

THE HUTT VALLEY ANGLER

Issue No 397 : February 2015

Newsletter of the Hutt Valley Angling Club Inc



February Activities

9th	Club Monthly Meeting — King Lion Hall 7:30pm
17th	Copy deadline for March newsletter
21st	Goodman shield — Paremata Inlet
22nd	Casting Clinic & Buddy Programme
25th	Fly Tying — Community House 7.30pm

Editorial

We have had a long dry spell this month allowing the rivers to stabilise and then the water levels have dropped to the extent that the streams are warming and many have a slippery coating of algae on most of the stones. Good for the browsing insects but a problem for anyone fishing at depth or wading. As expected, the trout have moved to more oxygenated water for comfort and more cover. Cicadas are out there, but a quick look round the committee room at our meeting, about a week ago, revealed that many of our committee had signs of paint on their hands so, like me they had been on the end of a paint brush instead of being on the end of their fishing rods.

John Millar

Newsletter Editor

The cover photo this month was taken by Trevor Jefferies

President's Piece

It is only late January as I write this and I got hit by a Cicada on a walk last week, how many people would get really excited about an encounter with a Cicada, I guess you have to be an angler to understand that this is not the first sign of madness.

So the dry fly season is under way and the rivers beckon. So the car is packed, a selection of flies fills two boxes, the helicopter is booked and the adventure begins. Well not quite, the last job before heading to the Ngaruroro is to write a message to my fellow members. I am looking forward to sharing some stories from this trip on our first club night for the year next month. More importantly I am looking forward to hearing all the stories you have to tell about the lakes and rivers you have been fishing in this season. Work commitments and travel have meant that this summer has had less fishing than I am used to but hopefully this trip I am heading off on now will make up for all that.

I would encourage you to take the opportunity at our next club night to share a story, a photograph or even a video. Fishing stories are great and also help us see the country and be part of



others' fishing experiences. Whilst it is entertaining, it showcases the very thing we try to achieve as a club, promoting the sport of fly fishing. Our stories by default contain information on where to fish (you don't have to share your secrets), the gear we used and the fun that was had. Please take up the challenge and come along ready to jump in and tell us the good, the bad and perhaps even the ugly (I have seen some pretty ugly fish) about your fishing adventures.

During the first committee meeting this year we discussed the programme for the year and we have a great list of activities and club nights including new guest speakers including a south island guide, a fly fishing gear designer and others. We also have workshops planned for novice and experienced anglers and of course some more of the same great things we have been up to in previous years. The year ahead looks good, fishing reports have been excellent so welcome to 2015 everyone and I look forward to a great Hutt Valley Angling Club year.

Steve Doughty

Club News

Club Night – Monday 9th February at 7.30 p.m.

King Lion Hall, King Street, Upper Hutt.

This month we will hear members' fishy tales and there should be some good ones. There will be opportunities to ask questions or seek help on fishing problems. A brief outline of our planned activities for the early part of the year will be given.

Goodman Shield Saltwater Fly Fishing event - Saturday 21 February – see under Fishing competitions later in this newsletter.

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Sponsor of the Club's Guiding Raffle

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Hutt Valley

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Casting Clinics and Buddy Programme

The next clinic will be held on Sunday 22 February. Please note that this is one week later than normal due to other commitments. Our monthly casting session will be held at 9.00 am on Sunday immediately prior to our Buddy Programme Session. It will be possible for members to attend casting then follow up with a Buddy session on the same morning. Names please on the clipboard at our monthly meeting or register on the website. Ian Lawson can be contacted for further information. His details are at the back of the newsletter.

It will be necessary to register for both casting and Buddy session if you intend to do both. We need to know how many tutors will be required for the sessions.

For further information get in touch with Ross Goodman, his contact details are given on the inside back page of the newsletter.

Fly Tying Meeting - Wednesday 25 February 7.30 p.m.

Upper Hutt Community Meeting House, off Logan Street beside Upper Hutt Medical Centre.

This month – Gold Ribbed Hare's Ear

This versatile fly is usually tied as a weighted nymph but is equally effective if tied unweighted and fished high in the water column where it may be mistaken for an emerging caddis fly.



Our monthly beginner fly tying group will meet at 6.30 p.m. in the same room immediately prior to the senior meeting. Those attending this group are reminded to be there by 6.30.

Handicap Fishing Competitions

Goodman Shield — Unfortunately this competition wasn't fished during our weekend trip to Pahiataua in early December so we have rescheduled it as a novelty Saltwater Fly fishing Competition. We have provisionally set the date as Saturday 21 February. The competition will be held at Paremata inlet with the times to be decided in accordance with the high tide. We hope to see some Kahawai being caught on the fly!



If you are interested in trying this alternative fly fishing style we would recommend your heaviest rod and line and tie or purchase a few brightly coloured large flies. These should be flashy to attract kawahai or mullet. Suitable flies can be seen online at various websites.

Burgess Shield Surfcasting Competition — March 14 or 15 (day to be decided). Details and an entry sheet will be available at our March club meeting.

This will be held at Lake Ferry. You will remember that 'Snapperman' aka Mike Nansett won last year's competition with a very nice snapper caught from the beach.

Please register for the competitions through our easy website registration or by contacting John Millar by email or phone. If you haven't fished a competition before, then give it a try. A generous points allowance for each fish will be given to less experienced competitors and you could win one of these handsome trophies to hold for a year.

Raffle Winners in December

Green Trout Guiding Raffle Entry – (48) Dan Waechter
Fly Box with 12 flies – (44) Colin Lewis
\$20 Hunting and Fishing Voucher – (18) Al Markham

Club Trips

Our trip co-ordinator is Damian Bengree. If you have suggestions for a club trip please talk with Damian, meanwhile he has been putting together a trip calendar to various destinations during the new season. Damian's contact details are at the back of the newsletter.

