

The *Flyer*



Official Newsletter Of The



The Flyer

The Official Newsletter of the Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club

APRIL 2022

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Front Cover: Brian M was pleased to be catching browns at Ebor again. Not as big as his Tasmanian or NZ browns, but satisfying none the less.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT



April 2022

Welcome to another monthly newsletter. I don't recall the months skipping by this fast 50 years ago!

Another month disrupted by weather events. Fortunately, I haven't heard of any of our members being impacted by the calamitous situations in South East Queensland and Northern NSW. Our misfortune of missing a couple of casting days and an outing is insignificant compared to the suffering incurred by the communities to our North. As I write, areas of northern NSW are again being evacuated as they receive, as one resident put, it "a one in ten day flood." We could have had the added reality of casting on water at "our" ground at Mylestom as the cricket field had a substantial covering of water. The forecast of storms when you are using a graphite rod doesn't exactly instil a level of safety. There is no way I would have put my boat into the river at Mylestom on the outing day due to the amount of flood debris in the water. I would not like having to incur another "financial crisis" (as Jim puts it) by trying to chip a log with a propeller.

A big thank you to one of our distant members and now a temporary Coffs resident, Jason, for his efforts on our fly tying evening. A wonderful demonstration with the tying of "Vince's loudmouth Popper." The evening was well attended even though we still had ominous weather forecasts. Hopefully we will get a chance to try them out this Bass season.

The next fly tying evening will be held at MO Tackle with another of our members, John Everitt, demonstrating the tying of buck tail. This is going to be an evening open to the general public but hopefully we will be able to have a presence as the district's Fly Fishing Club.

Hopefully, the weather will allow us to get back to our regular casting program in April. David, John and Allan found the solution at Dorrigo by using the local indoor stadium to conduct a successful fly casting clinic. Well done. If only the road would stay open!

Our committee meeting is being brought forward to April 19th to deal with the backlog of cancellations and business. Committee members are asked to take note of the change.

Again, check the calendar to see if there are any events or outings that take your interest and be sure to register.

Until next time, all the best, stay safe and healthy and tight lines.

Doug

From the Editor

The wet weather has been relentless this year and just when things start to clear up and water levels drop, we get another deluge. We have been forced to cancel a number of outings due to rain, flood and unsafe conditions. We shouldn't complain, though, as a few missed outings is nothing compared to the ordeal flood victims are going through all around us.

On a more positive note, we have managed to conduct some of our planned activities and get the year off to a good start. Casting has resumed with both the day and evening sessions going well. We held a successful casting clinic at Dorrigo where the indoor stadium protected us from the elements. Our meetings have also gone ahead as planned with interesting guest speakers.

Our fly tying sessions finally got started after having to cancel last month because the wet weather cut some of the roads and made it risky for people to venture out. We had a good roll up with Jason leading the group in tying a Loud Mouth Popper. From a couple of beginners just watching to seasoned fly tyers everyone got something from the night - including a Loud Mouth Popper to take home and try. I think fly tying is such an integral part of fly fishing we have to continue these nights.

We are hoping the weather will be kinder to us for upcoming trips to Lake Keepit and Dunmore Trout Waters. If you haven't booked you had better do so soon. Don't forget to check the club calendar regularly for updates and get involved.



The Club Grand Slam Awards have not generated a great deal of interest yet but that is probably due to the lack of fishing opportunities more than anything. Remember, the Foundation Level only requires a flathead, bream and mullet to be caught within the calendar year. I know of one new member who has posted a picture of his flathead on Facebook so is one third of the way to becoming a Grand Slam winner. When the weather finally allows us to get out on the river, I hope more people will set themselves this challenge and post a few photos of their captures.

While the wet weather has disrupted our fishing here on the coast, it has been all good news for the trout streams on the tablelands. Ebor endured several years of drought which almost decimated the trout population, but thanks to the rain and the stocking from the Dutton Trout Hatchery, the area is fishing well again. If the conditions continue and people fish responsibly it's looking positive for the next few seasons.

Editor

Club Executive 2021-22



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No April Meeting

There will be no April meeting due to the Easter holidays. The next meeting is planned for Monday 16th May.

Committee Meeting

The committee meeting is being brought forward to Tuesday 19th April to deal with the backlog of cancellations and business. Start time will be 6.00pm at the North Beach Bowling Club.

Raffle Winner.

Each month we have a raffle but every third meeting there is the added incentive of winning a major prize. The club purchases the major prize which this month was a South Pacific Collapsible Wading Staff from A1 FlyFishing. President Doug presented Brian (aka Pip) with his winning prize.



Every meeting there is a raffle of prizes donated by members and supporters. At the last meeting there were so many prizes that everyone went home with something from the raffle. Thanks to those who donated prizes: David L, Ken C, Glenn, David M, Bill A, and Dayne with apologies for anyone whose name I may have missed.

April Outings

There are two outings planned for April.

The Keepit trip will go ahead from Wednesday 6th until Saturday 9th. We don't have sufficient numbers to book a cabin at the Sport and Recreation Centre so we will be staying at the Lake Keepit Holiday Park. This will be a DIY outing with members needing to book their own accommodation and arrange their own food.



When you register for this event, you will be sent further details. If you want more information or to put your name on the list, please contact the Secretary.

