



Sussex Branch Newsletter



FEBRUARY 2004

ANNUAL DINNER-MARCH 20th

Our speaker will be **Martin Fleetwood** of Duncton Mill who will possibly let us into some secrets of the fishery.

Applications for tickets and menu choice should be returned to John Burt with cheque as soon as possible. It is a great evening – good food, good company, presentation of trophies, including the Flydressing competition, plus the draw for the Rod Raffle. In addition there will be the traditional raffle on the night for goodies of quality organised by Jim White. Whilst Jim will provide the star prizes, he will gratefully receive prize donations from you to boost the prize list. Bring them along on the night, or see Jim beforehand on tying nights.

IMPORTANT ENCLOSURES

With this newsletter you will find entry forms for all the programmed events over the summer. Please complete those you are interested in and return the relevant slip to the organiser of each event, together with post-dated cheque where required. If you don't send your slip, you will not be booked in! If further events are arranged they will be notified separately or with later editions.

Also enclosed is the updated programme to the end of the year. There are one or two items where dates, etc, are to be confirmed, so check the web-site!

AUCTION

It has been decided it would be preferable to hold this on a Thursday in November, but we will not know on which Thursday the complete ground floor will be available until April, when bookings are confirmed..

26th FEBRUARY—SPEAKER

Our guest speaker on **Thursday 26th February** will be **Michael Evans**, who will discuss his fishing exploits and flies that catch all over the world. No doubt he will also give some background to his range of tackle which is now so widely recognised.

RESERVOIR PLATE WINNER

Once again yours truly has put his foot in it; your editor has completely overlooked his own report of the 9 lb rainbow caught by **Tim Albright** in the Swale Branch Competition (see Newsletter July/August). Hence the above trophy will now be awarded to Tim. Sorry to disappoint Lee Shergold but as the picture below shows, Lee did deserve a moment of glory, especially as he also had another fish of 6 lb 12 oz on the same day!! The revised list of trophies to be presented at the Dinner is on page 2.



A happy Lee Shergold cradles his catch – an 8 lb fully finned rainbow from Bewl Water on 19th November. Lee took both of his beauties on an intermediate line with a Yellow Blob on the top dropper.

Ashbourne Trout Lakes

**Penhurst Lane, Penhurst, Nr Battle,
East Sussex. TN33 9QR**

***Exclusive private trout fishery in outstanding
surroundings***

Various memberships available (min 4 day ticket)
Season 1st March – 31st December

Contact: Douglas Chalmers Tel/Fax: 01892 864471
e-mail: DougChalmers@aol.com

(Roy Gurney is a member, so have a word with him!)

WHOOPS!

Price correction for entry forms

Due to a typographical error the price of the BEWL competitions are wrong. The correct prices are: Frank Darrah **£32.00, Match v. Ouse Valley **£30.00** and the Charity Pairs **£33.00**.**

