silt. This should reduce the amount of bank undercutting and speed up the flow to enable the river to move through this section more freely.

Further downstream, ten further areas are to be worked upon to create localised channel narrowing, two low level islands, further bank protection and improved fish spawning areas. Hundreds of more faggot bundles will be needed (I've found a supplier who manages an ancient woodland near Saffron Walden so we're helping a woodland too!) as will more posts and gravel.

The success of the delivery of this project will depend upon volunteer input. At the time of writing volunteers have already completed 100m of bank work and have moved ten tons of gravel to improve spawning and fry habitat. I will be organising further work parties throughout the winter months and into spring if you wish to get involved please email me at [HYPERLINK "mailto:rob.mungovan@btinternet.com"](mailto:rob.mungovan@btinternet.com) rob.mungovan@btinternet.com or phone 01763 261061 to be added to my list of contacts. In

In addition to physical work it would be useful to have the occasional use of a trailer at the start of work parties in order to help move materials – trailer drivers needed.



For more information about

ForShep please contact Liz Kendrick via [HYPERLINK "mailto:kendrie@btconnect.com"](mailto:kendrie@btconnect.com) kendrie@btconnect.com For more information about the Wild Trust see [HYPERLINK "http://www.wildtrout.org"](http://www.wildtrout.org) www.wildtrout.org

Rob Mungovan, ForShep Environmental Advisor