

fly fishing club. cambridge.

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INVICTA TRIUMPHANT IN INTER-CLUB FLOATING LINE COMPETITION



THE HAPPY HALF DOZEN. The six top scoring Invicta members with trophies

Left to Right: Chris McLeod, Mike Smith, Gary How, Ray Storer (back), Kieran Bonas, Ryan Worker.

Sunday 26th July saw the annual Inter Club Floating Line Competition, again organised this year by GWFFA. 48 competitors representing 4 clubs and 5 teams (2 teams from GWFFA) took to their boats ready for the 10.00 am start in what would appear to have been ideal conditions with general cloud cover and a light southerly wind. Unusually the boats headed off to nearly all parts of the water with no initial obvious concentration in a confined area except that the 'G' buoy area again attracted slightly more boats as may be expected.

The tone of the event had been clearly established in the harbour. It is not always easy to determine what others are fishing but teams of up to three very bright orange blobs set up on most rods is not difficult to recognise. Our first drift was from one of the boils towards the willows and it was not long before my boat partner, Mark Brinkman, was holding up an arched rod and guiding a stockie with a bright orange object in it's mouth to the net. After a few more

unproductive drifts we prospected the area off the south end of the dam which offered no encouragement to stay so we motored over to the growing flotilla around 'G' buoy.

Since it was understood that the fish were in the top few feet of the water I had put up a (non-orange) Booby to attract attention to the following nymphs and watched closely for any sign of interest around the Booby. I watched in vain. Meantime the light wind was becoming heavier and control and contact with nymphs rather challenging from a fast drifting boat and since I suspected the fish were a little deeper I changed my set up with progressively heavier flies replacing my point fly until eventually my line straightened and my first stockie of the day was landed. I was conscious that progress was significantly faster at the blunt end of the boat and observation and verbal exchanges with other boats made it apparent that success was related to the brightness, size and speed of the orange blobs. Now it



Ready for the off!

may come as a surprise to many that I did have just such an item in one of my fly boxes. It had been kindly given to me a few years ago by John Mees prior to an AMFC event at Eyebrook and I feel he really expected me to use it but I thanked him, put it in my box and then went on to use my small wet and dry flies to good effect but now however, faced with stark reality, was clearly the time to test it. John's Tequila Sunrise Blobs (aka Mike Smith's Black Gnats) are not at all inconspicuous and I believe Mark in the engine room was really taken aback at seeing me tie it on but immediately I was on - into my second stockie. Not, I would hasten to add, attached to the Blob on my dropper but to an equally non-representational but less garish fly on the point. The experiment was to be short lived however since in conducting necessary leader adjustments the heavy wind caught the unattached Blob and blew it over the side and then under the boat... lost forever but at least its watery interment was on it's home water. The wind did not abate and the boats continually shipped much water in their course upwind to start further drifts proving once again that my so called waterproofs were not! So eventually we tied up for the weigh-in, Mark with a good selection of recently stocked fish and myself with just two, assorted age related aches & pains.... and a wet backside.

Despite the conditions on the day, or possibly because of them, there were numerous full bags and 200 fish weighing nearly 446 lbs were taken. Top rod was Richard Kesek (GWFFA) with 8 for 20 lbs 5 oz. Best boat was Richard Kesek and Ashley Cooper (16 fish for 38 lbs) and best fish (3 lbs 14 oz) was taken by Invicta's junior member Kieran Bonas who, like the other Invicta juniors performed extremely well and does not shirk from working physically hard for his fish. The main event, the team prize was however taken, albeit with a narrow margin, by the elite 6 scoring Invicta team members with 42 fish for 90 lbs 2 oz. As winners, Peter Hartley, GWFFA Chairman,

suggested that Invicta should undertake to arrange next years event which was immediately but maybe incautiously agreed to by Chris. McLeod. All in all it was a very good day, conducted in a very friendly spirit finishing in a rather indifferent meal but in a most convivial inter-club atmosphere setting Invicta a high standard to live up to next year.

TEAM RESULTS

1) INVICTA *	42 fish	90 lbs	2 oz.
2) GWFFA2	38 fish	88 lbs	15 oz.
3) GWFFA1	36 fish	79 lbs	2 oz.
4) ELFA	34 fish	77 lbs	6 oz.
5) MID-NORTHANTS	23 fish	52 lbs	10 oz.

