



The Vice

newsletter of Tasmanian Fly Tyers' Club Inc.

Volume 7, Issue 3

Winter Edition, June 2009

Next meeting Monday 20th July when Simon Thomson will talk about cane rods.

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Presidents Report

Listen to the falling rain, listen to it fall. About time too. Whilst we'd still like a couple of metres of snow and rain in the highlands the recent rain has been very welcome. I'm hopeful that Lake Leake and Tooms will recover enough to fish at least before Christmas. I've mentioned a few times my preference for Lake Meadowbank especially in the early part of the season. While I am the first to agree that this water can be fickle, it is worth getting to know. The early morning midge fishing can be superb and I've never seen more red spinner anywhere in the state. The water quality is cool and clear and full of nutrients with beautiful weed beds for fly life. So there's some early season options for you. More traditional waters such as Great Lake, Arthurs and Woods should fish well with rising water levels and fish chasing Galaxia in the rocks.

Our recent meeting based around fishing The Great Lake was enjoyed by those attending. Many members have contacted me to say how much this will assist in fishing this huge body of water. The committee has plans for similar meetings based around the popular highland lakes. These meetings are to be followed by field trips to put the theory into action. This sharing of knowledge is one of the main benefits of joining a fishing club. I know I always enjoy fishing with new boat partners partly because I always learn something new but also because a shared fishing experience is twice as good.

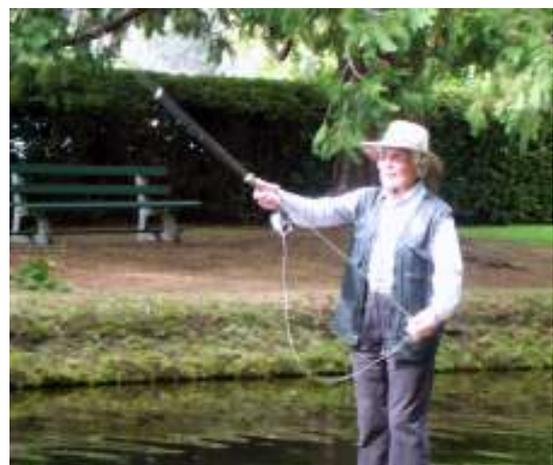
The committee is finalising the field trips for the coming season so I urge you to pick a few over the year and come and enjoy the company, the fishing experiences and good old fashioned fun.

So sort out your gear, get a new fly line and tie up some patterns. I'll see you out there.

Finally, I was very saddened to hear of the passing of Marg Knight. While I had only known Marg for a few years, her zest for life and fly fishing passion has left a permanent impression on me. I particularly remember the first time I met Marg. It was at Tony Dells winter flytying evenings. I was tired from a long day at work and was looking for a seat when Marg came and stood beside me. Neatly dressed, twin set and pearls, dress shoes; perfectly straight. I thought she was going to offer me her seat! We chatted easily about the forthcoming season and the merits of the flies we had tied that evening. I remember enjoying her company and her infectious enthusiasm for flyfishing.

A long term, committed and popular member of the Tasmanian Fly Tyers club, we will all miss Marg very much.

Dave Hemming



Margaret Knight at the Salmon Ponds

Guess this Lake

The lake in the last issue was Lake Naomi and no one had a guess I think we will stop this section unless people are keen to have a go so email your guess to nib1943@iinet.net.au to win a \$30 gift voucher from the kind lads at the Fishing Connection.



Ian Stokes offers a piece from his famous ball.

Those attending the meeting on knots and rigs would agree it was a success with members willing to share their tips on tackle.

The meeting we had on fishing the great lake was extremely interesting and a vast amount of information was willingly provided by our members. The aim is to prepare a map of the great lake identifying where to fish, where the weed beds are; “the good rocky shores and drop offs” the best places to find wind lanes. This is a great fishery with a wide range of opportunities in a water which at first glance looks all the same and daunting; How do I fish this?”

Members at the meeting talked about early morning midge fishing, tackling the three dimensional wind lanes, evening fishing, chasing the sharks and drifting the dry. There was a wealth of useful information which needs to be captured. Perhaps we need a club “Wikipedia” approach to record our combined knowledge.

