

2019 September Newsletter

President – Darren Foster

Vice President – Patrick Tobin

Secretary – Jim Manley

Treasurer – Wayne Hunt

Newsletter Editor – Jeff Yates

Grants Officer – Lawrence Blackburn

Special Events – Cherie Blackburn

Raffles - Brent Blackwell

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club meets on the first Wednesday of each month at:-

> Beresfield Bowling Club Anderson Drive Bersefield At 7.00 pm





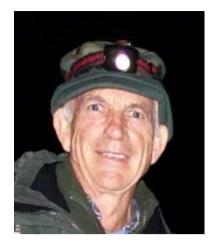
Committee Members

Fiona Meredith
Jeff Yates
Noel King
Robert Probert



Editor's comments





We are still receiving positive feedback from the Salmon Classic. I went to press last month prior to receiving a very welcome article from the editor of Hastings Fly Fishing Club. Iain's article has been reproduced and is included in this edition. We will endeavor to share more articles into the future. It will be good for all our clubs.

A few of us gave the salmon another run a week after the Classic, and encountered the biggest school of salmon that we have seen in the channel to date. It must have been 500m long and spread right across the channel, with only a couple of boats fishing for them; what a day! The full report can be read in the newsletter.

Lawrence has treated us to a nostalgic trip down memory lane with an article on his 20 years with the former Singleton Fly Fishing Club and with the Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club since its inception. I love the old photo from the first year of the club with our 2 foundation members, Justin and Lawrence. He also wrote an article for the Newcastle Herald on the history of the club. I was also able to snag the very first newsletter from SFFC with Justin as editor. If he feels the urge to go back to the desk, my job is up for grabs! Darren has also written a brief overview of our 20th Anniversary lunch at St Clair.

I would like to send a cheerio call to Rod D who had some illness during his recent trip to the US. Hopefully, he has recovered and gone trout fishing in beautiful Montana as he had planned. The club sends you their best wishes and get well soon mate.

Our 20th year anniversary weekend was held at Lake St Clair over the last weekend of September and was a resounding success, with around 40 in attendance. A great celebration, well catered for by the Sydney chapter, and a testament to our clubs family friendly values.

Brett has again been generous with a few more great shots of him and Shane chasing quality St Clair Yellas and Bass. Well done fellas.....

Don't forget the Williams River bass trip with co-ordinator Tangus over the weekend of 18th, 19th and 20th of October. Should be a fantastic spot for this inaugural trip to his property. There is something exciting about fishing a spot for the first time, and I'm sure this will not disappoint. Dust off the yaks or hook on the boat trailer and get in early and let him know you are coming, for catering purposes. I for one will be going.

President's Report



G'day members,

Welcome all to the September Newsletter for 2019. With the weather starting to warm up now, the odd mornings still have a bit of nip, and the days are getting warmer with daylight savings due to start soon.

The bass season looks like it's starting to shape up to be a good one with some really nice fish being caught around the banks of St Clair. I haven't heard how the rivers are going at the moment though.

The club has celebrated its 20th Anniversary this month at non-other than our favourite place; St Clair. Look out for the bumper story by Lawrence with plenty of pics.

We are currently looking at late November or early December for the release of Bass fingerlings through the Fisheries \$4\$ scheme.

The next club outing will be at Tangus' property on the banks of the Williams River on the 18th, 19th and 20th of October, don't forget to let Tangus know if you are coming.

The club's AGM, followed by the general meeting, is on Wednesday 2nd October at Bero Bowlo: see you all there for the 7.00pm start or earlier for a meal.