* The six top scoring Invicta members contributing to this result were Chris McLeod (8 fish 20 lbs 1 oz); Ray Storer 8 fish (16 lbs 13 oz); Ryan Worker (8 fish 16 lbs 7 oz); Mike Smith (8 fish 14 lbs 8 oz); Kieran Bonas (6 fish 14 lbs 5 oz); Gary How (4 fish 9 lbs.)



Kieran Bonas collecting his trophy for biggest fish from Peter Hartley.

There were some impressive performances on the day with 4 full bags from Invicta members and Chris. McLeod only missing out for Top Rod to Richard Kesek by 4 ounces. Hard luck Chris.... next year maybe.

The full Invicta squad ended up weighing in 57 fish between them and agreed that it was an interesting and challenging days sport.

Congratulations and thanks have been expressed to the GWFFA organisers of this years event which has become a major feature of the local calendar.

Now for the 2010 Competition - for the first time since its inception **'Under New Management!'**

invicta calendar of forthcoming events 2009

Aug. 15th	DRAYCOTE Carl Hunter Bowl & Carr cup points. Draw for partners	8.30 for 9 am
Aug. 18th	INVICTA TUESDAY EVENING LEAGUE FINISHES Grafham Water	5.30 for 6 pm
Sep. 5th	RAVENSTHORPE. Carr cup points apply. Choice of partners	8.30 for 9 am
Sept. 16th	GRAND MAX Floating Line Competition Bewl Bridge	tba
Oct. 7th	HANNINGFIELD. Carr cup points apply. Choice of partners	8.30 for 9 am
Oct. 15th	CRAIG BARR. Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Oct. 29th	ROBERT EDMUNDS. Doing it my way. Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Nov. 14th	ELINOR Invicta Fur & Feather Bank event	tba
Nov. 26th	CHRIS. McLEOD. The Los Roques Experience. Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Dec. 10th	INVICTA XMAS SOCIAL. Full details later. Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm

LOSS OF A MEMBER.



It is with the deepest regret that we have to announce the passing of popular Invicta member Bryan Denley at Papworth Hospital on Tuesday 7th July. Bryan loved the outdoors and fishing, shooting and sailing in particular, frequently fly fishing coarse fisheries for carp etc. Rarely if ever seen fishing from boats at club events Bryan will perhaps therefore not be familiar to all members but he was a regular at our winter meetings and at Whittle Lake, a water he became particularly fond of. Bryan was also a keen member of the Invicta fly tying group although ready to admit that his enthusiasm exceeded his dexterity, viewing the sessions as much as sociable as practical. Keen on jazz (he played the clarinet himself), Bryan's funeral service at Cambridge Crematorium started and concluded with recorded jazz numbers and was conducted by a Humanist Celebrant... alternative to the end. It was a testament to Bryan's popularity that the service was exceptionally well attended, including many representatives from Invicta and Whittle Lake. Our sympathy in their loss is extended to Bryan's family which includes his grandson Will Thwaites, an Invicta junior member. We share your loss.

ARE YOU IN NEED OF SOME FLIES? CHECK OUT THESE.

Here's a great way of catching a few fish and supporting young anglers into the bargain.

The England Youth Flyfishing Association – whose aim is to ensure that no young angler should have to pay to represent their country - has launched two carded sets of flies under the title 'Manager's Choice'. Each comprises 10 flies tied by Fulling Mill together with notes on the flies and their use.

The Rivers Selection, chosen by EYFA rivers manager Dave Mee, includes five dries and five weighted nymphs while the Loch Style selection - assembled by the association's stillwater guru, Rob Edmunds – contains a mix of buzzers, nymphs and blobs.

The sets sell for £10 each and all profits from the sale go straight into much needed EYFA coffers.

To buy, simply email your requirements to EYFA secretary, Bobbie Worker at [HYPERLINK](mailto:bobbie.worker@eyfa.co.uk)

["mailto:bobbie.worker@eyfa.co.uk"](mailto:bobbie.worker@eyfa.co.uk)
bobbie.worker@eyfa.co.uk or phone 07944405890 and she'll let you have payment details.



RED SHOWS UP UNDER WATER. Henry Lowe brings us some insight into red colouration and practical application in fly patterns.

I read recently in 'New Scientist'¹ that a German ecologist, Nico Michiels, tried diving to reefs in the Red Sea with red filter foil on his diving mask. As red light is absorbed more by water than the other parts of the rainbow, he expected that at depths below about 50 ft (15 m, handy conversion – your 10ft rod is 3m long), he would be in pitch black dark, all natural red light from above having been blocked by the water.