This was a project that the committee identified at its meeting at the great lake, and we have started marking “the good oil” on the map from the Peacock lodge this can be added to as more “research is done”.

The committee also plans to have a club event on the Great Lake asking the members who know the lake to act as leaders. It would be great to have an article on fishing the great lake for our vice; any volunteers?



The boys at Spot On fishing tackle have kindly provided the Club with 4 vouchers to the value of \$30 each for this year's ‘Guess this lake’ competition. I’m sure everyone will join with me in thanking the lads for this kind support, and continue to patronise Steve’s shop.

Next issue

The next issue of vice will be out by the end of September with a deadline 19/09/09 for copy to John Smith nib1943@iinet.net.au if you have ideas, articles or comments send them to John.

Monday Meetings.

Our President suggested we change our meeting format a bit to get more contribution and involvement from members and it seems to be working!

We have had some really good Monday meetings recently with our own members leading the way and sharing their experience. Noel Wilson tied his peacock black and peacock and described how to fish it. Ian Stokes tied his famous nymph and his new secret weapon the possum emerger-“Stokesy’s way”.

For payments to the club

BSB: 807 007

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Name: Tasmanian Fly Tyers Club Inc

Then email the details to Tim Munro

tim@theatreroyal.com.au

Margaret Dorothy Knight **31 January 1923-17th June 2009**

A tribute by Peter Fay

Marg was a country girl who loved the outdoors, as did her father who was Surveyor General of NSW. She was Tall, good looking, full of sparkle, and strength.

Marg Mulley born in country NSW, as was her sister Joan. They spent their early years at Lismore. Marg was a border at PLC Sydney where she matriculated, then spent a year as a jillaroo learning to horse ride, and other country skills.

She completed four years nursing training at Prince Alfred Hospital, Sydney and was NSW State Freestyle Swimming Champion.

Margaret moved to Hobart where she met Bill Knight and they married in 1947

I first met them in 1953, when Bill was hospital superintendent. Jim their son, was born before they moved to Grosvenor Street where Sue and Heather were born. The next move was to Lipscombe Avenue Marg said Bill bought it without her seeing it - what a brave man!

Marg and Bill had mutual interests of family, flowers and fishing, as well as love of music.

Both were founding members of the National Rose Society of Tasmania, which was established in the 1960's. Margaret won the prestigious T A Stewart Memorial Award for her work as a rosarian, the first recipient from Tasmania and the first woman to win this Australia-wide award. Margaret was President of the National Rose Society of Australia in 1977. It was also in the early 1960's that Bill and Margaret became interested in fly fishing and she joined the Fly Tyers Club in the 60's and attended fly tying classes for years. As with most things she did, Margaret became proficient, taught an Adult Education class one year and conducted Tony Dell's Monday night classes while he was away this year.

In the 1970's Bill and Margaret did 2 trips salmon fishing with John Morris to his 'beat' near Fort William, Scotland. It was in 1975 that they were recalled because of the traumatic death of Sue, which left a shadow over the family for many years. Bill was diagnosed with a brain tumour in 1990 and was nursed at home by Margaret for his final 12 months. Time rolled on and Jim's MS deteriorated and he was cared

for at St John's Park and then at Vaucluse. He was visited every night by Margaret.



In 1961 Margaret joined the Queen Mary Club where she enjoyed her Monday Bridge 4. Margaret was a great reader (she told me she had over 100 publications relating to fly fishing). She liked to read "factual stuff" with a dictionary nearby.

Marg and family fished with Johnno Johnston and occasionally stayed at his shack "Esratew" in Tod's Corner.

Bill and I shared a shack on the edge of Little Pine Margaret wanted something a bit better than a 12 x 8 foot unlined corrugated iron shack. She bought a piece of land overlooking the Shannon Lagoon and had a shack built there on rocky clay soil.

Margaret and Heather would drive up late Friday and return late Sunday. When I say they drove up, I more correctly should say Marg drove up. No-one else was allowed to drive her car! Or the boat! She was very independent.

Marg took great delight in teaching the grandchildren to fish- She thought it fantastic that 3 generations of female anglers would be on the water at the same time.

