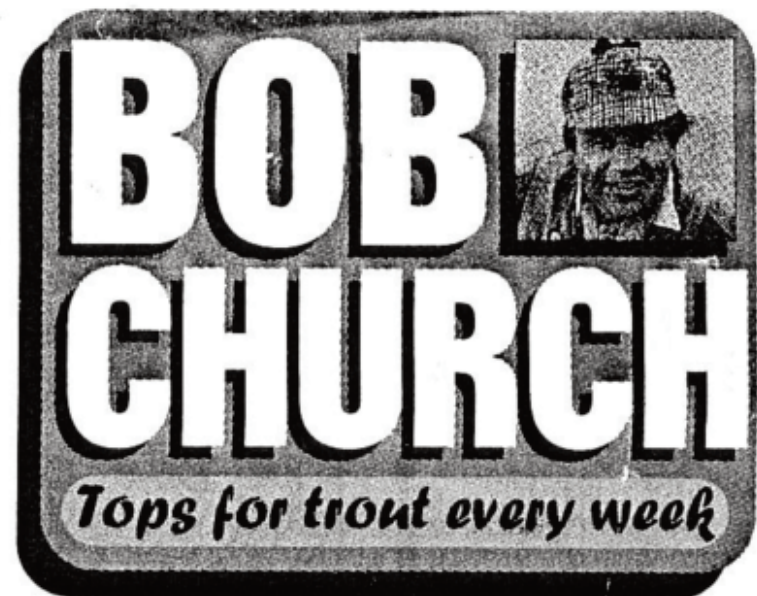


'It's the year of the young ones'

'Awesome' stuff in cool Canada



At the moment, England most definitely rule the world at fly-fishing, as three recent events have proved beyond any doubt.

First, England won the Home Countries International then, two weeks ago

SO far it's been a successful year for the England fly-fishing team, culminating in a world title win in Canada. Bob Church gives an in-depth look at the success of our home-grown stars, and describes the fishing conditions on the dramatic Canadian lakes where they flew the Union Jack so well...

in Canada, won the World Fly Fishing Championships. They followed this by winning again in the Commonwealth event.

So, at stillwater fly-fishing, England are the best. Isn't it nice to say we are the best at a sport after the cricket and football nightmares?

I enjoyed my three weeks in Canada, flying into Vancouver before driving through magnificent scenery to Kamloops. This is the home of the famous strain of rainbow trout which has now found its way all over the world.

They have a saying in Canada - if something is different in any way, it's 'awesome'. Actually, that's how I would describe British Columbia. Its sheer size is awesome.

Our party - the England Commonwealth team of Dennis Buck, Chris Howitt, Dave Grove, Brian Thomas, Charles Jardine, Tony Pawson and myself, fished several lakes around the Kamloops area and enjoyed some magnificent sport.

In all, we caught 530 trout topped by a 9 lb 8 oz rainbow and Eastern brook trout to 4 lb. Ninety nine per cent of fish caught were returned, and we used only one fly at the time: this is a local rule. Having said that, stillwaters seem to behave the same the world over where trout are concerned.

Standard British tactics worked really well on all the Canadian lakes, and it was these that gave us the edge.

I am very pleased to say that Wales also got in on the act by providing the individual World Champion in 23-year-old Russell Owen. In fly-fishing, what with Jeremy Herrmann and now Russell, it's the year of the young ones.

At every lake we visited, the bird life interested me almost as much as the fishing. Each day we had ospreys fishing with us, and bald eagles and red-tailed hawks were everywhere.

That incredible water bird the Loon (or, as we know it, the Great Northern Diver) was represented by at least one pair on every lake. They have the most dramatic, eerie, howling call.

The Canadian rainbows and brookies have a main diet of shrimp or, as they call them, 'scuds' - plus chironomids very similar to ours.

They also dine on Damsels and Dragonflies in plenty, a type of Mayfly, and leeches and large sedges.

The fly patterns which worked best for us were chironomid pupae (Buzzers), Damsel Nymph variants, Black Leech and a Welsh Nymph called Dai Bach.

These were all that were needed to get seriously good catches. The only other important thing was to work out at what depths the fish were at. This varied considerably from lake to lake, and we used either Hi-D lines, Wet-Cel intermediates or my Claret Fast Glass.

Often you would have to double anchor up on the edge of a drop-off, then fish the deep water, bringing your fly 'up the hill'.

There was one special water we all loved called White Lake - it had the most crystal-clear water, making it ideal for fish spotting and stalking tactics.

We would anchor in about 15 feet of water and sit quietly in the

boat. After a while, you could see fish swimming by deep down over the white-coloured marl bottom.

The tactic was to use a weighted size 10 Buzzer Nymph in black or olive, then cast a short line.

You needed to concentrate on where your nymph had reached bottom and, when a trout came into the area, give the rod-top a slight lift.