What he saw, in the blackness, were lots of bright red spots and flashes. It turns out that several fishes living on reefs have pigments that fluoresce red, in their eyes, on fins, etc. and appear able to use these to signal 'privately' to other fishes, mostly of their own species. The existence of this red fluorescence is a new discovery to help understand how fish manage their lives.

Commenting on colour vision of fishes, Sosin and Clark² suggest that whilst shallow water game-fish have good colour vision and can see a considerable number of colour hues, differing penetration of different colours into the water must limit the colours they do see. The red (in normal day light) will be visible only in the top few feet of the water, orange persists to greater depths; green penetrates deeper than other colours.

The colours that fish see are not simple to study, and knowledge is limited. The fishes that feed at or near the surface seem, and would be expected, to see many colours including reds and oranges. Fish that live and feed deeper down are assumed

to respond better to shades of green and blue, as these colours remain lit up deeper down, and to be more or less red-blind.

Amongst the reef fishes, Michiels found that, in tanks, species with red fluorescence would respond to a red dot from a laser pointer, whilst fish of non-fluorescing species ignore the red spot. Such a test indicates that these fish do see the red, highlighting the probability that the colour vision of fishes varies substantially between species, rather than following generalised patterns of variation. Further study of colour vision in different fish species is needed.

Considering how we use day-light fluorescent parts/materials in several of the flies we fish with, I thought all this interesting. With rainbows, I'd expect them to see red as a distinct colour. It is after all part of the colour patterns they, and some of their close relatives, develop as they come ready to spawn. Nonetheless, I like the thought that by including spots and bits of red or orange fluorescence, we are only doing with our flies the sort of thing that various fishes have been doing for many, many years; i.e. sending little signals to draw fishy attention.

¹ S. Pain, 'Code Red' in *New Scientist*, No. 2702; Vol 202, p. 38 (4 Apr 09)

² M.Sosin & J.Clark, 'Through the Fish's Eye' (1976) *Andre Deutsch*, 191 pp. [If you have not seen this book, it is written for anglers and is well worth a look.]

JUNIOR MEMBERS 'ON AIR'

It was an early morning start for 3 Invicta juniors and one senior member on Tuesday 28th July. Ryan & Adam Worker along with Kieran Bonas were interviewed on the pontoon at Grafham Water (together with Invicta member Kieran Caulfield who is assisting EYFA) for the Jeremy Sallis Breakfast show on Radio Cambridgeshire about their successes in competition and national qualifications. All three of the interviewed juniors plus Oscar Boatfield are members of the English Youth International squad - an astonishing result, 4 youth internationals from a club which only numbers currently 9 junior members must rank as extraordinary by any standards. Congratulations lads and to those who support you. Investing in the future of our sport translates into encouraging the



young. To this end Invicta offers free membership to all under 18 years and has a history of subsidising training for the young, especially in association with tutelage under Peter Hartley (qualified coach and chairman of GWFFA) plus qualified assistance from Invicta member Allan Sefton and offering financial support to the England Youth squad. This policy certainly has borne positive results but we recognise that this age group does present a range of logistic, financial and time pressure constraints, also that undoubtedly there is more talent in our area who may wish to become involved but do not know how to proceed. Clearly Invicta membership is a positive first step on the ladder to success and recognition in the sport. Spread the word.

ENGLAND'S 'YOUNG GUNS' QUALIFYING AT GRAFHAM FOR SEASON 2010



The England Youth National was held at Grafham Water on Sunday 12 July 2009. Fishing in the previous 2 weeks had been very difficult, practice had revealed that conditions were going to be challenging for the competitors aged between 12 and 17. The competitors were drawn in pairs and accompanied by an experienced boatman, many of which were Invicta members who had kindly offered their services for the day. The top ten anglers qualify to represent England at the Youth International to be held in England in July 2010.

With some very experienced loch-style anglers including World Youth team members Matthew Kidd and Carl Malpass, the competition for places in the 2010 England Youth Team was bound to be strong. There were 4 Invicta junior members in the line up. Brothers Ryan and Adam Worker, Kieran Bonas and Oscar Boatfield.

Match day conditions were good with the wind swinging round to the west allowing the boats long drifts straight down the reservoir. Several anglers had early fish including most of the top seeds. As the day progressed it became obvious that Grafham was fishing better than it had for some considerable time, and this was borne out by three of the competitors catching their limit.

Fortunately Invicta's Oscar Boatfield, Kieran Bonas and Ryan Worker all made the top ten!