Marg and Heather were not only mother and daughter, they were best friends and I doubt there would be a quiet moment when they were together, be it on the water or when Heather popped into Lipscombe for a chat.

Marg was a great Lady.

Member Profiles

Margaret Knight and Heather Noga.

This profile was written and approved by Margaret just before her unfortunate stroke. I have left it unchanged.

I prepared a few notes and sent them to Margaret and she sent back a wonderful history of the three generations of lady anglers. I had a great time talking to Margaret and Heather so I have added a bit here and there.—John Smith

“My first fly tying class was with Graeme House in 1958. At this time we had odd trips to Penstock and Tods Corner. I managed to get a licence from the Hobart City Council to practice casting in the top reservoir at the Water Works. I caught my first fish at Penstock early in the 1960’s. Bill and Peter Fay built a cosy little shack “Belchers” at Little Pine situated between Bill Beck “Hic-Cup Hall” and “Knock a Grog Along” owned by Ray Longden, Jim Hastie and Ambrose Hayley.”



Heather with a typical catch

“We had great times at the Pine and this is where Heather started fly fishing. She was still at school but as soon as school broke up it was off to the Pine. Heather caught her first fish out near the river and carried it round on her belt all day. Actually it fell off

the hook as she went to net it but the fish was so exhausted that it lay on the bottom. I said put the net in front of it and it swam straight in. “

Heather told me that father Bill purchased a new aluminium boat that did not row as easily as the clinker built dingy that Margaret used because he bought cheap, oars which were too long for the boat. Given the choice Heather always went with mum because she had gin and tonics in the esky

“I joined the Fly Tyers Club in the 1960s. I attended many fly tying classes over the years with Ray Longden, David Tadd, and David O’ Brien and even took an adult education class one year myself. Heather and I are regular attendees at Tony Dells Monday nights.”

‘These days, Heather and I fish together and I find I have to net more fish for Heather, than she nets for me. We’ve always loved the Pine but also fished Arthurs regularly till this season but with Arthurs so low, it’s good to be back at our old stamping ground.’”



Margaret at her Miena Lodge

“Heathers favourite fly is a Royal Wulff, with a nymph dropper. She has to be desperate to fish wet. On the other hand I keep changing my fly, all Tony Dell’s patterns look tasty and I do like a green nymph. I’ve caught my bag twice on Arthurs with a Hardy’s Favourite. Bill and I fished Lake Pedder when it was popular and my biggest fish was 14 lbs caught on a mud eye.”

“Bill and I had two trips Salmon fishing in Scotland with John Marrion in the late 70’s. John had the rights to fish the Lochy near Fort William for two weeks each year for 3 anglers. He invited us two years running. I tied up the tube flies that John recommended but the gillie said they were too hairy. The first night I sat up and trimmed them with a pair of nail scissors and they proved quite successful”

“Heather wants me to teach her to back the trailer, but then she may not need me. I say I need to do the backing to keep me mentally active. Actually Heather won’t put a tow bar on her car and she does not like to get it dirty.” *(Heather told Margaret” I suppose I will have to show my senior’s card before you will let me back.”)* “

“Having hooked myself this season (*ripping it out the hard way*) I have since learned the correct way to remove an imbedded Hook, never too old to learn new tricks!”

“My grand Daughter Emily has been coming up to the lakes since she was little She has learnt to cast and has caught a few trout. It was great when she requested a rod and reel for her birthday, I knew then that she was properly hooked. I heard her at the boat ramp telling a fisherman that we are three generations of women anglers”

We are privileged to have Margaret and Heather as very active members in the club. They are great fly tiers and great fun to be with. Margaret is as sharp as a tack and knows the Pine like the back of her hand. The next challenge is to recruit Emily.

Margaret, Emily and Heather,
Three generations of anglers together,
The lakes in their blood, bound together with love,
They go fishing depending on weather



Margaret and Heather can’t wait.
To go fishing together as mates!
They catch fish on the Pine without any wine!
But the gin and tonics are great!

Heather catches fish often first try
Marg wants to see which fly
If she were to look she might grab the hook
So I don’t show her; that’s why!



“Nana with Emily aged 14 and getting hooked”

□

Member Profile John Spencer

John a true blue Tasmanian Started fly fishing in 1981 jumping straight into fly fishing and fly tying with no previous fishing experience.

