

Fly of the Month

The Suspender nymph



Hook :- Kamasan B 830 or similar 2 X long, 16-14-12

Tail :- Grizzly hackle fibres

Rib :- Fine copper wire

Body :- Grey alpaca wool, seals fur or substitute

Thorax :- As per the body

Suspender :- Polystyrene bean bag bead wrapped in nylon stocking material.

For the past two or three years, since I crossed Brumbys Creek off my favourites list, I have been fishing the South Esk around Evandale. I prefer to fish the flat sections and pools and I have often had days when there have been lots of rising fish and I have had trouble getting a take. I've had some moderate success with small, light coloured dries because the fish are often on those tiny caenids, but nothing consistent. But earlier on this season there was an afternoon when there were good fish making those bulging rises that don't break the surface, something I had seen a few times before. I tied on a nymph on a greased leader and had a take which I promptly missed. The trouble with that method is that in a current the leader finishes up sinking and you can't detect takes. Which is what got me thinking about suspender nymphs.

A check on the internet shows that there are probably hundreds of variations on the theme but the one above has worked for me a few times this season. YouTube videos generally show the fly being tied as a regular type nymph with the 'float' added almost as an afterthought. Personally I like to tie the nylon-wrapped bead on first, leaving a little bit of slack between the bead and the hook. This means that when I get to the front of the fly with my dubbing I can make a few wraps around that bit of slack nylon before I tie off behind the eye. That leaves a bit of a gap between the bead floating in the surface film and the nymph hanging below. I think that looks better than the eye of the hook hard against the bead.

Apart from that it's just a normal nymph tie. Lash the nylon material that the bead is wrapped in along the shank behind the eye then take your thread to the bend of the hook, tie in a few strands of grizzly hackle fibres and attach the ribbing wire. Dub the thread and wind it forward to just past halfway along the shank. The ribbing wire is now taken forward in three or four turns over the dubbed body and secured. Add more dubbing to the thread and build up a small thorax, followed by a few turns around that nylon mesh between the bead and the eye. A varnished whip finish or wrap knot and the fly is finished. (Be careful there as some head cement varnishes will dissolve polystyrene.)

As mentioned above the possible variations are endless. If you can't get hold of the polystyrene beads small pieces of closed cell foam will do the trick and then you don't have to bother with the nylon stocking material, although I suppose you could still wrap them in nylon to make that gap between bead and hook which I like. Foam also comes in colours which could be a help.



Alan T.