Scruffy flies and big fish.
Darren Foster
President, HVFFC 2019



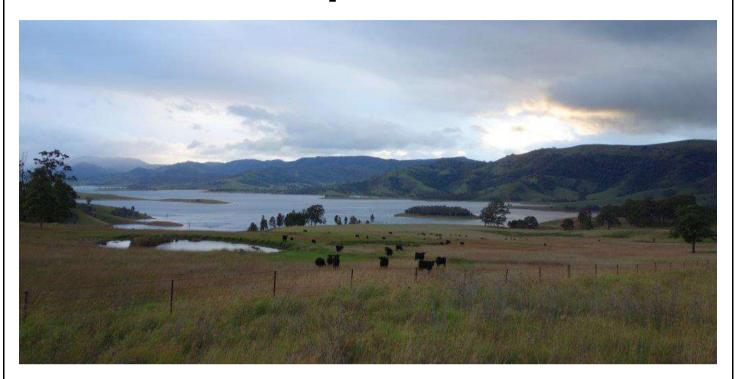






Month	Date	Venue/Event	Trip Master	Contact Number
January	19 th	Fly Tying with Lawrence & Cherie	Lawrence B.	0432989797
February	02nd	Fly Tying @ Mai-Wel with BWC Flies	Darren	0413392774
February	06th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
February	22 nd , 23 rd , 24 th	Bombah Point - Saltwater -	Tom Jones	0406662713
March	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
March	8 th , 9 th , 10 th	Lithgow Lake Lyall	Rod Fox	0407195508
March	16 th , 17 th	Forster Fly Muster		
March	30th	Fly Tying @ Mai-Wel with BWC Flies	Darren	0413392774
April	03 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
April	6 th	Aust. Fly Fishing Festival		
May	01 st	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
May	10 th , 11 th	Bunyah Silver Perch	Patrick	0458781675
June	05 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
June	14 th , 15 th , 16 th	Lake St Clair Bass, Yellowbelly		
June	22 nd	Fly Tying @ Mai-Wel with BWC Flies	Darren	0413392774
July	03 rd	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
July	20 th	Xmas in July & Club Awards Night	Cherie	0410555019
August	07 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
August	08 th	RISE Film Festival Bero Bowlo	Darren	0413392774
August	23 rd , 24 th , 25 th	Swansea Salmon Classic	Cherie	0410555019
September	04 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
September	28 th	Fly Club 20 th Anniversary @ Lake St Clair	Rod Fox	0407195508
September				
October	2 nd	AGM/General Club Meetings at Bero Bowlo	All	
October	18 th , 19 th , 20 th	Williams River - Bass	Tangus Ness	0401960973
November	06 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	
November				
December	4 th	Club Meeting at Bero Bowlo	All	

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club's 20th Anniversary 28th September 2019



This year has seen the Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club celebrate it's 20th Anniversary. What an extraordinary milestone for any fishing club to achieve.

The club celebrated its anniversary at none other than the club's favourite destination; Lake St Clair, Singleton. This is the home of the club's bass stocking projects since 2002 for which the club is second only to NSW DPI Fisheries in numbers of bass stocked.

On Saturday 28th September 2019, close to 50 members and their families and friends attended the celebrations, making the outing the largest in the club's history (not including the Liddell and Salmon Classics).

A lavish lunch and nibbles were provided by the Sydney chapter, with Rod and Narelle Fox coordinating the catering leading up to the day and the preparation of lunch. After lunch a few words were spoken by the clubs president Darren Foster welcoming guests.

This was followed by the lucky door draw with lady's prize plus, a bottle of 10th Anniversary shiraz going to Ingrid Sewell; the men's lucky

door prize which was a box of cod, yellowbelly and bass flies (tied by Brett Clarke of BWC Flies) plus a bottle of 10th Anniversary shiraz went to Wayne Hunt; Brent Blackwell won a pair of very fishy looking shoes; other bottles of 10th Anniversary shiraz went to Pauline Hunt, Jo Esdaile and Juan Del Carmen.



After the raffles we moved on to the cake where our oldest (Tony Ward) and youngest (Christopher Jackson) members cut the cake together marking the 20th Anniversary of the Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club. Founding

member Justin Smith was presented with a Founding Member club shirt to mark his involvement with Lawrence in forming the club.

To everyone that made it on the day, thank you all for coming along and making it such a wonderful day. There were a few that unfortunately couldn't make it; Lawrence and Cherie would have loved to have made it, but unfortunately Lawrence had to work.

Our sincere and deepest sympathies to Rod Dillon whom has had a run in with a bit of bad luck overseas. We hope you have a speedy recovery Rod and safe travels back home. It was good to see young Jenna turn up for the celebrations too.



There was a brief photo-shoot for past and present club presidents although unfortunately two were unavailable so a couple of stand-in replacements were quickly found. See the Mt Royal Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club Presidents portrait.

Finally, I would like to thank Rod and especially Narelle Fox for the amazing catering job they did and all their helpers, Rod Esdaile, Brian Willet, Fiona Meredith; thanks to Tony for picking the trailer and dropping it back off at work; thanks also to our guest Juan for doing a bit of casting tuition and Shane for helping out as well.