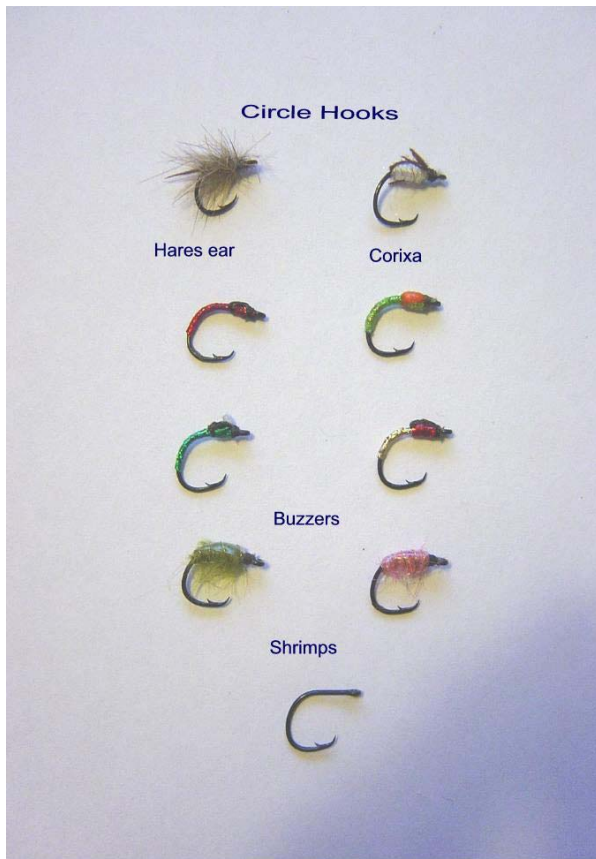
Circle Hooks

Over the last year I had read several articles in *Flying fishing and Fly Tying*, one by none other than angling author John Goddard. It was quite clear that these hooks were not readily available in the UK so I did not bother to find a supplier. Last October while in the West Country on business I happened to call in to the lodge at Chew reservoir near Bristol. In the shop were some circle hooks and I bought a packet that rekindled my interest to tie some. They have a large gape with the point tuned up to form a circle. Peter Cockwill has used these hooks with success fishing for sea fish in Alaska but a much larger size!

As to fishing with flies tied on these hooks, a different technique is required. Firstly you fish almost static and when you get a take, do not strike, as it will pull the hook out of a fish's mouth. Just pull the line taught and invariably the fish will be hooked in the scissors, so the articles say. Also if fishing with a team of flies with circle hooks, using a sight bob will be a definite advantage. I would recommend using size 12 and 14 only, and worth a try for next season on a small scale.

I have tied some patterns suitable for this type of hook with examples shown below.

When next season starts I shall experiment with them to



see whether it is easier to catch fish or not. I do have some spare hooks that anyone is welcome to try, but they must report back findings for a follow up report next year.

Fulling Mill tell me that they will be marketing circle hooks more widely next year at less than £5.00 for 50 whereas Eagle Claw circle hooks are nearly £5.00 for 25. I believe we will see a number of articles in the angling press about these hooks over the next year to make them more popular.

Phillip Ellis



Big Fish Competitions 2003

Peter West Trophy

(Best Rainbow from Sussex water)

Chris Croucher	Blackwool Farm	15lb 0oz
Lee Shergold	Bewl	8lb 0oz
Jim White	Chalk Springs	7lb 11oz
Malcolm Middleton	Bewl	5lb 11oz

Brown Trout Cup

(Biggest Brown from Sussex water)

Paul Daltry	Chalk Springs	6lb 12oz
Chris Croucher	Chalk Springs	6lb 8oz

Members' Reservoir Plate

Best Fish from Sussex Reservoir (including Bewl Water)

Tim Albright	Bewl	9lb 0oz
Lee Shergold	Bewl	8lb 0oz
Malcolm Middleton	Bewl	5lb 11oz

Frank Darrah Trophy

(Bewl Pairs)

Tim Albright and Alex Rainbow	13lb 2oz
Lee Shergold and Gerry Newland	6lb 11oz

Charity Pairs Bowl

Michael Brayne and Colin Rann	14 fish	24lb 8oz
Peter Buss and Jim White	15 fish	17lb 5oz

Jimmy James Memorial Trophies

Branch outing – Best bag

Winner	Peter Winder	12lb 1oz
Runner-up	Phillip Ellis	10lb 3oz

Plowman Trophy

Branch Outing – Best fish

Dave Morris	3lb 2oz
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Stillwater Challenge Chalk Springs

Best Fish

Winner	Bill Smith	7lb 3oz
Runner-up	Jim White	7lb 2oz

Best bag

Winner	Bill Smith	12lb 14oz
Runer-up	Jim White	12lb 13oz

The above trophies will be presented to the winners at the Annual Dinner on Saturday, 20th March 2004

A Few Grains More

by Brian Hendry

In my article last month I possibly convinced you that a #7 line was the way forward for your #3 stream rod; what follows now in Part 2 might have you considering that a WF7 line is the only one you need for all your trout fishing. Now read on.

