

## **2022 Darwin Flyrodders Territory Freshwater Fly Fishing Open**

Each year the Darwin Flyrodders hosts the Territory Freshwater Fly Fishing Open held on the iconic Corroboree Billabong which has over 50 kilometres of navigable waters.

This 2022 DFR TFWFFO, was the 30th Anniversary of the competition.

The premier species targeted are Barramundi and Saratoga, with others such as Tarpon, Sleepy Cod, Long Tom, Archerfish, Catfish also eligible for points for length.

The premier species earn double points.

Our base for the Competition is the Corroboree Park Tavern on the Arnhem Highway which is only a 15 minute drive to the launching ramp. Just over an hours drive from the edge of Darwin.

While some teams fished a few days leading up to the comp, others have relied on past experiences and weekend pre-fish outings over the last few weeks.

16 teams of 2 fly fishers each, had registered this year, however COVID stopped one team and one other angler from participating.

Teams range from first timers with the fly, to beginner fly fishers, to the super keen and very experienced competitors (you, the guys who fly fish way too much!).

Boats vary, equipment varies, and tactical options are endless; but all are there for the awesome comraderie that sits over all of the DFR activities.

And while “THE” top secret location might not be revealed - tactics and flies are shared readily amongst the competitors. Though any discussion about where the barra might be this year is spoken of cryptically and very softly: well at least prior to lines in!

So, Friday evening, the first night presentation is at the Corroboree Park Tavern location, where all competitors are staying. It is where the pre-comp instructions are given and the handing out the team bags with all sorts of goodies from our many sponsors. Deckies are reminded not to lose the scoresheets (it has happened!), and to assure proper attire is conformed to (fishnet stockings I am told? Not sure that’s an absolute!). And one angler, just like every year is reminded that he needs to adhere to the closing time for each day’s fishing! You miss the scoresheet cut off, once! and the club will never let you forget it! Then again, every club has one of those “guys”, don’t they?

Pre-dawn Day 1 of comp, sees boats readied in darkness outside of sleeping arrangements, some take a quick stop at the tavern, who have opened the kitchen early and especially, for those that want bacon and egg rolls, and hot coffee. Awesome start!

By the crack of dawn four or five boats are found prepped and ready to launch at the billabong’s main boat ramp 15minutes from the accommodation. While several of the hard-core keenest fly fisher teams are already zipping along the still waters out to their chosen starting point.

Lines in at 7am. Lines out at 5pm. With lots of casting in between!

That evening the talk on arrival back at the tavern is about lots of fish, monster jumps of gigantic toga that jump metres into the air to dislodge the sharpest hooks and flop gracefully back into the pristine billabong water - free to annoy, maybe even inspire the next fly fisher to come along.

Saturday evening presentation starts with a special meal, fancy food just for the TFWFFO fly fishers. It was spot on in flavour and amount! (as always). But most of the super keen anglers are waiting on the Day 1 results!

Biggest of the key species is presented first. Barra, then Toga, then tarpon with special awards for biggest Catfish.

Then the team standings are given in two halves, ooohhs and aaahhhs are heard as the scores are displayed. Then the Individual standings are also displayed in two parts 15 fly fishers on each slide of the presentation. It will be an interesting shortened Day 2 for some fly fishers – as it is tight at the top of the table standings.

Not many barra caught but a few, there were countless tarpon and plenty of average toga. Most of the 30 anglers are catching fish – even the first timer of using the fly - has snagged a fish or two. Well done everyone!

Day 2 is same lines in but out by 1pm. The competitive teams are again on the water predawn, and while still very keen to catch fish the other anglers are also soon on the water to fully froth the water with their efforts and carefully crafted flies.

Lines out mid arvo and boats packed up for the drive home. But all are eager for the afternoon presentation of the final results.

Finger food first – awesome again!

But the results are what the fly fishers are here for this afternoon.

Again, biggest of species first for 2022 DFR TFWFFO

Biggest Barra 65cm – Roger Sinclair



Biggest tarpon 40cm – George Vlazny



Biggest Saratoga 66cm – John Murdon



Most Meritorious – first bara on fly - Michelle Slow



The encouragement award was presented next. This to a fly fisher who during the Open, exemplifies what the TFWFFO and DFR is all about – having a go and learning through the process. This was to Ian Hayne.



Due to tremendous amount of work by the DFR club committee members with our sponsors – especially in such a crazy COVID cause economic time frame – all fly fishers get a prize corresponding to raffle numbers picked from a hat.

