

# An Irish Miscellany

by Bob Holland



The stunning Lough Corrib

## World Cup Trout Fly Championship

The 58th World Cup Trout Fly Championship was held on Lough Mask County Mayo Southern Ireland from 31 July to 4 August 2014. Russell Bell and I took part. The competition was first held in 1958 and has been held every year since apart from the years 1988, 1989 and 1990 when the event was cancelled as a protest (successful) against the introduction of rod licences in Southern Ireland.

BBFC club members Mick Priest and Keith Lawrence had won a day's fishing on Lough Mask with Declan Gibbons a Mask Ghillie as a prize in a charity match held on Lough Corrib in May. Mick and Keith could not take up the prize and generously agreed that Russell and I could use it. Thanks again chaps!

Russell and I flew by Aer Lingus to Knock where we hired a car and drove to Cornamona. We stayed with Roy and Sorcha Peirce at Grasshopper Cottage B&B Cornamona which overlooks Lough Corrib.

We decided to stay at Grasshopper Cottage because we did not want the bother of self-catering and we had the Corrib on our doorstep and other fishing close by. Roy is a vastly experienced angler and boatman and we knew that we could arrange other fishing opportunities through him. Grasshopper Cottage is very comfortable and Sorcha keeps it spotless or at any

rate she did until I arrived with my fly tying gear. In no time the room looked like the cat had been amongst the pigeons. Sorcha's response to this was "I must apologise I have not been able to clean your room properly".

### Day 1 - Lough Mask

Declan had agreed to take us out for our practice day on Lough Mask. This was good of him because not only had he made his services available as a charitable donation but he was fishing the match and could have used the day to practice himself. Lough Mask is about 22,000 acres in places it is 200ft deep and there are sharp limestone rocks below the surface which can rip the bottom out of a boat. You need to go out with an experienced boatman. It was a windy day and before setting off Declan dipped his hand into the water and crossed himself. Even the locals treat the Lough with respect. I could see the headline "Two lawyers drown on Mask; a good start".

We had a great day with Declan with five fish to the boat pulling wets. The best team was an Octopus on the top dropper, a Golden Olive Dabbler on the middle dropper and a Silver Daddy on the point. We fished floaters and intermediates but in the afternoon Declan suggested I go on a Di 3. I changed thinking "A Di 3 - this isn't going to work" Bang - fish on. Thanks Declan! So at the end of our practice day we had a method. We gave Declan a bottle of Bushmills as a thank you which he clutched to his chest, his expression resembling that of a child who has just been given the best Christmas present ever.

### Day 2 - Lough Mask

This was our qualification day. 470 anglers fished the competition this year with the field being divided equally between four qualifying days. The top 25% of anglers on each qualifying day going through to the final. You are drawn with another angler and allocated a boatman. All of the boatmen have experience of fishing Lough Mask but some have more experience than others. Most of the boatmen on a qualification day will fish themselves on another qualification day with a view to fishing in the final. The incentive for the boatman to keep you on the fish and not take you on a tour of the lake is that there are prizes for the best boatman on each of the qualifying days. Russell caught two fish but only fish over 14 inches are counted and neither of Russell's made the measure. I did not touch a fish. One fish each over 14 inches would have got us through to the final.

### Day 3 - Doo Lough Delphi

One of our Irish friends, John Somerville Junior is a ghillie at Delphi Lodge County Galway and he kindly arranged for us to fish for sea trout on Doo Lough Delphi. Delphi Lodge was originally built in 1830 as a sporting lodge but is now a country house hotel. It is an idyllic spot. Google it and have a look at the You-Tube clips. There are three Loughs and a stretch of river where Salmon and sea trout run I estimate Doo Lough Delphi is about two miles long by about 400 yards wide. It is surrounded by mountains. Stunning.

I had my traditional wet flies with me but nothing sea trout specific so I tied a fly which I thought might work which I called The Galway Girl.

Fishing Manager David McEvoy, who is himself a keen fly-fisher, came up to the Lough, sorted out the boat and told us the best drifts. Apart from a couple of hours when John brought a client up to fish the Lough we had the place to ourselves. We had 29 fish to the boat. Mostly small fish but I had 5 sea trout between 3/4lb and 2lb. The majority of my fish fell to the charms of the Galway Girl. The method was pulling wets on a slow glass. The best team for me was a size 12 Claret Bumble (suggested by David) on the top dropper, a Silver Invicta on the middle and the Galway Girl on the point. On our way back to Cornamona we had a meal in Leenane and each enjoyed a Galway Hooker.