Here is a list of proposed trips with tentative dates. Details will be posted as these arrangements are finalised.

February – Lake Otamangakau cancelled.

March – Mohaka River – Mountain Valley Lodge

April – Taihape

If you are interested in taking part in a club trip then please get in touch with Damian, his contact details are at the back of the newsletter.

Library

Maureen advises that we have a new book in the library. This is for our saltwater enthusiasts (just to show that we promote all forms of angling). A review of the book is given below.

Book Review — “How to Catch Fish and Where The complete Kiwi Beginners Guide” by Mike Rendle.

The most important word in this book’s title is “complete”.

Mike Rendle covers his subject completely in a no-nonsense fashion and illustrates most pages with detailed diagrams and high quality photos. There are a number of very good tips and explanations throughout the book. A list of the chapters indicates the content and scope of this excellent book.

- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Safety | 11. Boat Fishing Basics |
| 2. Take a Kid Fishing | 12. Other Options |
| 3. Before We Start – Basics | 13. Fishing Rules and the Environment |
| 4. Rods and Reels | 14. Lures and How to Fish Them |
| 5. About Lines | 15. Softbaits |
| 6. Hooks, Sinkers, Swivels, Clips | 16. Filleting Your Catch |
| 7. Fishing Tools, Tackle Boxes | 17. Smoking Fish |
| 8. Knots and Rigging | 18. Fish Identification |
| 9. Bait and Berley | 19. Where to Catch Fish |
| 10. Wharf, Beach and Rock Fishing Basics | |

At 285 pages there is plenty to digest and I thoroughly recommend this book to all fishers.

Reviewed by John Millar

Buddy-Plus Raffle

The Buddy-Plus raffle was drawn at the November meeting. The winner was number (7) Ian Porter. Ian should have a memorable couple of days fishing and we look forward to hearing from him after the trip which will be taken early February.

Fish of the Month

Details of trout caught can be entered in the club fishing diary and

will be considered for our fish of the month award. Hunting and Fishing (Alicetown) sponsor a \$10 voucher each month for heaviest fish. Entries need to be received by the Saturday prior to our club meeting to qualify for fish of the month. You can enter fish in the club diary by email or phone to John Millar.

The winner in November was Ian Lawson with a nice Brown Trout hen of 4lb caught in a local river.

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Tales from the Riverbank.

Over the holiday period some of our members have taken advantage of the good weather and fished around our region. There have been visits to the upper Otaki River, different parts of the Ruamahanga and the Rangitikei Rivers to list a few. Not all of these trips were successful in terms of fish caught, but nevertheless the experiences were enjoyed.

Mike Nansett and his brother-in-law Jason (this month's MTM) enjoyed some good dry fly fishing in the South Island whilst on holiday.

Mike wrote that on one small river they had some great dry fly action. He hooked 19 trout and landed about half of them. The lucky ones made a run under overhanging willows and managed to escape. Jason caught his first trout on a fly rod then repeated that success the next day.

A report from Damian Bengree.

Going fishing with Tim had always been on my to do list, ever since Tim had explained his methodology and approach to fly fishing; and so it came to pass that we I ventured over to the Ruamahanga on a sunny morning to fish the waters near Morrison Bush. Coming down the hill towards the river I was pleasantly surprised to see this popular camping field was somewhat quiet which should mean the river would be free of fishermen too. We were in luck, no fishermen to be seen!

Tim spotted the first brown, holding in about 200mm of quiet water and



surprisingly decided to tie on a small dry fly. If you don't know Tim, he normally fishes small wets across river, holds the line firmly and maintains line control as the fly swings across and down. A method that's very successful. Two or three casts was all it took for Tim to land his first fish of the day, a nice one and half pound brown.

As we progressed upstream, we could clearly see a number of trout rising in the next pool, however despite a number of fly changes and a variety of approaches the fish weren't interested in our offerings. Moving on and fishing through runs, riffles and pools we didn't touch another fish so back to the car and the shade of the willows where we had started the day. Tim suggested I fish down river using a small wet trailing behind a weighted hare and copper. Bang! , I was into a rainbow which came easily to the net. Third cast and wham another rainbow, which jumped and ran, finally coming to the net.

After lunch and a nice long cold drink we set off down to the bottom of Morrison Bush, crossed the river and skirted the edge of the farmers field, scrambled through the blackberry and old willows. Looking ahead, the runs and white water looked promising and so they proved to be. Tim fished one side of the run picking up a few rainbows while I crossed and picked up a nice brown, however while I bent over and was netting him I noticed a splosh at my feet. Closer examination of the stony river bed revealed my car keys, wow, lucky I spotted them! Back in my pocket they went and on I fished. Ten minutes later, where's my phone! Bugger! no sign. Well that's a good lesson. Always zip your pockets. Despite the loss of a phone, I had a great day and really enjoyed fishing with Tim.

Just after the New Year, the call of the Ruamahanga struck again and this time Dave and I decided to spend the night on the river bank, luckily the night was warm, the winds calm, and the stars were oh so very bright against the Wairarapa sky. This was the perfect night for sleeping under the stars and led to a near perfect day, brimming with numerous takes from rainbows that were small in stature but enthusiastic in the battle.

