

It's 'tight lines' for world fly-fishing anglers

Champion to defend title



● World fly-fishing champion Brian Leadbetter, of Bedford, England, has a practice cast at London Lakes, in the Central Highlands.

Picture: PAUL SCAMBLER

Like a British bulldog, England's fly-fishing team captain, Brian Leadbetter, jealously guards the world fly fishing crown he won last year.

Between him and a second title are 79 experienced international anglers all planning strategies for tomorrow's assault on three waters in Tasmania's Central Highlands.

The stage is set for the eighth world fly fishing championship, and most teams openly admit that the competition is more like a war.

During the next three days some reputations will be made and many more dented, but when the competition is over the mateship which binds anglers worldwide will return.

Leadbetter realises that most of the competitors rate him as the angler to beat. However, if a bookmaker was running the school, Tasmania's member of the Australian team, Jan Spencer, from Longford, would be ranked as equal favorite.

She has the advantage of local knowledge, and while most of the competitors have spent the past week practising in the highlands, Jan Spencer has 25 years head start on these waters.



The Dewar's eighth world fly fishing championship will be held in Tasmania tomorrow, Wednesday and Thursday. 80 competitors from 16 countries will fish in Bronte Lagoon, Little Pine Lagoon and London Lakes during the three days to decide team and individual champions. Reporter and fly fisherman MARTIN GILMOUR reports from the Central Highlands:

Leadbetter, a 42-year-old engineer from Bedford, is quietly confident that the England team has the talent to again win the prestigious teams' trophy.

"Trout are trout no matter in which country they live. Apart from small local food variations they all feed the same and act the same," he said.

"Mind you, the browns we have caught so far have shown amazing fighting ability and they are certainly harder to catch.

"There is so much food in these lakes that the trout can afford to be fussy, which makes them a tougher prospect. Trout in English lakes are very hungry."

Leadbetter admits that many variables — and certainly some luck — will influence the championship result.

But as for wind and rain: "It's always like that in England, so wind and rain will suit us."

Leadbetter says his first priority is for England to perform well in the teams event.

"We all fish for the teams result, and help each other. If on the final day one of us has a chance for the individual trophy, then so be it."

Although Leadbetter obviously enjoys his fishing, it is a way of life more than a recreation.

He is part owner of one of England's best lakes, Grafham Water, where last year 23,000 anglers paid upward of \$50 a day for the right to fish.

Tasmania's 35,000 anglers pay \$26 a year to fish in about 4000 lakes and rivers.

"This is my first trip to Tasmania but I will certainly be back," Leadbetter said. "The quality of the waters and trout make it a paradise. English anglers would find it hard to believe what locals here take for granted."

World Fly Fishing Championships
Tasmania, Australia - 26th November-3rd December 1988

CHAMPIONS!

Fly-fishers on top of world

ENGLAND'S fly-fishing heroes have beaten the rest of the world and completed a magnificent international 'double' for the second year running.

They retained the World Fly Fishing Team and Individual Championship with a glorious all-round performance against all the odds in the clear lakes of Tasmania.

And England's John Pawson created a slice of angling history as he stormed to the world individual title — following in the footsteps of father Tony who clinched the coveted trophy in 1984. It is the first time a father and son have won the same world title in a branch of

BY ADRIAN CURTIS

the sport.

England's domination saw Brian Thomas land the runner-up spot and Angling Times columnist Bob Church finish fourth as they left host nation and

clear favourites Australia standing.

Fished over three days on three venues — London Lakes, Little Pine and Bronte Lagoon — England's success in the eighth World Championships was never in doubt.

Faced with high winds and rain for

much of the contest, England's decision to wade and search every beat with a team of wetties proved crucial.

Every member of the five-man outfit caught trout in each daily session of the tournament. With 20 points awarded for each trout caught and one point added per centimetre, England's catch

rate put them in command from day one.

At the finish, they had taken 37 trout and amassed a remarkable tally of 2,133 points — more than double that of their nearest rivals France.

● Turn to Page 2

John follows father to world fishing title

By MARTIN GILMOUR

John Pawson caught his first salmon on a fly at the age of seven. Now, the 28-year-old Briton is the world fly-fishing champion following this week's championship in Tasmania's Central Highlands.

His victory also capped off a unique father-son double. His father, Mr Tony Pawson, won the 1984 title in Spain.

John, a sales representative for a printing firm, was a surprise winner of this year's Dewar's Eighth World Fly-Fishing title after being in sixth place before the final session.

He landed eight fish and hooked and lost the "five biggest trout" in a sensational performance at Bronte Lagoon.

"When I got to Bronte, it felt really fishy and after getting the first five fish and hearing that Brian Thomas had caught five I knew England had wrapped up the team trophy," John said yesterday.

But John said it wasn't until that stage that he also realised he was in contention for the individual title.

"Brian is a really close friend and I would have loved him to win. I decided to just relax in the last hour and if I caught fish and won, then so be it," he said.