He undertook one of David Tadd's Adult Ed. Fly Fishing course and at about the same time started fly tying, with no training in the art. John gave me some marvellous notes.

'In 1982 or 83 thought I had better improve my tying skills so I enrolled in David Tadd's Adult Ed. fly tying course.'

My early fishing waters were Lake Sorell Meadowbank, Shannon River, Clyde River, and the Ouse River. Now my main fishing waters seem to be Arthurs and Penstock

I have done a little fishing outside Tassie in Victoria, the Hunter Valley near Newcastle in NSW where I lived for a couple of years and in South Island of NZ, and British Columbia. My plans are to do more, particular the rivers in NZ

Very much enjoy fly tying, and have a reputation within the club, quite unfairly, that on club tying outings like Tiger Hut I bring along more tying material than what Bridges Brothers have on their shelves. **NOT TRUE**. But due to these false rumours I've been forced go "minimalist" with my fly tying gear. I now pack everything I need into one small bag.

My current enjoyment with fly fishing and fly tying are:

- **Occasionally out fishing Westy.** Note this is an extremely rare event. I'm still working on a "super fly" that will allow me to increase the frequency of this rare event. This "super fly" is based on a pattern told to me by Macca called the Hickory Fly.
- **Enjoying a good bottle of red wine up at the club shack,** especially with Cliff.
- **Off season fly tying at Tony Dells.** I sit at a table at the back of the room called "the naughty boys table" with Denis, Rob, and Margaret. It's a good thing that I sit at this table as a calming influence, as the other three can be quite disruptive.
- Currently I am not tying as much as I would like, as all of my fly boxes (only have 3 boxes) are full. Might need to go

out and buy a couple of more boxes so I can fill these up. May need to seek Tony Dells advice on this.

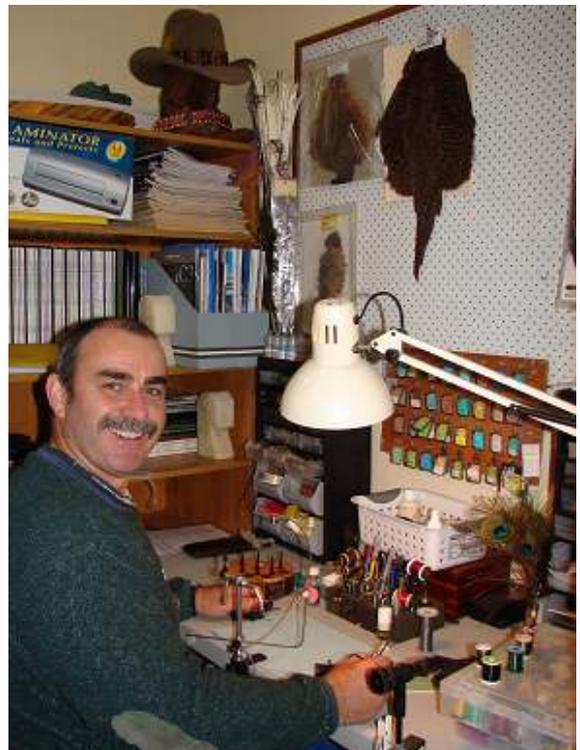
My current focus with fly fishing is to check out the local trout fishing scene in the Democratic Republic of Congo over the next 3 to 5 months, while dodging mosquitoes with malaria, and rebels with AK47s

John is an excellent club man and is on the committee although his overseas trips are interfering with his duties and his fishing. John is an excellent fly tier and willingly shares his knowledge. He has written two excellent articles for the Vice.

He is a great bloke to go fishing with and those who have had the privilege know that John gets great pleasure in catching the most fish. He certainly catches his share of fish. When I asked him for a tip on fishing he said "**Go fishing with Westy**"

Spence is generous and wise.
He ties thousands and thousands of flies.
Gives flies away that won't catch on the day.
Flies he deliberately ties.

Competitive fishing? No way!
John goes out for a lovely day.
Likes tying a fly, not helping fish die.
Do you believe that the tooth fairy pays?



John at the vice again!