At the first pool Dave and I spied a number of browns rising and feeding tight under the willow branches, however despite a number of fly changes none responded. Off we went, working our way down river, fishing the white water using a dry dropper which proved successful with a number of rainbows coming to the net. A further one hundred metre walk down river led us to the best

fishing spot of the day. A tight, two metre wide, white-water drop off under the willows looked promising! The first drift of the dry fly, dropper rig through the zone was met with a sudden dip of the dry and a nice two pound rainbow leapt skywards followed by a storming run under the willows and a break off. After re tying the rig and casting further away from the willows the dry dipped again, however, this time I was ready; side strain was applied on the strike and after a few minutes a nice rainbow was landed. This set the tone for this drop off. Cast close to the willows and lose fish and rig, cast further out and land a nice trout. In the end I pulled about eight rainbows from this one stretch.

By this time the sun was high in the sky and scorching therefore we decided to make our way up river to the waiting car and a cold drink. Along the way, more feisty rainbows were pulled from the highly aerated, cooler water with two being kept for the smoker. Long may the summer last!

Dry Fly Action by Armani Govind

What appeared to be an average kind of a Wellington day (a day we would probably not fish), turned out to be a wonderful day out in the Wairarapa. Tony Houpt had offered my father and I (arguably just me), a day's fishing on the Ruamahanga River. This was my chance to gain knowledge and christen my new Rod. We had arrived in the Wairarapa with what we thought would be appropriate cold windy weather gear. Little had we realised that we were overdressed. The first thing was to strip off the thermals into 1 layer and be on our merry way.

Tony set himself up with a Czech nymph, my father setup a wet line and I setup a dry fly. Wandering up the river we decided to cross. Just days before the river was in flood with a $170 \text{ m}^3/\text{sec}$ then settling down to another spike the day before we arrived to $80 \text{ m}^3/\text{s}$ (it was interesting to note that Tony checks the water level rather than the river flow). When we arrived the river was still up, so our first crossing was a bit edgy. Reaching half way before we realised that crossing was going to be dangerous, we turned back and went up a bit further into some slower current and crossed there. Tony started off with Czech nymphing by tying on an Orange Beaded Red Pheasant Tail



Flashback, with a natural as a dropper. It was the 3rd cast when he hooked and released a small brown trout. He then handed the rod over and guided me through how to cast. With little experience casting it was quite a challenge lobbing nylon up the river. When eventually I hooked one, how easy is that for fishing. Without realising to keep the tension on a barbless hook it was off as quickly as it came on. Lesson learnt. I fished the rest of the stretch then proceeded further up the river to find what appeared to be a small trout under the willows feeding on the surface. Tony took the dry fly setup and had a few casts at it. We were positioned up above the fish not the best position for a strike. The fish had seen the fly the and a bow wave came, it took, and Tony struck but the connection wasn't there. Spooked.

We fished the rest of the pool in hope. My father went off with wet line truck and trailer combination (a small hackless Woolly Bugger with an orange bead and a small wee wet). We later met up and went up the river with no luck. We had lunch, and Tony couldn't resist to try the deep, narrow slow run where we had stopped, he seemed convinced that the water was fishy. No luck, we went back down to find the earlier fish feeding under the willows. It was my turn to try (this time square on with the fish). Casting about 3 feet above it, the size 18 Parachute Adams delivered. A good 5 minute fight led us to thinking it was bigger than first anticipated.

The fish was landed netted but never weighed, still a solid fish nevertheless. This was my first fish hooked and landed on a Dry Fly. This has to be one of the best fishing methods for me personally as the action and seeing the fish take is just amazing. This fish was chocker filled with willow grubs. We went back down to the stretch where we first started Czech Nymphing. I was rushing through this last stretch as we were about to head home when I hooked another fish, then another, and another. Turns out I was pretty hopeless with barbless hooks.

Tony then checked the flies and came to a decision that they were blunt (to be honest I would still fish them), he showed me how to assess whether or not the hook is blunt. By running the barb over your thumb nail if it slides across its blunt, if it grips and holds its still worthy of using. Once the fly is blunt he



will only keep the bead of the fly if minimal or no paint damage is found, otherwise it's only good for the bin.

Two day fishing trip by Ian Lawson.

Bill Harris and myself ventured into the Tararua Forest Park on a two day and two night trip to fish the upper reaches of the Ruamahanga River. Bill's wife Carolyn dropped us off at the start of the track at 4pm on Tuesday. with instructions to collect us between 5 and 6 pm on Thurs. By 7 pm we had reached our intended campsite, on the way we disturbed half a dozen wild piglets but there was no sign of the mother so it is quite possible she had been shot. After we had passed the lodge the track turned into more of a deer trail than a track and if it wasn't for the orange stickers on a tree here a there you could easily lose the trail. The campsite was one which Bill had used many times over the last 50 years and was still being used to this day by hunters and fishermen, with a spring creek within 5mins walking distance which made it an ideal spot. It had been a hard slog in and both Bill a I had sweated buckets, with air temperature well over 20 deg C. so after Bill had setup the flysheet and I had cooked supper it was off to bed, — well you couldn't actually call it bed, one of those self-inflating mattress about an inch thick and mine had a blow-up pillow which kept going flat so I didn't get much sleep.

