



Single Haul

The Newsletter of The Izaak Walton Flyfishing Club

September 2010

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From Hackle Guards to History

Four days of driving west from Toronto saw us pull into the parking lot of the Prewett Creek Inn. We were there to float the Upper Missouri River from Wolf Creek, Montana, to points downstream. On a previous trip eight years ago, my fishing partners had come up with a dry fly they named their 'Missouri River Special'. A very productive parachute pattern for rainbows which requires a hackle guard to turn flies out quickly. Realizing I'd forgotten to pack my hackle guard, I headed to the fly shop next to the inn. A square built affable owner soon found me what I needed and began to offer up the latest river and bug information which would prove very helpful to us over the coming week.

He had a tying bench closeby and in the vice I noticed a fly in progress with larva lace in the pattern. "Do you tie?" he asked, not remembering my guard purchase. "Yeh, I do", I quipped, "... and doing more of it now I'm retired". "Ever used larva lace?" "No I", but for years I've admired Greg Heffner's woven lace nymph patterns. "Oh! you know Greg do you?" he said somewhat surprised. I was more

surprised than he since we were a good four days west of where Greg lives.

"Do you own the inn as well as the fly shop?" I inquired. He told me his name was Phil Camera, part owner of the inn but exclusive boss of the fly shop. ".....been here on the river a good while and love it" he said. ".....but I've been in the fly fishing business a long long time. I remember early in the eighties using a shock tippet material fishing for silver salmon in Alaska. It was "Power Gum" a Sue Burgess product which didn't work for me so when I got back home I began the search for something better.

Samples started to arrive at my house from a range of extrusion companies around the US, and one in particular caught my eye. The day "product X" arrived I was tying some pupa patterns and began to experiment with the new delivery. Although this was potential shock tippet material, I found I could easily vary the segmentation, especially on pupa tied patterns to produce a more subdued and subtle look reflecting the natural. Furthermore, I discovered a memory it seemed to have and if it was finger heated I could reduce it's size until it froze at the new diameter."

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A tool and die man by profession, Phil was now getting excited about "product X" and had occasion to meet one day with George Gehrke (Gehrke's Gink) in his lawyer's office. He spoke about the experiments he'd been doing and suggested the name "Larva Lace" since he had been tying "larva like" patterns. George immediately confirmed the catchy title. With a name to market the product, Phil continued his experiments.....how could he pull it over the eye of the hook whose diameter was three times the internal diameter of the lace? A little saliva solved that problem, so now it became possible to get a microfilm of translucent Larva Lace over the eye and on to the hookshank.....wow! the possibilities?

Next, Phil peddled Larva Lace around the fly shows of eastern US. to an enthusiastic reception. He self promoted his product starting with a translucent lace then developed eight colours. By 2000, he was producing 150,000 feet of fourteen colours in three different sizes, twice a year, exporting to over twenty countries. The fly fishing fraternity then demanded a midge lace and again Phil met the challenge to produce one.

Development of this new synthetic gave rise to a book entitled "Fly Tying with Synthetics" which emphasized tying techniques for which Phil was credited as being a pioneer, the first to focus exclusively on tying with synthetic materials. Tragically, Skip, Phil's beloved son and shrewd business partner died in 2001. The loss devastated the Camera family drawing to a close Phil's interest in the Larva Lace business. Soon after he sold out.

Our conversation had started within an hour of my arrival at his Fly Shop, and during my stay we had many more chats in and out the bar, recounting colourful fly tying characters we both knew. We had a lot of laughs together and on the river, a great week's fishing.

www.prewettcreekinn.com

Ed

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Summer Stories

Bill Christmas



Mill Creek, Cayuga, 2010

It is not even the end of the September, but we have done so much already that I felt it necessary to pass on a summary of what we have done so far, and a peek at what's next. We finished the installation of our Data Loggers over three days requiring 30+ volunteer hours. A lower stream job cleared two "Leaner trees" for local firewood use, plus fallen trees clogging the stream.

After installing our first prominent Beaver Baffle at the top of Taquanyah at DeCewsville Road, with the help of our Haldimand Stewardship Rangers on July 7th, we began the process of preparing downstream for the installation of three more. These will be at crucial places where most beaver pond flooding causes the most damage. We had to carve access paths through the bush to enable us to move the 60 to 70" long 12" conduits into place in the breached beaver dams. This took five separate work events involving our Rangers and 60+ volunteer hours!

We now have scheduled the assembly and positioning of the last three units on two weekends: September 18th and 25th. It is hoped we can arrange for an on-site party on the Aldridge property on the 18th at 1PM. We

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will confirm by midweek. When these chores are done, we have only non-critical jobs left, like filter cloth, soil and seeding of the Armstrong site, replacing the fence and installing our signage, now in draft stage.

