

Fly of the Month

Mini spinner



Hook :- Dry fly 18-16-14, a black hook such as Tiemco 102Y is preferred

Thread :- Black 8/0

Tail :- Microfibbets, fine paint brush fibres or similar

Body :- Long peacock herl from the sword feathers

Hackle :- Brown or black wound through white

Earlier on in the season Ron and I were having some frustrating sessions on the South Esk River trying to catch fish rising in the slower runs and pools. They were obviously on something very small and we tried all sorts of small flies with no success. So I sat down and tied a few mini Klinkhamers and tiny black spinners. As an afterthought I also tied up some white ones but thought they looked a bit bright so wound a brown hackle through the white. I put them all in a separate box and headed off to the Evandale stretch of the river to give them a whirl. I found a pool where the fish were rising, went down to 1.4 kg tippet and started casting. Black spinner did no good and neither did the mini Klinkhamers. But the mini brown/ white spinner took four fish in an hour. Two were undersize but two were good keepers. Closer observation of the water (which should have been done “last week”) revealed little white spots on the water which I took to be bubbles but which I now think were caenids, and my little grey spinner looks a bit like them. It's a good theory which I'll stick to for now. By the way, caenids, pronounced seenids, are the smallest member of the mayfly family in this part of the world and are generally greyish brown in colour.

Interestingly, the fly didn't work on a couple of recent trips to Penstock Lagoon when the fish were definitely mopping up spent caenids and making those rises that barely dimple the surface. (Mr.Penstock, Gary Cullen, knows how to catch those). I suspect that's because in still water your imitation is just one of many but in flowing water the fish wait in the current line and just pick the food off the conveyor belt as it comes past. Put your fly on the conveyor belt and it stands a good chance of being taken.

The mini spinner is fairly straightforward to tie. I like a black hook for dries and have been known to hit a gold one with a black waterproof marker. Lay your foundation thread from eye to bend and tie in a few tail fibres of about hook length. The colour of the tail fibres doesn't seem to matter too much as long as they are nice and fine. For the body I use those long, thin herls from the 'wrong' side of a peacock sword feather. Attach one and wind it forward in nice even turns and tie it in about a quarter shank length back from the eye, Next attach the brown or black hackle followed by the white. Wind the white one forward, tie it off and then wind the brown or black one through it, wiggling it about a bit so that you don't trap too many white fibres on the way. Tie it down, head cement it and the fly is finished.



Alan Taylor

