

Issue 190

TROUT FISHER

Fly-focussed but totally transferable

Spring 2024

**Confessions of an Addicted Salmon Angler ~ Opportunity Plus!
Tongariro Update ~ Where there's a will . . .**



THE KLINK: FEATURES AND REVIEW

TROUT FISHER

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Personally I believe that most mistakes that are made while tying Klinkhåmers occur because people are stubborn, don't read the instructions properly, and tie my fly from looking at pictures and don't listen to the thoughts behind the pattern, and why I use certain materials.

Extracts from Chapter 6 of The Klink and the leader system used worldwide, by Hans van Klinken. ©



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Since I retired, I have plenty of time to go through all my fishing and flytying diaries and it is quite amazing to see how productive I was in the 1980s and 1990s.

By Hans van Klinken. ©



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In subzero temperatures, I stood, rugged up in my winter warmers, surveying the 180 degree views over the gum forest lands, by the Eucumbene River meandering through naked grasslands.

By Matt Hoole



Cover

Klinkhåmer Special. (Leon Links ©)

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Hans de Groot, Franklin Moquette and Ton Lindhout came up with the striking name . . . while editing my story for the Nederlandse Vliegvisser and it has stuck ever since . . .

Klinkhåmer Special

Forty years of dry fly success

Excerpts from Chapter 6 of The Klink, by Hans van Klinken ©

Personally I believe that most mistakes that are made while tying Klinkhåmers occur because people are stubborn, don't read the instructions properly, and tie my fly from looking at pictures and don't listen to the thoughts behind the pattern, and why I use certain materials. I have dozens of examples why Klinkhåmer Special flies fail and most I can refer back to people using different materials to the ones I suggest in my dressings. I think before attempting to tie a Klinkhåmer Special properly, you would benefit from knowing what I was thinking when I created the pattern. Quite a bit already has been described and explained in my Parachute chapter. My great preference for parachute flies was definitely the start of the Klinkhåmer thinking progress just a few years later. It was the foundation of the development to keep my crazy iceberg shape fly floating so extremely well.

I repeat that when fishing for grayling with dry flies, I believe that it is a combination of the shape of the mouth, the speed of the rise, and their way of taking the fly that causes a grayling to push away a regular floating pattern. A parachute-style dry fly reduces this problem, and an emerger that hangs deep in the surface works even better. I proved this theory many times after designing the Klinkhåmer Special. The iceberg shape, or deep surface-hanging emerger style in which I tie my flies, solved these problems and improved the catch rate incredibly.

Even flytying expert and master flytyer Oliver Edwards told me that his catch results went up a lot after he started using the Klinkhåmer or Klinkhåmer style flies. I also observed that at least nine out of ten grayling were hooked well in their upper lip when using Klinkhåmer flies.

Flyfishing with deep subsurface hanging parachute flies offers many benefits. A well-tied parachute fly lands perfectly on the surface and floats wing upright the entire drift. Because of the 'iceberg shape' in which most of the mass of the Klinkhåmer Special is below the surface, the upper part of the fly is vertically stable. If tied correctly and with the right materials, this fly floats through riffles and strong currents without tipping on its side or sinking.

For me, the idea of a parachute fly is to create a strong fly silhouette for a fish. I think that it is this deep in the surface, hanging presentation of my Klinkhåmer Special that allows the fly to imitate all types of emerging mayflies, caddis and even some terrestrials. The appearance of an insect caught in or below the surface film makes a tempting target for trout and grayling, but the position and shape of the hook also allows you to hook fish more frequently and securely. Even Atlantic salmon, notorious for merely bumping flies with their noses, are at certain times hooked more frequently with the Klinkhåmer than with traditional bomber flies or bugs. Seatrout sometimes can go mad for them too but they prefer slender ones.

When we tie imitations of insects, only a few points seem important. We consider the size, shape, colour, and mobility of the naturals, and replicate these elements in our patterns. But I think there are more points of interest, and I search for them every day. For example, several years ago I started thinking differently about fly design, and today I teach my flytying students





For me, the idea of a parachute fly is to create a strong fly silhouette for a fish . . .

to consider the silhouette a fly produces. I don't mention the shape anymore. Thinking like this suddenly makes the length of the wing extremely important.

I try to look and see things in a different way. Wind can improve mobility and we already include that element in our flytying. But how many tyers take into account the effect of the sun on the fly as it rests in the water? I now realise more and more the importance of silhouette and the great influence of the sun and rain on the colours from patterns like spiders and other flies that you fish just underneath the water film.

I can offer no other explanation as to why some selective fish will only take a certain fly when the sun sets or rises or just disappears behind a dark cloud. After fishing Klinkhåmers for forty years I changed my mind radically about the length of the hackles within the parachute too, and that is why I have also a good number of Klinkhåmers with extremely long hackles in my fly boxes today.

WHAT DOES THE KLINKHÅMER IMITATE?

I must confess that when I developed the Klinkhåmer Special, my depth and understanding of entomology was at a very early stage.

The first Klinkhåmer was meant to imitate what I found in the stomach of the grayling I took for lunch. I only knew that what I tried to imitate was a caddis pupae, right on the verge of hatching.

I first tried to imitate its curved body using a grub hook. And I could replicate the emerging legs with the parachute hackle. These elements best describe what eventually gave rise to the fly's appearance today.

Now four decades later, I view my Klinkhåmers not only as wonderfully effective flies, but as an imitation of a series of flies. I can alter the basic pattern in ways which imitate emerging sedges, midges and many species of upwing flies. In addition, my Klinkhåmers have become a perfect imitation for many different types of large, struggling terrestrials. Even when there is no visible evidence of a hatch, fish love to rise for it and take it. This fact alone makes the fly a truly great dry fly searching pattern.



*Beautiful grayling, over 50cm,
caught in a lovely stream in
southern Finnish Lapland.*



FISHING THE KLINKHÅMER SPECIAL

When the rules permit it, I mainly fish my Klinkhåmer fly downstream. Because I learned to fish on streams in the mighty rivers of Scandinavia, I have many personal preferences and good arguments to support a downstream presentation. The simplest explanation is that I much prefer – and find it most productive – to fish a drift with the fly in front of the tippet and leader. I pretend to be able to think like a fish and thus, I believe that a lot of fish will refuse flies when they discover the leader or the shadow formed by the leader. This is very common with upstream fishing. One might argue that very fine leaders tend to eliminate this problem, but I say that very fine leaders and big fish are incompatible! I learned this very early in Scandinavia and I know from experience, that when I fish downstream, my catches improve dramatically. I only use one backcast in my river fishing. My catches have always been my proof of doing things right or wrong while fishing.

Because I gained so much experience in downstream fishing, I adapted my fly casting to it, and by making a combination of a parachute cast and a snake cast, I can cover extremely long drifts and multiple fishing lies. It also means that I have a lot of slack in my line through which I have to set the hook quite vigorously.

USING THE KLINKHÅMER AS SIGHT INDICATOR

A lot of flyfishers use a Klinkhåmer Special as a sight indicator because of its amazing floatability. The trick is to tie an extra piece of tippet on the curved hook from the Klink where they connect a small nymph or emerger. In South Africa, I saw several anglers doing it when they were hunting for the beautiful yellowfish. In New Zealand, the trick is so popular that many call it the New Zealand rig. Also known as the Klink & Dink style.

A WORD ABOUT MY OWN LEADERS

I gather that there are many anglers who don't like braided leaders. For the record, I love them! Especially the tapered hollow intermediate ones. I find they give extra power and weight to the leader, they resist wind knots, and they deliver the ability to cast extremely large dry flies, such as my Klinkhåmer Special, bombers, bugs, large hoppers and mice. I have used these leaders since the early 1980s with enormous success. They have saved me dozens of hours during my youth classes too, because the kids struggle far less with knots than if they were using normal leaders.

MY LEADERS AND TIPPETS ARE DIFFERENT FROM MOST . . .

My technique for securing the leader to the fly line is to push my hollow braided tapered leader about 5cm over the fly line and tie the end off with tying thread. For the record, I have no loop-to-loop connections, because I saw too many of these connections fail when people were playing really big fish. Loops are strong at first but with time during fishing becoming weaker. I just add a drop of waterproof superglue to protect my tying threads and it never comes off again. All my leaders are tapered, going down from 50-20lb for big fish and from 30-10lb for normal fishing. I mostly have a strong silver or stainless steel tippet ring at the tip end and all individual leader parts are connected without using knots. I put them together with a special needle. On the tippet ring, I attach one size tippet material only. I have found these leaders extremely handy, smooth, durable, and unbelievably strong in their connection.

I use exactly the same system (although thicker in diameter) for catching tarpon and sailfish and therefore even dare to call these leaders tarpon- and sailfish-proof. These extremely powerful leaders no longer have a tippet ring and their leader and tippet are connected in a different way too, because you often need shock tippets or a bite tippet in very different diameters.

In all my fishing catching some very large fish, I have never had this leader connection snap and I have used it intensively since 1981. I set up two of these leader systems in Malaysia for two guests on the same boat and they caught 29 and 32 sailfish in one week without any breakages. When something breaks, it's only the tippet or the fly you lose. I do a lot of youth classes and kids break or tangle their tippets a lot but with this system I replace a new tippet in less than a minute. If you use a parachute or snake cast, or a combination of both within the same cast, you will be fishing the Klinkhåmer in almost the same way as I do! I often pull back the line a bit before it has landed to create even more slack in the line when fishing downstream in big rivers.

MY LEADER SYSTEM . . .

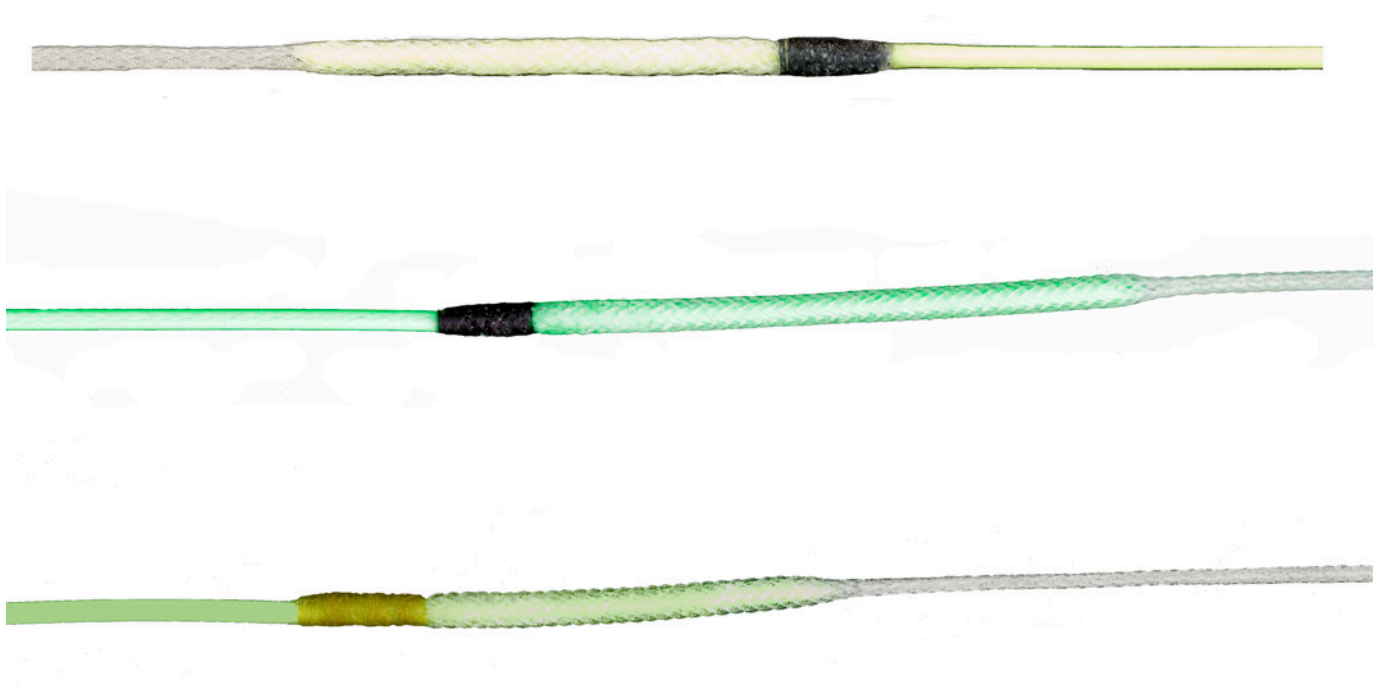
PROS:

- You can use it from AFTMA 3-16
- It was specially designed to cast huge parachute flies but works very nicely with any large fly, and small flies too
- It is extremely durable (one leader can last a whole season)
- It is designed to keep wind knots to a minimum (ideal for workshops and classes for beginners)
- The leader will turn over extremely smoothly, with minimal disturbance on landing
- The heavier weight and power of the leader will give an extra push to the tippet through which the leader will stretch more beautifully than any other leader system
- Precision casts are much easier once used to the system
- Changing a tippet is a matter of seconds
- The leader is intermediate density, which reduce shadow to a minimum
- There are no coils in the leader system
- There are no knots in the system

CONS:

- It's not for sale so you have to make it yourself
- It's thicker than hand built leaders
- People don't like its appearance

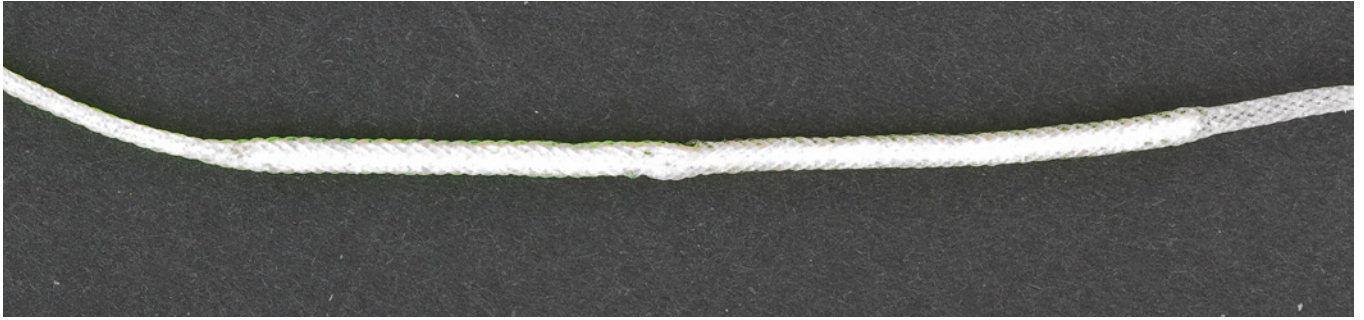
CONNECTING BRAIDED LEADER TO FLY LINE



The braid is pushed over the end of the fly line and secured to the line with strong tying thread, overlapping the end of the braid. Apply waterproof glue to the bound area. (Same system connects backing to fly line. Ed.)



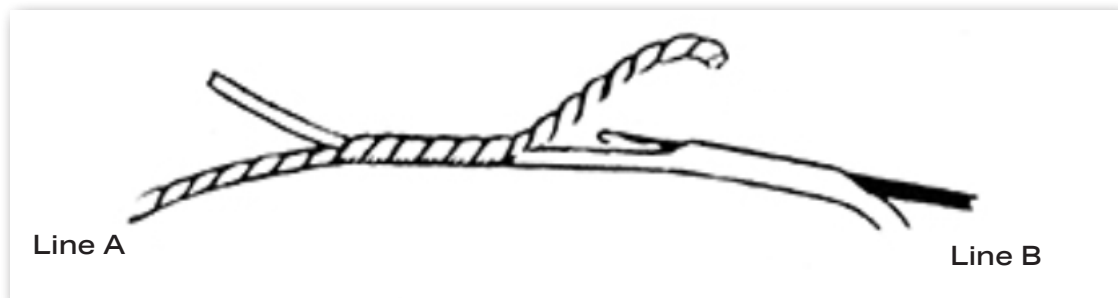
INTERNAL LEADER STEP DOWN SPLICE, SAY 30LB TO 20LB



SPLICING THE BRAIDED LEADER TOGETHER

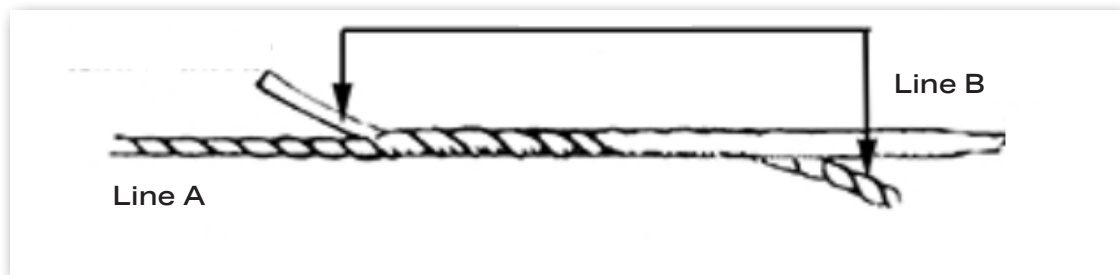


Insert the needle into Line A, about 10cm/4" from the end.
Push the needle through Line A for about 2.5cm/1" then break out.
Pick up Line B.
Pull Line B back up through Line A.

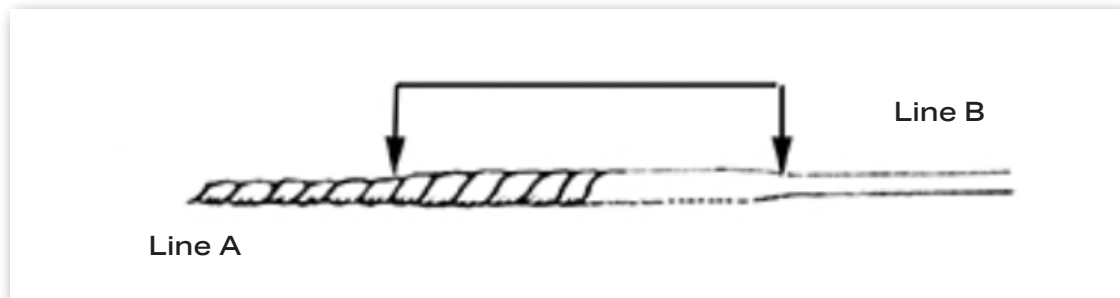


Remove the needle
Push the needle inside Braided Line B, about 10cm/4" from its end.
Pick up the tail end of Braided Line A.
Pull tail end of Line A through Line B.



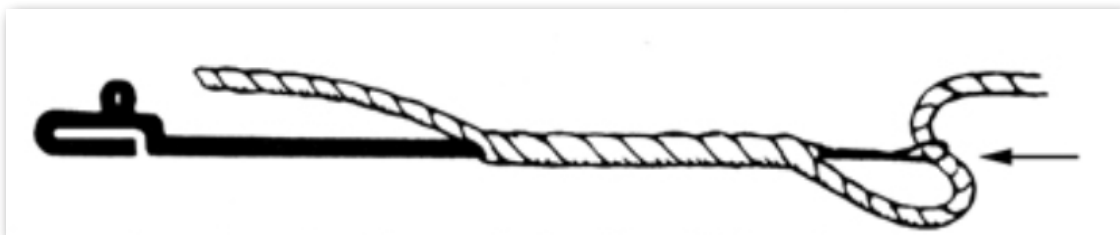


Trim the loose ends.



Gently pull Lines A and B, to bed loose ends inside the splice.
Smooth the splice and seal.

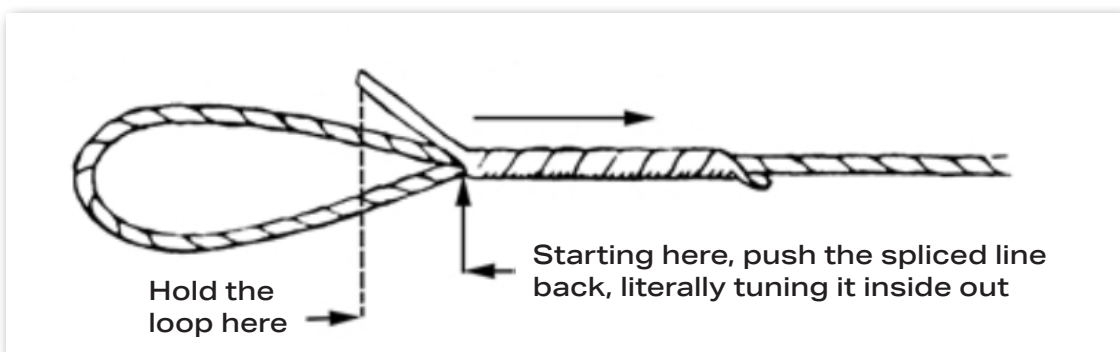
SPLICING LOOPS ONTO THE TIPPET END



With the tippet end of braided leader towards you, insert the splicing needle about 10cm (4") from the end.

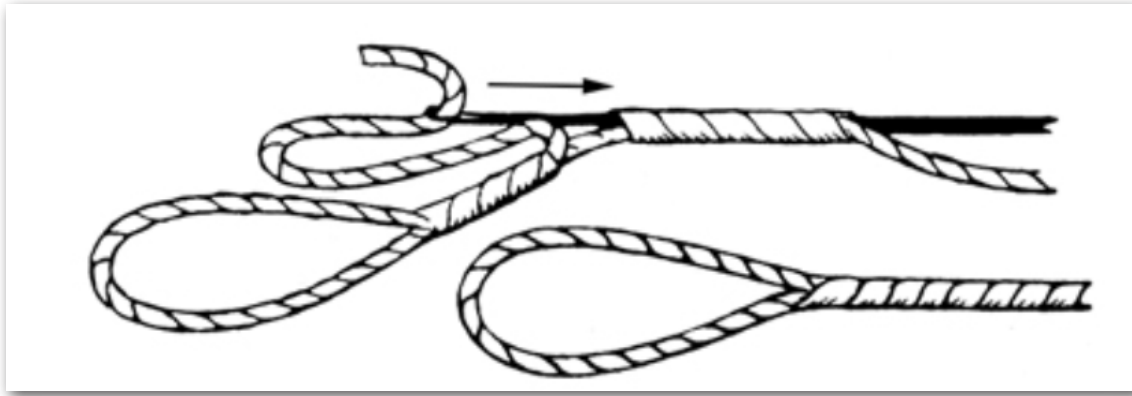
Run the needle upwards about 5cm (2") inside the braid, then push out.

Catch the upper part of the braid with the hook. Pull the caught braid back through the splice and detach the needle.



Hold the loop with thumb and finger of free hand and then, with the working hand, push the outside spliced cover back towards the top of the leader, so that it literally turns itself inside out.

Adjust the loop to the preferred size.



Starting 5cm (2") from the end of the loop, insert the needle into the braid, hook the loose end of the loop into the needle, pull it back through the braided splice.

Trim loose end. Hold the splice above the splice and below the loose end. Pull with both hands, so that the cut end disappears inside the splice.

Smooth out the splice and seal.

FOOTNOTES

Designed as a complete 'no knots' system for dry fly fishing. Loop both ends of the leader if you intend switching leaders and fly lines for other applications.