The next morning having had a good breakfast and hanging our packs in a tree (so that any pigs couldn't get at them) we went in search of a place to access the river, having spent at least an hour of scrambling and beating our way through bush we finally reached the riverbed and what a wonderful stretch of river it was with crystal clear water; although we did notice



light green algae growing where the river was shallow. Bill commented that he had never seen the algae this far up the river in the past. A sign of the times and things to come! We assembled our rods and headed upstream. In the next 5 hrs having climbed and scrambled over numerous bluffs and waded through pools and crossed the river several times we had no fish to show for it, we did however see about 10 to 12 good sized trout but if we didn't spook them while climbing over the bluffs the ones we did get to cast to

were just not interested in feeding no matter what we tried. We left the riverbed about 2pm with the intention of breaking camp and hiking back down the river below the lodge where the wading is a lot easier. Well that was the intention, but after scrambling up out of the riverbed and not immediately finding the track we climbed halfway up the ridge looking for it, where Bill told me to wait there while he looked a bit further up. Sometime later I heard Bill calling me and it appeared to me that he was ahead and below me which proved to be the case,



Bill had climbed to the top of the ridge and not found any sign of the track so had come back down again where I joined him and we headed off back towards the river and sure enough we came across an orange sticker nailed to a tree. After two to two and a half hours from leaving the river we finally arrived back at camp but were too damned tired to follow through with our plan of moving down river that night, so something to eat then off to bed. We had company that evening in the form of a pair of shining cuckoos which I had not come across before, they were noisy buggers. Bill said they come from overseas each year and are not native to NZ. They went quiet come dark but started up again in the morning. It rained in the night and I lay there thinking we are only under a flysheet so I hope it doesn't last very long, I don't know how long it rained for but I would think only an hour or two and had stopped by the time we got up in the morning.

We had breakfast, collected up any rubbish, packed our backpacks and set off down the track towards the lodge, an hour and a half later we were looking for a place to again access the river. Once again after scrambling down bush clad cliffs we were on the riverbed, ate some lunch then we assembled our rods and set off upstream. Two and a half hours later and not having seen a fish we decided to call it a day and headed back to collect our packs and head out.

We decided to walk down the river to a track that Bill said had been bulldozed many years ago and would mean we would have much easier ascent from the riverbed. We had one deepish pool to wade or alternatively climb up and over the bluff. I thought the pool was no more than waist deep and I'd had enough of climbing so off

came the shorts and underpants and we crossed without the water getting above our waists. Unfortunately the photo I took of Bill crossing was out of focus which is a great shame. We continued downstream still not seeing a fish until we came to the so-called bulldozed track, it was no longer a bulldozed track and would have been very easy to miss altogether, being less than half a metre wide. If you weren't looking for it you wouldn't know it was there. Half an hour later we arrived back at the pickup point at 4.45 pm. We were tired, disappointed we had not caught a fish but happy in our ability to get out and enjoy this wonderful country in our early seventies.

Get out and do it while you are still able — we're a long time dead!

Night Fishing

In mid-January two club members, Ian and John, drove to a local river for a spot of evening fishing. It had been a hot and sunny day so they were confident that a good rise would ensue because there was certain to be plenty of insects hatching. The river level had continued to drop over the last couple of weeks; it was now at low summer level and was running at ankle deep in some sections. Nymph fishing becomes a difficult task under these conditions so they were relieved to be fishing on or near the surface. John had set up with 2 flies about 30 cm apart. His point fly was a green beetle and his dropper fly was a dark coloured elk hair caddis. The caddis was dressed on size 14 hook and the small beetle was size 16. Ian had a similar setup except that his point fly was an unweighted #16 Hare and Copper and his dropper was a light grey CDC dry fly to match the Mayfly hatch.

Unusually, there was little or no fly activity to be seen. They patrolled a good looking stretch of river keeping well back from the water's edge.. Ian decided to check out a deeper pool further upstream whilst John scanned a shallow but likely looking pool for a telltale swirl that would indicate that fish were feeding subsurface on emergers. After about 10 minutes John heard a call from Ian and saw him coming down towards him carrying a trout in his net. Ian had cast into a very fishy looking run and his Hare and Copper nymph was taken immediately. It was a fine trout of six and a half pounds. A photo was taken and the trout released. The two anglers then moved back to their original spot and continued their vigil, watching and listening for signs of surface feeding. John heard the sound of trout sucking insects a couple of times but had

difficulty pin pointing where that fish had risen. A few speculator casts brought no result. It was getting dark now and then a trout or two began feeding steadily directly across the stream from Ian. He had managed to tangle his flies and had a struggle in the dark to unravel his tangled leader. Meanwhile that fish or couple of fish



were now feasting continually. John spotted a rising trout hard against the bank about seven metres upstream from where the other trout was still rising, but not to Ian's flies. John cast over and placed his flies about a metre upstream from the trout. On his second cast the fish took one of the flies and John lifted. He felt the slight resistance as the fly lipped the fish. It continued to rise and had not been alarmed by the pull of the fly. Meanwhile the trout that Ian had been covering made a fatal mistake by taking his Hare and Copper. It surged downstream and splashed angrily on the surface. John had a second offer from the trout he had been fishing to; this time he struck and jagged the fish but the hook pulled out again. He had been upstream of the trout so perhaps that was a contributing factor. It is quite possible that the reduced hook gape on his beetle pattern may have been partly to blame as well. Despite the fact that the trout had felt the hook at least once it kept on feeding. John was surprised to say the least. Then the inevitable happened, Ian's trout had decided to head upstream and although he tried to muscle it back down the pool, it was sending out massive bow waves as it careered closer towards the rising fish. The other trout stopped feeding. Ian got his fish under control and netted a beautiful hen fish of 5lbs. These local trout have been in stunning condition this season so the feeding must be excellent at present. Once the regulation photoshoot was over, the pair prepared to recommence fishing when it happened.

The moon came up. A full moon a huge white balloon in the sky. The darkness was gone and long shadows were now being cast across the landscape. It seemed



bright enough to read a newspaper. All insect activity had been switched off and not another rising fish could be seen or heard. It was time to go home.

A Report from Thomas Fichtner

My wife and I spent 4 days on Lake Waikaremoana during our Christmas holiday last year and it turned out to be a fairly successful fishing trip as well, despite being so short.

