



Hardy Team England
Chris Ogborne (captain), Iain Barr, Simon Gavesworth, John Horsey, Chris Howitt & Andrew Ramsden.



MATCHES

WORLD BEATERS?

BRITAIN'S rugby teams were battered in the Rugby World Cup, but fortunes look brighter for our fly fishermen at this year's World Championships.

Held in Victoria's Snowy Mountains, South East Australia, the format could favour the British. The five three-hour sessions consist of four lake sessions and one river session.

"This suits us," said Iain Barr of Hardy Team England. "We fair better on the lakes as shown during last year's World Championships in Poland. There was a greater emphasis on rivers then, so we crashed out."

Some of the Welsh team have fished the venue before, giving them a slight advantage. "Despite being without a sponsor, we are determined to give 00 per cent," said team member Gareth Jones.

Glen Garioch Team Scotland manager Iain Earle said: "Given the format and the quarry of wild browns and naturalized rainbows — think we're capable of beating our eighth place gained in Poland last year." Scotland possibly has the oldest competitor in the championships in Alistair McKellar — reported to be in his 70's!

Team Ireland, under coach Billy Hutton's guidance, are also optimistic. "If we get good loch-style conditions I'm sure we'll catch fish," said Billy who will be flying out on November 4 to make full use of his local guide.

Most UK teams are flying out two weeks before the event (fished from December 3 to 5) to practise and acclimatise themselves.

***Australian authorities have restrictions on certain fly-tying materials, and will be inspecting at customs. This is to protect the country from unwanted microscopic bugs and insects. Hardy Team England are ordering materials from an Australian supplier as a back up.**

- TEAM WALES**

Moc Morgan	Gareth Jones
Hywell Morgan	Peter Holborn
Terry Morgan	
- GLEN GARIOCH TEAM SCOTLAND**

Iain Earle (Coach)	Alistair McKellar
John McCallum	Iain Wilson
Andy Walker	Matt Walker (reserve)
Sandy Nicholson	

- TEAM IRELAND**

Billy Hutton (Coach)	Dave O'Donovan
Derek Walsh	John O'Hare
Tony Crowe	Hugh Healy
P. J. O'Brien	

HARDY TEAM ENGLAND



Chris Ogborne (coach)



Andrew Ramsden



Iain Barr



Simon Gavesworth



Chris Howitt



John Horsey





John Horsey felt encouraged after taking this magnificent 5lb brown trout from Lake Jindabyne during practise on a slime line.

MAD ABOUT YABBIES

England team man John Horsey finds the wily browns have an obsession for crayfish in the 19th World Fly Fishing Championships in Australia – the toughest yet!

AT Heathrow airport, Captain Chris Ogborne told the departing Hardy Team England “I don’t believe in jet lag” So two days of travelling later, we were up bright and early to look at the venues and begin our team practice for the XIXth World Fly Fishing Championships. Our chalet was 3,500 feet up in the Snowy Mountains of New South Wales, overlooking a small bay on massive Lake Eucumbene, almost 35,000 acres in size. Lake Jindabyne was about 40 minutes drive away and at 7,500 acres far more manageable. We would be fishing bank and boat sessions on both lakes, but with a combined perimeter of 180 miles there was a fair bit of bank to cover! The other venue was the

Murrumbidgee River. The practice areas were quite good, with rising fish and no shortage of features. We were told that the competition beats were even better! But I had my doubts! During the practice sessions, we all caught fish on the three venues, but never many. We knew after the first couple of days that the competition areas would probably be just as difficult. With gun clear water and extremely spooky fish, it became vital to blend with the bankside cover and to avoid “sky-lining” the fish. On Lake Jindabyne, I stalked a brown trout in the shallow margins as it rooted out yabbies (freshwater crayfish) from the soft clay bottom. Dropping my Black Taddy about six feet ahead of the cruising trout, I jerked the fly off the bottom like a frightened yabkie when the fish was about three feet