"When I hooked the last fish at 8.25 pm with five minutes to go I gave myself a good chance."

John and the England team paid special tribute to their Tasmanian guides for the past two weeks, Noel and Lois Jetson, of Cressy.

"What we achieved would not



have been possible without the Jetsons' help. They gave us advice without trying to change our style of fishing and with the rest of the team there was a great pool of knowledge," he said.

John also said that his success was a reflection of his father's advice and teachings over many years.

The most impressive aspect of the English team was that there professional approach in difficult conditions.

While many people may say that fishing a wet fly "blind" in rough water is based on luck, the fact that England caught 37 fish compared with France's next best of

16 and Australia's 15 shows there was more to it.

The team's calculated and deliberate bid to retain their 1987 world title in a foreign country proved successful.

● More pictures: Page 38

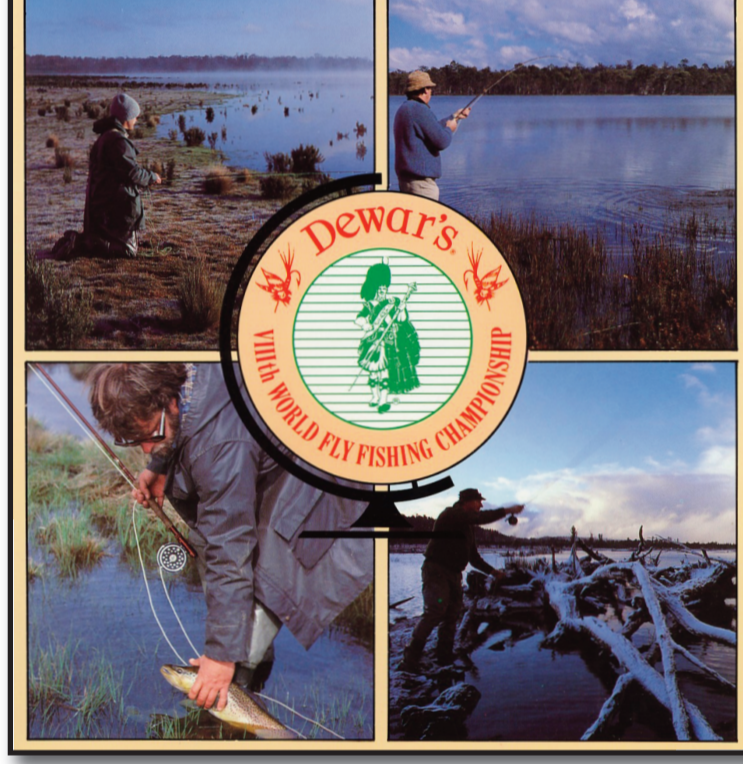
RIGHT: John ties a fly to his rod before trying his luck at London Lakes.