The second outing for April is a day trip to our Home Waters at Mylestom on Saturday 30th. A boat, canoe, kayak or SUP will make the fishing easier but for those land based you will be taken by boat to the sandflats to fish. There is no set starting time but someone will be at the boat ramp at 7.00am (High Tide 8.00am) if you need help or transport. We will meet up after fishing at the Oval for lunch at 1.00pm.

This will be a great opportunity for those wanting to get a start on the Grand Slam Awards. Target species will be bream, mullet, luderick, trevally and flathead.

You must register for this outing so you can be contacted with further details. You can email ccffc@tpg.com.au or call Allan on 0427457725.

Tuesday Casting Group

Casting continues this month for the day session but the evening sessions have ended until we are able to find a venue with lights.

Anyone is welcome to attend. Rods will be available for those without. The venue is the park in Mylestom opposite the boat ramp. For more information you can contact Allan on 0427457725.

9.45am - Arrive ready for 10.00am start.
10.00am - 11.00am How to sessions and Casting
11am till 11.15am Morning tea
11.15 am till 12.15 pm More casting.

After casting you are welcome to join the group that goes to the café for lunch.



Casting will continue each Tuesday unless there is a need to call it off when an email will be sent to all those who regularly attend. If you are thinking of attending for the first time, make sure you let us know and get your name on the email list.

The program for April is as follows:

- Tuesday 5th Casting Mylestom
- Tuesday 12th Casting Mylestom
- Tuesday 19th Casting Mylestom
- Tuesday 26th Fishing at Valla Beach

We will be following the levels of the FFI Fly Casting Skills Development Program. Everyone who attends will be given a booklet and DVD outlining the program.

Tuesday Night Casting

As daylight saving is ending, we will be putting the evening casting sessions on hold for a while until we find a new venue with lights. The people who have been attending are all from Coffs Harbour so we will be looking for somewhere closer to home. Watch this space for developments.

Dorrigo Casting Report

The trip to Dorrigo was well worthwhile with 3 juniors and 3 seniors attending our casting clinic. With the help of David M and John S we had a great day introducing these beginners to the art of fly fishing. The indoor stadium provided an ideal venue for the casting.



At the end of the day everyone went away happy with what they had learnt, even the instructors. And we welcomed two new members to the Club.



Fly Tying Night

Twelve members took advantage of Jason Stratford's fly tying knowledge and skills at our first fly tying night. The pattern Jason chose was the Loud Mouth Popper made famous by Vince Margossian from Queensland. The fly came to prominence at the 2008 Gold Coast Flyfishing Convention where it won the prize as best fly. This is the original version as tied by Vince.



The LMP creates plenty of noise when it is stripped vigorously along the surface of the water - loud enough to be heard from 50m away. Bass and other surface feeding fish find it irresistible.



Thanks to Vince, Jason and Peter Glasson who provided the step by step instructions which you will find on page 16.

Mo Tackle Fly Tying Night



This month our fly tying night is going to be held in conjunction with MO Tackle. Club member and head of MO Tackle Fly Department, John Everett, has extended an invitation for us to participate in a fly tying night to be held on Tuesday 26th April from 6.00pm to 7.30pm at Mo Tackle, opposite the Showground in Coffs Harbour. John will be tying flies with bucktail for bass, cod and barra. You can come along and watch John in action or bring your own vice and tie some of the flies. There will even be workstations set up where you can use the tools and vices provided. If you want to tie the flies, you will be able to purchase a pack of materials for \$15 which will include everything you need from hooks, to thread to bucktail - enough to tie at least 3 flies - with a retail value of at least \$15 each!

There is no cost (unless you want a \$15 material pack) and tea, coffee and pizza will be provided. You are welcome to come along and just watch and learn and catch up with others who are interested in fly fishing and fly tying.

John is a talented fly tyer and guide with years of fly fishing experience in the New England area. This is an opportunity you should not miss. Places are limited so book early by contacting John at Mo Tackle on 66524711.

Club Calendar 2022

Here is the draft club calendar for 2022. It is provided to give you an overview of what might happen and an opportunity to plan ahead. Dates and changes will be added throughout the year and late changes will be in the Mid-Month Update and posted on Facebook and our website.

Month	Outings	Activities
JANUARY	No outing this month Meeting/Casting at Mylestom Oval at 5.30pm on Monday 17 th .	Club Meeting at Mylestom Monday 17 th
FEBRUARY	Bass Outing at Taylors Arm (Doug) Saturday 19 th	Club Meeting Monday 21 st Committee Meeting
MARCH	Casting Day at Dorrigo Saturday 19 th March Tuesday Casting Group Resumes 1 st March Homewaters Saturday 26 th March	Club Meeting Monday 21 st Mylestom Major Raffle Drawn
APRIL	Keepit Trip Wednesday 6 th to Saturday 9 th April Fly Tying at MO Tackle Tuesday 26 th 6.00pm Home Waters Saturday 30 th April	No Club Meeting Monday 18 th due to Easter Holidays. Committee Meeting Tuesday 19 th
MAY	Home Waters Saturday 14 th May Try Fly Fishing Family Day at Ebor Saturday 28 th	Club Meeting Monday 16 th
JUNE	Home Waters Saturday 11 th June Lake St Clair TBC	Club Meeting Monday 20 th Major Raffle Drawn
JULY	Casting Day TBC Flats Fishing Workshop TBC (Garry) Dunmore Waters Friday 29 th to Sunday 30 th July	Annual General Meeting Monday 18 th
AUGUST	Swansea Salmon Classic TBC Mullet Mash Saturday 20 th August	Club Meeting Monday 15 th Committee Meeting
SEPTEMBER	Gathering @ Gumma (Pip) Friday 9 th to Sunday 11 th September Home Waters Saturday 24 th September	Club Meeting Monday 19 th Major Raffle Drawn
OCTOBER	Home Waters Saturday 8 th October Bass Bash Grafton Friday 21 st to Sunday 24 th	Club Meeting Monday 17 th
NOVEMBER	Home Waters Saturday 19 th November	Club Meeting Monday 21 st Committee Meeting
DECEMBER	Keepit Carp Caper Thursday 8 th to Sunday 11 th December Christmas BBQ Tuesday 13 th December Major Raffle Drawn	No Club Meeting