away. The take was explosive and so was the fight. I have never seen a brown trout jump so many times in the shallow water. Ten minutes later, I fished through the bay in case there were any more trout cruising and caught my best fish of the trip, estimated at 5lb. This also took the Taddie fished on a slime line with a jerky figure of eight retrieve. Both fish were stuffed with yabbies. We realised that the boat fishing would centre around trees and rocks, or structure as the Aussies call it. The main food form at the time were mudcreeper yabbies, and large flies like Taddies fished on sinking lines appeared the best option. Personally, I had never blanked before in five previous World Championship events and I was not prepared to do so in Australia either – or so I



But what? That question would be answered during the match. Chris Ogborne’s pre-match team talk was very positive, but he also made one thing clear – we would have blanks in the team. He told us to accept this, put any blank sessions behind us and concentrate on getting that next fish. After all, it would be the team with the least number of blanks that would win the Championship. Personally, I had never blanked before in five previous World Championship events and I was not prepared to do so in Australia either – or so I



The crystal-clear margins of 7500-acre Lake Jindabyne proved a challenge for competitors. Here John Horsey stalks and hooks a brown in practise.

SESSION 1 I DREW the bank on Jindabyne and looked long and hard at my beat. I had about 75 metres of good-looking water that included a nice bay, with a point at one end and a big rock at the other. My Polish neighbour had poor water, so it was obvious he would head straight for the rock that divided our beats. The Slovak on my left started the session standing tall on the rocks, so I figured every fish in his beat would be spooked and probably most of mine too! The Polish angler headed straight for the big rock, so I carefully fished my bay. At times I was lying on the ground to keep my profile low. After an hour, all three of us were fishless. The Pole had moved away into his bay, so I spent the next hour and a half fishing the rock. No touch!

I then headed for the other point and fished taddies, nymphs and even dries in search of that one elusive trout. At 11.50, I looked at my watch and decided to move back to the rock for the last half hour. Just then, the Pole moved back and within two minutes was whooping with delight as he landed a good-sized brownie! Having fished my point out, I moved back to the rock, just in case that brownie had a mate! With less than a minute to go, the Slovak, who was still jumping around on the rocks for all the world to see, hooked and landed a small brownie. I could not believe it. To say I was totally devastated would be a major understatement. Only four anglers caught in that first session. My blank had happened. I had to forget it and prepare for the next session at Eucumbene.

AUSSIES SCOOP PRIZES

THE toughest World Fly Fishing Championships of all time saw hosts Australia scoop team and individual honours. Just 140 fish were taken by 00 competitors during 1,750 hours of fishing. Not surprisingly, it was mainly southern hemisphere countries who dominated the results, with New Zealand picking up bronze for both the team, and Pat O’Keefe in the individual stakes. But France stepped in to prevent a clean sweep by securing the team silver medal. Difficult weather conditions leading up to the match resulted in poor insect hatches and made the fishing even harder. But the French found the river similar to some of their own and took full advantage using tiny nymphs and dry flies. Many had expected the United Kingdom nations to pick up some medals. Yet the only award was the silver for Scotland’s Sandy Nicholson, a popular member of the Orkneys Club team and well versed in fishing for wily browns. A blank in the final session denied him the chance of an individual gold medal. Hardy Team England finished in fifth position, one fish away from the medal positions. They did manage two team members in the top 10, with John Horsey eighth and Simon Gavesworth ninth. The new World Individual Champion was Australia’s Ross Stewart and even he blanked in one session!