This month also saw staff conduct two more "Bug" samplings, which show much greater and varied populations of vital insect life. Last year's formal report will be updated with 2010 data over the winter. Our 'Temperature' draft report is in hand. It shows what we expected: outstanding LOW mean temps, necessary for brook trout habitat. With our biomass survey planned for this month, we look forward to having no more major hurdles to overcome before restocking is okayed by the MNR. This report is being done to coincide with the presentation to HAFFT at 7:30 PM on Monday, September 13th in Hamilton titled "Turning Back the Clock 40 years". We will be reporting that to date, we have had over 811 volunteer hours donated by over 75 different individuals, representing 9 organizations, plus 15 involved residents and five Mill Creek land owners. It is an amazing and heartwarming story!

Thanks to all who have helped. We look for even greater participation as we move ahead.

Bill Christmas, Project Coordinator, Ted Knott Chapter, Trout Unlimited Canada.

As a footnote: We have been asked to do a report for Trout Unlimited's national publication in the spring of 2011.

The Late Theresa Hurst

On behalf of all club members, I would like to extend our sympathies to Peter and all the Hurst family in the passing of his dear wife, Theresa, in June this year. Theresa was a great support to Peter in all of his IWFFC endeavours. She will be missed greatly. Peter has asked me to extend a thankyou to all who attended Theresa's funeral earlier this year. **Ed**

Letters



Dear Derek,

As a member of IWFFC for at least the past 25 years and knowing that the club and several members possess copies of my Fishers' Craft and Lettered Art. Tracts on Fishing from the End of the Middle Ages (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997), I am a bit put out that the lead story in the May 2010 Single Haul repeats long demolished myths about the authorship of the Treatyse of Fysshynge wyth an Angle. Historical knowledge really has advanced considerably since the days of the Rev. Watkins, so it is sad to see no such acknowledgment in the newsletter of the Club. If we think the past of our sport matters at all, we should attempt to get the evidence reasonably right. Quite apart from the utter lack of evidence for the very existence of the putative Dame, much less that such a person compiled the Treatyse, historians have shown surviving writings on fly fishing and fishing for sport in England and on the European continent to predate the Book of St Albans by at least two human generations.

Perhaps the Club should consider joining the American Museum of Fly Fishing, whose The American Fly Fisher is a quarterly journal with mostly quite solid articles on the history and development of the art and pastime.

charrs and best fishes
Richard Hoffman

Editorial Note

It seems it doesn't take much to raise Hoffman hackle. (contrary to the hens @ Whiting Farms.) My phrase, to which Mr.Hoffman refers in the May 2010 editorial , ".....the first known writing appears to be....." I think adequately carries with it an element of doubt and humility that would indicate that I'm not a scholar of fly fishing history as he implicitly suggests I should be. My words are therefore not definitive and should not be interpreted as such. However, I thank Mr Hoffman for his letter and congratulate him on his knowledge of the subject. I am also happy to note Mr Hoffman is a professor of history.....and not english!

PS. *Would any member who has a copy of Mr.Hoffman's 1997 publication please let me know since I have been unsuccessful in locating one? Mr. Hoffmann may even consider a donation to the club library? Ed*

Leaders and Tippets Ron Koshoshek

Traditional leader design has 60% of the leader's length in the butt section, 20% in the midsection and 20% for tippet. The traditional leader length is 9 ft. This works well for casting large trout flies especially in windy conditions. However, if you are casting small flies that require delicate presentation, you may need to shorten the butt section and lengthen the midsection an equal amount.

Unfortunately, there is no universal leader design that will perform optimally for all flies in all conditions. In addition, it seems that fast action fly rods work better with some designs and slower action rods (as bamboo rods tend generally to be) work better with others. However, an experienced caster can usually compensate for these differences to the point where rod action makes these differences almost negligible.

Over time and experience, I have chosen to use two leaders for trout fishing and recommend these designs. I do not suggest that you make up lots of leaders with this design preparing many leaders for an extended period. I suggest you make up only two and that you modify them as needed. In this way you can adapt them to your rod, the weather,water conditions, and your casting skill.

For western waters like the Missouri River, Slough Creek and the Lamar and Lewis Rivers in Yellowstone Park, you need to go long with fine delicate casts over finicky fish with flies size 14 to 20. You can vary the length of the leader somewhat by varying the length of the tippet.

For a 4-6 wt line, here is a 12 ft. basic leader to which you can add a 2 ft to 4 ft tippet.

.020 - 48 in.

.018 - 24 in.

You can get away with .017 on this section since getting a true .018 can be difficult.

.015 - 18 in

.013 - 15 in

.012 - 12 in

.010 - 10 in

.009 - 8 in

.008 - 8 in

This gives you about 12 feet (143 inches) to which you can add your tippet. I generally go 2-4 feet but a minimum 24 inches is necessary. So you are looking at about a 14-16 foot leader from line to end of tippet.

You can eliminate the .009 section and drop down the .020 section from 48 to 44 inches, if you want to shorten it a foot. But I would remain fairly true to the lengths of the other sections. Always start with .020 and end with .008. For 7-9 weight lines, start with .022 rather than .020 but the rest of the diameters and lengths can be the same as above.