Family & Fly Fishing

by the Editor

Let's face it, most people don't come to fly fishing till their latter years and fly fishing can be seen as an old man's game - just look at me! But if fly fishing, and fly fishing clubs, are to survive, we need to encourage more members of the family to be involved.



There are many reasons young women, men and children don't take up fly fishing. Some of the reasons are the same for all types of fishing but fly fishing brings its own challenges. The art of casting and the cost of equipment can be a stumbling block. The men only culture also puts people off. But it doesn't have to be like that. Efforts are being made to break down the barriers and clubs like ours can teach casting and provide equipment, making it easier for everyone to learn to fly fish.



Old men like me will remember teaching family members to drive a car. In the end it was often easier to ask, or pay, someone to do it for us. The same could be true for teaching someone to fly fish. Having someone else introduce family member to fly fishing can be less painful and more productive.



To this end, our club, in conjunction with NSW DPI Fisheries is conducting a Come Try Fly Fishing workshop for families. This will be held at the Dutton Trout Hatchery at Ebor on Saturday 28th May. We are encouraging adults to bring their kids, grandkids, the kid next door and have someone teach them how to fly fish and catch a trout on fly in the hatchery dams. This is a shout out to all mums, dad, aunties, uncles and grand parents to reach out to the children around them and get them involved. It will be a fun day. It will be day of learning. It will be a day you shouldn't miss. Use the QR code on the next page to find out more and register.





Department of
Primary Industries



Try Fly Fishing

A family day at Dutton Trout Hatchery, Ebor.
Adults and children learn to fly fish and catch a trout.

All equipment and lunch provided.

Conducted by NSW DPI Fisheries and Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club

Saturday 28th May – 8.30am to 4pm
Bookings essential. Sign up at Eventbrite.
Places are limited.
Cost \$30 per family (1 adult + up to 3 kids)



For more information contact Allan Ekert
Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club
Phone 0427457725
Email: ccffc@tpg.com.au

Tailrace Fisheries

By the Editor

Tailrace fisheries occur immediately below natural or man-made dams or restrictions to the flow of water on rivers, canals, streams or any other flowing current. Some tailraces are relatively small and can be fished from the bank. Other tailraces are huge and require a boat to safely navigate. We don't have a lot of tailrace fisheries in Australia but those we do offer excellent fishing opportunities if you know how to go about it.

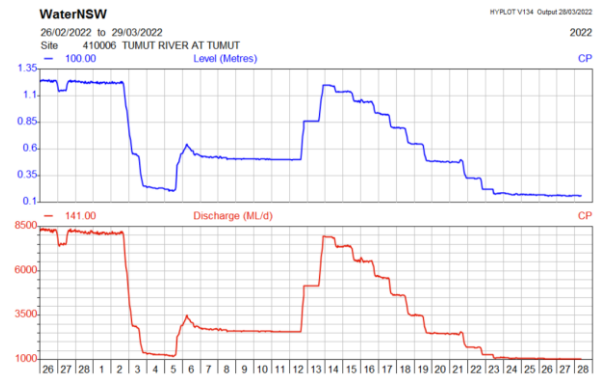
At our last Meeting Glenn Colquhoun reported on a trip he recently made to the Tumut River. Glenn enthused us with his recount of the day trip drifting down the river with a guide in a drift boat. He left us all calculating how we could add this trip to our bucket list.

The Tumut River is impounded by six dams, located at Happy Jacks Dam, Tumut Pond Dam, Tumut Two Dam, Talbingo Dam, Jounama Dam, and Blowering Dam before flowing across the plains to join the Murrumbidgee River near the town of Gundagai.

By the time the river reaches the town of Tumut it is a force to be reckoned with.



Flow rates vary from day to day and river levels rise and fall.



The only way to fish a river such as this is by boat. Glenn was fortunate as his family had arranged a drift boat trip with Aussie Flyfisher and guide Jimmy Barwick as a birthday present. The "boat" was actually a rubber duckie specifically set up to handle the unique conditions of this trailrace fishery.



All Glenn had to do was sit in the bow and fish while Jimmy did all the rowing. You might think the rowing would be easy as it was all downstream but imagine having to slow down the boat in this current to enable Glenn to cast to fish.

Glenn's report was full of details on how to fish the Tumut but my shorthand wasn't good enough nor is my memory to list all the important points he made. You will just have to ask Glenn if you missed the meeting.