Seal all splices with waterproof glue.

[Link to braided material](#) [Link to braided backing](#) [Link to Splicing Tool](#)



My flies, leaders and methods catch just about anything. Beautiful Lenok trout seduced by a large size 4 Klinkhåmer in Mongolia.

Opportunity Plus!

Talking Plenty with Peter Storey

It's an early 1960 Spring and a boy is targeting a heavily-overgrown section of a Somerset brook, already fully aware that's where to find the least-disturbed fish. He's still fixed spool but it's as light as he can realistically keep it in this environment – the Intrepid Elite loaded with a 3lb breaking strain nylon spool and a worm threaded onto a hook. His 6' solid glass Milbro spinning rod will cast this dead-drift set-up a surprising distance but there's no need here; find an opening in the overhanging brush, get into a position to cast without exposing yourself, wait for a target, cast, hook anything that takes and then, try to land it. Within moments he's faced with a small shoal of roach and immediately, out from under some roots appears a pike. Here we go . . . Then something totally unexpected glides into view, golden brown and heavily speckled, and . . . When the worm penny finally drops, he buys some traditional wet flies and works out how to use them with this same tackle; a year or so further on, inspired by Oliver Kite's TV series, his first fly fishing set up . . .

The first visit to a stream in Springtime remains the highlight of each season. That boy's adulthood now means a few hours rather than all day, but they will produce a similar experience. Whatever state that stream may be in, my strategy is clear and my tactics, driven by over 60 years' trout fishing and most of those, here in NZ.

Looking back again, the next critical step in that on-going education was simply learning to sit by the water, watch fish, and let them show me how to catch them. Out here in NZ, where river trout are largely opportunist feeders inhabiting clear water, this is very easy; and doing so, you quickly realise they take any drift item that simply looks 'right' in that particular environment (as gut contents will confirm). Where lake fish have time to inspect – and all-too-frequently do – river fish have current to contend with. That's why, for my money, especially in higher early season flows, opportunist feeders don't stay in one place long – moving from faster water hot spots to slower water drift lines, to conserve energy. This happens so often on NZ streams that you need to keep watching spotted fish right up to the point of casting. If that fish was undisturbed it will generally return, however, and moving on unquestionably risks compromising that feeding location for the next few hours.

Yes, if you treat each venue with care it's my experience that Springtime in NZ means opportunity plus. There are so many choices out here in fact, that it's typically hard to cover them all. Here are the main ones I hope to enjoy over the next three months . . .

LARGE AND DARK

The next step on that early season stream is to find out what the 'right' drift item is and then match it. If nymphing, take a decent-sized rock or piece of long-trapped vegetation out of a riffle and see what's on it. In Spring, with typically higher water levels and probably more colour, choose the largest and darkest item you find there and match it for size and silhouette. Maturing *Coloburiscus humeralis* mayfly typically feature heavily in Spring samples and being in the #8-10 standard hook size, you can pack both bead heads and lead into your imitations. If lucky enough to hit a hatch of them, however, Kakahi Queen is as good an imitation as any.

I've learnt to fish any water with my Black Palmer these days, matching the hackle turns to clarity. (Apologies – this photo is my clearest.) My first hand 'tie', it has caught fish anywhere I've fished it for over 20 years, after solving the conundrum of those then too-well-educated Rangitaiki Canal edgewater browns (the forest is now closed October to May). The result of a 'last hope' situation, its immediate success led my strategic approach back to its weightless start point. Tactically, I mainly fish it off braided and furled leaders plus tippet, primarily for their extra surface tension loading in tight environments; all surface shine removed, of course. No floatant; representing a spent mayfly spinner, Black Palmer can float or sink. Any target is a fly-first presentation, of course, aiming to make the fish move towards me. Otherwise, then if moving downstream it's an outward progression of up-and-right-through Oliver Edwards-style drifts, starting at my feet and covering the entire stream where possible, before moving on; if upstream, an ultra-slow wade, searching all logical water fly-only, W. C. Stewart-style. Faced with a river in flood, it's edgewater only; sighted and searching.



Maturing *Coloburiscus humeralis* nymph . . .



Scuffed with pumice . . .



Golden brown and heavily speckled . . .



BROWN AND FAT

At the less complicated end of the Kiwi Springtime river fly fishing spectrum, it's now a warm evening towards the end of October. The Waikato is being run at average level below the Arapuni Dam and we are camped beside it, hoping for an early run of breeding smelt from Karapiro, which so far hasn't eventuated. Just upstream of the campsite a large willow extends over the river edge and suddenly, there's a buzzing sound coming from it. Next thing there's a rise just below the tree, then another; within moments, the water in that area is full of rising fish. We grab our rods; change up to floating lines, put Coch y Bondhus on the tippet and moments later, have both landed trout. When the light finally said 'ENOUGH!', we had dinner and slept. Fish were rising below that tree at dawn the next morning . . .

Brown beetles – this one obligingly flew into the kitchen widow – hatch all over the country from early season until December. If you are not into nymphing, or just want a change, a Coch y Bondhu – which doubles as a water beetle and there are plenty of them in most rivers too – or just about anything of similar profile that floats well will draw trout anywhere early season. If fishing hydro controlled reaches anywhere in both islands, where net builders abound, Hans' featured Para Poly Sedge would cover two potentially concurrent Spring evening rises.

LONG AND SLIM, WITH A HINT OF COLOUR ON TOP

Early season lake fishing typically finds water temperature below optimum feeding level at all depths and trout well spread out, following shoals of smelt. It's early August as I finish this column off and there has been very little shoreline activity over the past month, mainly because there are few smelt close in. I do not expect this situation to change much before smelting begins either. Smelting means breeding; and in these lakes, along the edgewater of sandy beaches. While it lasts, trout will come into the shallows and feed on them; with abandon at first but then, ever more carefully. Smelting could well begin earlier this year, with Spring already showing around here and a full moon 18 October. Come 1 October, however, my expected initial focus will be offshore reefs until sunrise and deeper water once the sun is up, working down to about 20 metres before calling the session off.

Between now and then whitebait and then smelt will run up rivers from the sea, all over the country. Both work their way upstream along the slack edgewater and that's where to find both resident and sea-run trout chasing them; probably with kahawai not far away in tidal areas. Combinations of full moon and high tide are typically when most run in. These smelt are much larger than those trapped in these lakes, up to 200mm long, but the same colour. Whitebait are 75-100mm and transparent, with a touch of olive.

Closer to home, in broad daylight and clear water, Lake Rotorua's brown trout will be hunting smelt, dragonfly larvae, bullies and koura in the shallows from now until forced into the feeder streams by rising heat. These fish are best spotted and caught by ambush, with a lure placed in their path on the lake bed and activated as close to the fish as possible. Similar opportunities will be found along the Rangitaiki hydro lake shorelines; anywhere throughout both islands holding brown trout in fact. Typically, these fish hunt along fixed beats. So if you miss one without hooking up, sit tight and it will probably come back.

These photos are of a dead smelt I found washed up on the beach after an onshore wind night – it's about 60mm long. Built-in flash makes it look more solid than it is, however, so pull everything back in scale when tying; the message with smelt (and whitebait) lures is suggestion rather than reality. Trout typically hit smelt shoals with wide open mouths and there is plenty of collateral damage. Reading *The KLINK*, and noticing Hans' emphasis on making sure only the wings of Klinkhåmer Special float, reminded me these smelt *float upside down*. This suggests they are hit by trout *at depth*, so that their buoyancy sacks expand as they rise to the surface, to hold them that way. With very few smelt close in this Winter and typically, just the odd emerger-like rise from cruising trout, I am now wondering if these dead smelt are what these trout are taking. Would an imitation held in the surface film by a buoyant belly, with the rest of its body suspended below, get a response? Once this issue is uploaded, I intend to find out! I will definitely need more casual/careful surface feeding options, should this season on the lake prove as difficult as the last.

Here's to a great 2024-25 Season but only wait until October 1 if you must. Spring is already making its presence clear around here and between now and late November, the combination of potentially earlier warming temperature and Springtime occurrences suggests the entire period covered by this issue could be Opportunity Plus!



Within moments, the water in that area is full of rising fish . . .



The message with smelt (and whitebait) lures is suggestion rather than reality . . .





Kevin Neil from Auckland with his keeper heading for the freezer - typical quality Rainbow Trout caught 28 July 2024



Tongariro Update

From Ross Baker

One afternoon a few summers ago, on another river not too far from here, I was carrying a good sized trout back to my car when I stumbled across the farmer who owned the land we had trespassed on. Fortunately he did not mind in the least so I offered him a fresh caught fat Rainbow for his dinner. "Nah" he retorted - "I only eat *Taupo trout*!" How many times have I heard that?

Considering the condition of the catches we have seen, or heard about when they escape over the last three seasons, we understand what the farmer meant. Trout are what they eat. Any fish growing up cruising around a clean pure snow-fed lake eating an abundance of smelt and Koura (freshwater crayfish) has to be a delicacy. When it all comes together on Lake Taupo the river angler "foodies" are in heaven.

When we look back over the last twenty plus years of fishing the spawning runs on the Tongariro River, we cannot recall a sustained period of such good fishing and such well-conditioned trout. That is a profound statement!

Twenty years ago the quality of Tongariro trout slowly diminished over a long period. For several seasons the fishery struggled to maintain any quality at all. Fortunately those days have gone but we have not forgotten their causes.

With the benefit of hindsight we now understand it was mainly due to a breakdown in the Lake Taupo food chain - (i.e. a break in the phytoplankton-zooplankton-smelt connection). Back then, for a period of more than a decade, a four pound fresh run Rainbow was highly regarded. More recently, it is expected, again and again.

Now, every week, we see prime five pounders and many much larger. This 2024 season has followed the previous two and maintained a steady procession of superb trout being released, broken off or retained to be smoked every day. To achieve this high quality level takes three years' growing and maturing in Lake Taupo.

Tongariro anglers have been so impressed with the sheer fighting spirit of the trout this season. Many who had slipped into the pattern of catch and release - before the Covid period - received a loud wake-up call. They return breathless, day after day. It is such a delight compared to previous years when they were dubious about whether it was even worth visiting. Now they are re-booking as soon as possible.

It is particularly noticeable from smiling overseas visitors who are returning after being MIA (missing in action) over the Covid period. After being away for so long they can judge the improvement better by the number of lost trout breaking off. They have all increased the strength of their tippets to make any impression. They have returned to their trusty old 7-8 weight rods to deal to the wild fury of the hook-ups. Naturally we accept all the credit for the improvement.

Part of the reason also has to be the increased daily limit installed a few years ago - from three to six, together with the reduction in minimum length, from 40 to 35cm. Thank you DOC - the Department of Conservation, who manage the Taupo fishery. They now encourage taking all trout caught, to improve the remaining condition of the fishery. Good tactics.

The fly selection during spawning runs has not changed much. For nymphers the more sophisticated Glow Bug varieties work well in gloomy conditions but once the sun is up most switch to natural patterns - Hare & Copper or Pheasant Tail versions such as flash back and rubber legs. Over on the dark side, the wet liners cannot go past Olive Woolly Buggers. From our observations it is more about casting to achieve a good presentation and natural drift, than the choice of fly.

Anglers need to remember that these are not the usual educated river fish. They are lake fish that have cruised around open water for three or so years, feeding on smelt and Koura. When they enter the tributary rivers they have to adjust to currents and varying pressure depths, along with a very different diet. They are completely out of their natural environment. Often they are not feeding but just nip at the fly out of curiosity. If one Jack eyes a fly another





'Arguably, the most popular spot' . . . from the bridge

will pinch it, as part of the spawning behaviour. All is revealed when they are gutted to discover lumps of pumice, wood or stones in their gut. They did not know what to eat? Or ate whatever invaded their space?

