



2019 Freshwater Fly Fishing Open

Corroboree billabong was once again the venue for Darwin Flyrodders Freshwater fly Fishing Tournament. May Day long weekend saw 14 teams (2 anglers per team) assemble at Corroboree Tavern on Friday evening ahead of competition days on Saturday and Sunday. Teams were expecting a hard slog on the back of one of the worst wet seasons on record.

Most teams headed out for an early start taking advantage of the coffee & bacon egg rolls provided by the hard working Corroboree Tavern staff that looked after the competitors during the comp. Some teams started earlier than others to stake out their spots ready for lines in at 7.00am. One team had technical difficulties which meant that they only managed to hit the boat ramp at midday - half a day fishing lost!

At the end of day one team Draggin Flies were leading, their homework ahead of the comp paying dividends as they racked up good numbers of tarpon plus some saratoga, Team Glass and a half were not far adrift in second place. Individually Shane McCarthy held a slim lead with Quinten Pope & Peter Cooke nipping at his heels. Apart from a plethora of tarpon other species were hard to account for.



2019 Competitors



Team Rankings Day 1

1st Draggin Flies	2223
2nd Two Casts	2169
3rd Vertically Challenged	1941
4th Glass and a Half	1924
5th Chuck & Duck	1823
6th Tarpon Tamers	1546
7th Alaskan Kings	1506
8th Castaways	1413
9th Rat Boys	1380
10th Master & Apprentice	1261
11th Just 1 More	1099
12th No Flies On Us	815
13th Flies Down Rods Out	803
14th One More No More	786

Individual Rankings Day 1 (top 10)

1st Shane McCarthy	1278
2nd Quinten Pope	1241
3rd Peter Cooke	1220
4th Tom Harding	1183
5th Chris Rainbird	1042
6th Richard Carter	983
7th Robyn Gless	891
8th Marty Krantz	817
9th Roger Sinclair	790
10th Bob Bekkers	781

After a well catered dinner on Saturday night at the Corroboree tavern ably supported by a few refreshing ales the results for Day 1 were presented to an attentive audience with a special mention to all the DFR sponsors.

Day two, the leading teams were hard at it hunting points but some dropped off succumbing to the crash and burn that day two panic is well known for.

A big shout out to Peter and Lynne and staff from Corroboree Park Tavern for hosting the Darwin Fly Rodders event again. Also thank you to all who helped out and our generous sponsors who ensured that all participants received a prize just for entering.



Saratoga – target species

Final Results

1st Draggin Flies	3679
2nd Glass and a Half	3476
3rd Chuck & Duck	3356
4th Vertically Challenged	3120
5th Alaskan Kings	2771
6th Tarpon Tamers	2688
7th Two Casts	2617
8th Master & Apprentice	2447
9th Castaways	2141
10th Rat Boys	1709
11th No Flies On Us	1577
12th Just 1 More	1526
13th Flies Down Rods Out	1223
14th One More No More	1098

Final Individual Placings (Top 10)

1st Quinten Pope	2140
2nd Peter Cooke	1956
3rd Tom Harding	1940
4th Chris Rainbird	1868
5th Richard Carter	1683
6th Roger Sinclair	1490
7th Bob Bekkers	1458
8th Glenn Hubble	1450
9th Shane McCarthy	1405
10th Marty Krantz	1341

Fish Caught Overall

Species	number	Biggest	Angler
Barra	9	55	Robyn Gless
Saratoga	58	63	Peter Cook
Tarpon	770	41	Sonya Lovegrove
Catfish	27	53	Megan Pope
Archerfish	2		
Sooty Grunter	1	?	Chris Rainbird

Competitor Contributions

Peter Cooke and Richard Carter of Winning Team: Draggin' Flies

Our strategy this year was partly based on fly selection and location advice from club members and others who had won the comp or done well in previous years. We also pre-fished on three occasions in the 2-3 weeks leading up to the comp and found three key locations with reasonable numbers of saratoga and a couple flies that worked well. One location was within 3km of the ramp and the others were mostly 15+ minute runs downstream in the main billabong.

We found good numbers of toga near sharp turns/corners in the water way and off grass ledges where there was some depth, landing flies in the grass, stripping to the edge and letting them drop into the water as gently as possible, allowing them to sink for a few seconds depending on the depth. This led to several fish that evidently grabbed on the drop or on the first couple strips, particularly during our pre-fishes.

We got lucky on day one with a couple of perfect speed wind drifts and picked up the two biggest toga (61.5 and 62cm) of the comp with that stealthy approach. Flies included a combo of leech and damsel patterns and a hybrid of sorts that I used exclusively, which was made up of 1/0 Gamakatsu SL12 with bead chain eyes, crystal flash, black bunny tail and about 8-10mm of wrapped flashy chenille in pink or orange, which worked well because big tarpon were also keen to grab it. My hook selection should have been B10s but I couldn't find any pre-comp so I tied them on SL12's. We dropped as many as 20 toga between us on day one; some immediate misses, some wrapped around lilies and other just inexplicably came off. I'm pretty sure Richard dropped a 70cm + on day one. We're speculating that our weed guards had something to do with it. I used 80 pound, same length as the hook, Richard's were a bit shorter, which may have been a bit too stiff.

I also found that Toga and big tarpon like small open pockets in the lilies, perhaps a square meter or two in size. It's like they patrol that area for landing insects or bait fish that swim into it and become visible in the sun.

Day two was a totally different experience as far as toga were concerned, we chalked up Saturday's success to the rains that fell on the Friday night. I only landed one 35cm toga on Sunday and dropped 3 others. The thing that kept us in the running on Sunday was the very willing tarpon, upgrading as many as ten times each on day two.



Champion Team - Draggin' Flies

Competition Snap Shots



Sunrise Barra for Robyn Gless



Dave Krantz checking his "How to catch a Barra App"



Death grip tarpon



Glenn Hubble and Damian Cappelluti filling in time with selfies



Chris Rainbird shows off a nice Corroboree saratoga

Chris Rainbird related to me after the comp that their team "Chuck & Duck" fished small gurgler surface flies on 2/0 hooks with floating lines for the majority of the time. Chris said that tarpon had no hesitation in taking these flies either & would often beat Saratoga to the fly. They tried to target toga where ever they could find a clear pocket of water among the lilies. Chris also managed to land a sooty grunter. Chris said conditions were very difficult with large amount of lilies present in the billabong.



Quinten Pope Champion Angler



Sunset Fly



Runner up Champion Angler – Peter Cooke



Damian Happy Toga



Marty Krantz with a beautiful togo



Runner up Champion Team – Father & Daughter: Quinten & Megan Pope



Alex Godfrey of team: Master & Apprentice



Saratoga for Marty Krantz while Dave looks on & wonders?



Quinten and Megan Pope in action



Launching early morning at a busy Corroboree boat ramp



It was a Tarpon Fest as Marty Krantz demonstrated



Most Meritorious Fish – Megan Pope

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