From what Glenn told us, and from my experience fishing tailraces, there a number of important differences from our usually fishing practices on local rivers and estuaries. Because the water is moving so fast and swirling in many directions you must learn to MEND the line. Ebor fly fishers know how to mend the line but imagine doing that with a large indicator and heavy nymphs 9 feet below and at long distance. You also have to learn to mend over different currents to present dry flies. Glenn talked of the frustrations trying to present a grasshopper pattern to brown trout sitting in the slow water near the bank while maintaining a drag free drift over the swirling current.



There are a lot of fish in the Tumut River where the cold water from the dams is ideal for both rainbow and brown trout to flourish.

Glenn caught plenty of fish but there was little time for photos with Jimmy on the oars and Glenn taking advantage of the prime spots as the boat drifted swiftly downstream.



Over the day Glenn learnt the art of mending and a few other tricks of the trade which he shared with us. The trout fought well in the fast and cold water. Generally speaking, the rainbows liked the faster water in the middle of the river and around structure. The browns liked to cruise the slower water around the edges and in the backwaters. In a few places it was possible to beach the drift boat and walk the shore stalking the cruising browns.



Glenn highly recommends this trip as a great day out catching and releasing fish and learning new fly fishing techniques.

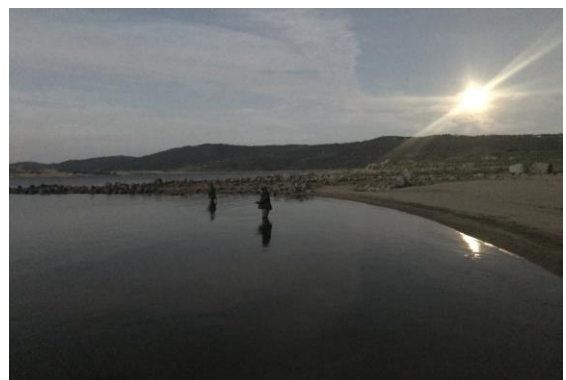
My own experience with tailtraces mainly centres around Brumbys Creek and the Macquarie River in Tasmania. Although this river system does not carry as much water as the Tumut, the same fishing conditions apply. I didn't use a guide with a drift boat but had my own tinny setup to access the water.



The water is not as fast on the Macquarie but the level fluctuates widely and a boat is needed to fish the river where there is no access (except for cattle). The trout are mainly browns and grow quite big. If you are visiting Tasmania, drift fishing one of these tailtraces is highly recommended.

Every trout angler should fish a tailtrace fishery. It can be challenging but there are always trout there and some of them grow quite large. You need good casting and mending skills and a thorough knowledge of where trout lie.

Thanks to Glenn for sharing his trip report at our last meeting. I'm sure he would be only too pleased to add a few more details and answer any questions you might have if you ask. After leaving Tumut he went on to Jindabyne for a week of lake fishing which he also talked about at the meeting. A few photos of that part of the trip follow.



Night fishing is popular and productive on Lake Jindabyne.



The farm at Jindabyne where the crew stayed.



The view of the lake from the farm.



Everywhere you looked there was water to fish.



The boat made it easier to move from bay to bay looking for fish.



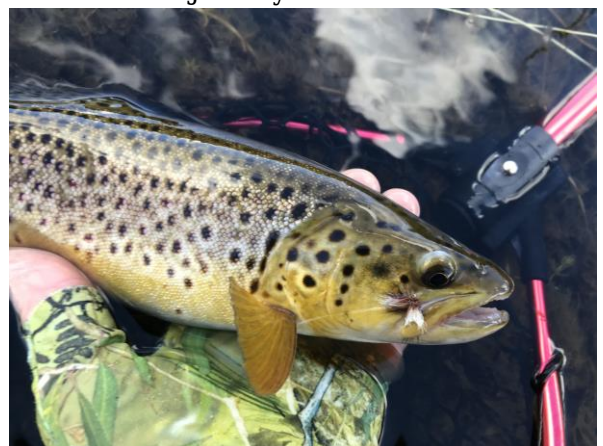
Rainbow Lake.



A misty morning on the lake.



A Jindabyne rainbow.



A perisher brown.

The Loud Mouth Popper

At our last fly tying night Jason Stratford introduced us to the Loud Mouth Popper, which as we know, was created by Vince Margossian. We are grateful to Vince for his creative efforts and willingness to share, to Jason for supplying all the materials and his leadership in helping us tie the fly and to Peter Glasson for providing the step by step instructions.



Vince and his original Loud Mouth Popper



This is a versatile fly which can be used anywhere fish attack surface flies and are attracted by loud noises. It is relatively easy to tie as Jason demonstrated and there are many variations you can try.

Here are some step-by-step instructions provided by Peter Glasson a fellow member of Vince's South East Queensland club. Those of you who attended our fly tying night will note that Jason put his own spin on how to tie the fly. As long as you don't stray far from Vince's original design you can't go wrong.



Materials

There is a heap of room to play with the LMP as it can be used like the JOS gurgler; for a variety of fish and in a variety of colours - but I suppose it is the "must have" for bass -- the bream seem to like it in brighter colours. The LMP is really a very easy tie and can be a replacement for the traditional surface fly - the Dahlberg Diver.