Lake Waikaremoana is a really beautiful place to stay and offers numerous opportunities for tramping, hiking and of course fishing.

For those who don't have a boat, the fishing there is a little bit limited but not impossible.

Lake Waikaremoana has a number of streams flowing in, and one of them is Hopuruahine.

It is a stream or small river similar to the Wainuiomata or the Makuri river.

It takes about half an hour to drive there from Lake Waikaremoana Holiday Park. Hopuruahine flows through native bush or forest and access is limited. At the time we've been there the population of fish wasn't very high. I counted maybe 15 fish in total on a 4km stretch of river. Both brown trout and rainbows are present. Six of them were above 6lb and the rest just about 2lb - 3lb.

It is a beautiful, quiet place, gin clear water with no other fishermen around, nor any human footprints around the river at all. The fishing was a little bit challenging as the fish were easily spooked and I literally had to move inch by inch.

The fish I caught was Billy the brown trout 9.72 lb, caught on dry fly, my favourite Adams irresistible size 14 and 4lb tippet material as my rod was set up for smaller fish. Billy didn't want to take the fly immediately when I landed it about 150mm from his head, but he took it once I cast the fly literally right on the front of



his mouth.

For those who are going to fish the lake and don't have a boat, a spinning rod would be your best friend. On a sunny day I walked about 2.5km from our camp cabin - along side of the lake shore and I spotted around 15 fish cruising alongside the edge.

All of them were about 4 — 5lb but I was missing a spinning rod so for me it was more an observation for next year Christmas holiday.

Note that with a fly rod you won't do anything, because before you pull the line out and cast, the fish will be gone as they are moving quite swiftly. With a fly rod it was best for me to cast lightly weighted wet flies (woolly buggers and lumo's) from the shore in the late afternoon until dark. I caught two fish in 30 minutes and that was the last casts and fish of 2014.

If you go there, please enjoy fishing but respect the area as it is a National Park. Also catch and release if you fish the streams.



Letter to the Editor

Hutt Valley Angling Club

Dear Mr Editor

I would like to comment on a report on the FishScene Interclub Flytying competition, as I do take umbrage to the comments made in the last edition of the HVAC newsletter.

I quote - "if the head judge had awarded 2 more points to the Hutt team we would have had a different winner".

I know in this day and age that personal responsibility is frowned upon and that it is ok, almost encouraged, to blame someone else for your failure or short comings, but the way the comments were made sounded to me that, as Head Judge, I should have automatically awarded those points and at no stage was there mentioned "if we as a team (there being 3 of us) had tied a little bit better we would have earned those extra points".

In future, if I am going to be a judge again, and after this bout of sarcasm I probably won't be asked again, any leniency that all 3 teams were allowed by my judging is now gone. So, for instance, and these were seen on the night, if there are a number of things wrong with the flies points will be deducted, so I wonder what will happen if the tiers come up with negative points. Oh, it will be someone else's fault.

So to help the teams tie a better fly and gain those extra points all by themselves, here are some suggestions:

- Practise the flies before the night, as you were told what they were weeks before and should be able to get a feel for them from the likes of "You Tube" and "Vimeo".
- Arrive early to get set up and get used to the venue, they are open early and it will help get into the flow of the evening and you are not rushing.
- Get comfortable with the tying area, and make it your own. If you don't want people in your face, put some masking tape around the area and ask people to respect your space.
- If in doubt about anything ask, the only bad question is the one not asked
- Look at the fly samples – are they different to what you practised. Look at the balance, colours, length of wing, hackle – especially when you have to choose your own. Keep referring to the samples if in doubt – it is what the judges are using as well.
- Look at the materials, and learn which ones go with which fly. If you don't like the quality of the material get clarification about it.
- Read the recipe, if it calls for lead underneath the body use lead. If a cake recipe calls for butter you normally put it in.
- Leave enough room for tying off, an amazing number of flies had crammed heads or scruffy heads. Practise before hand if not confident.
- If the body has dubbing learn to dub properly as a number of flies bodies were lumpy. Same applies to some of the chenilles tied in as bodies
- Great to see the number of tiers who bought along their own lights, but go to the Warehouse, or find a friendly builder and

put white board/plastic under your vice and behind the fly – it will show up better.

- Work out a plan before hand, especially with times, and stick to it. Other people will have their own opinion but for me, I would tie the fly I do best first, so as to get into the groove, then the 2nd to hardest, then the next easiest, then the hardest. By the time I get to the hardest I should be tying well and have a bit more time up my sleeve.
- Don't hand the flies in as soon as you have finished. Keep them as you may have time left over at the end and then may be able to re-tie one that you may not be happy with.
- Make sure you have all your tools and are comfortable with them, even down to the threads (this is why threads aren't included in the kits as I believe they are really individual and you should use what you prefer – mind you that could be an interesting one by making the tiers use a thread that they may have not used before)
- Relax into the evening – it's only bragging rights you are after not, having a Middle East accord hanging on it (mind you.....)
- Practise a few flies at the venue before the competition starts, almost like warming up I suppose.
- If in doubt, ask. I know I said this before but even though I made sure people were told about a couple of things before hand, there were some dumbfounded looks at times when they came to the part that they were told about.
- If using cement on the heads don't clog the eyes as it is a bad look and take the time to do it properly.
- Learn to wind hackle properly, or as the fly samples have it. Hackle is actually colour coded even when dyed and makes it especially easy to match up. For streamers like the Dorothy in this year's competition, 2 or more hackles form the wing, dull sides meeting each other. For the hackle on the Dorothy (and other streamer hackles) the shiny side faces the eye. For the dry fly hackle the dull side faces the eye of the hook to get the hackle standing up better.
- When tying your own choice fly, practise it at home first and tie something eye catching but easy to tie. Also I don't think that there that many rules in the comp that you can have bits of it prepared beforehand.