Sadly after a couple of good practice days Invicta's Adam Worker failed to make the top ten only catching two fish on the day. However, he will get a second chance to compete for the remaining 4 places at this International which will take place at Llandegfedd Reservoir in Wales on 7 August 2009. So hopefully we will still see him in the 2010 team.

EYFA Secretary, Bobbie Worker would like to thank all the boatmen for giving up their day, the competition could not be run without them.

Results:

1. Josh Fenton 8 fish for 18lb 143/8oz
2. Matthew Kidd 8 fish for 18lb 135/8oz
3. Ashley Gillies 8 fish for 15lb 115/8oz
4. Carl Malpass 7 fish for 15lb 107/8oz
5. James Atkinson 7 fish for 13lb 121/2oz
6. Matthew Holroyd 6 fish for 12lb 131/2oz
7. Oscar Boatfield 5 fish for 11lb 97/8oz
8. John Mackintosh 6 fish for 11lb 87/8oz
9. Kieran Bonas 4 fish for 9lb 143/4oz
10. Ryan Worker 4 fish for 8lb 151/2oz

Best fish: Ryan Matthews 3lb 13oz
Top Rod: Josh Fenton 18lb 143/8oz

Statistics:

Fish caught: 78
Rod Average: 3.55
Total weight of fish caught: 173lb 31/8oz
Average weight of fish caught: 2lb 31/2oz

THE ASSOCIATION OF MAJOR FISHING CLUBS - How are we faring?

Up until the end of July (round three) the Invicta A team fishing in group 3 have acquitted themselves very well indeed, seriously challenging for top team on the day in round 3 at Grafham Water. See page 8 for our Chairman's personal report on this particular match.

Uncertainty definitely extended itself to the Invicta B team in round three of Group 4 at Pitsford. Very good conditions generally with cloud and wind pretty much as one would wish but the fish were extremely tightly located with taking fish often only found within a few square metres. The previous advice from AW that fish had moved off shore into deeper water was not borne out in my experience, my boat partner did very well casting literally two feet off the shoreline where he could. Bank anglers off the bungalow were having a field day with constantly bent rods and watched with envy by the boat fishing competitors who in having to give 50 metres space found themselves too far away to participate in this bonanza but in prime seats to watch!

The Invicta B team find themselves currently in last place of the lowest group. Well, the only way from there is up! Some of the team members are not exactly overburdened with experience but time will level this. Also, I feel much can be learned from the other teams in terms of team communication in respect of fish location, depth and tactics. I would have liked to give info on other matches but up to now getting match reports is like getting blood from a stone. Hopefully better structure in future. However, the writer of the Match report for the AMFC Newsletter did see fit to comment *"Without doubt the best part of this match was the great spirit and Sportsmanship of all the teams, It was a joy to fish in this company!"* I didn't hook him then!



Raring to go at Pitsford



Peter Oldham weighs in watched by John Andrew

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<i>Group Three</i>	Points per match					Points total	Team position
<i>Bowl Bridge F.C. 'B'</i>	3	5	5			13	1
<i>Crawley F.C.</i>	1	1	1			3	5
<i>Fish Hawks 'B'</i>	4	2	2			8	3=
<i>Invicta F.C. 'A'</i>	5	3	3			11	2
<i>Soldier Palmers 'B'</i>	2	2	4			8	3=

Group Four

<i>East Midlands .T.F.A</i>	4	4	3			11	1
<i>Grafham Water F.A. 'B'</i>	3	3	4			10	2
<i>Invicta F.C. 'B'</i>	1	2	1			4	4
<i>Tunbridge Wells F.C.</i>	2	1	2			5	3

SUPER BARGAINS IN INVICTA DESIGNER WEAR... The Great give-away!

Hmm! Well not exactly giving them away but the next best thing. How long have you been wearing your Invicta hat? Many are showing wear, tear and fading and are maybe due for replacement. In a customary show of generosity it has been decided to reduce the prices of remaining stock and if you are quick enough you can now obtain.....

Invicta stylish Grey Cap	£5.00
Invicta embroidered vest badge	£3.00
Invicta metal badge	£2.00
<i>.....or, all three for a mere</i>	<i>£7.50 !!!!</i>

These are available from our treasurer. Contact Alan Prevost at alan@prevost.net or telephone 01954 230678 to take full advantage of this exceptional offer. Its a smart move!

MICKY BEWICK MOVES TO IRELAND



Surprise news from the AMFC Newsletter is that charismatic Queen Mother competitor Micky Bewick is moving to Ireland and fished his last match at Grafham Water on 23rd May. Well that's going to change the match and winter lecture scene! Good luck Micky.

