

Lindsay Simpson February 2019

Lindsay was introduced to still water fly fishing in 1992 from whence he progressed to Sweethope (Northumberland) and eventually Rutland Water. He has been Captain of the Soldier Palmers Team and his expertise has been applied to some of the major trout/grayling rivers in Europe.

In reporting the contents of the meeting, rather than repeating tying techniques, I thought I would concentrate on steps which were new to me. As you will read, I am quite out of touch!!



1. A shrimp Imitation

It was appropriate that the first demonstration was a Grafham shrimp. He has observed that some of these beasties were huge, well bigger than the competition gauge permits and would normally require a long shank hook. However, he stuck with a Hanak 310 size 8 which was within the rules: the hook was barbless (as is all the Hanak range?). *Now here we come to the start of my learning curve. He commenced using GSP thread. Now I am not quite in the silk era but when GSP was introduced I read somewhere that it was so strong and fine that it could cut through natural fly-tying materials (and fingers!) unless extreme care was taken. GSP is made of micro-fibres and in this respect resembles floss.* Lindsay always used it via a bobbin holder and spun it into a fine thread before putting it to use. Thus, it was possible to tie very slim flies and compact heads with the minimum number of turns. Although Lindsay used white (translucent?) thread it is available in a limited range of subdued colours. Felt tip colouring was possible although I doubt if it was absorbed into the fibres. It is a tough materials and Lindsay recommended keeping a pair of scissors dedicated to cutting GSP.

LS started off by applying a base of GSP. As it is polyethylene based, it is also very slippery and not easy to secure. Hence a bed of Loctite Super Glue was applied to the shank. At this stage, for bank fishing, he would consider adding some lead foil to assist a zig-zag retrieve and hence mimic the swimming pattern of the natural. I believe Chris McLeod has imitations with neutral and positive buoyancy. On this occasion LS tied to International requirements, starting by tying-



in a generous bunch of partridge fibres for the tail. The rib was to be constructed of Veniard Buzzer Wrap which was flat and clear, probably a generic name for Mylar ribbon on a spool (try Flybox). The body was made from Scruffy Dubbin supplied by Andrew Ellis (www.facebook.com/Troutstalker.uk/) which I think was described by L as a mixture of squirrel and synthetic – widely acclaimed in the press reviews. A short piece of 30lb.b.s. nylon with burnt ends (pre-prepared) was tied in close to the thorax

to represent eyes.

Now here was the clever bit in my opinion. The GSP rope was unravelled and the strands separated using a needle to form a dubbing loop – simples! The dubbing was fed into the gap and the thread spun to produce a fur “brush”: this was wrapped around the shank in open turns to form a tapered body. A short wing case made from pheasant tail fibres was applied over the thorax and treated with UV resin to increase the durability.

Most fly tyers are now familiar with UV cured resin: some may be put off by the cost or reports that the resin sometimes remains tacky. LS was using something called Solarez (it was in a small tub not a squeeze tube) which was cured using a single UV beam pen available from Veniards for around a tenner. I surmised that L was pleased with the results but the most liked feature was the slim applicator brush. I was impressed by the way in which he applied the resin to a short section of GSP prior to finishing it off, thereby eliminating the need to allow time for the resin to penetrate through the whipping. I have heard that these resins have a certain shelf life – does anyone have any experience of this?

2. Booby

The concept of the so-called washing line technique is to attach a buoyant fly on the point and use 3 buzzers up the cast. The idea is to allow the buzzers to sink and then retrieve in such a way that the buzzers rise vertically in the water thus matching the motion expected during a hatch. In days of old, a muddler with a square-cut head was the tool of choice. The choice of hook required a combination of strength and lightweight: a Hanak 130 fitted the bill. I am not sure why LS chose to use black Veevus thread rather than GSP, but the first move was to tie in a bunch of peach coloured marabou plumes to form the tail. A brown squirrel dubbing was used for the body and this was over-wound with open spirals of gold rib.



The interesting bit concerned the booby eyes and there was some discussion regarding the benefits of cooking the booby chord prior to use. The suggested heat cycle is 20 seconds at 180°C which causes the surface film to melt and seals the pores and increases the durability. The jury appears to be out on the advisability of this process. LS had no interest in subjecting a freshly prepared collection of eyes to this treatment for fear of wrecking a whole batch! However, he was keen on rounding the ends of the eyes using a Dremel cupping tool known as Type 932. I noticed that in applying the eyes, he first captured it on the tying thread and then wound it onto the shank. I think he found this easier than binding the eyes directly to the hook shank.