Member profile: Ian Stokes

I first went fishing with a friend and his family from the jetty in Lindisfarne Bay and caught the only fish a large cod. At that time I wasn't that keen on fishing as I got into trouble for being late home. I then started fishing with my father and brothers from the Causeway at Midway Point for mullet when I was 10. From there I graduated to spinning for cocky salmon along the foreshore at Lindisfarne. My father was taught to cast by Don Hammond and another business friend on the front lawn of our house. Father taught me to cast using a cut down Hardy's Jet fibreglass rod and a silk line when I was 13. My first trout on a fly was a tiddler caught from Arthurs lake on a trip with Dad and Don when they caught a number of large fish. We often fished together and we built a 15 foot boat which was a floating caravan for accessing the Cowpaddock and Meadowbank which offered fantastic wet fly fishing. I struggled to catch fish in those days but persevered and slowly gained more skills.

I met Lyndon Cubbins and John Hughes at University and we started to fish together particularly at Lake Sorell which became our favourite haunt. We still fish together and Lyndon and I have jointly owned a shack at Miena since the mid 80's.

I have been fly fishing now for over 40 years. I commenced fly tying in the early 80's but then like now was not really an avid tyer. It was easier when Dad was alive to put in an order for new flies. I now tie all my flies but I have a limited range of patterns which would probably number about 20 that I use each season. My favourite flies to tie are those that are simple but I find that I adapt patterns and techniques to make up my own hybrids of successful patterns. My go to fly wet at the moment is a black leech pattern that I have modified using green "bead yarn" and my dry is a scruffy possum tail emerger.

When I first started to fish seriously I loved fishing early in the season in Lake Sorell to fish in the marshes. During summer I then fished either Arthurs or Little Pine from the boat to the dun feeders. Over the past few years I have become more inclined to fish from the shore and have spent more and more time in the Nineteen Lagoons area trying to get away from the crowds on the more popular waters. The sight fishing that is available on some of the western lakes is fantastic with midge feeders and tailing fish on calm evenings and mornings.

My favourite type of fishing is sight fishing to feeding fish. I love seeing a fish feeding to a pattern and

leading that fish with a dry fly (usually an emerger) and waiting with anticipation as the fish approaches the fly and hopefully takes it. If I can then slow down the strike (big problem for me) then I have hooked the fish. Landing the fish is secondary as fooling the fish is the best part for me.

I became a member of the club in the mid 80's after my father died. Prior to that I had been a regular participant at club events but was not a fly tyer so was not eligible to join. I joined the committee in 1999 and had 5 years as Secretary from 2000 to 2005. I enjoyed the time I had on committee and found that I became much more involved with the Club during this time.

I have recently "retired as the Manager of Family Services for Colony 47. I have worked as a social worker all my working life and was employed in the Child Protection and Youth Justice areas for over 20 years. I have spent this summer fishing but will be looking for part time work in the near future probably back in the human services industry area.

Stokesy is a great club man. Putting in 5 years as secretary is a lot of work. He is also famous as a fly designer and inventor of Stokesy's Nymph which is used by many club members. He has been more than generous handing out the famous Mohair.



Stokes in Action

Fame for Ian Stokes, we insist
Designed the fly that catches most fish
Mohair wool tied real rough now that's not so tough
Stokesy's nymph will put fish on your dish

Off to Augusta he'll go.
To a place no body will know.
Smutting just before dawn, the fish should be warned;
That Stokes is a real fish foe!

Adult Midge using the Paraloop Method

Paraloop techniques are well described in the book "TYING FLIES THE PARALOOP WAY" by Ian Moutter.

Picture of finished fly:



Hook: Kamasan B100 Size 16

Body: Danville's flat waxed nylon: olive, black, grey, or red

Ribbing: Fine gold wire

Thorax: Peacock herl

Hackle: Black

You need a gallow tool and the thread to be used in the paraloop need to be strong, hence I suggest using Kevlar thread. Colour of this does not matter

Tying Instructions:

- Tie in the ribbing and the body nylon around the bend
- Wrap the body with thread
- Rib the body. Varnish the body



- Tie in a loop of Kevlar using the gallow tool. Have the loop vertical and taunt
- Tie in the hackle at the base of the loop.