LARGE PIKE CAUGHT AT GRAFHAM WATER.

Captor, Richard writes "The fish was caught on a 6 inch white and olive streamer using a Di8 fast sinking line. She was ably netted by my 11 year old son Robbie and was hooked at about 30 feet depth. The fish bottomed my 25lb scales – I estimated her true weight to be around 26-27lb."

Obviously congratulations are due to Richard and his son for this impressive capture. However, am I the only person, when reading to report to wonder what was Richard actually targeting fishing a 6 inch streamer pattern at 30 feet down on a widely recognised premier trout fishery with fish claimed to be in the top few feet?? Grafham does have a pike fishing period allowing extended fishing methods but is our premier Trout water risking losing its specialist trout status? The any method, all species approach at Hanningfield has shocked many fly anglers with no doubt adverse repercussions as has Severn Trent's attitude towards fly fishing. Is Anglian Water concerned at what many trout anglers may view as a retrograde and threatening step? Remember Hollowell?



Richard Sewell photographed with his large pike caught in July at Grafham Water.... and we can all see where!

REPORT ON THE AMFC GROUP 3, ROUND 3 MATCH AT GRAFHAM WATER - by Lawson Wight.

Grafham water was the venue for the third round struggle for glory in this most convivial series of matches. Invicta were lying 1st equal alongside Army B going in to the day, so expectations were high. Many of the Invictas had been out the previous Saturday for our President's Cup as well as serving as boatmen for the Youth National qualifiers on the Sunday. Some stalwarts were also at the Tuesday evening League the night before so, where were the fish? Simple - everywhere, was the general feeling. Plenty had been caught on previous days and the overcast breezy conditions looked encouraging. The forecast was for cloud with strong winds by midday, possibly easing a little toward late afternoon. There were lots of very smart orange hats and blue shirts tackling up in the car park as Invicta B were fishing their Group 4 match at the same time. My partner for the day was a Bawl man, Bob Shaw. I'd had a very good day with him at the start of last season so was looking forward to a repeat. I find that over the years, the AMFC matches become more and more enjoyable as you fish with an increasing number of partners you've been out with before. At the off I remarked to Bob that the boats were fanning out and looked to be heading for all corners of the water. I always like to see this. You know there should be lots of good fishing areas and nowhere will get crowded.

Bob told me of several areas they'd caught the previous day so we headed for the west end of the reservoir. The weed beds at Grafham are extensive this year and we started our first drift a couple of hundred yards off the bank. It was relatively sheltered here but drifting on the now strong SW wind soon pushed us out into deeper water and much rougher water. We saw the odd fish being caught but to our surprise we had no action for the first hour. A couple of line changes later and still no joy. In the distance

there looked to be a good drift across the front of Savages Creek and no boats there so we decided to head there. There are some large areas of weed in this area as well and it was as we approached one of these that Bob hooked his first fish. It turned out he'd hooked two! He let them swim around for a bit without bullying them too much before deftly netting the first, cutting the dropper, allowing me to net his second. Very nice.

We persevered for an hour or so but with no further interest. A wet crossing through the waves to the Sludge Bank and Q buoy yielded me one fish. It had fry, buzzer, beetles and corixa in it. Again, no pattern was evident and we moved back to the west end. Fishing was slow. Actually now, very slow. Due to the wind the northern part of the reservoir had been largely un-fishable. It was now 4pm and as the wind had dropped slightly Bob suggested another move, this time to the area of the north tower. No boats here and I soon caught on a very fast moving sedgehog. The fish was full of daphnia so on with a blob, a nymph and a booby. A Di 5 and a very fast retrieve seemed to be just the ticket and fish came quickly. Time to head in and I had redeemed myself a bit with six fish. Bob had four now including one on his very last cast. We had seen little of the others through the day. Back at the harbour the details were revealed. It had been a surprisingly slow day for most with very few limits and a smattering of blanks. Invicta A were to end up in 3rd position. One more fish and we'd have remained in joint first. It is a much repeated pattern that over 48 fishing hours (6 rods x 8 hours) that catches can be so close, sometimes only ounces separating the teams. The day concluded with a cracking barbeque and some tasty beer in the garden at The Wheatsheaf in Perry. Lovely stuff!

"Angling is reaching a new high plane when a fisherman can spend a day on the stream or lake, catching fish and returning them to the water again, unharmed, to come home empty handed. That angler keeps no trophy to show his fellow man as proof of his prowess but contents himself with the pleasure of hours well spent in the surroundings he loves. He has fished for sport and not for glory."