Thanks to all the members for making this club what it is, and to the committee members for taking that extra step-up.

Thank you all Darren Foster President, 2019

Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club: a brief history 20 years on..... Lawrence

Some twenty odd years ago, I made contact with a bloke in Singleton who I had attended school with in Campbelltown in the late 60's and 70's. We caught up for a BBQ or two and discussing, of all things, fishing. We had both had our share of bait and lure fishing so the natural step from there was, fly fishing, however it looked like an art form that would surely take years to perfect, and put serious strain on the mortgage, due to the cost of getting properly kitted out to be able to throw a piece of fur and feather onto the water to entice a willing fish.



There was a tackle shop in Singleton at the traffic lights (back when there was only one set of lights in town), he had customers that were keen fly fishermen, so he organised a sales rep from G. Loomis (a fly rod brand of some repute) to come to Rose Point Park and provide a demonstration and training session followed by a BBQ. About eight people attended and my mate and I were there and after the training we sat around and discussed the idea of forming a group/club of likeminded people, to learn about this mysterious art form and see if we could actually catch a fish or two, and that my friends, is where it all started. Singleton RSC Fly Fishing Club was conceived.

As with any group there are those that will put up their hand and volunteer to get things happening regarding forming a club, working out where to have meetings, what time, what day of the month, what is the agenda and so it goes on; those are the core people who keep the club rolling on and work tirelessly behind the scenes. Over the last twenty years that core group has changed many times, each time new people bring their ideas to the club, people who have been in the club for many years decide to put up their hand and volunteer, this change in committee members helps the club grow and bring in new members year after year.

So how do you get a new club off the ground? You take the best ideas from other clubs and copy them, some of our group were also members of Newcastle Fly Rodders, a club that met on the

first Tuesday of the month at Charlestown Bowling Club. That club has since long gone but many of the ideas came from there, trying to get a tackle shop to sponsor the club, organising raffles at meetings, how to organise a club outing, what to take, where to go, what rods to use, what flies to take. It soon became apparent that many people need to be involved to make it all come together.



To allow members to attend both club meetings, the Singleton club chose to have meetings on the first Wednesday of the month at the Singleton RSC. The RSC club gave us access to one of their meeting rooms which was slightly larger than a standard bedroom at home, but as we were only a small group it would suffice. We talked for a while and decide that we needed a few key positions: president, vice-president, secretary and treasurer, people tentatively put up their hands and the executive committee was formed. Since those early days there are quite a few more committee positions now all fulfilling different roles from events co-ordinator, newsletter editor, and grants officer to a group of committee members trying to keep everything under control.

One of the keys to this clubs longevity if the fact the from the very start it was a non-competitive and sharing environment which meant that if one member was catching fish on a particular fly, they were most likely going to share that fly pattern with others so that they too will succeed and catch fish (only to be photographed and released, most of the time). The non-competitive side of the club means that no one member is held in higher regard than any other, whether that be through position or title. With everyone on the same level playing field there are no little splinter groups that do their thing and don't share with others, everyone from the president down is open to a friendly jibe and all give back in return which can make for some very funny meeting and outings.

In 2002 Singleton Fly Fishing Club became incorporated, once incorporated the club could get public liability insurance mainly for the protection of others should we manage to hook someone with an errantly cast fly. Meetings were now held at Singleton Diggers (in the Heights no less) as the RSC was undergoing renovations. As the club grew over many years it became apparent that there were less and less local members in attendance and many coming from Maitland, Newcastle

and surrounds. The proposal was put to the meeting to find a venue that was more central to the majority of members; Club Maitland City was chosen and used for many years. One evening, it too was found to be undergoing renovations and the club ended up in the patio area of the nearest club member, much to the surprise of his wife. Now the club is centrally located at Beresfield Bowling Club, meeting on the first Wednesday of the month at 6.30pm (with the exception of January).



Ross Mackaway, our original Singleton Fly Fishing Club sponsor

In 2016 came another milestone in the club's history, the name change. As the club was now based in the Hunter region it was decided to drop the name Singleton, as it was no longer appropriate. Many names were put up for discussion; Hunter Fly Rodders, Hunter Valley Fly Fishers and others not suitable for publication, and after much animated discussion, the name *Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club (Inc)* was agreed upon; the name incorporated the region and what the club was all about. The club web site provides a plethora of newsletters and special event stories and photos of grinning fishermen celebrating their catches. Make sure you visit www.huntervalleyflyfishingclub.com.au to catch up on the latest information.