- Wrap the hackle up the loop thread, and then back down. Aim to wrap the hackle up the thread the distance the loop is tied from the eye.
- Weight the hackle tip down using hackle pliers



- The loop and hackle now needs to be pulled back out of the way to complete the fly. I've made a simple tool to accomplish this.



- Tie off the hackle tag and remove
- Tie in the peacock herl and wrap up to the eye leaving room for the head.

- Remove the loop from the holding tool and lay over the herl. If the hackle extends over the hook eye the hackle can be carefully packed down by spreading the loop with your fingers. Do this until the hackle matches the length of the hook to the eye. **But be gentle**



- Before laying the hackle down and tying off, stroke the hackle back away from the eye to avoid trapping too many hackle fibres when laying down onto of the herl
- Lay the paraloop down and tie off
- Trip off the loop tags
- Small need head
- Varnish if you require

Picture of the finished fly and how it should float;
Note floatant has only be applied to the hackle



*Spence's more flies than a shop
Tying material; he's got the lot
He'll give you a fly, you might wonder why
Generosity plus that's what!*

Activity Reports

Tiger Hut Weekend

Sixteen members filled the Tiger Hut for an excellent weekend of fly tying, fine food , fine wine and fine company.



As Noel Wilson suggested

“Organisers and those who helped make the weekend a great success need to be congratulated., Cubby and Stokesy in particular, and other contributors such as Craig for meat, Macca for the traditional Mrs Mac's apple pie, David Chote, for camp oven roast potatoes., and Ashley Artis (arguably one of the best dry fly tyers in Australia) who not only provided his expertise but also his mini spit roast and he cooked the roasts for Saturday night, not to mention his excellent fruit cake, and his humor. Anyway the food, company, red wine etc were all excellent and we tied a few flies as well.”

This is what the club is really about sharing expertise sitting down to tie a fly or two, some red wines or the odd ale with great discussions and stories about past club activities and heroes.



Speaking of heroes Young Trotty managed to lodge a number 8 hook in his elbow well up over the barb, while fly tying-would you believe it! Craig Granquist

came to the rescue using the fishing line downward pressure method with encouragement and advice from others “pull it quickly” –“No do it slowly”; which caused Trotty some anxiety. The hook was successfully removed with out any pain.

There was also long and sometimes tedious discussion led by Peter Trott about the pros and cons of wide arbor reels of such complexity they went well into the night, with no final resolution despite the highly trained participants.



Snowy Range

The club had the privilege of being the only group allowed to fish Snowy Range since it was closed in April 2008. Our thanks to the owner Bob Cleary. When arranging the day with Bob I said I was expecting 20 or so people to enjoy some catch and release fishing and a quiet family BBQ. It was great, and a bit of a surprise to see a large turnout of at least 40 adults and at least 20 children.

We charged \$10 per head for members with the proceeds converted into high quality wine to reward the owner and to take his mind off the impact such a large group would have on fish stocks, Lets hope he will have us back again.



The club funded the BBQ: snags and burgers procured and prepared by Dave Hemming plus 3 rather large rainbow trout harvested by Peter Murphy. One of them weighed in at 11 lbs.

I believe that every man women and child who wanted to catch a fish did so and some caught so many they lost count. A lot of fish were exercised!

Prior to lunch people fished one of the nine ponds catching mainly rainbow trout and the odd salmon. Laurie Matcham claimed a large rainbow and a salmon around 20lbs.



After a fine lunch the two ponds with salmon were opened up and proved to be very productive.

It was great to see the joy on the face of children catching a fish, sometimes their first, and quite often a large one.

I suspect that some of the fish were exercised more than once and triple hook ups were quite common.

It was a most successful family day.



COMBAT FISHING

From our man up North Francis Bright

In October 07 John Smith, fellow Club member, arrived in sunny and slightly warm Kununurra. He was keen to get a barra having only caught one before over in the NT – preferably on fly.

The local fishing had been dead. My normally productive secret spots were quiet. Last year the fishing was just brilliant but not this October. I had two days of “Smith guiding” to look forward to in very tough conditions.