- Learn the rules and exploit them, you will probably teach others new things that way.

"See, tying well to get 2 extra points isn't that hard".

Regards
Jeff Wood

Editor's comment

Obviously Mr Wood forgot to take his happy pills when reading the HVAC newsletter last month and I accept his criticism. Perhaps if I had written "earned by the Hutt Valley team" instead of "awarded by the head judge" it would have been more acceptable.

The point that I was illustrating in the newsletter was that the team scores were very close and a few points were all that separated the teams in first and second place.

Jeff's tips and comments that follow are a good guide as to how the teams should prepare for this event in future and hopefully by taking this advice we will all perform at a higher level.

Meet the Member

Hi, I'm Jason Young. I am proud to have been born and bred in Upper Hutt. I have worked over the years around the Wellington and Petone region, originally as a sign-writer and over the last 18 years in the display and exhibition business in various roles.

I have grown up with an interest in the outdoors – dabbling in fishing and hunting over the years. Most of my fishing experience has been around surf casting and fishing from boats. I

attempted some self-taught fly-fishing 20 years ago with very little success and always wanted to give it another go.

I was lured back into trying fly-fishing last autumn by my brother-in-law and fellow club member Mike Nansett. It was a good time



to take it up as my lovely wife was completing her master's degree and I had lots of time on my hands while she was studying. I wish I had taken the sport up a few years back when she started studying. I now have the fly-fishing bug, and must say, thanks to the tuition I'm gaining through the club and from Mike, I haven't looked back.

My biggest highlight so far came when fishing in Alexandra over Christmas where I hooked but lost my first trout, only to successfully land one the next day and then another a day later. I have only recently joined the club, but have found it really useful so far, especially the casting clinic. I am looking forward to developing new skills to help me to hone the craft even further. My next goal is to learn fly making.

I look forward to meeting and speaking with you all and tapping into some of the wealth of knowledge of my fellow members.

Trout Catch and Release in 2015.

By Tim Trengrove

As a keen fly fisherman in New Zealand during the 1980s, I got to witness the widespread acceptance of Catch and Release (C&R). It didn't so much trickle down but totally captured the angling fraternity. Our first fly fishing magazine, *Flyfisher*, was a major vector in spreading the C&R message. Letters to the editor in 1984 demanded to know whether a particular advertiser was *for* C&R when they had one photo with anglers holding dead fish and another photo showing a fish being released. Tempers ran hot. It seemed that in a few short months C&R was firmly entrenched and that every angler here had an opinion on it.

I also have opinions on C&R and feel uncomfortable with many of the ways it is practiced today. This article is an attempt to outline what those practices are and to suggest ways in which they could be done better.

The big picture

The United States of America is regarded as the home of C&R and a spokesperson for it was Lee Wulff. "Game fish are too valuable to only be caught once" is attributed to Lee, widely accepted and rarely challenged. Angling pressure on trout waters is the reason usually given for C&R. In Yellowstone National park in 2006 there

were over 55,000 fishing permits issued. It is difficult for us to comprehend angling pressure on many USA waters. While there are objectors to C&R in the USA, reading their trout fishing magazines and articles on the internet it appears C&R is alive and well there.

In Europe though, the picture is quite different. C&R is banned in many regions of Switzerland, Germany, Spain and France. If game fish really are too valuable to only be caught once, how did C&R come to be banned? What are the conditions needed for a country to ban C&R *and* could that happen in New Zealand?

Clearly the force for change to end C&R is outside of the angling community. It has to be well organised, vocal and politically effective. Numbers help. Well organised, vocal and politically effective groups have brought about changes in animal welfare practices in New Zealand. Change in public perception against C&R is already happening here. Information need not be factual. Highly emotive words and phrases are sufficient to sway public opinion. Take 'trout pain' for example. There is much argument as to whether trout do feel pain like we do yet many opposed to C&R associate trout pain with C&R and want it banned.

Back home

Could C&R get banned in New Zealand? The elements for change are here though at present in small enough numbers and in relative disarray to have effected change. Save Animals from Exploitation (SAFE) are a vocal and radical animal welfare group. Read their website information to see strong opposition to fly fishermen using C&R then read what SPCA also say about it. If you think New Zealanders will always accept C&R, witness animal welfare changes to sow crates in the pork industry, battery cages in the poultry industry and tail docking in the dairy industry. New Zealanders do care about animal welfare and a change in attitude to C&R may only be a matter of time.

Animal welfare

We all ought to be concerned about animal welfare.

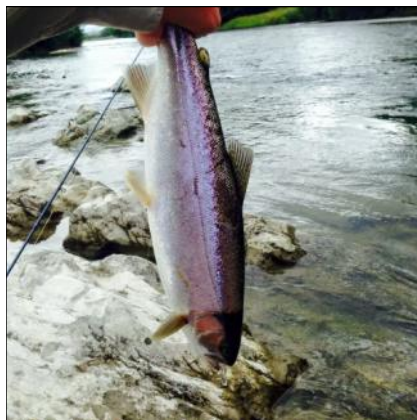
When discussing C&R with people who don't like the practice, you will find there is little moral justification for it. More productive ground is in accepting that we do catch and release trout and that our practices need to be improved. Fly fishermen are the face of C&R in New Zealand. Photos and videos show what we do and unfortunately much of that shows scant regard for animal welfare.

In order to move towards better practice in C&R it helps to start with trout to see how they can be impacted badly by poor C&R technique.