So what has the club achieved in those 20years? The club adopted Lake St Clair, just outside of Singleton, as it's home fishery. Each year, with the assistance of the Department of Primary Industry (DPI) dollar for dollar scheme, the club purchased \$8,000 of Australian Bass fingerlings from approved hatcheries to restock Lake St Clair, this has made the lake one of the prime Bass fisheries in the country, and plays host many National Bass fishing competitions.

Darren with some of the 10,000 \$ for \$ bass ready for release in St Clair



The money to purchase the fingerlings must be generated somehow, so for many years the club held what was originally called a 'Carp Bash', with the name later being changed to 'The Carp Classic' on the grounds of Lake Liddell Power Station; it was a three day fishing frenzy. Here the club hosted members from Sydney Fly Rodders and Hastings Fly Fishers (from Port Macquarie), in the Liddell Sports Club Rec. room which held 60 participants. Here men, women and children were able to safely walk a short distance (after completing the Liddell generic site induction) to the edge of Lake Liddell and catch the ubiquitous Cyprinus Carpio (common carp).

The problem with catching so many carp was what to do with them, as the fish is a known pest and is not allowed to be returned to the water, so coming to our rescue was the Hunter Biodynamic Group. The group provided large plastic drums for all fish caught to be collected and taken to one of their farms and over time, converted to a rich carp based liquid fertilizer for their biodynamic crops. This provided a unique use for the fish and kept the grounds of Lake Liddell clean and tidy; this allowed the club to come back year after year generating the funds necessary through entry costs and a huge Saturday night raffle, to purchase the Bass fingerlings for Lake St Clair.



l-r clockwise:- Jenna, Hawkeye with part of the 2 tonne Liddell carp haul, Mik in action with a 4wt onto a carp, Glen with a fine carp specimen







In August 2016, Lake Liddell was closed to the public after the virus, naegleria fowleri, more commonly known to everyone as a brain-eating amoeba, was discovered; it enters the body through the nose and travels to the brain where it destroys brain tissue. Ok, so it appears that Liddell is now off limits. The club needed a replacement for the Carp Classic and came up with the 10

Salmon Classic, held at Swansea Lakeside Caravan Park with attendees using boats in the Swansea channel to chase Australian Salmon, a great fighting fish, especially on a fly rod.



Cherie
and Jenna
always
willing
caterers,
last
supper at
Liddell
Carp
Classic

Catering for these events is a huge task and this is where the wives have been dragged kicking and screaming into the club to help out on those occasions, where a man is just not up to the task. The organisation, the purchasing, the food prep, the breakfasts lunches and dinners all take time and over the years many of the club's wives have managed these tasks with the help of many different lists, and jobs for the club members; it is a combined effort to cater and clean up with so many guests and an exhausting weekend, but very much appreciated by all who attend.

Where does the club go to fish? Over the years the club has travelled far and wide from small freshwater streams in the Barrington Tops chasing small rainbow trout, to the saltwater estuaries of Hawks Nest chasing bream and flathead. Mudgee, Ebor, Eucumbene, Jindabyne, Glenbawn, Lithgow, Tumut, Goulbourn, Port Macquarie, New Zealand; just too many places to remember, and for some lucky few, the U.S., South Africa, Scotland and Ireland have had members from the club fly fishing for the local species. If you want to travel around and see the world, take up fly fishing!

Every month the club hosts a fishing trip somewhere, locally or afar, and there's always a fish on the bite somewhere. In January a fly tying day is hosted where members come along and demonstrate a fly pattern that has worked for them in the past, others just come to catch up and enjoy the great food on offer. The club has members from Port Macquarie, Muswellbrook, Sydney and everywhere in between traveling many hours for the weekend outings, which is a testament to the great camaraderie that the club has developed over the years.

Going hand in hand with the fly fishing experience, is capturing the memories for the future. Photography is another expensive hobby that thankfully some of our members are very keen on

and very good at. The cameras on phones are ok for some shots but when you want a high quality photo of yourself, with that catch of the day, you need to make sure you are fishing with or near to, the guy with the good lens. There are many great examples of this in the newsletter and on the club website check them out and enjoy their work.



As I said this is a brief history and I'm sure I may have left things out that others may have remembered, the Christmas in July Dinners, Awards nights, film festivals and so much more.