Hooks

You need a hook with a wide gap -- my favourite is Gamakatsu SL12S in size 2 (or SIWASH) - alternatively Mustad 34007 and the Daiichi 2546. If the LMP is only to be used in the fresh - Tiemco TMC 2499SPBL, Mustad Circle Hook and the old specialist, Dahlberg Diver Hook - Mustad 37187 are the go.

Body, Front

Just glue a few sheets of closed cell foam together (about 10mm thick) with super glue and hit with a hole punch. This makes a multi-coloured cylinder. Then cut about 1/5 off to make a flat bottom - cover with a hood (1 or 2 mm thick foam) so there is an overlap of 2 mm -- vary the overlap depending on how much splash you require.



Body, Rear

Chenille - small Anton Chenille in Chartreuse and then suitable hackle long enough to imitate legs. Dubbing brushes can be used.

Tail

Polar Fibre, Marabou or Neer Hair - mixed with Organza has about as much flash as you need.

Thread

Mono black

Lead

0.20 lead wire or snip off a small piece of lead.



Tying Instruction

The Head - it's easier to make about 10 to 15 heads at a time.

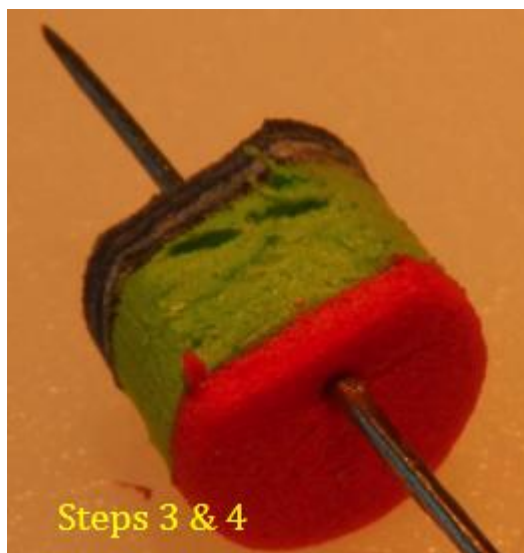
Step 1 - Laminate several layers of closed cell foam - super glue or contact cement -- various colours - to about 10mm thick - this can vary depending on hook size and length - the head is about half the length of the shank.



Step 2 Using hole punch - punch out any number of heads - 12mm dia punch is a good size - 10mm for smaller flies.

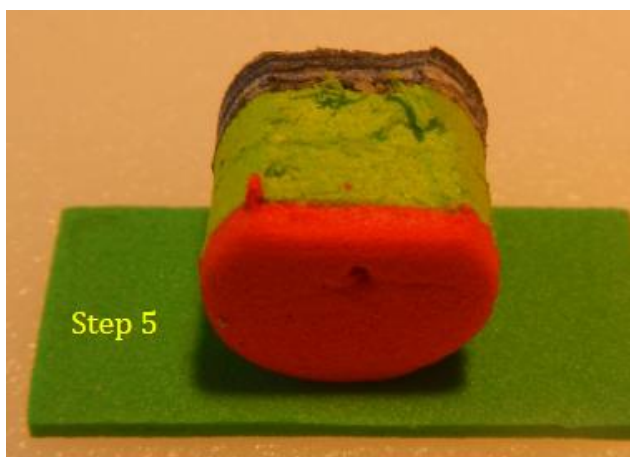
Step 3 Cut the bottom flat - ie cut 1/5 off the diameter.

Step 4 Make a hole near the flat end of the head - ready for the hook.



Step 5 Cut 1mm thick foam, to be used as the hood - 2 mm is OK. The hood should extend about 2mm past the eye end of the head - this is the blooping end.

Step 6 Super glue the hood all the way around to the flat. The hood should overlap about 2mm forward of the head - eye end of the hook and trim if necessary. The sparkle coated foam from Spotlight is good for bream LMPs.



The Loud Mouth Popper - Assembly

Step 7 Wrap base around hook shank and tie in lead just above bend of the hook. Use 5 turns of 20 gauge lead, over wrapped and add a small dab of super glue.

Step 8 Tie in tail of polar fibre, about the length of the hook - around the bend.



Step 9 Tie in chenille and hackle to the bend end of the hook - Tie in weed guard, recommended for bass - to about the middle of the hook. Place small amount of super glue onto the weed guard connection - making sure it is well secured.

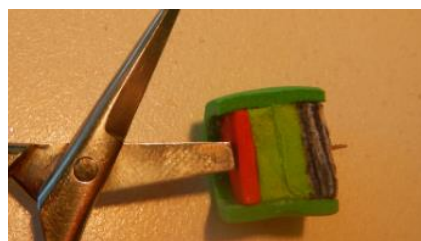
Note: Make sure there is enough room between the weed guard and the eye to push the head on later - check the length of the heads already made.

Step 10 Wind the chenille - up past the weed guard to the eye of the hook -sparsely tie past the weed guard, as this is only used as a base for gluing the head - the head must slide over this part of the hook.



Step 11 Palmer the hackle up to the weed guard and secure - whip finish.

Step 12 Ensure the hole in the head is adequate, to allow it to slide over the eye end of the hook. Super glue the chenille from the weed guard to the eye - slide the head on, while still liquid and hold. You need to be quick and positive to do this - stop the head at the weed guard.