The urgent probing questions from novices over the last twenty years have hardly changed. Which fly? Which pool? The main change in the popularity of the Tongariro River pools is the loss of the Bridge Pool below SH1 traffic bridge, following Cyclone Gabrielle. The previous daily line up was one of Turangi's best tourist attractions but is now out of sight, spread out more throughout the lower river.

Arguably, the most popular spot is now just above the bridge on the true right bank, at the confluence of the bypass in a pool previously known as the Daisy Pool. Down river, the lower Bridge Pool on the true left and Reeds Pool on the true right have a regular following. In the town pools the complete Judges, Major Jones and the Hydro are usually occupied. Upriver, the well-known Boulder Reach is usually thrashed.

Perhaps the most pleasing and noticeable trend in the last few years has been the increase in the numbers of female anglers participating. Previously they just watched and wondered how these guys could enjoy stumbling around in the cold wet river. Ever since the first Tongariro River Ladies Tournament took place about five years ago, however, the fishing clubs report increased membership from this group.

We particularly enjoy observing the difference in attitude from the usual more serious mens club trips. Instead of competing for the biggest trout, the women seem to have much more enjoyment just being on the river (*Girls Just Wanna Have Fun!*). Realising they can cast just as well, typically with timing and technique rather than brute strength, tackle shops now stock gear designed specifically for women; who do not hesitate to use guides either, to teach them all the tricks and skills.

Having now formed their own clubs, and with the next annual Tongariro Tournament this August, they have become a new force to seriously consider.

Watch out, guys!

Kind Regards,
Ross and Pip Baker

E: ross@tongarirorivermotel.co.nz; W: www.tongarirorivermotel.co.nz;

P: +64 7 386 8555



**TONGARIRO
RIVER MOTEL**



Another young convert – School holiday fun for 11 year old Kaylee Lepper from Taranaki – her first trout, fly fishing with Mum. Better than xbox!



LETTERS

Hello, Todd.

My son, also Todd and Cc, currently in his third year at UC studying Environmental Science and Chemistry, wrote me an article for my current issue after a visit to Lake Ellesmere last month (low resolution copy attached, along with a dated camera copy of the river entering the lake at the Rail Track). Needless to say his article and the photos sent with it shocked me - I knew freshwater quality was bad in lowland Canterbury generally since the upsurge of intensive dairying over the past 30 years but had no idea just how bad. Frankly, the Kaituna, formerly an excellent trout fishing river according to many, now looks third world.

I have already contacted both eCan and F&GNC. The former have told me by email they are investigating the matter and I intend to find out just how far they go. The latter seem to believe there is little they can do - all rivers flowing into the lake are now in a similar state and there is little local political will to change this (my read of a telecon).

Todd. Besides being my local MP, you are Minister for Agriculture, and Fishing and Hunting. Looking ahead, and given both these activities thrive with high-quality freshwater, how do you see New Zealand maintaining - better still increasing - its global reputation for them?

With respect and thanks for your time,

Peter Storey,

SUBSEQUENT COMMENT

If it is serious in promoting 'sustainable outcomes' internationally this government will install logical restrictions on both direct and indirect contamination of freshwater at catchment level, in its overhaul of the RMA, NPS-FM and FWFP.

ECanterbury readily and promptly investigated Todd Storey's findings in the Kaituna River and found, yet again - it's an ongoing occurrence, reported before and still present when they revisited the site - that what we see in this photo are algae in the lake being driven upriver by a combination of tide and wind.

The ongoing presence of algae in Lake Ellesmere is unquestionably an indirect 'trace outcome' of land use inside the lake catchment and similar photos can be taken in many others in both islands, including some in the Minister's electorate. That reality is unlikely to change until meaningful freshwater quality management legislation operates at catchment level, nationwide.



Hon Todd McClay

Minister of Agriculture
Minister of Forestry
Minister for Hunting and Fishing
Minister for Trade
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs



08 JUL 2024

MIN24-0458 / TM01334

Peter Storey
By email: peter@nztroutfisher.co.nz

Dear Peter,

Thank you for your email on 27 May regarding the state of freshwater quality in Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere and the Kaituna River. I appreciate your commitment to highlighting these issues and your proactive approach in reaching out to me.

I am aware of the outstanding values of Te Waihora/Lake Ellesmere, including for trout fishing. These values are recognised by a Water Conservation Order and I understand that Environment Canterbury and Ngāi Tahu work together on managing lake openings to the sea to support fish migration.

The Government recognises the critical importance of freshwater quality for a range of reasons, including healthy trout populations. To address concerns about freshwater quality, the Government has initiated several key actions.

We are committed to replacing the National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management (NPS-FM) this term to better reflect the interests of all water users. The process of replacing NPS-FM is expected to take between 18 to 24 months and will include a robust and full consultation process with all stakeholders. I encourage you to make a submission when the consultation period opens, as your insights are valuable to us.

We also intend to simplify and clarify the Freshwater Farm Plans (FWFP) regulations. The changes are intended to enable farmers and growers to find the right solutions for their farm and catchment, ultimately benefiting water quality and the ecosystems dependent on it.

You also raised a question about trade and New Zealand's international reputation. New Zealand promotes sustainable outcomes through the trading system, including through increasing trade in environmentally friendly goods and services, as well as strengthening global cooperation in this area. I will continue to work with the industry to deliver trade outcomes that meaningfully contribute to addressing climate change as well as loss of biodiversity, pollution, and other serious environmental challenges.

Thank you again, for taking the time to write to me.

Warm regards

Hon Todd McClay
Minister of Agriculture



NEW PRODUCTS

GHOST NET KNIVES

Did you know there is enough fishing line abandoned each year to wrap around the equator 400 times, and enough abandoned fishing nets to cover the entirety of Scotland? Drifting for years, these ghost nets terrorise everything in their path, from marine life to the marine environment. Nothing is safe.

To help untangle this problem, NZ brand, The Ironclad Co. has created the first ever range of knives with 100% discarded fishing net handles - Ghost Net Knives. The commercial-grade knife range, made in partnership with 97-year old knife maker Victory Knives, uses fishing nets recovered from nearshore areas of the ocean and every knife sold will haul a further 1kg of discarded fishing nets from the oceans.

The 22cm Ghost Net Filleting Knife is the hero in the range. Sleek and flexible, it delivers clean, effortless cuts for delicate tasks. RRP: \$89

There are 4 knives in the range. They are perfect for fishing enthusiasts who care about our marine life.

The commercial-grade knife range, made in partnership with 97-year old knife maker Victory Knives, uses fishing nets recovered from nearshore areas of the ocean by Oceanworks - a company that exists to measure, reduce and track companies' plastic footprint. This material is then meticulously processed, cleaned and forged onto a lifetime guaranteed blade, turning what was a wasted commodity into something valuable.

In addition to what Ironclad Co uses in the knives, for each knife sold, they will haul a further 1kg of discarded fishing nets from the ocean through the Oceanworks Impact+ Programme - more info here:

<https://oceanworks.co/pages/impact;>

<https://ironcladpan.com/>

<https://www.science.org/content/article/astounding-amount-fishing-gear-lost-ocean-each-year>





Karaage Trout or Salmon

Wild to the Table with Tony Smith

Japanese tempura is recognised as the lightest form of frying. This recipe called karaage, is used when a larger fritter is fried rather than individual items. It is a good way of making a small amount of fish go a long way.

INGREDIENTS

400g fresh trout or salmon fillet; 2 peeled carrots (around 120g); 1 small peeled kumara (around 160g); 1 courgette (around 170g); ½ small red onion; cauliflower (around 140g)

TEMPURA BATTER

2 cups all purpose flour; ¾ cup potato or cornflour; ½ cup chilled water; 1 egg; 2 teaspoons salt

DIPPING SAUCE

4 tablespoons Japanese soy sauce; 4 tablespoons mirin; 2 teaspoons sugar

ACCESSORIES

1 litre Vegetable frying oil – canola or soya is fine.; a couple of tablespoons extra flour; ½ cup Kewpie Mayonnaise (Japanese mayonnaise but can be substituted)

WILD TO THE TABLE

Tony Smith was born in Dunedin, educated in Temuka, Alexandra and Gore, and has been a professional chef for more than 40 years.

A keen outdoorsman and conservationist, who loves trout fishing and small game hunting, Tony sees himself as a typical Kiwi bloke – a fan of rugby, BBQs, beer and wine, with a penchant for NZ's Pinot Noirs. Copies of his book, *A River Rules My Kitchen*, are still available on TradeMe. Contact: riversmith55@gmail.com



Cut the vegetables into very thin strips, there are various mandolin vegetable cutters around that you may have to make this task much easier. Cut the cauliflower into fingernail sized pieces.

Cut the fish into 1 cm cubes.

Put the water (very cold) into a bowl, mix in the egg, flour, potato starch and salt. Mix quickly but don't beat it. It is important not to over-mix.

When ready to finish and serve; Heat oil, if you have a fryer, perfect, if not I find a wok is perfect.

Toss a little of the extra flour through the vegetables then put them into the tempura batter, then add the diced fish also tossed in just a little extra flour.

Mix quickly with a large stainless serving spoon.

Mix together the soy sauce, mirin and sugar, and keep aside. This is your dipping sauce.

Test the oil temperature by flicking a few drops of batter into the pan, it should rise and sizzle immediately. A perfect frying temperature is between 170 and 180° C.

Using a large spoon, pick up a portion of vegetables and fish, without too much batter. Hold the spoon close to the oil as shown across, tip and scrape into the oil with your other index finger. (Take care not to drop the mix in from any height as this can result in splashing hot oil.)

Cook until crisp and place each fritter onto kitchen paper to drain. They can be made in advance and heated quickly in a hot oven.

Serve with the dipping sauce and mayonnaise.



Three PPSs taken straight from my fly box



Para Poly Sedge

Chapter 7 of The Klink, by Hans van Klinken ©

Since I retired, I have plenty of time to go through all my fishing and flytying diaries and it is quite amazing to see how productive I was in the 1980s and 1990s. Some claim that the 1980s and early 1990s were the golden years in flytying because everything seemed possible in those days. Without the fast and incredible world of Internet we had to rely on books and magazines to gather information. A lot has changed since then, but personally I think that every flyfisher and flytyer goes through different stages anyway, and in my life I was most creative and went through my most productive flytying stages between 1980 and 1999. I tied and developed most of my patterns in those years, but my ideas and improvements have never stopped. I just do things more slowly now.

EARLY NOTES

Once I opened one of my old diaries and read all my early notes about a sedge pattern I had named 'The Para Poly Sedge' (PPS). It is another parachute fly that I developed just a few weeks after I tied up my first Klinkhåmer Special. But it was a totally different pattern because it was a Parachute Sedge. While reading these old notes I re-lived the magic and excitement of the pattern and it gave me the idea to write this chapter. It's always interesting to learn the history of a particular fly and how it was developed.

The first examples of the PPS were the result of some tying experiments during a terribly dark, cold and rainy summer that was blighting the eastern part of Norway. These were days when you didn't want to be outside. The temperature had dropped dramatically and a raw eastern wind, hail and wet snowstorms didn't spell much good. Although we normally camp out beside the riverbank we had decided to rent a comfortable cabin. The bad weather had already spoiled our wilderness camping and almost all our clothing was wet, a situation where a warm and luxurious cabin is the only solution.

I had just put some wood on the fire and my wife was relaxed, reading a book beside the open fireplace. The fishing was extremely poor so I concentrated on flytying by creating a special sedge pattern for a small tributary of the mighty Glomma river that I had never fished before. A good fishing friend, who had died that winter, had fished this tributary frequently and we had just made serious plans to fish it together during that summer.