Lee Wolff (The Handbook of Freshwater Fishing, 1939.)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

(From Henry Lowe) Hello Peter, Thank you for another good newsletter, as good as the pricey magazines, I reckon! Follows for your soap box: a short homily on 'International Rules' offered for your next if you like.

International Rules. These date back to the original matches held, as now, between the four home nations. Not much else is the same! At that time, lake (or whichever celtic name you prefer) fishing for trout was for wild brown trout and was pretty much exclusively found in the western and upland parts of the British Isles. The accepted, traditional method was to cast from a boat drifting broadside to the wind, as this covered the maximum possible area of water in a manner allowing comfortable fishing. The boatman or ghillie, who knew the water, would select suitable drifts and, of course, manage the boat.

Flies were fished in teams in or near the surface, aiming to bring trout up to take them. The tackle available permitted little else, but it did work. You could fish with a greased line (of braided silk, of course) that floated, or when the grease wore off or you rubbed it off, the line would sink slowly below the surface. The flies were presented on a cast ('leader' is a term imported from across the Atlantic) made of silkworm gut. This material came in lengths of about 18 inches (due to the size of the silkworm!). The standard (9 foot) cast used 6 lengths, 2 between the fly line and the top dropper or bob fly which was tied on the tip end of the 2nd length. Lengths of gut were joined by blood knots so the ends stuck out at right angles to the cast making for good fly presentation. 2 more lengths separated top and middle dropper, with 2 more to the end, with the tail fly. (If you don't believe this, just look in the Lodge at those made-up, knotted leaders that they (used) to sell.)

What you could not do safely was fish large/heavy flies on the weight of tackle that experience showed to be most effective for trout and, anyway, the trout would rise well in good conditions (i.e. dull days with a moderate or strong breeze). When conditions were bad (bright sun and flat calm), you didn't go out.

The rules for the Home Internationals were written to codify this method of fishing. This had, and still does have, certain advantages. Small flies that can be cast well with normal trout tackle are definitely safer for others in the

boat. Flies that are too large, too heavy or too numerous are more likely to generate nasty accidents. Using free drifting boats should allow all to have fair access to the whole of the water.

As originally undertaken, the anglers and the boatman (who might well be looking for his next day's tip from the anglers in neighbouring boats) would manage their boat with care to avoid spoiling the fishing from following and nearby boats. In general, with wild brownies well scattered over their feeding grounds, it was not productive to follow another boat closely anyway. With the boat on a drift, long casts are rarely needed; flies can be worked better at a moderate distance, the essence being the use of the bob fly to 'wake' in the water's surface. If the fish are there, they come up to the flies first time, and they're quick. If the flies are too far ahead of the boat, you miss 'em; no second chances. The method is basically very simple, but the skill is largely in working the flies to attract more fish than other folk. If you get to fish in wild places, the traditional style remains the basis of success in most conditions. Casting long for wildies is a recipe for frustration. (And another thing, anglers were expected to be properly dressed - tweeds!)

What's changed? Tackle technology, above all: Fly lines are now offered in a vast range of sinking rates as well as floaters, offering access to fish in many conditions when previously they would have been inaccessible. Lines are also easier to cast long distances As soon as you have a sinking line, long casting is advantageous as it allows command of a greater range of depths than shorter throws. In practice, with a number of boats fishing in company, casts of 50 yards or more such as can be achieved with shooting heads offer too many chances of discord, so the rule for 'whole' fly lines is good. Incidentally, if when on holiday you must use long casts for wild brownies (for instance fishing a loch shore), take a low- (or non-) stretch fly line. Airflo made one useable line early on, a translucent intermediate. That changed my hooking success from about one fish per 5 to 6 rises to 1 from 2, and frustration ended!

Rods can now be manageable (for the young and fit) at considerable lengths as they are so light. Who amongst you last fished a split cane rod of 10 feet or more from a boat? A limit on length (12 ft when I last heard) allows

reasonable tactical options without tackle providing overwhelming advantage over a boat partner. Monofilaments are available in a good variety, and provide another element where competitors can improve their chances by using good set-ups. (Always remember the alternative name for fly fishing as a sport - Untangling in a High Wind.)

