

the BUGPOLE

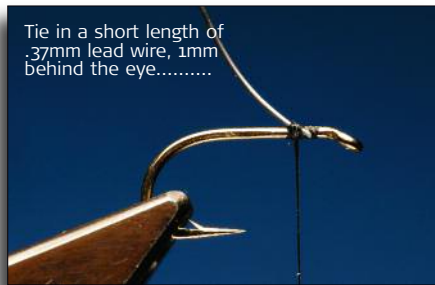
I'm not a fiercely competitive person, and regard my fishing as a very private activity in many respects. This isn't to say I fish alone or in a solitary fashion, just that often my fly-tying thoughts are developed away from the waterside - the tying bench is my other means of fishing.

Last year I was invited to fish a 'One-Fly' competition - one fly for the day - you lose the fly, you're out! The competition was fished on a southern chalkstream, where teams of three bid to catch, a: the best fish, b : the most fish and c: the best team result. This was quite a challenge, since the event was held in early October, and from the beginning of September most fish on these waters are/were preoccupied with nymphing. So, what tactics?

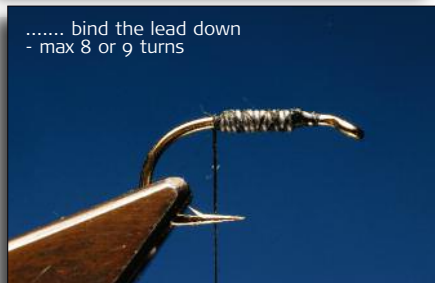
Luckily, I had a couple of days to practice on my home water, and the fly that seemed to work best was a miniature damsel/olive nymph, size #14 - that fly did really well last year. Now, if anything is for certain, it is that, things won't be the same this year, no two days are ever the same, and the rivers were carrying a lot more water than last year.

So, this year, I was invited into the competition again, and I set about with a bit of practice, but this time the successful pattern was a small bug pattern, initially designed to tempt a grayling or two. This it did with

Tie in a short length of .37mm lead wire, 1mm behind the eye.....



..... bind the lead down - max 8 or 9 turns



.....prepare a strip of pearlescent sheet - 4mm wide.....



.....catch in the strip at the tail, & then a few turns further forward catch in the rib of twisted copper wire.....



..... make a dub of hare or squirrel fur and



aplomb, but it also took some excellent browns, fished upstream, dead drift. While I settled in my mind that the 'bug' would fish well, all along was the nagging memory of last years' successful pattern.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained I made up some bugs with tails as per the little pattern from last year - after all, if the tail failed, it could be ripped out, and I still kept my fly - two flies in one?

One component which has developed over a time is the copper rib. For the purposes of this fly I reverted to a fine gauge copper wire twisted using a dubbing twirler into a tight wire rope. Initially the rib was tied in at the very end of the body, behind the shellback, but in practice it 'fell' off the back end after taking a couple of fish, a situation which would not be acceptable in the 'One-Fly' competition. So it was moved into the body by just a millimetre or so from the rear end and proved every bit the right decision. A coat of Hard as Nails is applied to the back as an insurance.

The body material varied in practice between dubbed squirrel and brown Microbrite, in the end the fly for the day was the dubbed squirrel version, but the Microbrite wrapped body does equally well.

In the fishing scenario, the tactic is to spot fish where possible and offer the fly upstream, and allow it to dead drift, ANY movement of the



leader forward or sideways is a signal to lift the rod tip, or if a targetted fish moves when the fly is in the vicinity, again lift, it might be the only signal you get!

