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# FLY OF THE MONTH

**Patriot** by Charles Meck — (An Indicator with an Attitude)

- Hook:** Mustad 94833 or TMC 100, standard dry fly, sizes 10-18 (Size 12 best)
- Thread:** Red 6/0 or 8/0 for smaller flies. A fluorescent red orange is also good.
- Tail:** Reddish Brown hackle fibers
- Wings:** White impala or calf tail, or calf body hair divided
- Body:** "Smolt Blue" Krystal Flash wound around the shank; wind some of the red thread in the middle of the shank, similar to the Royal Coachman
- Hackle:** Reddish Brown



Charlie Meck was one of the featured fly tiers at the 2004 Ontario Fly Fishing Show. This red white and blue is good alone, but it also can be used as an indicator fly with a small nymph or smaller fly tied off the bend. Charlie taught a few new tricks to split the hair wing and to work with slippery materials like flash. Notes by Lucky Ketcham, SDFP.

Smash the barb and mount the hook in the vise. Attach the red thread with a jam knot at two thirds the hook shank to mark the location of the future wing. Make a thread base back to the bend. Charlie likes to use white calf body hair for the wings, because they show up well in low light and are easier to use than kinkier calf tail. Calf tail or Impala body hair can also be used. Select a small bundle of calf body hair (40 to 50), the number of hairs will vary with the hook size and your eye sight. Clean out any under-fur and stack or get most of the tips even. Size the wing to be two hook gaps in front of the thread marker. Manipulate the stack of hair with your fingers to make a tight bundle and place on top of the hook, tips to the front. Make two soft pinch wraps and then tighten the thread, making more tight wraps on the base. Pull up on the front of the wing and make a small thread dam of 8 to 10 wraps to stand up the wing. Charlie teaches a trick to help stand up and split the

wings. Take a loop of fine leader or thread about 6 inches long. Place the loop over the eye of the hook and pull back to the hair wing. Spread the hair out with your finger nail and find the approximate center. Pull the leader loop back through the center of the wing and tie it off behind the wing. This little trick just helps find the middle. Now take the regular tying thread and figure 8 wrap through the middle of the wings to further separate. Make two or three thread wraps around the base of each wing and then around the hook shank. Trim off the butts of the hair wing at an angle or with three spaced cuts to make a tapered under body.

Add the tail: Select a small bunch of stiff brown rooster hackle for the tail, about 15 to 20 fibers. Size the tail to be one shank length and pinch wrap on top of the hook. Keep the tail on top of the hook shank and tight wrap to mid shank. Trim off the butts to blend in with the base of the hair wing.

Select 4 or 5 strands of Smolt Blue Krystalflash and attach at the base of the tail. Charlie notes that some people have had problems with slippery materials like the Krystalflash, pulling off the back of the hook. The trick he teaches is to keep one strand of flash in the material keeper while he wraps three or four forward making a smooth

continued on next page



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## Fly of the Month

continued from previous page

body. Then wrap the final strand of flash as a tight rib to hold the other strands in place. Wrap the rib strand up to near the mid shank point and tie down with a band of red thread. Make 10 to 15 wraps of thread and then continue with the blue flash up to the base of the wings. Tie down and rim off excess flash.

Select and size one or two reddish brown hackles. Attach behind the wing with the stems between the divided wings. The dull or concave side should be up. The larger size 12 hooks might need two hackles to make a very full hackled fly. Wrap 4 to 6 turns behind the wings and another 3 or 4 in front. Secure with three tight wraps and trim the stems. Charlie then made the whip finish with three turns of thread on a half hitch tool and then another three turn half hitch. It was

Charlie Meck that taught me that the half hitch tool method was the same as a whip finish made with a special tool. A small drop of head cement is optional.

A size 14 Patriot was very good for me at Sotcher Lake near Mammoth, the first week in October 2006. There was a hatch of smaller brown caddis that evening and larger October caddis were occasionally seen. 10 to 13 inch rainbows were rising just off the shallow inlet area. I caught 12 of my 16 trout that evening on a single Patriot. The full brown hackle makes the fly float well, the white wings makes it easy for a blind man to see and the bright blue and red body seems to attract the fish. Why use a yarn indicator when you can use "An Indicator with an Attitude."

Try it you'll like it. — Lucky



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## Lake Heenan

continued from page 5

Prince Nymph with a large gold bead. The bigger fish were caught between 4 PM and 5 PM when the shadows started to appear on the west shore line. There is a point with a lone pine tree on the west side that has historically produced some of the big fish. The flat near the hatchery building produced many smaller fish in the early morning. The average size fish in this lake is 18 inches.

Many of the locals that I talked to say they like to use smaller size 14 and 16 Princes, Hare's Ears, Damsels and of course scuds. Angora Leech patterns in black, wine and purple are supposed to be good colors too. They do not know why the Prince works so well. Someone said that there are a lot of water boatmen (Corixidae) that have oar like legs similar to the wing or tail of the Prince.

A shore angler said he has fished the lake every year with Thomas Buoyant spoons in Orange and Red. He said that the cuts are suckers for patterns with red, orange or purple. A large gold Kastmaster was the hot spinning lure this year. Those of you that mix spin and fly fishing you would have to modify your spoons to have a single barbless hook.

### BASIC INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW:

- ONLY open on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays, CLOSED Monday-Thursday
- Season opens the Friday before Labor Day, closes the last Sunday in October
- Fishing only allowed from Sunrise to Sunset
- A caretaker (retired warden) checks for licenses, but you can't buy a license there
- You can fish from the bank, but most people use float tubes, canoes, or rowboats
- Bears have learned not all fish survive when released, so they frequent the lee shore. Be Alert!
- No services available here, other than chemical toilets. Bring food and water
- For flies, black or olive Woolly Buggers, Prince nymphs, Callibaetis, and midges are good patterns
- Lures, spinners, and plugs are allowed here too (with only a single barb less hook!)
- The fish feed in spurts. Fishing gets red hot, and then it can completely stop. Be patient!
- The end near the dam, and the side opposite the launch area are most productive (I don't know why)

More notes on page 9