Flies bring us back to where you began this, Peter. The variety of patterns, their composition and sizes is vastly increased. The safety issue remains. I would not share a boat with someone casting a Dog Nobbler or similar on a size 8 long-shank hook unless their rod was separated from me by their body! To do this safely you need a #9 or heavier line, certainly for long casts; and you must not have a person on your rod-hand side. With 2 anglers in a boat, they cannot take equal chances fishing in this way. The 15/16ths size means, let's face it, not more than 1 inch which is the size of a size 8 traditional-type wet fly. Generally, this is big enough to draw fish in most conditions. Often smaller flies catch more fish, sometimes to a degree that amazes those who've not seen it themselves. Always respect the ability of trout to see and respond to tiny items in the water, especially when it is as clear as it often is these days. Incidentally, flies in sizes 10 or 8, perhaps 6, are quite adequate for salmon in lochs although Falkus recommends rowing the boat gently across the wind as it drifts.

Rainbow trout, that tend to shoal or at least gather in restricted areas of a large fishery are a novelty. These habits make the spread-out exploitation of all the water, that paid (and pays) with wild brownies, a poor strategy when in a match with several other boats. The possibility of finding 'hot patches' where most of the catch comes on any day causes considerable pressure to maximise exploitation by those boats that find a patch. As a result, boat management has, most regrettably, changed I think. The more thoughtful etiquette of the past, when the understood and accepted 'rules' were set to avoid reducing the chances of other anglers, has undoubtedly deteriorated in competitions and we all know of incidents or complaints due to this. I would it were not so. Again, wild trout did and still do impose limitations as if fishing pressure increases locally, they don't co-operate!

Specifying 'engines on the left' does at least mean that all in a fleet of boats will tend to

drift leftwards, rather than having half of them going the other way - another cause of discord. When boats normally carried boatmen this was not an issue, but nowadays the anglers have to consider both fishing and boat control. The thing that has not changed is that the skilled hand can make flies more attractive. The more you fish, and catch, the better it gets. When you don't fish for a while, believe me it's amazing how much gets forgotten.

Dull days and tight lines to all, Henry Lowe.

(Reply) Henry,

Thanks for your compliment though I am unsure it is deserved but even more for your response. Yes, my own fly fishing started in the Highlands in 1966 and true 'Loch style' is still viewed as 'proper' fishing. I well recall the Kingfisher silk braided tapered lines that were oil dressed. Fine when new and dry but difficult when old, degraded and sticky and wet! There was no obvious rod/line matching then (is there now?) as profiles were not by weight but thickness and profile change (I guess that normally the HCH lines would approximate to our modern AFTM #6 (when dry) but the cane rods were not only slower but probably more tolerant. One aspect you (and those responsible for rules & usages) overlook is that by no means was all loch fishing from boats. Getting those heavy wooden clinker-built hazards to life expectancy into highland situations was not easy and initially fuelled by goodwill, muscles, time and whisky. Roadside lochs were obviously quickly served and the more remote where the quality indicated that supreme effort. However, some lochs are readily fished by determined walking and from the bank - such waters tended not to have boats and these oddly enough are often those much more highly prized by the experienced and knowledgeable loch fisher of today, inevitably like Invicta members mostly with grey or invisible hair. Re. Hook sizes - ok. I like longer shank hooks for some of my nymphs but the Hayabusa 376 size 12 hook, highly valued for its anti-straightening properties on bigger fish and not a big hook by any means is declared invalid by my international rules hook gauge - quite crazy. I am also denied size 14 & 16 nymphs with tiny metal beads which offer no appreciable risk. No - the rules do not adequately or fairly address these issues. Dog knobblers are a thing of the past now and I have yet to feel safe from hook laceration when competition fishing regardless of what

hooks they are using** It is not hook size but perhaps casting ability which should be called into play. Not enough of today's anglers have line control which is associated with bushes and trees etc. in the way. I wonder whether anybody should be allowed to fish competition from boats without a certificate of casting competence. That way possibly 50% (including many of the most experienced) would be eliminated immediately and sent back to casting nursery lessons. I am frequently appalled at the casting lack of ability of many boat anglers and there is much scope for instructors. I also recognise that I have been seduced by the ability to make longer casts using longer leaders and thereby sacrificing the control over top dropper (Bob fly) to pull in and enhance interest of so-so fish! I was fortunate to fish with and be re-

introduced to this skill on Grafham with a Scottish master of the technique a couple of years ago and it was a joy to behold and a sorrow to realise I was now distanced from it. With controlling two point drogues boats now also drift where desired. So I still maintain that the rules are inadequate and ripe for proper consideration and full review.

Anyway, thanks for your more balanced antidote to my rant which I will certainly air in the next edition. Peter.