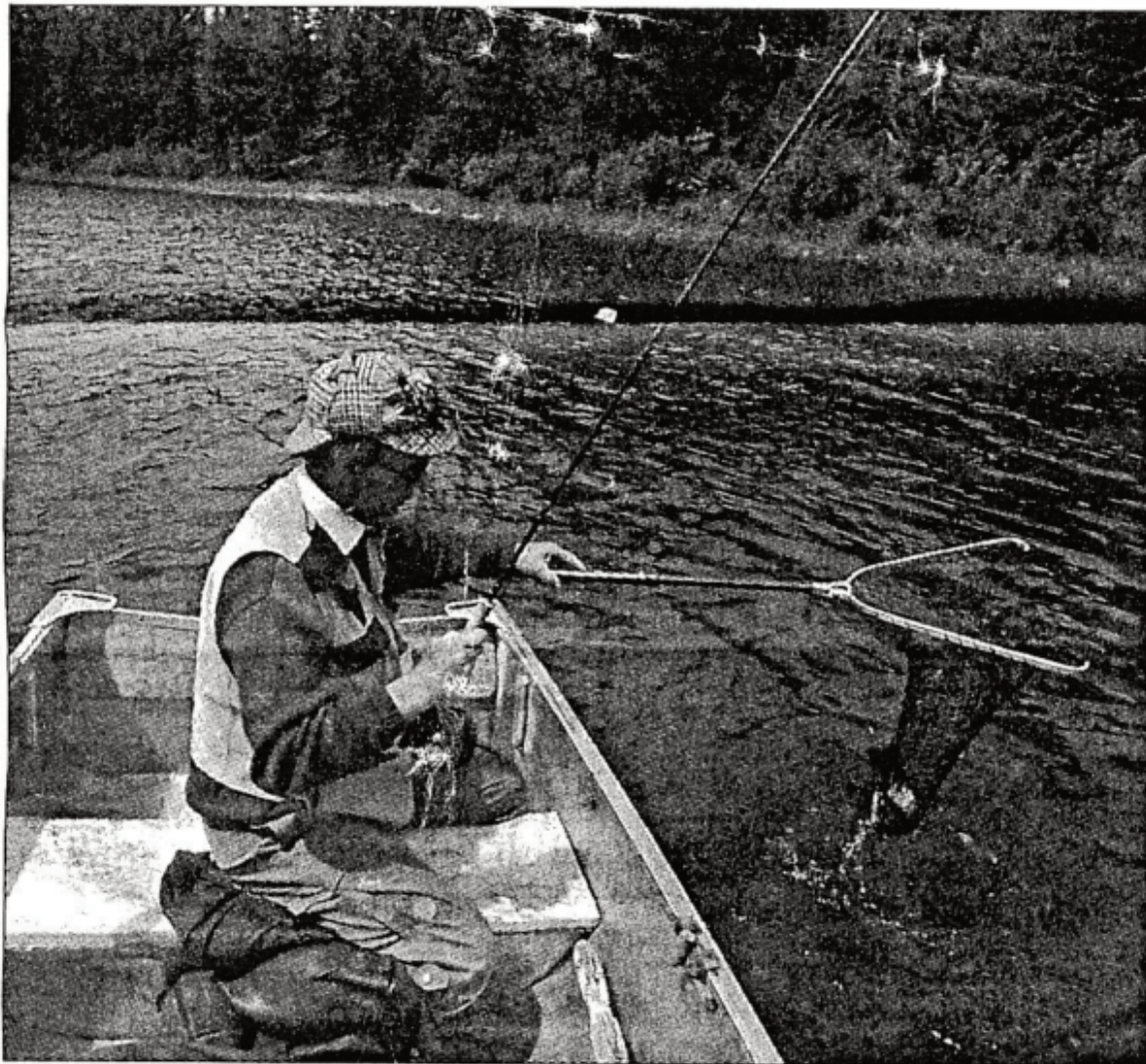
You could see the fish change direction to take the nymph, and have the opportunity to time your strike perfectly. I had several between 3 lb and 4 lb on this method - magic sport indeed. Finally, after the celebrations of the England World win, the England Commonwealth team travelled another 400 miles North to Nimpo Lake.

Here, there were no towns for 200 miles, and the fishing was for completely wild rainbows. With Canada, New Zealand and Australia putting their best professionals in their teams, we knew we were in for a battle.

There was no practice on the lake but, by the second of the four three-hour sessions, we had found fish on the six-mile lake. Instead of the anchoring tactics for so long favoured, the English team opted to drift-fish in the traditional manner.

This was a very brave move, giving us the winning bag of 54 trout. Team positions were: Dennis Buck (third); Charles Jardine (fifth); Bob Church (seventh); Chris Howitt (ninth) and Dave Grove (fourteenth) - a very consistent performance.

New Zealand came second with (keeping it in the family) Wales third, Scotland fourth.



PARADISE...Bob gets to grips with a Horseshoe Lake rainbow with all the grandeur of British Columbia spread out around him. Beats Pitsford!

"A brave move gave us the winning bag"

England

John Lindsey, Jeremy Lucas, Paul Miller, Chris Ogborne, John Pawson, John Braithwaite (reserve) & Geoff Clarkson (manager).

1. England
2. Poland
3. Italy
4. Wales
5. Czechoslovakia
6. Finland
7. Sweden
8. France
9. Scotland
10. New Zealand

Individuals:

1. Russell Owen (Wales)
2. Franciszek Szajnik (Poland)
3. Jeremy Lucas (England)
6. John Buchanan (Scotland)
7. John Lindsey (England)
11. Chris Ogborne (England)