In the current trout magazines we frequently read reports on the latest rods and lines, tested on our behalf by the experts of the day, and their writings often contain this sort of statement: "The rod performed so well that I easily cast a full 30 yard line time after time". Oh yeah!!

I have never managed to cast a full fly line; I have occasionally fluked a cast that has exposed a little backing through the last few coils of line on the reel, but that has usually been wind-assisted. My casting is decidedly average and my hauling technique appallingly inconsistent. Again I have measured the length of line outside the rod tip and on a good day it is about 18 yards, placing the fly 75 feet from where I am standing (54' line, 12' leader and 9' rod). It is not very far, but I console myself with the knowledge that, while I am beating the water unmercifully, at least it is done with the most delightful equipment I can lay my hands on, ensuring I look the part... anyway, back to the plot.

If our experts aerialise the first 30' of fly line to activate the rod properly with the design load, I cannot then believe that anyone can shoot 60' of running line, be it WF or DT. Therefore hauling must come into play. If they do this they load the rod beyond its design size by a considerable amount; say with the haul they aerialise a 60' length and shoot 30', then for a rod/line combination rated #5, a WF #5 line is loading the rod to the equivalent of a #9 line (9.3g for the first 30' of line, say 3g for the 30' of running line and a modest 5g for the force imparted by the haul technique, giving a total of 17.3g – see Table 1 last month). If it is a DT, then the equivalent is an #11. Some hauling techniques I have seen must increase the load by considerably more than the 5g I have guessed at, and take the combined load right off the scale; but the rods survive.

Knowing these sort of loadings are prevalent, when us anglers are crashing about on the water, manufacturers must err on the safe side when rating their rods, otherwise break-ages would be rife. If we take a #5 rod as an example, it is quite possible that it has been designed and manufactured to cope with lines of a much higher weight rating, and its performance might best suit a #7 or #8 line – the increase in weight from #5 to 7 is only 3g (approximately 0.1 oz).

The point is: don't be a slave to the numbers written on the rods and lines; try out different combinations and you might gain 10 yds on your distances; or you might break all your rods and have to buy replacements (man's equivalent of women's retail therapy!). My 9'3" #5 Hardy and 9'6" #4 Dadswell Elite have both been used with #7 lines with no adverse effect and my modest distances were easily achieved with a big reduction in false casting.

Also be aware that lines are sometimes heavier than stated on the boxes, often by one size, and I have found a couple up by two sizes: maybe another manufacturers' ploy to make our casting look better than it is! (Hoorah!!)

Possibly my two articles may have convinced you that all your fishing needs could be served by only two rods – a 7' #3 and a 9' #7. And just one WF #7 fly line to use with both. If that's the case, the auction in November will be flooded with redundant equipment and there is a good chance that I will buy most of it, as I apparently do not practice what I preach. I say this having just cast my eye around my tackle room and come up with the following facts: I have 54 fly rods and 92 fly lines in just about every configuration known to man, and I am just too embarrassed to mention the fly reels! Please don't believe anything I write – I'm obviously only after your tackle!

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

We are rapidly approaching the end of our fly tying classes. Our thoughts now turn to the coming fishing season, particularly when we see the evenings pushing out. It is now daylight after 5.00pm on a sunny day. For those of you who have been involved in the classes you should be fully armed with an array of flies with which to catch your trout. The aim of the classes is not only to teach you to tie flies, but to tie flies which will catch fish.

With this in mind you should receive with this newsletter a comprehensive list of events throughout the summer. We hope to have catered for all tastes in trout fishing, ranging from the expanses of Bewl Water to the intimate atmosphere of Chalk Springs. Please take a few moments to review the list and let the organisers of the events you wish to go on know of your intentions as soon as possible as much arranging and telephoning takes place to set up the venues and other contacts.