TEAM RESULT

1. Australia, 309 Points; 2. France, 352; 3. New Zealand, 376; 4. Spain, 385; 5. Hardy Team England, 395; 6. Slovakia, 401; 7. Poland, 415; 8. Canada, 416; 9. Ireland, 420; 10. Scotland, 420; 11. Finland, 424; 12. Wales, 429; 13. Italy, 430; 14. Czech Republic, 435; 15. Norway 444; 16. Belgium 453; 17. USA 469; 18. Germany 478; 19. Netherlands 483; 20. Sweden 500

INDIVIDUAL TOP TEN

1. Ross Stewart, Australia, 30 Points; 2. Sandy Nicholson, Glen Garioch Team Scotland, 46; 3. Pat O’Keefe, New Zealand, 47; 4. Shayne Murphy, Australia, 47; 5. Bernard Marguet, France, 49; 6. Peter Bienek, Slovakia, 50; 7. Andrew Scott, Australia, 62; 8. John Horsey, Hardy Team England, 62; 9. Simon Gavesworth, Hardy Team England, 62; 10. Kathy Ruddick, Canada, 63

HARDY TEAM ENGLAND

John Horsey, 8th, 3 fish, 62 points; Simon Gavesworth, 9th, 2, 62; Andrew Ramsden, 34th, 1; 81 Chris Howitt, 59th, 1; 90; Iain Barr 65th, 0, 100.

IRELAND

Pi O’Brien, 17th, 2, 66; Tony Crowe, 38th, 1, 82; John O’Hare, 49th, 2, 86; Derek Walsh, 51st, 1, 86; Hugh Healey, 65th, 0, 100.

GLEN GARIOCH TEAM SCOTLAND

Sandy Nicholson, 2nd, 3, 46th; Andrew Walker, 33rd, 1, 81; Alastair MacKellar, 64th, 1, 93; John McCallum, 65th, 0, 100; Ian Wilson, 65th, 0, 100.

WALES

Terry Morgan, 25th, 2, 72; Gareth Jones, 26th, 2, 74; Moc Morgan, 43rd, 1, 83; Peter Holborn, 65th, 0, 100; Hywel Morgan, 65th, 0, 100.

carefully in the water and cast. My Claret and Black Hoppers looked too small compared with the naturals around them. So I took a large beetle pattern out of my box and pushed it between my lips. For some reason, I tried one more cast and as soon as the Claret Hopper hit the water, a snout appeared and sucked it in! When I landed that brownie, I still had the other fly lodged in my lips! My controller measured the fish, released it and at that very moment, another fish rose in the bay. For the next 15 minutes, I covered every inch of that bay until finally it rose to my Black Hopper and fish number two lay in the measuring tray. Soon afterwards, the wind picked up again, the skies turned dark and the temperature dropped. I knew that spelt the last of the action for the session.

Only two people caught that session and I gained a first place with my two fish, which incidentally, were almost certainly the only fish taken on dry fly on the lakes during the entire match. Things were looking up. Simon Gavesworth had also caught a fish and won the boat session on Eucumbene that afternoon and although the rest of the team had blanked in both sessions, we had pulled up from last to fifth!

SESSION 3

IN determined mood, I mounted the coach the next morning at 6am and pondered my fate during the 90-minute journey to the river. My beat was situated in some of the most beautiful scenery I had so far witnessed. “Watch out for the snakes” came the advice from my controller. Unfortunately, my river beat was awful. I had one long, deep, featureless pool, bounded on both sides by impenetrable reed beds and lily pads! At the tail of the pool was the beginning of a run, but the best of it lay between the end of my beat and the start of the next and it was out of bounds. My controller told me that the Finnish angler who fished it previously had hooked four fish and landed one. That told me he had probably pricked all the fish in the tail of that pool, so things would be hard. After half an hour, a fish rose smack on the border line between my beat and the out-of-bounds water. Without hesi-



Simon Gavesworth finds a trout happy to take in a fast-flowing stretch of the Moonbak River. But it slipped the hook.



Slim but stuffed with yabbies, this wild Lake Jindabyne brown trout proved an elusive quarry during the event.

