

## THE FLIES OF TAFF PRICE

By Ed Herbst

During the visit to this country by the overseas fly fishermen who were brought here by the Department of Tourism and hosted by FOSAF, fly fishing author and historian Taff Price gave a demonstration at the club room which brought to the attention of those present a variety of new techniques and materials.

Three specific facets of the flies he tied are new to local fly fishermen; the use of the delicate, grey feather situated near the preen gland of a duck, the use of metal or pearl beads attached to either the hook shank or a pin tied to the hook shank which provide both flash and weight, and the practice of glueing feathers to nylon stocking material to enhance their longevity.

Most of the patterns which Taff demonstrated are sedge imitations at various stages of their life cycle and most originate in Eastern Europe. He did however tie a mayfly emerger from Macedonia which uses the preen gland (cul du cunard) feather tied in a loop over the thorax area to imitate the bursting wing case.

The Polefeitus pattern from Northern Slovenia is a sub-aquatic sedge imitation which uses a brass bead slipped onto a pin and the pin is then bound to the top of the hook shank. The rest of the fly is fairly conventional having a partridge fibre tail, seal's fur body and thorax and a beard hackle, again of partridge.

An emerger sedge pattern from Macedonia again uses the preen gland feather, but this time it is looped from the back of the body at the hook bend and tied down at the start of the dubbed thorax. This is probably intended to imitate the long antennae and wings of the emergent sedge. Again the rest of the fly is fairly conventional, a few preen gland feather fibres for a tail, slender dubbed fur abdomen and a fatter dubbed thorax with a feather fibre wing case.

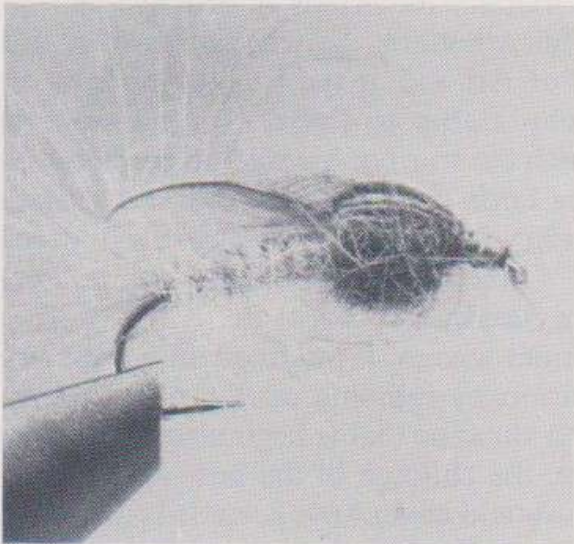
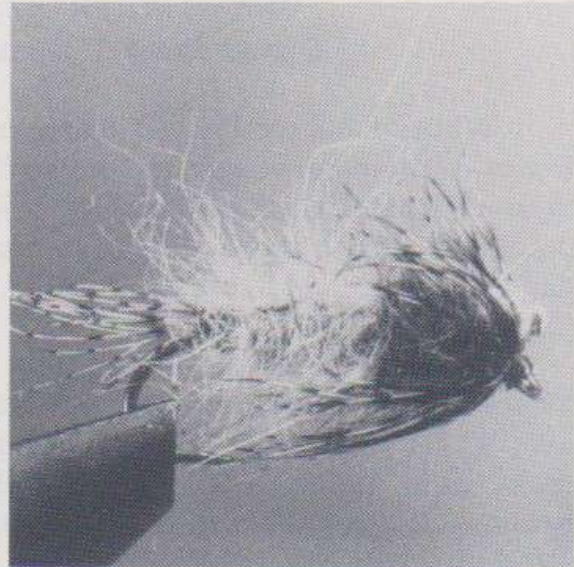
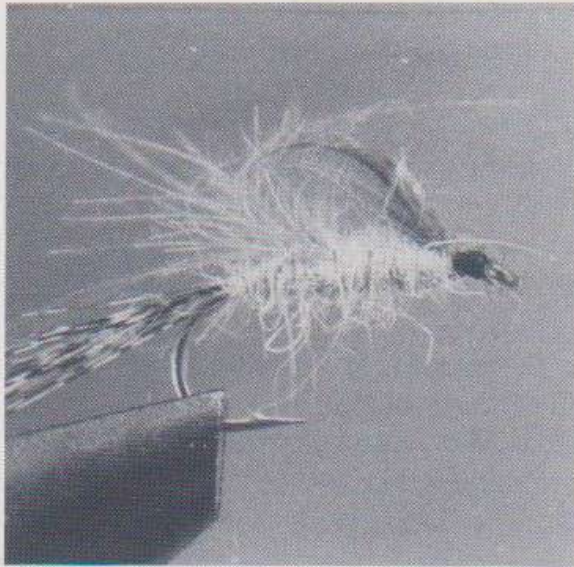
Taff tied two patterns originated by Marjan Fratnik of Milan. Both utilise the cul du cunard feathers. The Fratnik sedge is tied like Al Troth's Elk Hair Caddis except that it uses the preen gland feather for a wing, i.e., thin, dubbed body with palmered hackle and feather fibre instead of elk hair wing. Fratnik's F Fly is a simpler pattern using a heron herl body (although in the fly tied in the club room Taff used local blue crane herl) and a preen gland wing. It represents numerous down wing insects including adult chironomids and is extremely popular. According to Taff, Fratnik ties and sells literally thousands each year.

The final pattern illustrated is perhaps the most interesting. It is an adult sedge pattern from Slovenia's leading fly tying entomologist, Dr Bozidar Voljc. Nylon stocking material is stretched over an embroidery frame and then feathers are glued to the nylon. Once they have dried they are cut out, the nylon backing making the feather extremely strong and tear-resistant. The bodies on these adult sedge patterns consist of palmered hackles with a thin layer of glue being applied to the tops of the hackles. The nylon-backed feather is then folded to shape and tied on top of the hook as a wing, adhering in places to the glued feather tips of the palmer hackle body. This creates air pockets which help the fly to float. The fly is completed with a conventional hackle.

Taff has very kindly sent copies of his most recent books, "*Fly Patterns – An International Guide*" and "*The Angler's Sedge – Tying and Fishing the Caddis*" to the CPS library and both books contain details of the above-mentioned patterns.

The actual flies he tied, which are illustrated here, can be seen in the club room.

*The pleasures of fishing are chiefly to be found in rivers, lakes and tackle shops and, of the three, the last are the least affected by the weather. Arthur Ransome, Rod and Line, 1929.*



The flies tied by Taff Price at the CPS clubroom. Top row, from left: Mayfly emerger from Macedonia; the Polefeitus from Northern Slovenia. Middle row: Emergent sedge pattern from Macedonia; the Fratnik Sedge. Bottom row: Fratnik's "F" Fly; Voljc's adult sedge with nylon-reinforced feather wing.