Step 13 Araldite/Epoxy/UV Cured Goo the flat or underside of the fly for improved durability.



Fishing the Loud Mouth Popper

The best way to fish the LMP is using a weight forward floating line - although you can cast this on lighter lines, 7 to 8 weight outfits seem a lot easier. The weed guard is important, as you want to put this fly into cover as often as possible - bass hide in ambush.

The fly, to be most effective needs to be accurately cast in and around cover - under trees, around fallen timber -- in and over lily pads. The fly can hit the water hard and make a splash - but once on the water there are a number of variations on the retrieve. The standard is to wait a few seconds after the initial shock and then 5 to 6 fast short strips - then another pause, wait 10 seconds and then repeat - all the way back. Note, the pause allows the weighted tail to sink, making the next bloop very loud as it rises and straightens - pushing water out of the way. Be careful, as the bass are just as likely to follow the fly all the way back to your rod tip - then hit just as you are about to pick-up. The pause catches just as many fish as the strips, so wait in anticipation. Try this retrieve a few times and then play with variations - longer pauses, 2 or 3 strips between pauses, a slow waddle all the way back - leave it in the cover with only a small twitch.

The most important aspect to fishing the LMP is the bloop - the noise and the splash made by the LMP. If yours isn't noisy you had better make a new one. These are fun to fish with, as there is constant action and the retrieve is

really up to your imagination (as are the colours). If things are really quiet, try using the LMP with an intermediate or sinking line - as the fly floats, the pause will allow the fly to rise, another little tug on the fly line under the water pulls the fly down again. As the LMP displaces plenty of water, the fish will pick up on the vibrations and encourage a take. Tie a few with a little sparkle for bream - use floating and intermediate lines - all good fun.

Another version of Vince's Loud Mouth Popper is tied by Paul Arden of Sexyloops fame. Paul uses the LMP to catch snakehead in Malaysia. The video below shows how Paul ties and uses this fly which he got from Vince while visiting Australia.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_cTm8pa51a4





Does Style Matter?

We all have our own style. It might be the style of fashion we wear, our writing style, the way we comb our hair or the style of house we live in. We are all different and do things in our own way. Style plays a part in fly casting, too. Watch any two fly casters in action and you will notice they don't do things exactly the same. Of course, that doesn't matter as long as they produce the same outcome – an efficient cast. Much has been written about style versus substance in fly casting and the overwhelming evidence is that substance is more important than style. However, there are times as a casting instructor, you have to tell someone style does matter.

Style can be described as a particular way in which something is done, created, or performed. It is usually associated with an easy and graceful manner which looks attractive. In fly casting, some styles can look more attractive than others but that doesn't mean they are better. When we make a cast, we have a desired outcome and as long as that is achieved, style doesn't matter. Different styles can achieve the same outcome as long as they are based on the essential physics of a good cast. Substance is more important than style.

The substance of a good fly cast involves moving the line along as straight a path as possible. To achieve this there are variables to control and the rod has to be accelerated and decelerated smoothly. Bill Gammel ¹ wrote about these Five Essentials which are the substance of a good cast. When followed, these principles will lead to efficient casting outcomes no matter what style is used to accomplish them. This was born out in a study conducted in the 1990's by Al Kyte, a professor of physical education at the University of California at Berkeley, and Gary Moran, who has a PhD in anatomy and kinesiology. They filmed and studied some of the world's best casters and noted that there were wide differences in style among the casters they studied but their results were similar. They concluded these difference in style were not nearly as important as the caster's ability to master the "essential physics" - the substance - of the fly cast. It was the substance of the cast, not the style that produced the desired outcome. You can read more about their study [here](#). ²

If substance is more important than style it should follow that style doesn't matter – but it does. In his book, “The Orvis Guide to Better Fly Casting”, Al Kyte ³ writes about a number of different aspects of style and their advantages and disadvantages. It's not about using the “correct” style but using a style that works for the task at hand. He suggest there are three aspects of casting that should be explored when learning to cast to develop an appropriate style. They are in relation to how we grip the rod, position the arm and stand. This month, I want to address the grip which I will discuss in a little more detail later on. The other aspects of style I will cover next month. Click on the picture below to watch a video on substance vs style.



When we first learn to fly cast, we style our casting on an angler, instructor, or mentor who has impressed us. This might be a world class fly caster such as Steve Rajeff, Lefty Kreh or Joan Wulff. It might be someone in a fly club, a friend or casting instructor. It might be someone on YouTube or in a book. If you were to study the style of all these people you would find they are all different and difficult to replicate exactly. In wanting to cast like they do we attempt to adopt their style. The question is does that style work for you.

The style you adopt will depend on factors such as your physical attributes, your fly fishing preferences and your motivation to become a better fly fisher. Steve Rajeff who is a muscular man has a different style to Joan Wulff who was a dancer. A trout fly fisher will develop a different style to someone who only fishes the salt. If you are content to be a “chuck and duck” fly caster, style won't matter unless you see the need to do things more efficiently. When you want to get better, style does play a role.

There are a number of aspects of style that affect the substance of a cast. Grip is the first one that comes to mind and probably the most controversial. The other day we had a group of beginners at one of our casting clinics. We didn't talk about grip but just handed them a rod and got on with making “pancakes, eggs and bacon.”³ With only a few hours to get them casting we didn't have time to talk about style. If we had we would probably have disagreed on the “right” grip to teach. We all have our own ideas on which style to use but in the end does it really matter?