Last month you received your invitation to our dinner at the Dyke Golf Club. John Burt is working behind the scenes arranging this event. Please let him have your order and payment as soon as possible. As well as good food and pleasant company the end of term raffle will take place along with the presentation of trophies. On this point I would be grateful if the winners of last year's trophies would return them to a committee member so that they can be engraved in time for the dinner.

As we look forward to a pleasant day's fishing it is worth reminding you that the branch is fortunate in having a number of qualified casting instructors. An hour spent with one of these can prevent a great deal of frustration at the water's edge.

URGENT for all TROPHY HOLDERS

Please return your trophies to Alan Middleton (or Roy Gurney or Paul Bond if he is not around) as soon as possible, as they have to be engraved for presentation at the Annual Dinner. Deadline is end-February, but executions for non-compliance will not take place until 4th March!!!



DONALD DOWNS

It was a great pleasure to have Donald visit the Branch on 29th January to see us in action on a tying night. It was great to have the maestro giving advice to many, whether they were beginners or experienced tiers. I spotted on one occasion Donald and our own Albert assisting a new member, albeit not a beginner, and the combined ages for the three totalled some 240 years!

As you may know, Donald was president of the Guild for many years, and among his pupils was Prince Charles. He is regularly to be seen at shows around the country, often in the guise of a Victorian fly-fisherman, where he may also be spotted quietly tying a dry-fly in a hand-held vice whilst conducting a conversation with someone!

We are pleased to advise that Donald has agreed to come on **18th March** to be our guest speaker, when he will give an illustrated presentation on the trout's larder with drawings and sketches of the trout's diet..

Terry Griffith

Terry has asked me to convey his sincere apologies for not being able to attend back in December. He explains he was very poorly. He had to cancel three talks that week, and it took three and a half weeks to get clear of the 'flu. He lost 16lbs in weight, something even the Atkins diet could not achieve in that time! Christmas just got cancelled!

FINAL REMINDER

2004 FLY TYING COMPETITION

Hurry up and get your entries in for this year's competition. Your entries should be handed to Alan Middleton, Paul Bond or any committee member by 14th March and winners will be announced and presented with their prizes at the Annual Dinner.

Barry Grantham

Our February speaker arrived late thanks to misdirection by our local police! Having got within a stone's throw of the venue by 7.20, he was then sent a wild goose chase to the other side of Brighton! Notwithstanding this, Barry gave us a demonstration of how to make a split cane rod starting from the raw bamboo pole. How simple he made it look to split the cane evenly using an old bayonet, and then plane the strips to accurate triangular section ready for gluing. Giving a running commentary and answering questions as he went along, he showed how years of practice enabled him to much of this work just by eye.

He explained that many of the tools used he made himself, being a toolmaker by original calling. Not only does he make rods, but also landing nets, priests and especially reels of high quality, replicas of famous makes.

His heat treatment of the bamboo, first on the raw poles to harden them, and then on the strips to enable him to straighten them, was remarkable, using a hot-air blower rather than the old traditional flame and steam respectively. He also brought along some of his finished rods and tackle, and the workmanship was much admired. Considering a rod takes some 40 hours "hands on" to produce (between many hours of drying glue and varnish) it is amazing that he charges only £350 for a Mayfly fly-rod – true value for such a piece of craftsmanship must be double or even treble that figure!

It is worth mentioning that Barry is also running the local branch of the Flydressers' Guild in Lincoln – how does he find the time?

We look forward to meeting him again at the various shows over the coming year.

OUTINGS AND COMPETITIONS

John Cooper has arranged a very full programme of fishing outings and events for this season. Please reward his hard work with support for these – they are arranged for YOUR benefit, after all.

For the benefit of newcomers, please note that ALL are welcome – especially YOU!! It is a good opportunity to meet up with everyone and to gain valuable experience to benefit your own fishing – though I hope you might be able to pass on a few tips yourself!

What it is certainly not, is a programme for the "elite" (not that we have any!) Fill in your slips enclosed and get them off to the organisers as soon as possible and enjoy the "other half" of our activities.

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