### Day 4 - Lough Corrib

With Lough Corrib on the doorstep and Roy available to act as a boatman we decided to fish Lough Corrib. There were salmon in the lake. Roy had lost one a day or two earlier. Russell had all the interest in the morning some of it according to Roy from Salmon. After lunch on an island things improved from my point of view and I had three fish one of them small and two others of one and a half pounds and two and a quarter pounds respectively plus a couple of good offers. Russell had a small fish between a pound and a pound and a half. We pulled wets on a slow glass. The Silver Daddy was the best pattern for me. To put matters in to perspective Roys view is that if you catch four fish in a day on Corrib you have had an exceptional day.

### Day 5 - Kylemore

Roy took us to fish Lough Kylemore which is a small lough in search of Salmon and Sea Trout. We lost count of the fish that we caught. Most of them small but Russell had 4 sea trout between 1 lb and 1 7/8 lb. Salmon do not feed in the Loughs so you need to wind them up to provoke a reaction. I thought a Raymond Bumble Muddler variant on the top dropper might do the trick. The Raymond didn't attract a Salmon but I caught a nice brown of about 1 lb on it. Roy looked at the fly and said "That's a Blob". "Yes Roy". Then I caught another fish on it. Roy's response was "The fish up here must be very hungry".

### Day 6 - Lough Carra

Russell was keen to fish Lough Carra which he had last fished 20 years previously. Lough Carra is about 4000 acres 6 miles long by 400 yards to a mile wide. It is mostly shallow. The bottom of the lake is white marle so the water appears to have a yellow tinge but is in fact crystal clear. I had a small fish in the morning and a couple of knocks fishing a floater with wets. After lunch Russell changed to a slow intermediate. He lost a fish then caught a beautiful fish estimated at 4 lb 5 oz on a Pearly Silver Invicta. His rationale for changing lines and using the Pearly Invicta was this had worked for him 20 years previously. He is still smiling. We came off the water in time to get to Cushlough Bay for the World Cup weigh in and prize giving.



Right: Gbillie Roy Peirce tends to the boat on Lough Kylemore

Below: Behold the epitome of concentration as Bob targets a fish.



Bobs Blob

Octopus

Silver Daddy

Galway Girl

## Flies

### Bob's Blob

Hook: Kamasan B175 # 10  
Thread: Veevus 14.0 claret  
Tag: Glo-Brite No.4  
Tail: Golden pheasant crest  
Rib: Uni small gold oval  
Body: Irish golden olive seals fur  
Body Hackles: Irish golden olive and hot orange cock hackles wound together.  
Shoulder Hackle: Grizzle dyed 'jay' blue  
Muddler head and cloak : Deer hair dyed blood red

### Octopus

Hook: Kamasan B175 #10  
Thread: Veevus 14.0 olive  
Tag: Gold Mylar  
Tail: Glo-Brite No 11  
Rib: Uni small gold oval  
Body: Golden olive seals fur  
Body Hackle: Golden olive cock  
Head Hackle: Golden pheasant rump feather

### Silver Daddy

Hook: Kamasan B175#10  
Thread: Uni 8.0 fire orange  
Tag: Ditto.  
Tail: Fine silver wire  
Body: Silver Mylar.  
Legs: Knotted pheasant tail  
Wings: Golden Badger Cock (from a cheap Indian cape)  
Thorax: Hares Ear  
Head Hackle: Golden Badger Cock

### Galway Girl

Hook: Kamasan B175#10  
Thread: Veevus 14.0 black  
Tag: Glo- Brite No 2  
Tail: Pheasant centre tail fibres dyed black  
Rib: Fine Silver  
Body: Back half silver mylar front half black seals fur.  
Shoulder hackle: Grizzle hen dyed jay blue  
Cloak: Bronze Mallard  
Cheeks: Jungle Cock

## Contacts

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There were some very good prizes e.g for winning a qualifying day 100 euros, for winning the match a 19 foot boat, 15 horsepower engine, Loomis fly rod plus a watch and for biggest fish 1000 euros." Leave the sentence about the Match winning bag in. It was then back to Cornamona for a few pints and the following day we returned to England.

## Conclusion

Six days pulling wet flies for wild fish is for me as good as fishing gets. Russell and I will be back in Ireland for the World Cup next year with no great expectations of winning any prizes but every expectation of having a great time.

NB The Galway Hooker is an Irish Pale Ale.



Bob cradles a nice Sea trout of 2 lb from Doo Lough



Russell with a beautiful Brown of 4 lb 5 oz from Lough Carra



The World Cup weigh-in.