When it comes to holding a fly rod there are three common grips that can be used. The thumb on top, the finger on top and the knuckle on top (also known as the key or V grip). No particular grip is right or wrong but each affects how the fly rod moves and the line is cast in different ways. There is no right way nor is there only one way.



Thumb on top is often suggested for beginners and is favoured by many instructors such as Joan Wulff. Placing the thumb on top of the cork is a particularly strong grip. It can be a very accurate if you take care with your tracking. With the thumb on top, you are able to make good stops and power snaps. On the other hand (no pun intended) the thumb on top grip makes it easier to rotate the wrist too far on the back cast opening up the loops. It can also twist on the back cast causing the rod to hook around and not track straight.

The next grip to look at is the finger on top. The index finger is extended along the cork pointing to the rod blank and target. This grip is very accurate especially on light rods casting short distances. With the finger on top, it is difficult to bend the wrist too far back preventing wide loops while on the forward cast the wrist bends forward easily to turn over the cast. However, for some people the finger on top grip lacks the power for a hard stop and wrist snap. Most experienced fly fishers use this grip at one time or another but it is not the favoured grip for distance.



The third style of gripping a fly rod is the V grip, Key Grip or Knuckle on top grip. It's similar to how we might grip a golf club and is usually the style that a beginner adopts when you thrust a fly rod in their hand for the first time. It's like holding a set of keys and unlocking a door. With the knuckle facing up and the palm down, a V shape is formed between the thumb and forefinger. The V grip is strong and not prone to hooking on the back cast. It's the cast I use most of the time proving I haven't advanced very far since I had a fly rod thrust in my hands many years ago.

These are the style choices you need to make when gripping a fly rod. There are even subtle variations in each style leading to many options. Each one has advantages and disadvantages. The best way to find a style that suits you is to experiment. Provided your chosen style produces the desired outcome stick with it but don't get locked into using the one style forever. The best approach is to mix and match - horses for courses. I find myself switching from grip to grip depending on the task at hand. Sometimes I even change my grip in the middle of cast. If it works efficiently, and it doesn't hurt, it can't be wrong.



Rod handles also have their own style. When you purchase a fly rod you usually have a few different shape grips to choose from. The most common on freshwater rods is the cigar. These rods are used in fishing situations where an accurate and delicate presentation is needed. If you want to use a finger on top then the cigar grip is best for you.

Half wells grips have a hump in the middle, then taper all the way to the front. These grips are common on most traditional trout fly rods. They are slightly thicker than a cigar grip which can be important because the larger grip is easier to hold and causes less fatigue. This is one of the reasons that I usually wrap my casting rods with tennis racquet overgrip to make them thicker.



Full Wells grips enable the caster to apply power for long casts and are common on saltwater fly rods. The upwelling at the end of the grip facilitates the application of force from the thumb and hand. They don't work as well for those who cast with the index finger on top.

There are other handle styles such as the maniform and many people have taken to their rod with sandpaper to produce a custom grip that conforms to the size, shape and position of their hand. Matching the right handle with your preferred grip can make a big difference in the way you cast the rod, the prevention of repetitive strain injuries and your enjoyment when fishing.



So, style does matter ... but not at the expense of substance. Learn what makes a cast work and experiment to find a style that helps you achieve the outcome you want. Sometimes fly casting is taught with rigid views of what is right or wrong. There are many legitimate styles in fly casting but they are only legitimate if they produce the desired result. Substance counts.

Next month I want to continue exploring the role of style in fly casting. In the [video](#) below, Peter Morse explains there are different styles in casting but as instructors we try to be style neutral. Sometimes that is not possible when people adopt a style that won't work for what they are trying to do or is dangerous. - then style does matter.



1. *The Essentials of Fly Casting*, Bill and Jay Gammel. Copyright 1993 by the Federation of Flyfishers. Published by the Federation of Flyfishers.
2. *Fly Casting: Substance & Style* by Al Kyte and Gary Moran
Al Kyle is a professor at the University of California at Berkeley. Gary Moran has a PhD in anatomy and kinesiology, and is a research, medical, and forensic biomechanist.
3. "Pancakes, Eggs and Bacon" is an activity from the FFI Fly Casting Skills Development Program. It involves moving the rod in ovals (pancakes) circles (eggs), and straight (bacon).
4. Kyte, Al. *The Orvis guide to better fly casting : a problem-solving approach*. Guilford, Conn: Lyons Press, 2008. Print.

Grand Slam Awards

To encourage members to improve their fly fishing skills, a series of awards is being implemented. These **Grand Slam Awards** have four levels (like the casting program) and members are can achieve an award by meeting the criteria listed. The fine details are still being worked out but if you want to get started, this is what you have to do:

Foundation Grand Slam.

This is for someone just taking up fly fishing and goes hand in hand with the Foundation Level of the Fly Casting Skills Development program.

The following three fish species must be caught on fly over the calendar year:

Mullet, Bream and Flathead.

Can be caught over any number of days
Must be photographed with some means of verifying the date

Fish do not have to be legal size but if undersize **MUST** be released unharmed.