Picture: PAUL SCAMBLER

Dewar's VIIIth World Flyfishing Championship 1988 TASMANIA · AUSTRALIA

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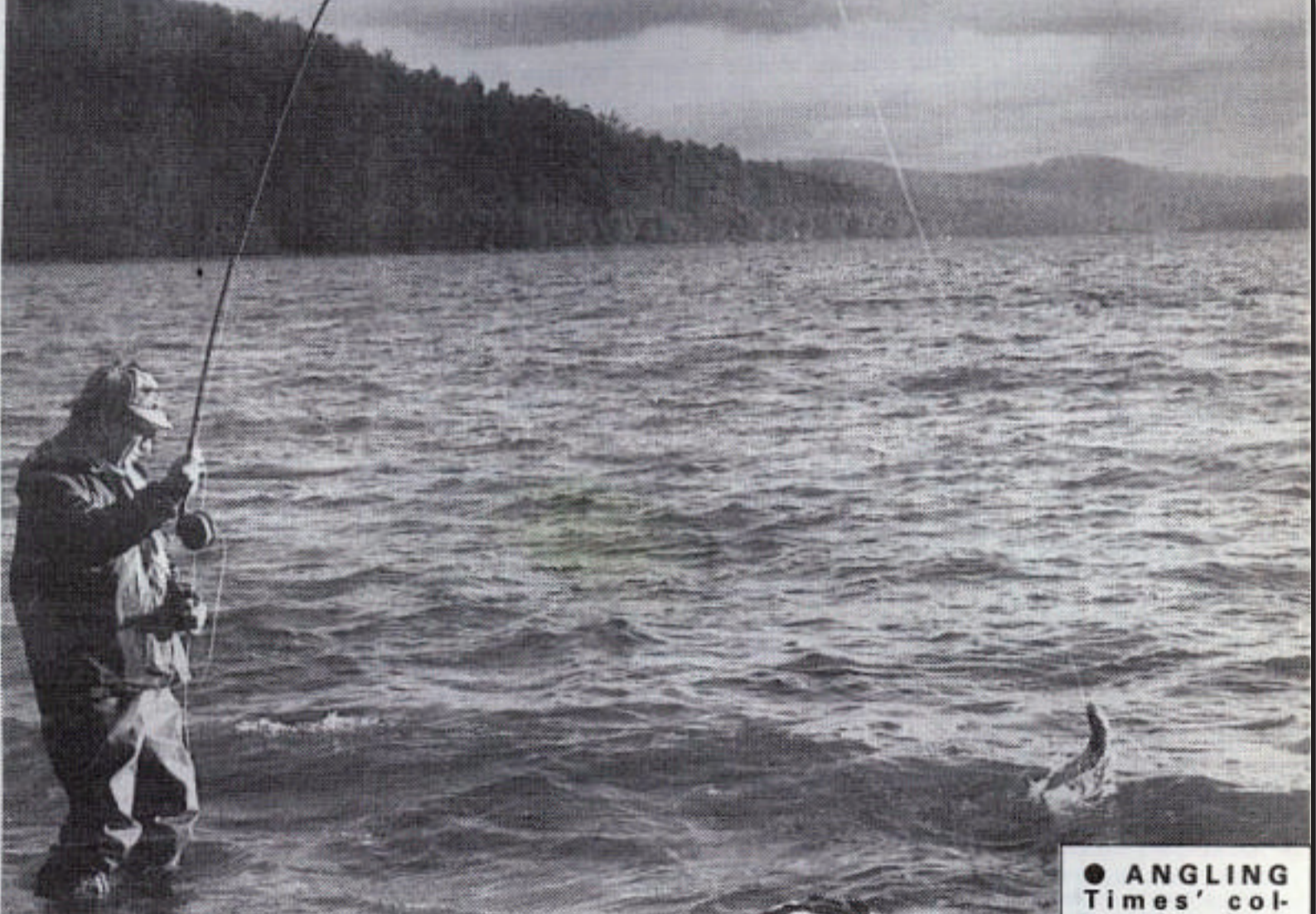


England
Dennis Buck, Bob Church, Brian Leadbetter, John Pawson, Brian Thomas & Geoff Clarkson (captain).

1. England	37 fish	1393.0 cms	32 rank score
2. France	16 fish	625.0 cms	136 rank score
3. Australia	15 fish	673.5 cms	150 rank score
4. New Zealand	11 fish	459.5 cms	169 rank score
5. Scotland	12 fish	465.5 cms	191 rank score
6. Canada	11 fish	452.5 cms	192 rank score
7. Wales	11 fish	367.0 cms	193 rank score
8. Italy	11 fish	354.0 cms	208 rank score

Individuals:

1. John Pawson (England)	692 pts
2. Brian Thomas (England)	621 pts
3. T. Piggott (Australia)	363 pts
4. Bob Church (England)	340 pts
5. J. Ramf (Australia)	331 pts
6. R. Jones (Wales)	315 pts
7. J. Dauchin (France)	311 pts
8. S. Forgan (Scotland)	289 pts



● ANGLING Times' columnist Bob Church plays a leaping brown trout on his way to fourth place overall.

● BELOW: Bob Church admires a trout from Little Pine Lake.

RESULTS IN DETAIL

TEAMS: 1 England, 37 fish, 1393 cms, 32 rank score; 2 France, 16, 625, 136; 3 Australia, 15, 673.5, 150; 4 New Zealand, 11, 459.5, 169; 5 Scotland, 12, 465.5, 191; 6 Canada, 11, 452.5, 192; 7 Wales, 11, 466, 193; 8 Italy, 11, 354, 208; 9 Finland, 8, 367, 214; 10 Norway, 9, 360, 215; 11 Spain, 7, 306.5, 237; 12 USA, 8, 305.5, 247; 13 Luxembourg, 7, 304, 256; 14 Belgium, 6, 228.4, 269; 15 West Germany, 4, 169, 305; 16 Switzerland, 2, 69, 358.

INDIVIDUAL: 1 J. Pawson, England, 692 points; 2 B. Thomas, England, 621; 3 T. Piggott, Australia, 363; 4 B. Church, England, 340; 5 J. Ramf, Australia, 331; 6 R. Jones, Wales, 315; 7 J. Dauchin, France, 311.5; 8 S. Forgan, Scotland, 289.5; 9 J. Guillemand, France, 286; 10 V. Davighi, Italy, 261; 11 R. Lanser, Luxembourg, 244; 12 B. Leadbetter, England, 242.5; 13 D. Buck, England, 237; 14 W. Ungermann, USA, 231.5; 15 P. Kettle, Canada, 217.5; 16 P. Mariner, Canada, 212; 17 T. Entwistle, New Zealand, 196; 18 M. Lamont, Canada, 194; 19 V. Autti, Finland, 193; 20 S. Solberg, Norway, 192.



● ENGLAND'S John Pawson shows off the silverware after becoming World Fly Fishing Champion.