In conclusion, everyone who is a past and present member of the club has brought something along to make it grow and prosper, people come and go but the club remains and will continue to do so for many years to come.



Thompsons Creek Dam Rainbows l-r Hawkeye, Zulu, Greg, Justin

Manning River Camp Barrington tops Hawaiian theme at Hawks Nest





Flytying with Brett (image Jason Stratford)

Peter and Justin celebrate a nice Eucumbene Brown



HUNTER VALLEY FLY FISHING CLUB

Congratulations on achieving 20 years!

Salmon Mayhem

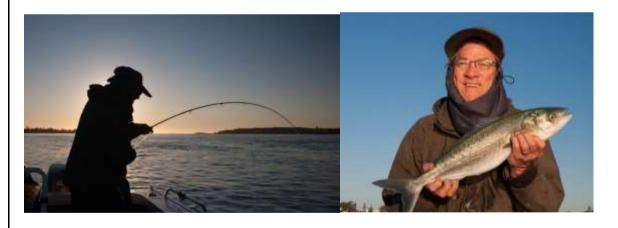
By Jeff Yates



Lawrence and Fred doing battle with a couple of raging salmon as a 120,000 tonne bulk carrier shadows their dingy.

Well, it seems that salmon season has peaked a little late this year. A week after the Salmon Classic, and the water is alive with baitfish and salmon. Peter, Fred, Lawrence and myself made a quick pensioners weekday run (sorry Lawrence) to Swansea, to give Lawrence a go at the salmon that he missed out on due to work commitments over the previous Classic weekend.

From the very moment we put into the water and headed for the bridge, salmon were smashing the surface, finning and chopping into baitfish (mostly anchovies). It was soon apparent that the school was quite extensive and would eventually be around 500m long.



Peter in action on daybreak

The first cast hooked a fish and soon followed by another. I was taking it easy with my Loomis after the loss of my old faithful \$11 rod, broke over the Classic weekend. Still, the fish have to be landed and in true spirt the salmon fought for a good 10 minutes before being subdued enough to come to the landing net. Another casualty of the Classic weekend was a couple of 8wt clear intermediate lines compliment of prop damage, but thats just collateral damage, and proof of a fun weekend.

Meanwhile, Fred and Lawrence caught up with us and soon got into the action, with multiple hookups on many occasions. At one stage, all 4 of us in 2 separate boats were fighting fish. Lawrence and Fred were having a ball, as were we, but I had the camera and focused on their boat as fish were being fought and fishermen run about.



Another double hookup



I've heard of crossed swords, but this is crossed fly rods



Lawrence and Fred complement each other in the height stakes, as Fred ducks under Lawrence's arm attempting to keep in touch with his rampaging fish

By mid-morning, the tide had stopped moving, and it was now dead low. Fish arches showed on the sounder from the Blacksmiths boat ramp to the bridge, but the activity had ceased. It was coffee break time. Under the bridge we tied up to the condemned wharf and trotted over to the Tides coffee shop for a quick reviver, also collecting a takeaway for Lawrence who was by now having so much fun, that he couldn't leave the water.



Peter landing a nice salmon outside the Swansea RSL

The tide had now turned, and begun to run in. The birds were working the current line getting ready for the afternoon action, but we had to call it a day when the outboard motor started to cough and splutter, showing signs of water in the petrol. We left Swansea and headed home thinking what lucky bunch we are to have this great fishery. (Sorry Coffs and Hastings!)

Swansea Salmon Classic

By Iain Morrison of Hastings Fly Fishing Club

This year's Swansea Salmon Classic was held on the Saturday 24th and Sunday 25th of August at Swansea and seven members including a soon-to-be new distant member, Steve Higgins, from Sydney Fly Rodders attended.

Don, Rodney, Paul, Steve and myself arrived early so that we could sneak in an extra day's fishing on Friday whist Dawn and Ron arrived late on the Friday evening.

Friday

Cold. I mean <u>really</u> cold. Our stalwart five still ventured out and reaped their just reward for facing the elements without trepidation.

Whilst Rodney was prohibited from casting due to a healing shoulder injury, he manfully accepted the position of Captain, guide, photographer and netter of fish for Don and myself. Our score, whilst not impressive, was very satisfying in the conditions. Don hooked three fish; the first spat the hook after a short fight whilst the last escaped when it was almost in the net. A quality fish that was landed between the two dropped fish eased the loss.