Bronze Grand Slam

Any three fish species from the list below must be caught on fly on the one day:

Mullet, Bream, Flathead, Trevally

Must be caught on the one day
Must be photographed with some means of verifying the date

Fish do not have to be legal size but if undersize **MUST** be released unharmed.



Silver Grand Slam

Any three fish species from the list below must be caught on fly on the one day.

Mullet, Bream, Flathead, Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Herring.

Must be caught on the one day
Must be photographed with some means of verifying the date and length.
Fish have to be legal size.



Gold Grand Slam

Any three fish species from the list below must be caught on fly on the one day.

Carp, Murray Cod, Herring, Yellowbelly, Brown Trout, Rainbow Trout, Brook Trout, Redfin, Mangrove Jack, Whiting, Trevally, Tailor, Kingfish, Tuna (any species) Mackerel (any species) Dolphin Fish, Marlin

Must be caught on one day
Must be photographed with some means of verifying the date and length
Fish must be legal size.



Our Supporters

These people have all helped our club in one way or another. When you are looking for products and services make sure you consider them first



Flies by Fedeles



Membership Fees

Membership Fees are as follows:

Adult membership \$30

Family membership \$40

Concession membership \$20

Junior membership free

Distant membership \$10

The membership year runs from 1st July to 30th June.

Family membership is available for a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, de facto relationship or adoption who live together.

Concession membership is available to pension card holders (including disability support and aged), Centrelink and Veterans Affairs cardholders

Distant membership is available to anyone living more than 80km from Coffs Harbour.

Junior membership is available to anyone attending primary or secondary school.

Fees can be paid:

1. **In cash** or by **cheque** at the next meeting or fly tying night. (cheques made payable to Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club Inc.

2. **By cheque** posted to:

The Secretary
Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club
11 Butterfly Close
Boambee East
NSW 2452



3. **Direct deposit:** BCU Credit Union
BSB 533 000

Account Number: 02051766

Name: Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club Inc

Reference: Your surname

If you are making an electronic deposit please send an email to ccffc@tpg.com.au to indicate you have paid as we do not have online access to our account. When depositing, make sure you include your surname in the Reference section. e.g.

Ekert Membership.

Club Contact Address

Our official email address is ccffc@tpg.com.au.

Our mailing address is:

The Secretary

Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club

11 Butterfly Close

Boambee East

NSW 2452

Electronic Contacts

We have a Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club website which can be found at:

<http://coffscoastflyfishing.weebly.com/>.

If you find problems with the website such as broken links please email the Secretary so they can be rectified.

Our Facebook Page can be found at:

<https://www.facebook.com/coffscoastflyfishing/>

We have a **Facebook Group**. If you are on FB all you need to do is search for Coffs Coast Fly Fishers and ask to join the Group. Currently there are 348 members in this group.

Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club Inc.

Membership Form

I apply for Membership or Renewal in the following membership category (*tick appropriate box*):

Adult \$30 Family \$40 Concession \$20 Junior - Free Distant \$10

Please fill all information below:

Name: _____ DOB: _____
Address: _____ Town: _____
Postcode: _____ Home Phone: _____ Mobile: _____
Email: _____
Emergency Contact: _____ Phone: _____

For Family Membership please complete the details below:

Name: _____ DOB: _____ Relationship: _____
Name: _____ DOB: _____ Relationship: _____
Name: _____ DOB: _____ Relationship: _____

By signing below you agree to abide by the Constitution, rules and safety regulations of the Club.

Signature of Applicant: _____ Date: _____

Signature of Legal Guardian if for Junior member: _____ Date: _____


The club uses photographs taken by members or of members in the newsletter, promotional materials, on the website and on our Facebook Page. If you do not want your photograph to be used, tick here.

Phone numbers and email addressed are shared by club members to co-ordinate club outings and for safety purposes. If you do not want your details shared, tick here.

This signed Membership form must be given or sent by email or post to the Club together with payment of annual Club fees. Payment can be made by cash, cheque, or direct deposit.

Post signed form and cheque to:

The Secretary.
Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club
11 Butterfly Close
Boambee East
NSW 2452

 Bananacoast Community Credit Union
Ltd and Police & Nurses Limited

Direct Deposit:

BSB: 533 000
Account No: 02051766
Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club Inc
Reference: **Your surname**

Notes

Club Membership Definitions:

Concession membership is available to; Pension Cardholders (including Disability support and Aged), Centrelink and Veterans Affairs Cardholders.

A family is a group of two or more persons related by birth, marriage, de facto relationship or adoption who live together.

Junior membership is available to anyone attending primary or secondary school.

Distant membership is available to anyone living more than 80km from Coffs Harbour. Distant Members are entitled to all the benefits of club membership and are covered by public risk insurance.

Fees:

Our preferred method of payment is Direct Deposit. When making a **Direct Deposit** please ensure you include in the Reference: your **Surname** so the payment can be identified by the Club Treasurer and a receipt issued.

Fees can be paid in **Cash** or by **Cheque** at a meeting or club outing.
Cheques to be made payable to **Coffs Coast Fly Fishing Club Inc.**

Completed Membership Forms:

Can be scanned and emailed to the Secretary at ccffc@tpg.com.au.
Can be hand-written and handed to the Secretary at a meeting or event.
Can be posted to the Secretary at the above address.

All information supplied will be held in Club records and will only be available to financial Club members, if approved by the applicant as indicated on their Membership Form.