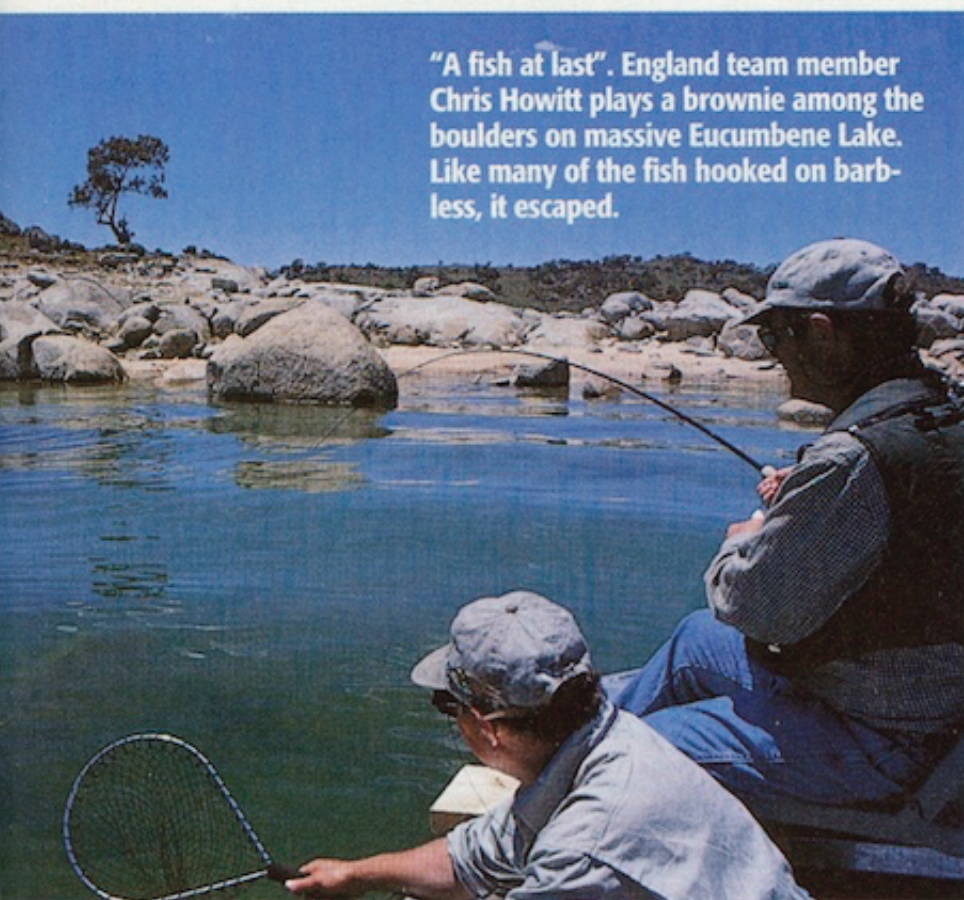
tation, I dropped my Hare’s Ear Cul above it and it took it immediately. I struck too early and missed it. For the next few seconds, I pondered as to whether to wait for it to rise once more, or to cover it again. I covered it! As before, it ate the fly and this time I made no mistake. That brownie jumped and jumped and jumped. I remember thinking – not with barbless hooks, please! Then it dived into the deeper water. Relieved, I started to get close to it, unhooked my net and... gone! That was it for me during that session, apart from one little pluck on a nymph. Blank number two.