*** This was written prior to the Interclub floating line competition when I shared a boat with Mark Brinkman. In all fairness I have never previously experienced such line control under extremely difficult conditions by a boat partner... thanks Mark I was truly impressed!*



This is going to run and run I am sure. As mentioned earlier in fishing reports our junior members are faring exceptionally well and many of our more senior members also in competition. How real is the competition environment compared to the actual world of ethical "pleasure" fly fishing and if there is a difference why? Many of the seniors will have broader experience against which to justify their choices but the juniors by virtue of their ages may have been thrust straight into the competition environment where the imperative is for assured and quick success. This immediately by-passes a wealth of tradition and satisfaction over absorbing and understanding the ecological pattern of the trout's environment and the fish's natural response patterns. Whip out fish put there yesterday as quickly as possible may be an over-riding objective to team captains and their competitors but is verging on the abhorrent to me and to call this 'sport' an abject misnomer but that is a personal view I do not expect to be generally shared. More importantly, are our young being denied the pleasure of true fly fishing which may also be applied to wary wild brown trout and not just disoriented rainbows suddenly relocated from a hatchery ripe for harvest? For some pulling orange blobs is a last resort for others a natural first choice... who is missing out most?

Competitions encourage fishing for maximum results, especially amongst teams and not for

maximum sport. It is about maximum plundering. Fly fishing is to my mind about fishing imitative fly or insect patterns whether successful or not. Fishing lures, blobs, fry or tube patterns where allowed under the rules of the water are legitimate practices but true fly fishing it surely cannot be!! I do not deprecate methods I do not embrace personally as inappropriate or ungentlemanly and our fisheries must offer angling to suit many tastes and styles and devise house rules to achieve this accordingly but the current international rules do nothing to encourage more 'gentlemanly conduct' quite the reverse they encourage maximum exploitation of any method offering advantage under the current eccentric and arbitrary legislation. In entomological terms exactly what does an orange or tequila sunrise blob represent in nature? Surely it is a devised and accepted method to deplete the water of more recently relocated stockies as efficiently as possible. The ethics of shooting does not permit the slaughter of running birds - is there no space for equivalent ethics in so called international (often mistakingly described as "Loch style") rules 'fly' fishing? Those who object to what has been described as 'cowboy' tactics by those who may fish with water legitimate imitative patterns over 15/16th of an inch long and then mount up themselves with garish fluorescent orange blobs are to my mind indulging in self mockery and self delusion. Have rules by all means but have above all

sensible and totally valid rules designed for real purposes. I personally feel that the current blob 'culture' is risking taking the sport into a total dead end and wonder why the regulating authority does seemingly nothing to divert this apparent mindless trend. and encourage more diverse and fundamental approaches. A further thought how well would 'loch style' fishing with blobs work on Highland lochs? Try it you may well be lucky enough to hear fish laughing or who knows, may even catch!

Is it time to canvas views generally of rules and widely debate them to achieve regulations firmly founded on democratic consensus and not by outdated or unwarranted dictate based on the personal preferences of unrepresentative 'representatives?' Should we decide where they will take us in competitions. Let's get this issue out in the open if, that is, it really is an 'issue'. What do you think? Come on... fill my inbox with your views!

**RESULTS OF THE PRESIDENT'S CUP MATCH
AT GRAFHAM WATER HELD ON SATURDAY
11TH JULY AT GRAFHAM WATER.**

	No.	Weight.
1) Mike Smith	8	15 lbs 11 oz.
2) Mark Searle	6	13 lbs 3 oz.
3) Graham Williams	5	12 lbs 14 oz.
4) Andy Linwood	5	12 lbs 2 oz.
5) Peter Oldham	5	11 lbs 13 oz.
6) Chris Williams	5	11 lbs 12 oz.
7) Kieran Caulfield	4	9 lbs 12 oz.
8) Gary How	4	9 lbs 1 oz.
9) John Caldwell	4	8 lbs 6 oz.
10) Alan Taylor	3	8 lbs 3 oz.
11) Ian Wilson	4	7 lbs 12 oz.
12) Lawson Wight	2	4 lbs 6 oz.
12) Ryan Worker	2	4 lbs 6 oz.
14) Alan Prevost	1	3 lbs 6 oz.
15) Chris McLeod	1	2 lbs 3 oz.
16) Steve Middleton	0	-- ---

I am sorry that I cannot provide more details. I was not at the match and although I do have the results unfortunately no report or photos have been supplied to me.

**PENULTIMATE CAST -
Is this a worthy candidate for the
Invicta award for inspirational
design.**



LAST CAST

