

Fly of the Month

The Jersey Herd



Hook :- Long shank 12-10-8. Tail and back:- Peacock herl

Body :- Gold foil, gold tinsel or similar

Rib :- Fine gold or silver wire (optional)

Hackle :- Hot orange Head :- Peacock herl

Tom Ivens was a pioneering English reservoir fisherman of the 1950s, 60s and 70s who developed many of the stillwater flyfishing techniques we take for granted today, such as 10ft. rods and taking the double haul from tournament casting and modifying it to suit everyday fishing. He also devised some innovative fly patterns, one of which is the Jersey Herd. In those days milk used to come in glass bottles with foil tops and the creamiest milk, which reputedly came from Jersey cows, was sealed with gold coloured foil. It was that foil that Tom used for the body of the fly and hence its name. The stocked rainbow trout in English reservoirs were, and probably still are, known for chasing fry and minnows in the shallows and targeting those fish is what the fly was devised for.

A recent trip to Lamberts Dam where big rainbows do chase galaxia in the shallows saw Alec and I pestered by Jersey heifers which insisted on looking over our shoulders and creating a backcast hazard. After that the Jersey Herd seemed an appropriate choice as this month's fly.

The Jersey Herd is not a particularly difficult fly to tie. Lay your foundation thread from eye to bend and then tie in three or four good quality peacock herls with about half a hook's length as a tail and the rest of the herl hanging back out of the way. Next tie in your foil or tinsel body material and the ribbing wire. Use your thread to build up a cigar shaped body which should finish far enough back from the eye to allow a head to be tied later. Next wind your foil or tinsel over the built up body (two or three layers is good) and secure it at the front. Ribbing wire is then wound forward over the body and also tied off at the front. The orange hackle is now tied in, making sure it slopes back nicely, and the peacock herl that was left hanging at the bend is pulled forward through the hackle and secured. Clip off all but one of the herls you now have behind the eye and use that to form a small head. A variation of the tying method is to pull the peacock herl forward over the body before tying in the orange hackle. This gives the hackle an all round appearance rather than being divided by the peacock herl pulling down through it.

A.T.

