

## Australian Fly Fishing Championships

This years national competition event took place on the 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2005 in Tasmania.

Bronte Park provided the perfect base for the organizing committee and competitors alike, being located between the four venues chosen:

- 1) Lake Arthur
- 2) Penstock Lagoon
- 3) Derwent River
- 4) Tyenna River

FFA Tasmanian chapter have been very busy organizing all the logistics to enable the competition to unfold.

The choice of venues could not have been better, providing a very diverse field in which to test competitors.

Lake Arthur had been at exceptionally high levels this spring and was still very high during the event. Duu hatches were sparse and not yet conspicuous to attract a lot of fish to the surface and although some fish were caught on dries, lures seemed to have accounted for most fish caught.

Penstock Lagoon on the other hand had its duus hatching in heavy numbers. To witness the spectacle these little creatures put on during competition on Saturday was a delight. Whilst a relentless and heavy downpour fell on everything it did not seem to bother them at all. I'm not sure the same could be said for the competitors.

On this lake, dries took fish along with a vast array of flies and retrieves. Given the very different weather conditions on the two days of competition tactics and techniques employed varied greatly.

The Derwent River below Meadowbank Dam had dropped to acceptable levels on the morning of Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> and although not wadeable in its entirety proved an excellent venue giving up plenty of fish to the various techniques adopted by the competitors. Nymphs under dry flies proved effective as did big wets fished down and across.

The other river session was held on the Tyenna River between Westerway and National Park this is a delight with plenty of broken water and pockets with wading nearly mandatory as the banks are overgrown with willows. With the substrate covered with algae wading was very precarious at best. Interesting fishing. Dries and nymphs accounted for most fish here. Unfortunately this river was affected by a quick rise in water level and discoloring during the last session following the heavy Saturday rain. Some competitors managed to catch fish before the water became too dirty.

The two competition days were marked by opposite weather conditions with a sunny and warm Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> and rainfall of nearly 40mm for Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup>.

After two days of competition everyone seemed relieved at the end of the last session. The evening dinner provided a friendly atmosphere in which competitors shared their experiences, thoughts, ideas and laughter about the fishing.

Sorting out points and scores for all the competitors and announcing the top 3 positions was next on the agenda.

Jonathan Stagg (Tasmania) took first place, Chris Dawson (ACT) took second place and Joe Riley (Tasmania) took third place.

Fine organization was indeed displayed throughout the event by the Tasmanian chapter and we all wish to give a big thank you to the organizers, controllers, land owners (who kindly provided us access to the water) and all involved for the the tremendous effort in staging such a wonderful event. We thank you for welcoming us and the great hospitality shown!!

THANK YOU!

EMILIO CAGGIANO – NEWSLETTER EDITOR FFA NSW