Life's lessons have taught me that you should never ignore a good tip, especially when it comes from one of your best fishing friends. I knew the river was famous for its excellent caddis hatches so I tried to develop a universal sedge pattern. Besides caddis, the river was also teeming with *Baetis* larvae and I also love to tie realistic *Baetis rhodani* lookalike nymphs, and given the weather conditions there certainly was enough time to play around with thread, fur and feathers.

NEW SEDGE PATTERN

When I looked through my spare box containing various prototypes of my Klinkhåmer Special that didn't make the mark, I suddenly saw a great opportunity to create a nice Parachute Sedge pattern using the same tying technique. I tied up a few new variations and after several attempts, and few hours later, I felt pretty happy with the results and was eager to try out my new experimental fly.



The Glomma River in those days could easily handle a lot of rain without colouring and its water level rises very slowly. Small tributaries, however, are a different matter and their watercourses can change quickly, especially after days of rain. The tributary I wanted to fish still looked okay that morning, but unfortunately it was no longer fishable in the evening. Thunderstorms in the highlands had changed this peaceful little stream into a wild, turbulent river.

All that I could do was go to the main river to check my prototype patterns for their floatability in rugged water and test some retrieving techniques in some lakes nearby. From the lake tests, I learned the pattern worked extremely well in imitating caddis flies walking on the surface. The rain continued and so I tied a whole bunch of my new Para Poly Sedges and ended up filling up my fly boxes.

The truth about the success of my PPS fly is unusual because I didn't get the chance to test it in any objective way while fishing this particular river. The following days there was still too much water and fishing was hardly possible. Wading was too difficult – even dangerous – and the best pools were completely flooded. Access to the river's hot spots was simply not feasible and the fish were impossible to spot. These were probably the worst fishing conditions I had ever encountered in this place – and remained so for many days.

ENTHUSIASTIC RESPONSE

Of course, I still tried some fishing, but not surprisingly, without success. The fish were not interested in my new sedge imitation or any other flies. My experimental flies were eventually simply forgotten among my other patterns. Every reasonable flyfisher agrees that one cannot condemn a river as poor just because an experiment failed due to the weather. I proved that right, because a few years later I did extremely well on this particular river in better weather conditions. Meanwhile



Beautiful trout caught in the Neretva river in Bosnia





PPS test in Mongolia was an enormous success

the PPS stayed in my fly box without being used very much. To be honest, I only used it maybe a dozen times.

During trips and in conversations with other anglers, I gave away quite a few flies and several of these were PPSs, simply because I had so many of them. Two years after I first tied them, my attention was drawn to the pattern in the following way; I received an enthusiastic letter from a German flyfisher to whom I had given a few PPSs to try in Scandinavian waters. He and his friends had done extremely well with the fly and he claimed that he enjoyed his best ever trip to Norway and Sweden largely thanks to this pattern. The PPS had become his absolute favourite and today he keeps a fly box full of them in many colour variations. The same year, another letter reached me with favourable reports on the pattern, this time from the UK. It seemed that other anglers were having much more success with this pattern than I had. However, after that second letter, I decided to give the fly closer attention and tried it out more intensively in various parts of Europe. This time my luck had changed and the results were far better. Most spectacular of all was catching a few grilse in a small Norwegian river. I even had some really good success catching seatrout while fishing in a few estuaries and sea pools of the Fosen Peninsula in Norway. I also fished the PPS for many years in Canada and it became my ultimate sedge pattern, especially for stillwaters.

HOW TO FISH THE PPS

The fly must be fished in the surface film, with the polypropylene yarn wing above the surface. Once the wing is treated with Fly-Rite's dilly wax, the fly floats very well and can be fished in drag-free drifts, or while using upstream retrieve techniques. The parachute hackle up front gives added attraction to this pattern and leaves a nice wake if the fly is retrieved at the right speed in slow running or stillwater. Using slow retrieve techniques made this fly an ultimate killer in the lakes of Scandinavia and Canada.



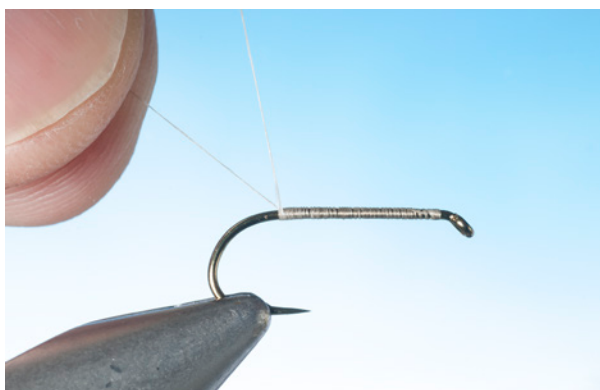
Tying the original Para Poly Sedge

DRESSING

- Hook:** Daiichi 1280, 1260, in sizes 8-10-12-14
- Thread:** Semperfli 8/0 classic waxed thread in tan colour
- Body:** Fly-Rite's poly dubbing in the following colours: light tan, dark tan, rusty olive, medium brown, dark brown, golden olive and any other colour to match the hatch
- Wing:** Several strands of Semperfli's poly yarn in white, blue dun, light dun, cream, brown or mixed
- Hackle:** Good quality light ginger, ginger, light brown or blue dun
- Wingcase:** Poly yarn same as wing

Note: For the wings and wing case, I also prefer certain blended colours of Predator fibre because it works exactly the same as poly yarn when treated with Dilly wax. It's ultimately the same material and you can mix it a lot easier than poly yarn strands. I love blended colours for example Black Nose Dace Semperfli Predator fibres as I used for the flytying steps of this PPS. It's good to show you that you can achieve exactly the same with Predator fibres too.

TYING STEPS



1 Place the hook in the vice and wrap the entire shank with tying thread.



2 Cut a piece Predator fibres of approximately 5-6cm long and taper one side at an angle of 45 degrees.



3 Put the tapered side on the hook shank as shown in the picture above



4 Secure the fibres well with your tying thread all the way up as close as possible to the hook eye and back again until you have created a nice tapered underbody.





5 Tie in a good quality hackle pointing in the same direction as the wing (i.e. with the feather extending forwards) and take the thread back to the hook bend.



6 Put some dubbing wax on your thread and set up your thread with Fly-Rite poly dubbing in the colour of your choice and dub a nicely tapered body. Wrap your thread back to the position as shown.



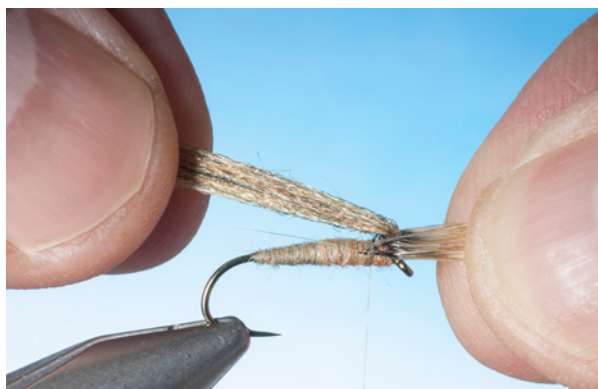
7 Grasp the tuft of Predator fibres and wrap the hackle around its base.



8 Take each successive turn closer to the hook shank. This ensures a compact, well-compressed hackle.



9 Pull the hackle tip backwards over the top of the hook shank and secure it with 2-3 windings around the body about 6mm behind the eye of the hook. (See red circle.) Trim away the excess hackle tip, but do not cut your thread.



10 Now, carefully groom all the hackle fibres forwards, then pull the Predator fibres backwards between them.





11 Tie down the wing where you secured the hackle and lock the wing with your tying thread.



12 Tie off around the wing and body with your whip finish tool.



13 Trim the poly yarn wing to a length that is about 1-1.5cm longer than the bend of the hook. (Experiment with the length of the wing during fishing.)



14 Apply some lacquer by using a varnish applicator on the windings and your fly is ready!



The River Soča in Slovenia where the PPS can be unbelievably successful at times



BOOKS

'I believe that a lot of fish will refuse flies when they discover the leader or the shadow formed by the leader . . .'

The KLINK

Reviewed by Peter Storey

Statements like this always grab my attention. They tell me I am dealing with a like-minded angler and when part of a chapter describing the history behind one of the most popular trout flies in the world of fly fishing, with an author who has probably created a book to read carefully and above all, objectively.

I started with the Klinkhåmer Special, of course, and stopped dead after reading the sections extracted for the opening article of this issue, amazed not only by Hans' command of English but also to find out he fly fishes much the same way I do. Those sections were chosen for their underlying message, however. They outline the **strategy** which drives Hans' fly fishing for trout, salmon and many other species inhabiting highly-pressured water, all over the world. Here in New Zealand too, whatever *tactics* used to achieve it, **ensuring your fly is the first thing a fish sees** is becoming more critical to successful fly fishing every season.

There are multiple high photographic quality tying sequences in the Klinkhåmer Special chapter, covering the original pattern, the second version, how to mend a damaged parachute fly and ultra-slim-bodied Klinkhåmers. Similar sequences form just the basis of all chapters, however. Each featured pattern includes the detailed thought processes behind its creation, modification, further development and use.

Besides a good selection of mayfly patterns, 21st Century Kiwi fly fishers will appreciate the strong presence of caddis. The Klinkhåmer Special is the best known, of course, and besides the completely-featured Para Poly Sedge, there are three palmer-hackled 'guest' patterns in Hans' book which are clearly also applicable out here. Ants are something I for one had never considered before, however; yet in that chapter, Hans makes it clear both European and North American trout and salmon rise to them with gusto. Yes, Hans' favourite tactic is dry fly and therefore, Mainlanders especially should be interested to know The KLINK finishes with a chapter devoted to catching salmon that way.

In summary, I find The KLINK a thoroughly entertaining read with content that will lead open-minded fly fishers into new or further productive territory – myself included. So in closing, here's what Hans says he intended in writing it:-

'Beside marking the 40th (ruby!) anniversary of my Klinkhåmer, the motivation for this book comes purely out of passion and dedication to the sport of flyfishing, photography, and tying flies. This is why I picked a very useful selection of my best dry fly patterns which I use all over the world and over many years. I wanted to tell the real story of how my flies were conceived and developed and came to life. How and why I created my flies, improved myself as a flytyer and perfected my flies over nearly 50 years of flytying.'



The **KLINK**

The Extraordinary Flytying Genius of
HANS VAN KLINKEN

In New Zealand 'The KLINK' is available from Nationwide Book Distributors (NZ\$ 130.00) and local fishing retail outlets. In Australia, from Peribo PTY and local fishing retail outlets. More details can be found on the Merlin Unwin website.



The Fight for Freshwater

Reviewed by Tony Orman

Perhaps the title of this missive should have been "A Fight For Freshwater and Trout"? Trout need rivers with high quality freshwater and so too rivers need trout, to stimulate opposition to their being depleted in flow and/or contaminated. Trout in a sense, are freshwater's "canary in the coal-mine."

A leading ecologist and a controversial one at that Mike Joy has written a book "The Fight for Freshwater", a memoir that delves deeply into the decline of New Zealand rivers and freshwater in general. In the first chapter he recalls that in May 2011, New Zealand Prime Minister John Key was interviewed by Stephen Sackur on the BBC's Hard Talk television show.

Stephen Sackur, told Key that New Zealand's slogan "clean and green" was no longer true.

"Dr Mike Joy, of Massey University, a leader environmental scientist in your country, just the other day said 'we are delusional about how clean and green we are'," said Stephen Sackur.