Trout basics

The first thing to notice about trout is their need to breathe. To breathe they need to be in the water. If a trout is out of the water for long enough, it will die. The trout's most desperate need to breathe is while being caught by the angler. In most cases trout are completely exhausted by anglers, having no energy to swim away or ability to right themselves in the water. Burnt oxygen in the cells is replaced with dangerously high levels of lactic acid. Unless a trout is able to replenish oxygen levels quickly, it will die.

The trout's skin is living and vulnerable to damage during C&R. Slime covering the body protects against bacteria harmful to the skin. Contact with the skin will remove slime – on stones, in a landing net or by our hands. The trout's scales are deeply embedded through the skin and are easily knocked out during handling. This leaves gaping holes for harmful bacteria to enter the skin: the same harmful bacteria our hands are laden with. The effect of handling trout can leave what looks like burn marks on their skin. I've seen blackened hand prints on trout caused by handling and net mesh marks on other fish caught in the Hutt and Wainuiomata rivers.



The trout's bone structure was not made to support the weight of the fish being lifted up by the tail. According to fish pathologist Brian Jones, doing that will definitely damage the fish. Another thing to notice about trout is their finely tuned sense of balance. Turning a fish upside down upsets their balance so badly it can immobilise the fish. If released soon after, the fish can drift off in the current unable to move or right itself. It takes a considerable amount of time for the balance to be restored.

Towards better Catch and Release

It is clear that C&R is fraught with danger for trout and that a number of practices should be avoided. The ultimate in Best Practice is releasing the trout quickly without handling the fish. Next best is to get the trout in quickly and to handle the fish as little as possible.

One way to get the trout in is to exhaust the fish through lengthy playing. A better way is to get the fish in quickly by tricking the fish into submission. By using a strong enough leader, considerable force can be applied to draw the fish in towards the angler. Stay out of sight of the fish during the initial capture and stay low as you draw the fish in towards you. Sudden movements or giving the fish slack line will send it hurriedly back out. When close, grab the line and pull the fish in. Keeping the line tight, flip the mouth open, push the hook backwards to remove the fly then gently walk away from the fish leaving it to recover in the water. Barbless hooks help with easy hook removal as does hooking fish in the front of the mouth.

In most cases landing nets are not needed. They are useful in boats or fishing fast rivers with steep sides. In these cases, wet the net first, leave the net and trout in the water, remove the hook then tip the fish out of the net. No further handling is needed. These best case scenarios will happen more and more often with practice. There will be cases where trout refuse to come in quickly or when line gets wrapped around them. In this instance handling the fish cannot be avoided.



Trout should ideally be released as quickly as possible, by remaining in the water and without handling. Only practice will lead to a high percentage of planned and skilful releases.

If this became the model for fly fishermen in New Zealand with C&R, the public image would be much improved. There is more we can do by restricting how many fish we catch and release under a system that has no limits. Setting out to always catch and release as many fish as possible is unpalatable to both those opposed to C&R and most fellow anglers. In the end whether we are still allowed to practice C&R in New Zealand is beyond angler control. I hope though that we have done everything in our control to tidy up the way we practice C&R and that the public will not judge us harshly.

In the Loop

By Greyhackle



Do you have difficulty when tying flies to your tippet in poor light or at any time for that matter? If this problem discourages you from fishing late in the day then here is an idea that should help.

Usually those who have been around for more than 50 summers begin to strain their eyes a little when changing flies and quite often we decide to carry on with the same fly when we know that another artificial would almost certainly hook more fish.

We can employ line threaders and these help a lot until the wire gets bent and kinked then they are next to useless and usually get broken or lost.

Another and better solution is to avoid tying knots at night. So how will we connect our flies to tippet? By using loops to connect the leader and a length of tippet with your fly or flies already tied to it.

In order to choose from a range of different flies it will be necessary to carry several of these prepared traces. OK, so they can be stored on old tippet spools that you had kept for just such a purpose or you can make up spools to carry these.

Old CD's offer a solution here. Take some of your wife's old Englebert Humperdink or Rolf Harris CD's if you haven't lost (destroyed) them already!

Make a ring of 'no more gaps' or silicone, or other similar product to glue 2 CD's apart. This should run about 15 mm from the outside edge of the CD on the face side. Place another CD on top (face down) so that you have 2 clean sides to write on when the glue has cured.

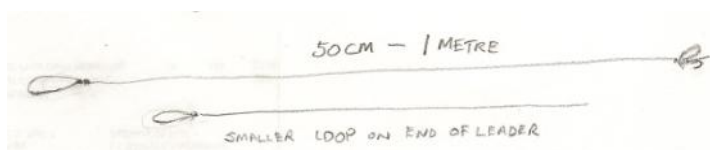
After the CD's are cemented apart, then a number of narrow slots

(up to 6) can be cut around the rim of the trace holder. A fret saw or coping saw (or a multitool if you have one) is suitable for this purpose. It is also useful to glue a piece of closed cell foam or felt to one side of the 'spool'. This can be used for anchoring flies or they can simply be hooked to the centre hole then the tippet taken directly to the nearest slot and wound around the circumference inside of the spool until the knotted loop can be stretched slightly to snap back into a slot where it will hold until needed.



It is possible to store several traces on each spool but this may lead to our old friend the tangle if working in the dark so best to make up several spools and put one trace on each. To carry these spools around buy a CD sleeve or wallet from you local \$2 shop and these should accommodate a few spools.

Make the traces about 60cm to keep the loops well clear of your flies and tie a figure of eight loop at the end of the leader and at the end of the trace, making sure it is big enough to pass the flies through it for attaching to the leader. It becomes a very quick and easy matter to change the trace with flies attached without the need to tie knots.



More fishing time could mean much less frustration and more fish caught.