Here are a couple of other basic rules of leader design :

1. Diameters of mono from the same manufacturer vary by up to .002 in for any stated size. So get a leader gauge and make sure that you are close to the above diameters, especially as you get down to .012 and thinner. Use your gauge measurement, not the stated measurement of diameter. You should not tie a thinner section of leader to a thicker section with more than .002 of an inch difference in diameter between the two pieces.
2. Use Blood Knots for joining sections together.
3. Wrap one less turn of the thicker section over the thinner section and wrap one more turn of the thinner section over the thick section. I generally wrap the .020 three turns over the 018 and the 018 four turns over the .020 then pull tight. I wrap 4 turns of .018 over the .015 and 5 turns of the .015 over the .018. Continue this 4/5 ratio down through the rest of the sections including the tippet.
4. When tying on the tippet section, and when tying any .006 or thinner section on to a larger section, and especially when the sections are made by two different manufacturers, double the thinner section on itself and wrap the doubled strand around the larger section. This will guarantee against the thinner mono cutting into the larger mono section and weakening it and against any knot slippage when a smaller and perhaps harder section is tied on to a larger single strand section.
Note: Tippet material tends to be harder than Maxima leader material, because you want greater lb. test strength in the tippet that has a smaller diameter. Also tippet material tends to be harder because you want to minimise stretch in the tippet material than in the larger sections.
5. Spit on the knot before pulling tight in order to both secure a better fit and

reduce friction and the mono-weakening effect by the heat generated when you rapidly pull the blood knot tight.

6. I recommend Maxima chameleon (brown) for the basic leader from .020 to .008. For tippet I use "Powerful" (brand name) in sizes 5X, 6X and 7X.

For nymphing larger free-stone rivers like the Madison River and using a floating line, I use a 9 - 10 ft leader.

- .020 - 36 in
- .018 - 20 in
- .015 - 13 in
- .013 - 10 in
- .012 - 8 in
- .008 - 8 in
- .006 - 18 in - 20 in of 5X tippet

However, you should consider buying and using a 9 ft. knotless leader since hand tied blood knots can be conducive to collecting moss and other debris that is usually present in the water column in late July and August. I rarely find knots a problem, but they occasionally can be.

Needless to say, when using a sink tip line an entirely different leader design is necessary since you do not want any buoyancy that comes with heavy gauge mono butts and 9 ft+ long leaders. A 5-6 ft leader is the max. I often do not use a tapered leader at all just 5-6 ft of 10 - 15 lb test fluorocarbon made by Seaguard works just fine. I more often choose the rocking chair and TV over this method of fishing, except when steelheading with streamers.

For attaching leaders to lines, I prefer dipping 1 inch of the tip of the fly line in acetone until the outer plastic coating is softened (1 minute). After stripping away the softened outer plastic coating with you thumbnail, the inner braided core of the line will be exposed. Insert a sewing needle into the center of the braided core of line.

Create a small butt section of about 10" of size .020 mono. Take a small piece of fine grain sand paper (220 cut) and roughen the end of the mono. Using a sharp scissors, cut an arrowhead in the end of the mono; remove the needle and insert the mono into the braided core. Gradually work and push the mono until it is tight against the plastic coating of the line. Saturate braid with superglue and let dry for 12 hours.

This 10" inch piece of mono will be used to attach the butt section of a leader to the fly line, using a blood knot. Since this 10" piece of mono is .020 in diameter, the same as the diameter of your .020 leader, attach with 3 turns of each to create a blood knot. Always subtract the length of the mono butt section from the total leader length.

This method is superior to the 'loop to loop' connection because of the smoothness of the glued connection passing so easily through the line guides and with the greater rigidity of the glued connection, it allows for a much more efficient transfer of energy from fly line to leader enabling the caster greater control and a line that "lays out" better as line and leader unfurl over the water.

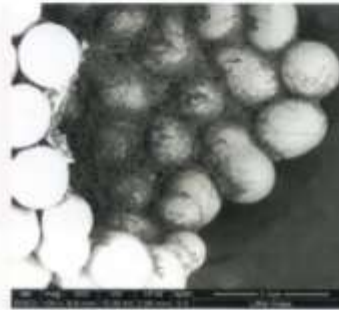
The Amazing Caddis



Photo Credit : Fred Hayes

Despite its resemblance to Hollywood's fictional "Alien," the critter shown here is a caddisfly larva known as a "rock roller" to Utah and Wyoming fly fishermen. The larva builds and carries its own underwater shelter case, using ribbons of natural sticky silk to stitch together grains of sand and rock (right rear of this photo.) But when placed in a lab aquarium with glass beads instead of sand grains, the larva uses its wet silk to add beads to its shelter case. (see thorax) Russell Stewart, a University of Utah bioengineer, hopes to make a synthetic version of the caddisfly silk for use as a surgical adhesive.

(Credit : University of Utah)



This picture from a scanning electron microscope, magnified 100 times, shows a mesh of wet adhesive silk ribbon produced by a caddisfly larva to stitch together the inside of its shelter case, made with glass beads it was given in a laboratory aquarium.

(Credit : University of Utah)

The thread which attaches the common mussel to rocks or other mussels (Byssus thread) is similar and so durable that in medieval England it was woven as gloves to protect the crusaders during battle. Maybe that's where Michael Jackson got the idea? For more information URL: [direct link Utah College of Engineering](#) Source: [University of Utah, USA Ed](#)