He cited Mike Joy's research, which had found half of the lakes and 90 per cent of lowland rivers in New Zealand were polluted. But an uncomfortable John Key defensively responded that he did not share Mike Joy's view.

"He's one academic and, like lawyers, I could provide you others who would give a counter view," he shot back.

The hard-nosed grilling by the BBC's Sackur and Key's increasingly hoarse responses ensued. Mr Sackur continued saying New Zealand was clearly not "100 per cent pure" as it has problems with water pollution and the decline of native species. He again cited Mr Joy, who said New Zealand had become complacent about its environmental reality. And so it went on.

Mike Joy recalls that the interview on BBC Hardtalk "dragged him into the national spotlight."

In his book. Mike Joy refers to the Oroua River in the Manawatu as being badly polluted by sewage from the town of Feilding. It must have been happening from decades earlier as I recall in boyhood days in the 1950s the river being so badly polluted we never fished it.

In his book, Mike Joy has dared to poke his head above the parapet. He is controversial because while many agree with him, others do not. He soon saw through the politics surrounding freshwater management and how the dice could be loaded by devious politicians and bureaucrats and even by compliant sycophantic or timid scientists.

For example relative to "loaded dice," in 2009, after much adverse exposure about declining water quality, the newly elected National government set up the Land and Water Forum. Mike Joy was invited to join and despite overloaded with work commitments, attended the first few meetings.

He writes, "however I soon gave up when I realised the balance of forum members was so comprehensively stacked in favour of environmental exploiters that it felt like an overwhelming dominance of what the forum called 'stake-holders', which clearly meant those who had vested economic interests ran the commercial use of water. The whole process, known as collaborative governance approach, had been championed and initiated by Guy Salmon, an advocate of blue-green approaches to the environmental management."

Mike Joy was completely disillusioned by the process. "The failure of the LAWF process is obvious as freshwater ecosystems and biodiversity continue their decline and the drivers of harm have a free run."

Mike Joy doesn't pull his punches. Compliant scientists get a rap, as do departments bureaucrats.



"What I saw as the capture of public servants and scientists dependent on industry and government funding is what made me angry," he candidly admits.

The Department of Conservation gets rapped over the knuckles too.

Another "government failure" was the Department of Conservation's decision around 2008, to start giving consents for commercial eel fishers to harvest long fin eels within national parks and reserves. Initially, when told, he refused to believe it. After all Mike Joy had worked with DOC for years on saving native fish. He tried to reason with DOC staff. But the muzzling had been implemented.

"The DOC scientists were also appalled but could not say so."

Victims in issues like this are often scientists. Science has been corrupted.

The long fin eel debacle left him with a sour taste.

He observed in two decades of working "with and against government scientists", there has been a subtle change as scientists have been forced through a lack of central government funding, to seek more and more of their income from consultancy work.

"So they have ended up working for the polluters or for politicised local government."

But Mike Joy is undeterred, in fact resilient and determined.

The last line of his writing says "I will be continuing the fight for freshwater."

After the infamous Stephen Sackur-John Key BBC Hardtalk interview, the book then goes into a somewhat languid but nevertheless interesting few chapters on his upbringing and a variety of jobs before going to university and qualifying as an ecologist. From then it candidly sets about exposing the deceit, deception and denials about the freshwater crisis.

One of his many pre-university jobs was as a surveillance officer - think "spy" - for the Security Intelligence Service. Surprisingly he found the job "tedious."

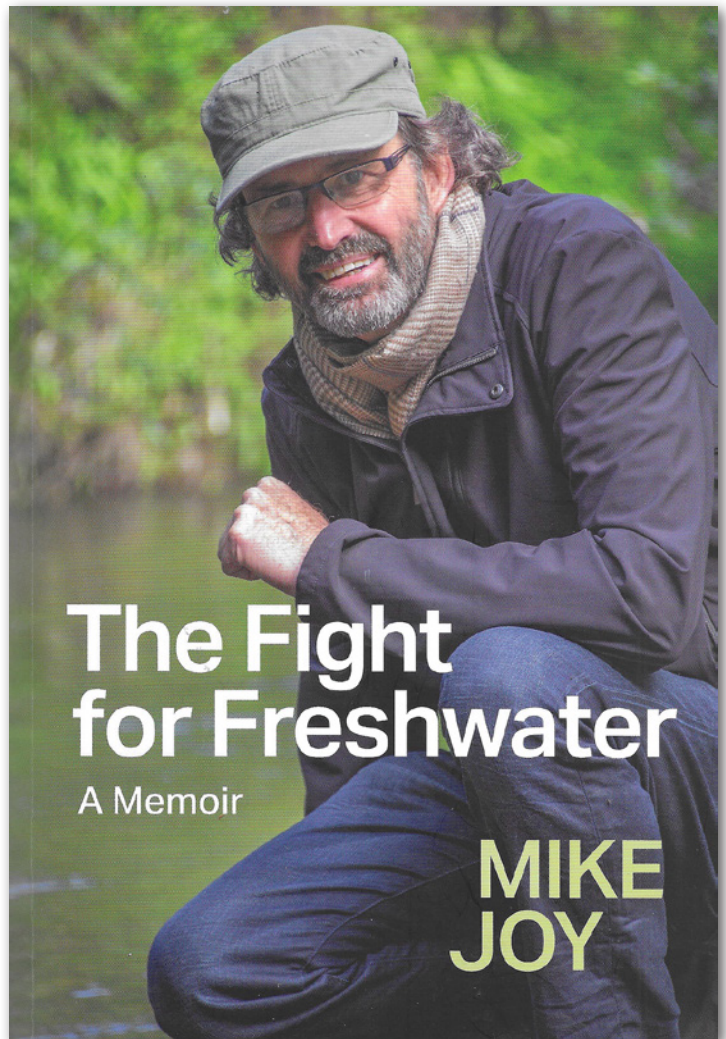
Thereafter his memoir picks up pace and in doing so, becomes a riveting account of his mission to save our freshwater rivers, streams and lakes.

It's a gutsy, revealing even inspirational read that every trout and salmon fisherman should read. For many – too many in today's society – it will hopefully cause a shedding of the twin shackles of apathy and lethargy and encourage anglers to join him in the fight.

Anglers do feature, notably the NZ Federation of Freshwater Anglers and immediate past president Dr Peter Trollove who has carried out untiring research work on nitrate levels in water ways - nitrate levels that are far too high for the health of fish, both native and trout and salmon - and even that of humans.

The fight is just not for your rivers and trout fishing but also that of your children and grandchildren. So go get a copy of Mike Joy's book.

"The Fight for Freshwater - a memoir" by Mike Joy, is published by Bridget Williams Books, price \$39.99



Learning About The Fishery

By Larry Burke

While my actual salmon fishing for the 1995-96 stopped with me finally having employment in what was meant to be a reliving casual position, it turned out to be mostly night shifts that left not enough time to fish. However I then started to get short term contracts. Filling in while other social workers took well deserved annual leave gave me days off but the salmon season was finished. That gave me a chance to move on to the 4th stage of my salmon addiction, "Learning about the salmon fishery".

This started with looking for written information. Most up until now had come from fishing magazines such as Fish & Game, which then came out bimonthly, but the one I got the most salmon information from was Allen Burgess' South Island-published Southern Fishing and Boating. Every month I had to get my hands on the latest copy and was very sorry when Allen could no longer publish, because of cost. The best book I found was New Zealand Freshwater Fishes, by R M McDowall, a great reference book. I was however looking for the actual fishing experience and helpful fishing techniques that could help my addiction. Then I found 2 books; "Salmon Country", by Jack Byrne, published 1980, and the book that has been my main reference on salmon, "In Search of Silver", by Ross Millichamp. This was not published until 1997, by which time I had several long discussions with Ross about some of my ideas and stuff around salmon. Some were "WRONG" and Ross helped me change them, when meeting him on the river – he was at that time on the staff of North Canterbury Fish and Game, and later went on to become the manager. He later did a rewrite of this book that was published 2013 and is even better. However I felt needed hands-on observational stuff and to this end, started looking for the Silverstream Hatchery I had heard about.

The then National government was selling the NIWA Glenariffe Salmon Hatchery at this time. It was offered to Fish and Game but the national council turned it down. It seemed to me the salmon fishery was seen as a cash cow at that time, in that there had been up until then no input needed from F&G but they received all the output – a large amount of licence fees from salmon anglers, a lot of whom did not trout fish. This was going to start causing problems within a few years, problems that are still currently on going and more of that will come later. For now, the upshot of the hatchery closing was that 80% of the salmon run would disappear in a few short years.

Having a few days off while on a short contract, I decided to find the Silverstream Hatchery, which was providing a lot of salmon. In those days, before GPS and internet, that meant exploring some back roads and even to this day you can drive past it, set back off the road, with just a drive and a farm gate; the only difference is a small sign restricting public access. I went in, explained who I was and where I fished, and the staff were happy to show me around when they had time. It was good timing too. Egg harvesting was happening and there was a wheelbarrow full of dead salmon with their bellies cut open. I knew salmon died after spawning but asked why they killed hen fish; I had seen eggs being harvested from trout on film and this was different. It was explained that to get viable eggs you cannot have any water around them, and since the hens would die afterwards this was the most humane way. The eggs are removed to a bowl and tested for viability, they told me. You run your hand through the eggs and if they feel soft and silky, they are immediately transferred to a plastic bag. If hard, they are water-damaged, cannot be fertilized, and are rejected. The staff said it only takes 30 seconds exposure to water for an egg to develop a hard shell. The jacks can be used several times and are not killed but "milked" the same way trout are but again, avoiding water contact. The milt is collected in small containers to be mixed with eggs later.





When this is done the eggs from several hens is placed in a 10 litre bucket and the milt from several jacks added and stirred around with your hand, to make sure every egg has the chance to be fertilized and to keep the widest possible genetic base. The eggs are then let stand for a short time, before a small amount of water is added and stirred through, to harden the eggs. (This explains why, out in the streams, only about 50% of eggs get fertilized.) The bucket is then connected to a fresh water flow for the next several weeks, while the eggs develop.

That was all I saw at that time, but it was the start of an ongoing journey of learning and being involved in the process a lot more in coming years. (The photos showing this are of a later time but give a bit of an idea.)

The Silverstream Hatchery came about when the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society started a small trout hatchery on the stream, which is a part of the Kaiapoi river, in 1964. In 1973 the hatchery was selected by the South Island Salmon Committee as the site to start an experimental artificially-induced salmon run and a source of ova for transplanting around the South Island by the council of the South Island Acclimatisation Societies. In 1975 Silverstream was purchased by the then Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, looking to develop a salmon ocean ranching fishery.

SILVERSTREAM HATCHERY OPERATIONS; NZ FRESHWATER FISHERIES REPORT NO102:-

Total production of fish 1977-2000, 3.6 million

Total Angler funded smolt 1996-2000, 100,000

Average survival 1977-1981, 0.10%; Average survival 1984-2000, 1.60%

Highest survival 1992 release, 3.59%

In addition to these releases salmon spawned downstream from the hatchery, averaging approximately 50 Redds a season. (Fish &Game magazine 2000, pp28-33.)

Stage 4 of the addiction was underway.



