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Positively Deadly!

CHRIS SANDFORD was on the winning team at this year's River Test 'One Fly' Competition. Here he shows us how to tie his triumphant fly



The 'Dream Team.'

PHOTO: GUY GRAGOE

Last year, I was flattered to be invited to join Chris Tarrant in Bob James' 'Dream Team' to fish the River Test 'One Fly' competition organised by Simon Cooper's company, Fishing Breaks. We didn't win, so this year we thought we'd have another go. As the title suggests, the 'One Fly' operates on a very simple rule. You fish with only one fly, lose it and you're out. But then comes the big question: which fly?

I supplied our 'Dream Team' with one of my flies that did quite well for us last year. When Bob invited me to join the team in 2010 I only had a few days to come up with a pattern that would get down through the murky water into the deeper holes, and would be strong enough to survive the battering that it would

hopefully receive from several large trout. On the morning of the competition Bob's guide looked into the box and said "They look *@!%#@!* deadly!" So that's what we decided to call the fly!

Later that day, a TV crew was filming Bob as he continually caught fish on my fly. The director asked him the name of the fly he was using. Not wishing to offend the viewing public, he pretended not to remember and asked his guide. The guide, without missing a beat said, "Oh that one, sir. That's the 'Ducking Feadly!'"

The D.F. is based on a grayling bug devised by the late Geoff Clarkson which is tied on a curved nymph hook. I simply tied it on a straight size 14, added a holographic strip down its back and gave it a pink butt so I had a better

chance of seeing it as it sank down through the water. However, the secret of its survival is a coating of Bug Bond, a new resin product that dries in about 10 seconds when exposed to the beam of a special ultra-violet torch.

In this year's 'One Fly' the D.F. did us proud. The team won and, thanks mainly to the fish-spotting abilities of head keeper, Jon Hall – who was my guide on the Moorcourt beat at Broadlands – I also managed to win the Lower Test award with the most points awarded to a single rod.

Our captain, Bob James, was delighted with the result and commented, "The 'D.F. is surely becoming a modern classic. It has now taken so many fish for me in so many situations. On the drop, down deep, and the takes are always really positive."

TYING THE D.F.

The D.F. is a very simple fly to tie. All you have to decide is how heavy you want it to be. I tie it with an ordinary black 3mm metal bead, or a tungsten bead and add a little lead if the river is pushing hard and I want to keep it bumping along the bottom.

D.F.

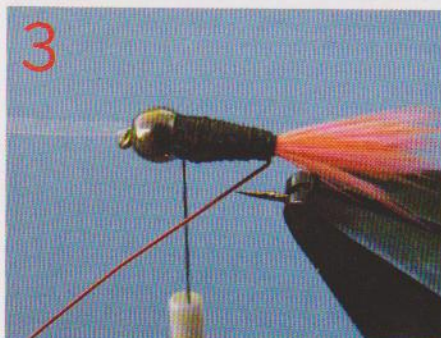
Hook: Kamasan 405 or similar.
Holographic strip: Uni-Mylar. Pearl (1/4in).
Rib: Bright red wire.
Tail: A pinch of hot pink marabou.
Thread: Black.
Bug Bond for a durable transparent finish.



Slip the bead on the hook, put the hook in the vice then move the bead to the rear of the hook. Tie in about an inch of the Pearl Mylar facing forward over the eye. Half-hitch the thread and cut it off.



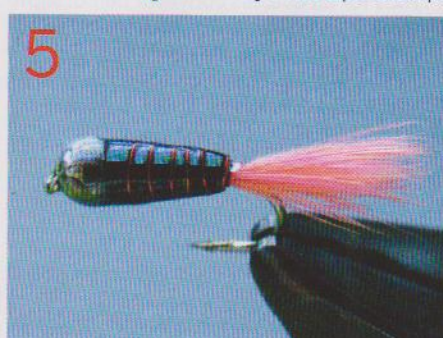
Move the bead forward, reattach the thread and secure the bead with several wraps. Move the thread to the rear and tie in a short tail of hot pink marabou and tie down the residue finishing behind the bead. This will start to give the body a nice tapered shape.



Now tie in a length of red wire under the hook, behind the bead and bind it down moving backwards towards the rear of the hook. Stop opposite the barb. Trim the wire excess. Continue to shape the body with the thread eventually finishing behind the bead.



Pull the Mylar towards the rear of the hook and secure with the wire. Wrap the wire forward in evenly spaced turns and secure below the bead. Trim the excess of both the Mylar and the wire.



Coat the D.F. evenly with Bug Bond and cure for 10 seconds with the ultra-violet torch. Hopefully you have now tied the indestructible D.F. When I used it in the competition, even after six hours fishing and six good fish it was still in great condition.