I managed to get the first hook up but only felt the weight of the fish for a few seconds before it ran towards me faster than I could strip and threw the hook. It was some time before I had two more hook-ups and landed both fish after fights of almost fifteen minutes. Boy! those things have stamina. The highlight of the day was a double hook-up when our last fish of the day struck almost simultaneously.

Meanwhile Paul and Steve also found the fishing frustrating. Steve hooked three large salmon and played each for at least 15 minutes while never getting chance to see them. One broke the leader and the other two threw the hook.

Paul hooked three fish with the first jumping 10 times before he landed it. The last hook up of the day was lost when he gave the fish too much slack while stumbling around the boat.

On Saturday

Not as cold but the wind was much higher. Don and I spent the day casting without getting a hit. In the stern I spent my day fighting the wind and freeing my line from seats, cleats and various parts of the motor. We gave up after seven hours and returned to the boat ramp.

Meanwhile in Paul and Steve's vessel Steve had a legendary bad day starting by forgetting to take the trailer hitch handle off of the trailer and almost lost it.

A runaway 360 degree turn of the electric motor caught and turned Paul's fly line into spaghetti and necessitated a trip to the beach to remove the line from the motor. The duo spent the afternoon battling the wind and the electric motor with a series of wind aided wind knots and succession of good casts always falling short by about a meter or two. It was frustrating but, unlike we wimps in Rodney's boat, they persisted fishing. Late in the afternoon Paul was watching as Steve once again came up just inches short on a cast. Pauls's line was just drifting with the current when a Salmon engulfed it. It was the only fished hooked (really suicided) and landed for the day.

Dawn and Ron also found conditions difficult and failed to come fast onto a salmon. Ron also lost a fly line when the wind took it into a revolving prop and had to visit the beach. Total score for the three boats was one salmon and two fly lines. One of the Hunter Valley boats also lost two fly lines to the dreaded combination of wind and propeller.

On Sunday

All members fronted up for a hearty breakfast supplied by the HVFFC. Dawn and Ron, Rodney and his crew then left for home but Paul and Steve launched their boat in beautiful conditions to an almost empty bay. As Paul said, "Others knew, we didn't!" After an hour without seeing any sign of fish they gave up.

Final results for our members - 10 hook-ups, 6 landed fish and two fly lines.

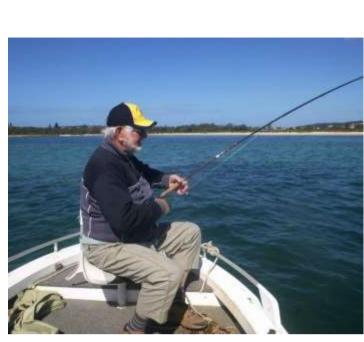
The Salmon Classic is not just about fishing. The social interaction between members of the three Clubs was a highlight of the event. The organisation was faultless, the food plentiful and tasty and the company great. Saturday night's raffle was fun (and rewarding) with great prizes, plenty of friendly banter and the obligatory and delicious chocolate crackles.

Members of the Hunter Valley Fly Fishing Club are to be congratulated. Many thanks to Cherie who worked tirelessly throughout to keep the event flowing and our appetites sated. She was ably helped by a willing cadre of her Club members who worked in the background.

Thanks HVFFC, we'll be back for the next Salmon Classic.

















Fishy Pics



Nostalgic look back at Brad with Liddell gold



Scape Pics



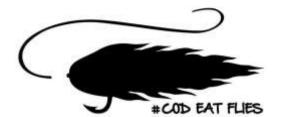
More nostalgia - thanks Liddell for the memories of some brilliant carp fishing, revelry, accommodation and banquets; shame that brain eating amoeba and asset privatisation ended after 17 years of the annual Carp Classic, but our Salmon Classic has taken on a life of its own and is a welcome replacement.

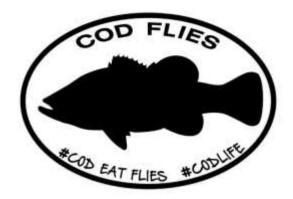
HVFFC members wish to "thank you"

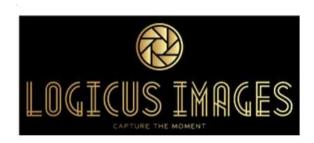












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