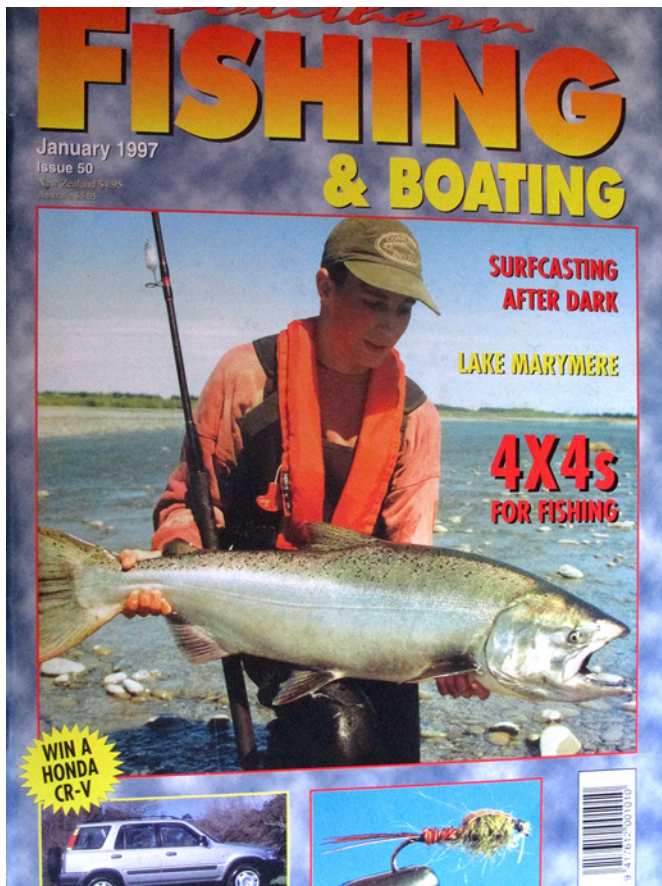
During this time I also decided I needed a new river salmon rod, as the ferrule had become so loose that when I put effort into casting the top section flew off. After some consideration I opted to look for a single piece rod of around 7 foot (2.1m) and spent a bit of time doing it, knowing if I found something in a catalogue I could get Jeremy to get it through his working at the Complete Angler.

Settled for a Fenwick HMG classic 7 foot (2.1Metre), GS 70 HM lure weight 7-28gm, line weight 4-6kg. This rod and another of the same model that I picked up a few years later on Trademe for \$20, would last me until 2013 and catch a lot of salmon. That set me up for the upcoming 1996-97 season.

The reel situation was a bit different; looking for metal-bodied smaller spinning reels was a problem in those days. I stuck to Mitchell and DAM brands mostly with 1 ABU model in there. Mitchells with rear drags were quite good but graphite bodied and bail arm springs and rotors did not last long and the metal bodied reels were at that time a bit heavy. One DAM reel I laid my eyes on is the only spinning reel I have seen that has a magnetic drag system and a handle that you can alter to speed up retrieval (see Photos). It seemed to work very well, until one day I found a major fault while fighting a good sized salmon.

I was fishing the Stewart Gully side of the Waimakariri in good conditions – slightly milky – when my spinner was hit by a hard-running fish. It took off up the river with the drag working perfectly – as the magnets increased the pressure the fish slowed, came back down about 25 metres, turned, and started to take off upstream again. Then the rotor broke away from the reel and jammed at the butt eye on the rod. I grabbed it but could not release line nor follow the fish and the line broke. Left me standing there staring at the broken reel wondering “WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?!” among fellow anglers with puzzled looks. To cap it all, that fish casually rose and did a slow porpoise in front of me, my spinner hanging from the corner of its mouth. I managed to find the retaining nut and tried reassembling the reel but discovered that the machining of the thread had been over done – how it had held together with some of the fish I caught with it seemed almost remarkable. Anyway, started looking replacement parts and finally found out this German-designed reel was assembled in Malaysia. Tracked down the company and was able to order the parts, which duly arrived. They had the same design fault. I came up with the idea to locktight the nut on, which worked, but I had lost confidence in the reel and so it has sat in my now around 140 antique reel cupboard untouched, until I got it out to write about it just now, 28 years later.

The reel has memories, however. Like one morning Jeremy and I shot off to Stewarts Gully for a rare fish, as he was now exploring other places with his work mates and developing a good reputation; so much so, around McIntoshs I was becoming known as 'Jemery's Dad'. We only had a short time out there early morning but in that time we both got fish and the DAM 650 M.D.S handled mine well. That was a good morning.







During the 95-96 off season we also heard that the main manufacturer, Whopper Stopper (SR Marston), based at Pleasant Point near Timaru, was going to stop putting out black anodised Zed Spinners – our favourites over the last few seasons. Martin and I decided we would find and visit every tackle shop in Christchurch and track down every last available one and found a few. Spinner loss can become one of the main expenses of salmon fishing, especially as the prevailing method – which we were moving away from by now – was to fish close to the river bed. Anyway, Martin, brother Colin and I thought about this and came up with the idea to approach the company and see if they would manufacture a special batch for us. They agreed to run around 100 to 150, to make it viable and we stipulated they use a certain die they had which had a flaw in it, near the swivel hole, as we had discovered this downturn gave Zed Spinners a more erratic movement through the water, which seemed to encourage more salmon hits. They agreed and we got our spinners. The anodised coating was not quite what we wanted but they still worked fine. I still have 6 and won't use them in case I lose them, which may seem a bit of a stupid. Since then, however, I have developed another way of getting the colours and patterns I want.

The 1996-97 season started with me not fishing at all firstly because of work and secondly, because my wife of 26 years decided she did not want to be my partner anymore. We stayed together for Christmas then found a flat for her and set it up. She moved out around what would have been our 27th anniversary.

The same weekend another strange occurrence had a major affect on me, my life, and I think the kids. The Press ran a feature article about something called Social Phobia which left me wondering how the person who wrote it knew what had been going on in my head for most of my life. It was like a SUDDEN HEAVY WEIGHT HAD BEEN LIFTED OFF ME. There was a name and reasons why this had been happening. This realisation caused mixed emotions with the two extremes mixed in. Finding out what was wrong with me helped me cope. I did seek counselling but soon gave that up as the solution was to leave the kids to my ex and head for England, where my qualifications would produce a job almost before I hit the tarmac. My only thought to that was, salmon fishing is very expensive over there.

All this emotional turmoil culminated in me deciding to out to the river one day in January, to The Point. I was standing there, casting with stuff going through my mind with a 3 metres or so deep hole at my feet. The thought came, just one more step. I stopped fishing, went home and did not even think about salmon for about a month.

It is strange how things happen. A week or two later I was reading The Press – as I tend to do every morning – found myself reading the classified and the personals, and an advert stood out. A group called Distinctive Dinning wrote about small groups of singles going out for dinner. On impulse I rang the group coordinator and asked for more information. Turns out you join, they send out a list of restaurants, you see one you would like to try and let them know, they book you in to your age group (there were 3), and the coordinator sets you up with 7 others split evenly, men and women. We met at restaurant, the coordinator introduced everyone, we paid a small fee and she left. You had a meal and good adult company for an hour or two, then went your separate ways. If there was someone you thought you would like to get know you ring the coordinator, who contacts that person and if the person was interested, you would get the contact details and take it from there. Why was this important to me? As it has turned out the rest of my life started with this group. I had been thinking I needed some "adult" company and was not interested in just spending time going to a pub, so joined, enjoyed it and felt like I was moving on.. The salmon addiction started to come back too. It was at the beginning of March that I started going out by myself and on the 4th I got a fish off The Point – a fresh run 14.5lb/6.6kg salmon in great condition, 31"/79cm long and an 18.5"/47cm girth. I was relieved, the addiction was still there.



Meanwhile the dinning group had organised a breakfast for all the groups this time at the Christchurch Casino, Sunday morning brunch. This was a test for me, as large groups of people in a social setting really stirred the worse of my social phobia. I usually had to force myself to do them. However this day was a break through, I found my self at ease and for once fairly relaxed, thinking I am in control of myself. What I didn't know there was also a certain lady there who was observing my interactions. A few days later I received a phone call from the group contact that lady was interested in meeting me and was I interested? I did not know who she was but I WOULD GIVE IT A GO!!! Armed with the contact details I phoned and set a date to go out for dinner 14th March. I would pick her up 5.30 pm from her home.

That day arrived but meanwhile Martin and I decided to go out to the Waimakariri, Stewart Gully side. We had a good day. The low tide was around 2pm and as peak fishing was half tide out and half tide in I thought I would have plenty of time to get home, clean up and be on time for my date. Martin got the first fish, a good fresh run, so we knew there was a least a bit of a run coming up. I got the next, a feisty little 2 year at sea, tagged hen 24.5"/62cm long with a 15.5"/39cm girth, weighing 8lb/3.63kg – the last NIWA tagged salmon I caught as this tagging was stopped when the Glenariffe was sold. However our day was going to get better, and more complicated. Later on, around 4pm, when I was beginning to think I should get going for my dinner appointment, Martin got his second fish, another good one. he said that's it had his limit and was off home. ME? A few more casts – as you do – and carried on; think it must have been close to 4.30pm when I really started thinking I must go. A hit, a fighting salmon and a little bit of trouble landing it with an incoming tide and steep bank but I managed it. This one was a bit bigger at 27.5"/70cm long and 16"/40cm girth, a great conditioned fish. I was by now in a bit of panic mode, however, as I knew I could not get back to the car, get home, deal with 2 fish, get cleaned up, and pick up my date by 5.30pm.

My saving grace was a Cell Phone. I rang the lady, explained the situation, was told "not to worry, take your time". That calmed the nerves. By the time I had done all that and arrived to pick her up it was close to 7pm. She had got hungry and eaten, yet still was happy to carry on with our arrangement and have desert while I had dinner, much to my surprise. What I didn't know (and was not told until much later on) was that she had been watching me at that breakfast and decided I was going to be her next husband. I was already well and truly hooked and landed; and still am, 27 years on, with my Hazel, pictured here with her first salmon.



I managed to catch 2 more fish before the end of March, on the 19th and 21st. The first one was a 13.5 lb/6.14kg jack, 32"/81cm long and 18"/46cm girth. The second was another jack, 15lb/6.82kg, 32.5"/82cm long and 18.5"/47cm girth. Both great conditioned fish. So the season ended. In spite the turmoil in my life, I was in a better place with plenty of hope in my personal life and already looking forward to the up-coming salmon season that was only 7 months away.

During this last part of that season one last totally unexpected event occurred when Martin caught another really good salmon. There had been a fresh down the river and looking at the flow according to Environment Canterbury phone service (pre internet) the river could be marginal. Nonetheless Martin and I decided it was worth a look. All this season the Stewarts Gully side of the Waimakariri River had been fished, our normal spot at The Point having filled in and there had been no large floods to flush the hole out. The river when we got there was less than marginal but we decided to have a few casts anyway.

There is a rock on the bank where we sometimes had a few casts on our way to the favoured spot. Martin stopped and cast out, retrieving in a bit slower than normal to see how far into the water he could see his spinner. To our surprise a large salmon followed the spinner right up to his feet and then sat there, just below him. We looked at it. It didn't move. Martin slowly lowered his spinner down just in front of the fish and gave it a little twitch, fully expecting the fish would take off. Instead it shot forward and grabbed the lure, then took off. Luckily Martin had his multiplier reel line disengaged and it didn't break off. A good fight later he had an impressive salmon on the bank, taken on about a metre of line!



Where there's a will . . .



Chasing 'Eucumbene Gold' with Matt Hoole



In subzero temperatures, I stood, rugged up in my winter warmers, surveying the 180 degree views over the gum forest lands, by the Eucumbene River meandering through naked grasslands. I was wondering what behaviour the spawning browns would be displaying, after recent heavy rainfall in the mountains. It's always hit and miss trying to predict how the great alpine river will fish, especially on the back end of extremely hot and dry conditions throughout Autumn. Being so dependent on Mother Nature providing enough rain or snow to raise the river levels to encourage the browns to run, while also offering protection for them to feed safely, would she render 'Eucs' golden bellies readily this year to the obsessed angler who's so willing to do the yards? Or would it be the usual cat and mouse game of timing it with the weather patterns, while testing every ounce of one's patience?