My style of fishing, is not a leisurely approach, it is an all out assault. As a result Smithy was a bit worried about having his “grey nomad meanderings” shattered by “gung-ho” combat fishing. My view was that he could use the rest of his round Australia trek with Helen in the Hi-ace campervan as a recovery.

Bank fishing can be hot work so I decided to take the pointy nose punt to make the chance of a barra a lot easier for John. A boat gives you some freedom to move spots easily and also have a clear back cast.

An early morning pickup to beat the heat and we were heading north east. If Smithy wasn't awake at the beginning of the drive, he was awake after about the thousandth corrugation. Negotiating a few potholes, creek washouts and rocks, we manhandled the boat into the water, loaded the gear including a full esky (of water!!) and set off for the first sortie.

Did I mention it was warm? I reckoned it was 55 in the sun and Smithy was only just coping – he was not alone! Smithy was trolling with standard barra gear – 15 kg braid, 80 lb Jinkai leader, a solid rod, and the secret barra weapon – a gold B52. In my view, use enough gun when hunting bear. The peace and quiet of trolling was shattered by Smithy yelling “I've got one”. A false start as we had hooked a rock.

The best way to hook fish when the fishing is quiet is to do something else. Gazing at the horizon; taking a swig of water, looking at a snag, going into the trance brought on by extreme heat and no fish. Smithy was taking another swig of water and the rod folded over and whilst line was not peeling it was definitely fishy. Alas, after ten seconds of stalemate it was over. “Yep Smithy I think that was fishy”.

The tide had started to run and the hole was filling up. I was anticipating a few barra and salmon boofing bait and even suggested that Smithy try a fly as they get onto small prawns and won't touch any other offering. There were only two boofs where there should have been hundreds. The fly remained “untagged” and Smithy was starting to sweat. Smithy seemed intent on waving that fly rod.



Trolling down a current line of dirty and clear water, Smithy was having another drinks break and all I heard was “SHIT!” “Whaaaat???” Some 40 metres behind the boat was a leaping barra. The first jump was around 1.5 metres up and then there was a second and a third jump. Smithy had this rather bemused look on his face – he was finally into one. After a while the barra started to tire and came to the boat and it was only lightly hooked. At about this time I remembered the net was safely back at home. I suggested to Smithy that he start praying as there was bugger all chance of getting this one in the boat. We did it! A 62 cm slab of silver with a yellow tail. “Geez Francis, this barra fishing is easy – I dunno why you think it is so difficult”.

After the first fish things went really quiet. I hooked a few rocks, Smithy drank more water and we puttered up and down looking for fish. I had a strike and landed a catfish about 2 cm longer than the lure and Smithy did take a photo (yair I'll be wearing that one for a while).



As things were not happening on lures, I decided to get some bait. Smithy continued to cast a fly around some rocky structure for no result. I did mention at one point whether he had got that “bloody waste of time” fly fishing out of his system yet. Smithy’s response was reasonable after flogging for 30 minutes for no result “I think so!”

Smithy continued to catch fish on bait, 2 more undersize barra, a pikey bream and a catfish. I managed to get a mullet scaled by a barra but still had none in the boat. As the sun went down I finally managed one baby barra with eyes too big for his stomach – aggressive little fella less than 30 cm but it was my one barra for the day.

Smithy reached the pinnacle of all fishing methods by teaching small mullet and boney bream to swim around rock bars on 6/0-8/0 circle hooks. Tropical fishers are multi-skilled and Smithy was adept at drinking water, holding a beach umbrella, reminiscing and fishing as well. Then his line went taut - confusion reigned supreme.

Ah well that is fishing. Smithy had fun and is no longer a WA barra virgin.

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Smithy told me to “hold this”. As there was a choice of 3 items the comment was not that helpful. I eventually got hold the beach umbrella, Smithy held the rod, the water bottle was on the floor and there was an angry fish putting its head down and crash diving into the rocks. This fish was well hooked and was soon beside the boat – maroony red with white stripes and a bear trap mouth. Smithy must have thought “...ho hum, a mangrove jack, catch them every trip do you?” No – they are bloody rarity.



Boab Tree in a Special place

If you are heading north look Francis up. He really looked after Helen and I making our trip a ripper even if he did his best to destroy me. Great place the Kimberlies. Thanks Francis.