Woods Waffles

New Year Resolutions

This year I didn't bother to make any resolutions as I haven't got around to doing any of last year's, and then only some of the year before that, and some of the....

So it is hard not to get too involved in making plans around how to spend this wonderful summer combining 2 of my favourite things (no not beer and food). During the first week of Feb I will be doing the Kiddies Run at the Tarawera Ultramarathon, and not by

coincidence staying at Lake Tarawera. Because of the way these long, longer and longest runs are organised there is registration and also equipment and runner symposiums on the Friday before the run on the Saturday. Because I am only doing the 60km and not the longer runs, I have decided to skip most of it and spend the down time fishing. My father is also coming to watch the run and decided to bring his gear as well, so for once we have done some quite intricate planning which gets us fishing on 4 days. Because the event starts at 6.00am(!) I am hoping to finish at around 2.00pm(?) and then an hour back to Tarawera, grab the flyrod and go and stand in the lake for a few hours to get the soreness out of the legs – that’s my excuse. Sunday will be more of the same (without the run), with the sneaking out early to get a fish in before the journey home on the Monday. The same sort of planning has had to go into a trip in March as well, as I am down in Wanaka doing the Motatapu Off- Road Marathon. Again get there on Thursday, register Friday, run Saturday, recover Sunday, home Monday. Flights have been planned around getting the most of the time there and fishing has been arranged through Paul MacAndrew of Aspiring FlyFishing. So another case of can’t wait. There is one grey cloud on the horizon though, as the only time I did an off road event down in Wanaka – the Big Easy 42km marathon from the Snow Farm at Cardrona – I literally couldn’t walk for 2 days afterwards, and that week only got as fast as a shuffle. So that could put a blight on the fishing. Does anyone have Lance Armstrong’s email address?

Trout gone Underground

To me, it is a shame, but Tom Chandler, the author of my favourite online blog has decided to call it a day and not post anymore to his informative site. It is a pity as it was, to me, a place to get information and inspiration from anglers who fished very differently from me. So after a bit of surfing – it really is work as it falls into the research and development area – I have found another site to look at (after GinkandGasoline, Evolution of a FlyFisher and Auckland Swoffer – I dare you to google them). It is called www.midcurrent.com and this month’s issue is really good. It has an article on Michael Keaton about the relevance between FlyFishing and Acting (apparently Birdman is a good movie to watch). I knew that he was a keen fisherman as I had seen some really funny footage of him fishing with his brother and how competitive they are. So the article was really interesting and one

I enjoyed. But the highlight for me was the article by a mad keen flyfisher on why he doesn't tie flies. Apparently the perfectionist in him wouldn't allow him to tie just a few flies, and he doesn't think he would use the 8000 flies that he would tie each year. Then it goes on about how he would have to arrange his flytying materials. Absolutely well worth the read.

Downsizing.

It has been a really interesting couple of months, as I have had a chance to talk to several successful anglers, hopefully getting the right oil as to what is working, and where. There are a few things that have really struck home this year.

One is the use of barbless hooks. It really is coming more commonplace for people to tie on these, rather than for purely snob reasons. Nowadays the hooks are better finished, sharper and better designed than ever before and the size is definitely smaller than previous years, with size 16 and 18 being the best sellers, both barbed and barbless.

Colour is being used more in these smaller flies. It used to be that grey and black were the only colours to use. Then commercial flies starting coming through with a lot more bling on them; not only to attract anglers but also because they caught fish. Now I see anglers using a lot more yellow and chartreuse in these small flies, why, because they work.

Rod and line weight is also coming down, and has been for many years amongst the better anglers, but is getting more and more accepted by people who in the past would have fished one to two sizes heavier. This could be because the rivers don't seem to be as big (e.g. Tongariro), better quality equipment is coming into the country and this can be tied up with better designs. Back in the 90's at Tisdalls, we used to sell/get enquiries about a 4 weight rod every couple of months, in fact I am still kicking myself that I didn't buy a New Zealand made Sage RP3 8ft 4 weight at the time as it would have just been perfect for the style of fishing I want to do today. I have a 4 weight Airflo Bandit set up in the shop which is going to get a run this week as I think it is a little honey.

But what I think is helping is the quality of the information that is now available. This is where clubs like the Hutt Valley Angling Club have stood out, as the amount of courses and the buddy system has been working very well. I have talked to anglers who have come through these, as well as some who haven't, and it is easy to see who has the better grounding on casting etc. So keep up the

good work.

Incept Water Strider.

For years I have had the urge to do more fly fishing of lakes and rivers from a boat – such as the lower Tongariro, the weed beds in Tokaanu Bay and Lake Otamangakau, but due to a number of pressures like financial and storage I haven't had the opportunity to do so. I was luckily enough the other day to get to spend some time talking with Bill Harris about the Strider, as he uses his one a lot when fishing in rivers and lakes. I even think that a number of club members have them as well, as I can vaguely recall some reports of trips in them. After looking at the pontoon boats, float tubes and the like, I think I will ask Santa to bring me one for Xmas next year as I now have a few more ideas that I would like to throw around with them as a means to explore some rivers that take my interest. Then there are some of the lakes around the place, like Lake Dudding near Marton. While it is used a lot by water skiers and swimmers during the day, there are fish in it and so a quiet craft like the water strider would be ideal. The 2 major factors for me though are that it is made here in New Zealand, better for any repairs and warranty, and also the safety aspect which was one of the reasons the talk with Bill was so good. Oh yeah, he also has such a wealth of knowledge that even I have learned to shut up and listen, and that takes some doing so thanks Bill. I just wonder if MOBIE will allow me to hang it from the shop ceiling?

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