The first individual fly fisher prize award presented is the “Back Stop” award. This is given to the angler who supports and pushes upward at the rest of us – this year it was first time fly fishing angler – Ian Hayne



Each Fly fisher is presented with their pre as the presentation rises through the results. Finally, four anglers left. Some these four had good days, others better days, some struggled. Who would finish where?

By the time the presentation got to the last four competitors, those left were some very good anglers who have placed repeatedly in the TFWFFO over the last few years. Two of which have been overall yearly club champions too.

One of them had caught five more togs than one of the anglers above them, would those five fish be worth enough points to leap the other anglers.



Hmmmmmm, very interesting. Pressure building, heart pumping – aaarrggghh!

Fourth place fly fisher went to BC with 3414 points.



It seems like an eternity till third place was announced – well done Shane McCarthy, with 3562 points



Richard Carter was individual runner up with 3710 points



And Peter Cooke was champion fly fisher for the 2022 TFWFFO with 3918 points



All the team standings were then announced for which results are based on two anglers combined points. After the other 13 teams shown the top teams were presented with their awards and prizes.

Runner-up team was 'Two Casts', with Robyn and Shane with 6116 points



The champion team was 'Dragg'n Flies' of Peter and Richard with 7708 points





Total fish caught during the DFR TFWFFO, were as follows:



A table titled "Total Fish Caught" with a background image of a bird in a pond. The table lists fish species, the number caught, total length, and average length.

Species	# Caught	Total Length	Av Length
Barramundi	8	419	52
Saratoga	386	15472	40
Tarpon	1039	30512	29
Sleepy Cod	6	219	37
Catfish	34	1056	31
Archer Fish	3	62	21
Long Tom	5	172	34
Mouth Almighty	2	43	22

Well done everyone!

As one angler has said:

“This is one of the best comps I have fished in as comps go (the DFR salt comp is, I believe, the best fly comp there is!)– and that’s not because of the results this year. As except for a person’s secret barra location on the billabong – most will tell you what they are trying, using and even suggest areas to focus your fishing. The banter, laughter and culture of the club is awesome. Yes, always a few loud ones, some quiet ones, but over all a great group of fly fishers, iconic location and target species, and an exceptional couple of days fishing and learning with like-minded fly fishers! Bring on TFWFFO 2023”.

So, congrats to all the fly fishers participating. It was an awesome 2022 DFR TFWFFO.



Thanks to DFR TFWFFO committee and DFR leadership team, and the countless and greatly appreciated sponsors.

How will 2023 DFR TFWFFO go?

So many options, such good fly fishing to be had!

Who would live anywhere else - Top End, NT what a great place to fly fish!

Come and visit us! Contact the DFR club for help and information.

For images of some of the fish caught this year - watch the video of the 2022 DFR TFWFFO

Again, thanks to our awesome sponsors!







Helen Stuart



Tracy Byron



Matthew Hayne





Helen Stuart





Richard Carter

# Team Scores

Place	Score	Team
1st	7708	Draggin' Flies
2nd	6116	Two Casts
3rd	5662	Master & Apprentice
4th	5281	Territory Towel-Ups
5th	4740	Glenn's Mates
6th	4694	Alpine Anglers
7th	4642	Team Rantipole
8th	4416	Chuck 'n Duck
9th	3441	No Flies on Us
10th	3309	Bucktail Bandits
11th	3167	Brothers on the Fly
12th	3049	Just 1 More
13th	2957	Flys Down Rods Out
14th	2878	No Doof No Boof
15th	2407	Bestie Pesties

# Angler Scores

Place	Score	Angler	Place	Score	Angler
1st	3918	Peter Cooke	16th	1813	Lee Slow
2nd	3710	Richard Carter	17th	1810	David Ammerlaan
3rd	3562	Shane McCarthy	18th	1806	Brett Byron
4th	3141	Tim Harding	19th	1752	Ray Vickery
5th	3344	Roger Sinclair	20th	1750	Helen Stuart
6th	2922	Dave Maurier	21st	1601	Troy Ammerlaan
7th	2662	Quinton Pope	22nd	1499	Tracy Byron
8th	2559	Glenn Hubble	23rd	1483	John Murden
9th	2544	Robyn Gless	24th	1457	Alex Godfrey
10th	2386	Damian Cappeliuti	25th	1421	Bill Shappert
11th	2365	Peter Thiel	26th	1301	Grahame Byron
12th	2354	George Vlazny	27th	1218	Gavin Christison
13th	2228	Justin Dwyer	28th	1186	Michelle Slow
14th	2181	Matthew Hayne	29th	894	Daniel Murden
15th	2031	Bob Bekkers	30th	706	Ian Hayes