SESSION 4

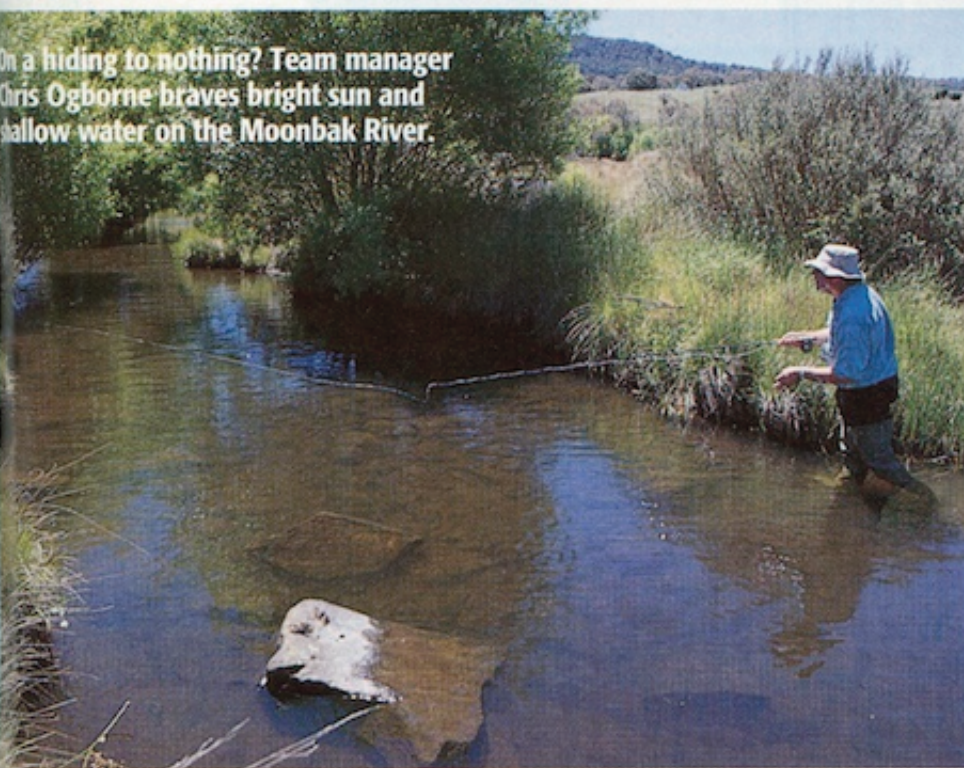
LAKE Eucumbene from the boat seemed a good prospect. Simon Gavesworth told me where he had caught his fish and moved four others, so I persuaded my Slovakian boat

partner to head for that bay. We fished hard, close to the structure. I used a slime line intermediate, he stuck with a sinker. By now, we had figured the fish were not that deep after all so I adopted a nymph and taddie combination. As on most afternoons, the wind dropped and it became very hot. A few beetles started to hit the water and I saw two fish rise. On went the floater and dries in a flash. I fished the water where I had seen those fish rise for more than an hour, but none rose again. The weather got cooler and I knew we had to make a move. We found the Australian pair’s boat tight up the end of a shallow bay where lots of dragonflies were dancing across the water. It was then that it struck me. We had been fishing the wrong water. Structure was fine, but shallow, weeded bays looked a better bet.

I pulled up a lovely brownie from the weed on a Mudcreeper Fur Fly pattern, but it turned away at the last moment. That was my only offer. Just one fish was landed that session by the Aussie’s boat partner! SESSION 5 LAKE Jindabyne from the boat was a great way to end the Championships. However, a storm was brewing and by 9.15am, there were white caps all over the lake. We were heading for Sid’s Bay on the opposite side, which meant pushing our 30hp engine through the eye of the storm. Danny Spelic, our controller and boatman, was willing to risk it, as was my Aussie boat partner Dave Hemphill. We went for it! That was some scary ride, up on the plane over some of the roughest water I had experienced. It took 20 minutes to get



“A fish at last”. England team member Chris Howitt plays a brownie among the boulders on massive Eucumbene Lake. Like many of the fish hooked on barbless, it escaped.



