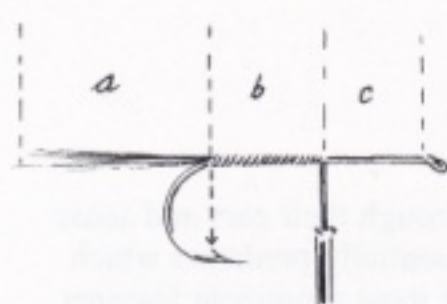


# TYING THE RAB

By Tom Sutcliffe

- 1 – Dress the hook with red thread starting half way between the eye and the bend of the hook and wrapping your thread to a point directly above the barb.
- 2 – Bring the thread back to the halfway mark as in (1) above.
- 3 – Select a bunch of long white cock hackle fibres as stiff as possible. Tie in at the half way mark and wrap your thread back to the point directly above the barb.
- 4 – Bring the thread back to the halfway mark – (2) above. Tie in four or five long, thin feather fibres, ie from an Egyptian Goose quill feather, cock pheasant tail, Grey Heron, Egret crest or Golden Pheasant crest. Do not use peacock – it is too heavy. Wind the thread back to point (1) above the barb and then back to point (2).
- 5 – Wind the feather fibres forward up the shank to make the body and trap them at point (2). Wind the thread back through this body to the point above the barb and then forward again to (2). This strengthens the herl and adds colour to the body.
- 6 – Tie in two long strands of bridal organza and two or three strands of black or olive Lite-Brite at point (2). Splay the various fibres in a semi-circle round the hook shank so that some are pointing upwards and some out to the side. Lock these “legs” in position with x wraps of thread. Push the fibres backwards to get them out of the way.
- 7 – Take the thread forward over the bare hook shank stopping about 1mm from the hook eye and leaving this area free of thread to accommodate the head of the finished fly. Now take the thread back to the halfway mark on the newly-dressed section.
- 8 – Tie in a small, wide hackle tip which must be brown. There must be no, or very little web . Tie in the first hackle at the thread point reached in stage (7) above.
- 9 – Tie in the second hackle – which must be white – at point.
- 10 – Now bring the silk back in between the hackles, to point (2) above, ie up to the body.
- 11 – Wind the rear (brown) hackle back to the edge of the body, using no more than four or at most five turns of hackle – otherwise it is too dense. Now wind the thread forward through the brown hackle with a jiggling motion to avoid binding down any fibres. Leave the thread hanging



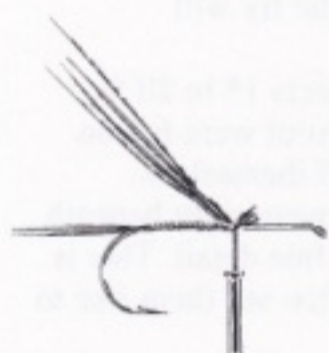


*Start half way between the eye and the bend*

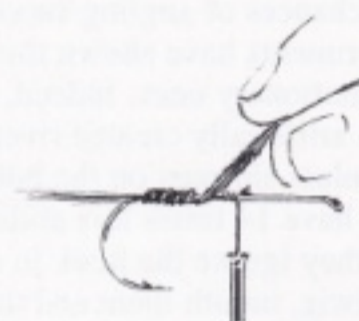
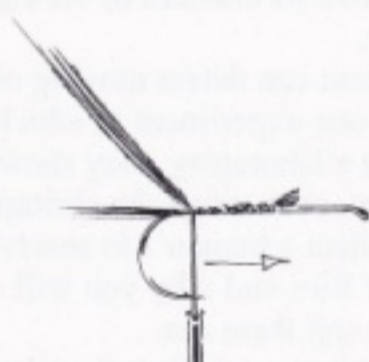


*Domestic roosters, at left, are better than expensive hackle capes*

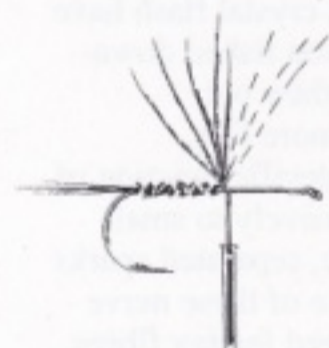
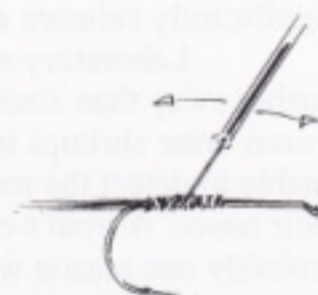
## The tying sequence



*Step 1*



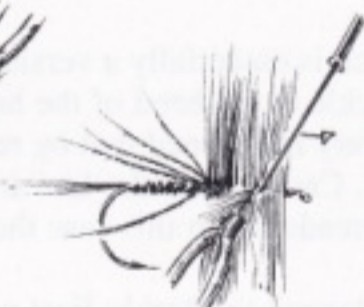
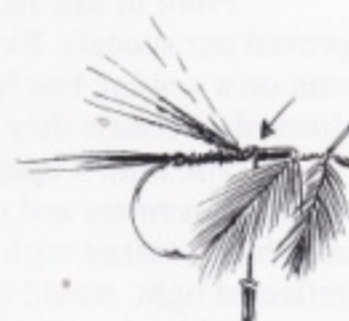
*Step 2*



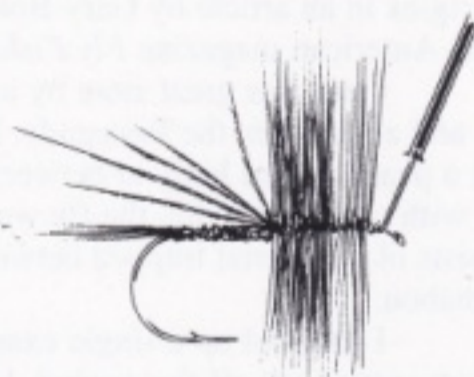
*Step 3*



*Step 4*



*Step 5*



*Step 6*

immediately in front of the brown hackle.

**12** – Now wind the white hackle back to the brown hackle with three or four turns only. Trap the hackle with the thread and then take the thread through the white hackle – again with a wiggling motion – to the hook eye and whip finish. Do not varnish the head.

Domestic free-range roosters are better for tying RABs than the expensive American hackle capes such as Metz, Hoffman, etc which are genetically bred to supply feathers for small flies. The long-fibred spade hackles which the RAB requires are most easily acquired from the domestic roosters which are common around rural kraals. For a small fee the owner will allow you to cut a few feathers from their birds. Select the oldest birds which can be identified by their long spurs.