As the runs approach the conversations start to mount, the weather channels are frequently monitored, and the sleepless nights begin, counting down to NSW's 'Holy Grail' of fishing in the Snowy Mountains. It's that time of year for like-minded anglers to come together from all over Australia and relax their conscious minds while rejoicing in their illustrious search for that elusive trophy brown trout!

It's also a soul searching time, sipping whisky or beer on the riverbank while being spoiled by the majestic views and serenity of the Kosciuszko National Park. A time of reflection and recharging one's energy levels before heading back home to life's heavy demands.

The NSW annual spawning run centres itself around two main rivers in the Kosciuszko National Park, the Eucumbene and Thredbo, with the Snowy River being a distant third. These two perennial rivers are annual spawning-run river fisheries, with many fish entering their waters from Eucumbene Dam and Lake Jindabyne during the run. Both are classified as 'Blue Ribbon' from May 1 to the June long weekend, meaning anglers can keep only one fish per day, at a legal limit of 50cm.

After months of gorging on a buffet of river crayfish (yabbies), the browns look to move off the bottom of Eucumbene Dam before congregating at the mouth of the Providence Arm. It's here the Eucumbene spawning run commences each year, when the weather cools and the heavens open. The first run of brown trout will charge up river from the lake upon rain, ready to face the hardships of spawning time; at times pushing their resilient bodies to the limits, scraping over shingle, jumping through steep rapids and fighting with one another. In more recent years, with the Snowy Hydro Scheme pumping gallons of water into Providence Portal, the trout will also begin their journey up the Eucumbene river from this catchment, also known as Lake Eucumbene. 'Eucumbene Gold', scattered across the riverbed, continues to drive the masses to Denison Campground, even with temperatures in the negatives. These browns' patterns during spawning, like an exquisitely crafted jigsaw puzzle, with a distinct reddish tinge, ensure these fish are a worthy prize! The opportunity to catch a true trophy makes fishing here even more a lure to the endeavouring angler.

It takes determination to fish this run!





*Resident Eucumbene Brown,
caught by my brother Dan*



Parked up at Dennison Campground, my gut feeling told me to leave this populated section of the river for another time and investigate further afield. Changing gears, I drove the dirt road back towards the Snowy Mountains Highway before turning onto the Alpine Sawmill Trail, opting to hike back into the Flying Fox Pool where I'd had success last winter.

Upon laying eyes on this location again, what a difference a year had made to the river and landscape. Dangerously dry weather patterns since then have baked NSW and ACT. As a result the Eucumbene river was a dribble compared to the torrents of water that gushed down through its gorged landscapes almost a year ago. The pools were so shallow in comparison to what I'd experienced during last year's run and the water so clear, that the golden stones on their beds were visible to the naked eye.

The fishing proved extremely tough going, given the low, clear water. There were some great resident brown trout up to about 6lbs holding in the larger pools and I witnessed, with a spin fisherman I had met by chance, a huge school of 15-20 browns circulating a beat in a deep hole. Catching them in low conditions posed a challenge, as these fish were more invested in their spawning antics than the temptations to eat provided. However, the spin fishermen seemed to be having the edge at tempting these temperamental resident fish into action. Perhaps the ability to turn out more casts in lesser time, while also imitating the larger bait fish of the river was encouraging a ferocious hit. Territorial aggression was probably the likely answer here, the fish literally bullying those shiny lures out of their domain, just as they would intruding fish.

These resident fish were vastly different in colour to the lake runners, a brown-green complexion covered in prominent black spots in contrast to the 'spawners', whose vibrant colour tones and patterns looked almost burning with passion. One week before, my brother Dan had found success luring the resident fish to a fly on the back end of a weekend of rain. The river had risen approximately a foot and the fish, although slightly skittish, were still happy taking a small nymph when contact-nymphing the river bottom, but refused any type of egg pattern he presented. Another method he found fruitful was twitching an olive or black Woolly Bugger in front of the trout's noses in getting a reactionary strike. When talking to other anglers, the early drop of rain had been enough for the first run of fish to charge up river from the lake. However these spawners remained fairly inactive, sitting deep in dormancy as the weather improved and water levels quickly receded.

Reduced flows and skinny tail outs made for challenging conditions on this visit





Coming into June we were still desperately awaiting that heavy dump of rain or snow to bring water levels up enough to encourage the fish to feed actively. The Eucumbene river only feeding off icy mornings with minimal runoff meant anglers were now praying for 'peak conditions', overcast weather to bring the spawners out of hibernation for the day, with the fish spasmodically taking anglers' flies.

Then, as if the heavens listened to our calls, a week's rain was forecast ahead on the radar. Although the early morning temperatures were now consistently hitting the negatives, it was never tipping the scales to force a heavy top dressing of snow to whiten out the Kosciuszko National Park, turning it into a winter wonderland. Nevertheless, the crowds poured in over the closing two weeks bringing the familiar sights of anglers lining the riverbanks. Rods were synchronously bent over with the tension of fish, while anglers held iconic pools of the Eucumbene river territorially. I received photos of 10 pound plus trout from those keen anglers intent on grinding out hundreds of casts and putting the hard yards in. I managed another half day trip to Denison with my family soon after but by then conditions had returned to low water, and I blanked.



Myself and mate James timed our final run up to the mountains to the very last minute, closing day! Expecting to be shoulder to shoulder with other anglers at Denison Campground, we arrived to find only a handful of cars. That sure came as a surprise, as normally the last day of the NSW fishing season brings out those die hard anglers keen to have one final crack at it.

Confusion turned to a state of perplexity once down on the riverbank, as the river had reformed itself to its low, clear self again! 'How?' Naturally, we were anticipating higher river levels with a faster flow after all the rain. Nevertheless, despite the decreased water level, the spawners were out and about showing off their crimson coats while displaying all their usual wintertime behaviour.

Initially, it was tough fishing again, as myself and James edged our way up into the bush line, working what we thought would be likely holding water. While never forgetting the spawning run mantra of having to be down hard on the bottom, we found ourselves getting snagged up countless times and having to go through the unfortunate process of re-rigging.

After a busy morning of working water, James finally struck gold, Eucumbene Gold! As the fish ripped away up the rapids, he confessed to hooking it on a two foot dropper after his indicator had slipped down. Had this fish actually come up in the water column to take a Glo Bug? It appeared so.



Little slip streams like this at Denison, always hold a few quality fish during the run.





Rather stubbornly and not wanting to give up on Eucumbene's 'golden rule,' I continued to dredge the bottom with a double fly rig consisting of a traditional Glo Bug as the point fly with a weighted nymph trailing it on a dropper, at times even putting on a split shot to get down in the deeper pools. Thinking it was only a matter of time until I hooked up, I kept bumping the bottom in typical spawning run style. Then James was into another fish, slightly larger than the last, twisting and rolling on its way to the net. Then another, in pretty quick succession! Spawning run or not, fly fishing has always been about adapting your methods when the situation demands for it, so I changed up.

Now both armed with lighter rigs, we began sight fishing our way upstream, taking a side each.

"Matt! There's two fish holding on the other side of this rock!" James called.

Without much thought, I instinctively laid out a short, accurate cast above the rock where the fish held, swaying in knee deep water. As the indicator cruised down, one of the browns had no hesitation in snapping it up like a meal presented on a Japanese Sushi train conveyor.

With the monkey finally brushed off my back, we continued fishing our way up through the bush focusing on the shallower pocket water and runs with a feeling now almost akin to summer time fishing in the Australian Alps. Confidence started to seep back into my veins while blood began flowing freely again, as I searched eagerly for that next fish.

It didn't take long! Seeing my indicator plummet down, I set the hook, and a big brown flapped about on the surface moments after. I leaned into him early with side pressure, using the backbone of my Traper Silence 10 foot rod. It was tight water, and I had to be sharp, clipping off the net awaiting an opportunity for a quick netting job. Being a typical brown he pulled away, naturally gravitating towards obstacles, dropping below me in the rapids before burying his head deep under a boulder as James dived in with the net. Desperately trying to leverage him up in the water column for James to get the net under him, the 4 weight cried out for help under its weight and then he was off, snapping my tippet clean.

For the next hour when the clock hit 2 o'clock, myself and James fished in 'Eucumbene's Nirvana!' We both caught splendid spawning run browns, which were all eager to eat! We cast to 8 pounders or larger, fell in the river a number of times, including when playing fish while laughing hysterically in the moment and somehow not caring about the cold, until perhaps, later on! After James netted another fish for himself, a beautiful four pound jack buried with classic spawning run colour, we couldn't help but question what it was about the '2 o'clock window,' on the Eucumbene. We'd both experienced similar timings before when fishing the run during previous years.

I particularly remember a day out last year, when fishing the Flying Fox Pool with my wife and kids. I plugged away for an hour or more with very little action, even though the river was high and looked extremely 'fishy'. Checking the time on my I phone, it had just ticked past 2 o'clock, when suddenly my indicator dived and a tug of war contest had begun with an aggressive head-shaking brown trout.

James meets success by accident and (left) after changing up accordingly, I finally get that monkey off my back





Very soon, I had a beautiful hen in the net, before following up with another two nice jacks within the hour. Then the fishing went completely cold again and recognising I had two little kids wrapped up like Eskimo's next to me, had no option but to call it quits.

James also told me about his similar experiences when fishing the run, witnessing when the browns 'turn on,' and 'turn off' again. He confessed to 2 o'clock being the highlight hour on many occasions.

Although mornings and nights often produce great fishing to hungry brown trout willing to eat, we both couldn't ignore that this time could well be the 'golden hour' of the Eucumbene spawning run.

We fished on eventually arriving up at The Flying Fox Pool which was a welcome sight, knowing we could take the trail easily back to the car park, then on towards Denison Campground, arriving back before dark.

Myself and James were pretty battered when we finally saw the car in sight. After being on the water since dawn, we'd covered some distance following the river from Denison Campground up to the Flying Fox Pool, with numerous falls and plenty of fish caught along the way. We welcomed some dry clothes, a warm car and a hot takeaway for the journey home. What a final day's fishing we'd been spoilt with, finishing off the NSW fishing season.

This year's spawning run was incomparable to previous years, with Mother Nature presenting a new challenge for us this time; warm, dry weather with extremely low river levels. After an extremely tough period of fishing in Autumn fighting the elements, we eventually found the 'sweet spot' in abnormal fishing conditions, only lasting for a few weeks before closing.

The browns ran as they always do, albeit perhaps later than usual into the season. Given the indifferent weather patterns and environment, they bunkered down taking refuge for the early part before revealing themselves, their beautiful golden flanks, keeping us obsessed anglers playing the guessing game, until the very end.

Yes, when chasing 'Eucumbene Gold' it's VERY MUCH a question of, 'Where there's a will, there's a way!'

Catching brown trout like these in a pristine waterway in the Kosciuszko National Park, is heaven on earth!

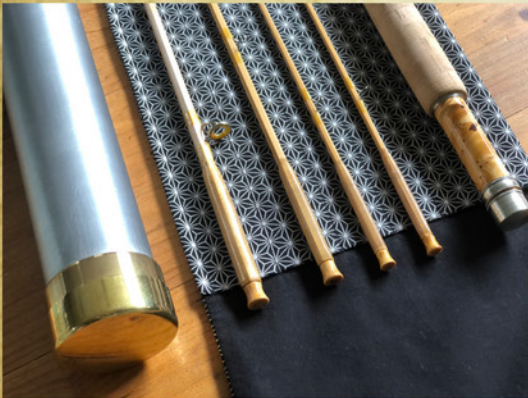


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