In a hiding to nothing? Team manager Chris Ogborne braves bright sun and shallow water on the Moonbak River.

across and we were all soaked. Still, this was the final session of the World Championships and I had a fish to catch. We were the first boat over the weedbeds in Sid’s Bay. I fished Mudcreeper imitations on a DI 7 sinker and started to pick up the Canadian pond weed, which told me I was at the right depth. After five minutes, I had an almighty take and I can remember shouting “fish on!” In double quick time, that 4lb plus brownie was in the net and we were giving it “high fives” all round – such was the spirit and camaraderie of the event. Soon after, the wind reached gale force and we were warned not to venture back across the lake and to remain in the bay. Tony Crowe from Ireland took the only other fish near the end of the session and we went back to the shore like two Cheshire Cats. Andrew Ramsden broke his duck on the

boat at Eucumbene to win his session and Chris Howitt managed a fish from the river. Unlucky Iain Barr had one fish rejected for being 2mm short of the 22cm minimum size and finished the Championships fishless. But at least that last session pushed us from 8th up to a final 5th place. CONCLUSION. FISHING for wild fish is never easy. If the weather conditions are wrong, then they simply refuse to feed. Last year in Poland, 6500 fish were taken in the Championships, most of them stockies. With such small numbers of fish the emphasis lies in saving a blank – not in catching a few more than your opponents. It also means that a bit of local knowledge goes a long way. The longer time you spend over productive water, the better your chances of getting that all important fish!



SANDY NICHOLSON

WE asked him how it feels to be number two individual in the world for flyfishing, and how he did it.

TF: Sum up the event for us.

Sandy: The locals were fantastic, the event well organised but the fishing was hard – the rainbows went very deep.

TF: That’s quite an achievement especially in the other side of the world.

Sandy: Coming second in the world, the top angler from the entire northern hemisphere, has to rate as my best ever achievement. It’s unusual for a Scotsman to do so well, even more so when you’re from Orkney!

TF: Have you fished these championships before?

Sandy: It was my first time in the World Championships, although I had fished twice for Scotland, but the tactics needed to catch in Australia were like nothing on earth.

TF: Tell us more about how you did it.

Sandy: I blanked from the boats during the lake sessions, and even though I had just two pulls – this turned out to be a good performance. The real shock was during the lake bank sessions. The fish were so shy that anglers couldn’t go near the water’s edge for fear of spooking the fish. The only way to catch was to stand well back and cast so that only your leader hit the water – my fly line hardly got wet! You had to fish fine with a long leader about 23ft. used a single fly for those wild fish having particular success on a size 14 Red Tag, catching fish up to 4lb. This method helped me to win both lake bank sessions.

TF: How did you cope in the river session?

Sandy: I was lucky enough to catch a fish with just two minutes to go. Lucky really!

TF: What about next year’s championships in England?

Sandy: My performance means that I’m automatically selected for next year’s World Championships. The rainbows should be easier to come by in England and I may even captain the Scottish team. So beware!

THE WINNERS



FIRST: The Australian team celebrate their well-earned victory with a few cans of the local nectar



SECOND: The French surprised everyone with their river skills.



THIRD: As expected, the New Zealand team finished well up.



TOP ROD: Individual winner Ross Stewart of Australia.

1. Australia	309 pts
2. France	352 pts
3. New Zealand	376 pts
4. Spain	385 pts
5. Hardy Team England	395 pts
6. Slovakia	401 pts
7. Poland	415 pts
8. Canada	416 pts
9. Ireland	420 pts
10. Scotland	420 pts
11. Finland	424 pts
12. Wales	429 pts
13. Italy	430 pts
14. Czech Republic	435 pts
15. Norway	444 pts
16. Belgium	453 pts
17. USA	469 pts
18. Germany	478 pts
19. Netherlands	483 pts
20. Sweden	500 pts

Individuals:

1. Ross Stuart (Australia)	30 pts
2. Sandy Nicholson (Scotland)	46 pts
3. Pat O’Keefe (Australia)	47 pts
4. Shane Murphy (Australia)	47 pts
5. Bernard Marguet (France)	49 pts
6. Peter Bienek (Slovakia)	50 pts
7. Andrew Scott (Australia)	62 pts
8. John Horsey (England)	62 pts
9. Simon Gavesworth (England)	62 pts
10. Kathy Ruddick (Canada)	63 pts