3. FAB

I always assumed that FAB's featured a chunk of foam sticking out of the rear of the fly! Not always it seems. LB selected a Hanak 270, size 8, which is a medium wire hook with a suitable gape to accommodate fritz. A tail of highly fluorescent (Steel Head Orange) fibres were tied in using GSP thread. A length of booby cord was sectioned down the middle and tied in about half way along the hook shank. They then resembled a pair of conventional feathered wings as used on a traditional wet fly.



Four turns of fire orange jelly fritz were tied in ahead of the “wings” followed by a similar number of turns of atomic yellow. Other colour combinations are employed including orange at the front and yellow at the back: also consider pink at the front and yellow at the back: how about pink at the front followed by yellow and white! Or all black. Your imagination rules!

4. A dry fly – Jock’s Dry?

I don’t think this fly had a name but it was considered to be deadly during a sedge rise. The hook was a new one on me – a Demmon Competition barbless G600 BL (size 12) which can be sourced from Romania but is yet another Japanese manufacturer (not to be confused with Mustad Demon hooks which are of the circle type). *LB then produced another new product (to me) in the shape of vinyl sheet imitating stripped peacock quill. The material and an alternative Hemingway’s are reviewed in the March issue of TF, p70.* He was using two separate threads. One Veevus 15 (green) and the other GSP. I am not quite sure how he used these. I think the Veevus was used to build up a tapered body and the GSP was the construction thread. Anyway, the fake quill was tied in at the tail with GSP and the vinyl body wound back to with a few mm. of the hook eye. The green underbody shone through the vinyl. I think the GSP was then overwound along the body but I could be wrong. The body was definitely coated with UV resin and cured. LR then demonstrated the use of a stacker to even-off the base of a clipping of deer hair which was duly tied in with GSP. *Another new material was introduced to me – snow shoe fur from the foot of an arctic hare. This is a much more robust alternative to CdC. The fly was finished with Highland Peat Scruffy Dubbing.* The resulting fly is highly buoyant and floats in the surface film. Nevertheless, Lindsay likes to further proof these flies before use. He is not a fan of Gink which he says releases an oil film on the water. Once used, the buoyancy was restored using a powder, of which there seems to be many brands now as well as **Tiemco**.



5. A Cruncher variant - the Muncher

A size 10 Hanak 230 (similar to the Kamazan 175) was used for this fly. A base layer of Veevus thread was used as a base layer and a cluster of red cock fibres was tied in for a tail. LS used natural stripped peacock herl for the body which was prepared by a third party – possibly Mikal Zappel although I have not been able to track him down. I think he may have been an exhibitor at the London Fly Fishing Show in 2018. This year it is on 25th-26th March). *I personally think that these natural peacock bodies are far superior in appearance to the vinyl strip.* The thorax was built up with fine Mylar ribbon which produced a multi coloured iridescent appearance. A picric acid dyed badger hackle was used to complete the fly, taking care to select a plume in which the fibres just reach the rear of the body.



6. Candy Floss Booby

LS described this fly with enthusiasm suggesting that he had great faith in its efficacy! The pattern was tied on a Hanak Type W size 10 barbless hook although I could not find this model in the Hanak catalogue. Maybe it was a WBL which has only recently been released? (BL = black nickel).



The marabou plumes used for this fly is best described as washed out pink. The tail and the wing contained a mixture of pink and white. Handling of these fibres was made much easier by applying some saliva via a finger and thumb. The body was built up with fluoro red thread overwound with translucent lurex and protected with a coating of UV resin. Note that there are wildly different interpretations of “pink” amongst commercial tyers and some patterns use a silver body. The yellow

eyes were tied in and fixed with a dab of Loctite super glue. LB was not a fan of whip finishing! I am sure at some stage; LB sealed the eyes with an open flame. We were assured that this fly was a deadly weapon at Rutland.

Lindsay is an ambassador for Funky Fly Tying and appeared on the tying stand at the recent Stafford BFFI exhibition. His talents extend to photography and readers are referred to www.iflyfish.info. This should be of interest to anglers seeking grayling. He has a Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/people/Lindsay-Simpson/541254669> and makes regular contributions to the Facebook group “Fly Fishing Large Reservoirs”.

So why did I bother to write this up? Because it was a pleasure to meet the guy!

Dave Jones March 2019