

SILVER INVICTA DABBLER

Rob Denson ties a fly with widespread appeal in late summer

DID I ever tell you about the day I nearly won the Lexus Individual title? No? Well then, sit back and get comfy. I remember it well. September 2009, Chew Valley Lake; great conditions, yet many dry nets and long faces arrived back at the jetty that day. Most anglers had scratched around all day for two, three or four fish, if they were lucky. Top score was eight, maybe nine... until I rocked up with 15. An unbeatable score... had it been match day. I had "won" practice day! Friends hailed me as the Lexus champ-in-waiting. I'm still waiting - two fish for me on match day; five won it.

The practice session had been one of those days. An early fish or two did wonders for the confidence, then, as so often is the way, the rest was like taking sweets off a child. The trout were in the mood for taking sheep off the bank, or so it seemed, as each and every fly and method I tried was welcomed with wide eyes and even wider mouths. Alas, I was a day too early. On the other hand, any fool can have a good day without the pressure that match day brings.

The stand-out fly was a size 12 Silver Invicta Dabbler. It started on the middle dropper, and after taking over half of my tally, finished there. A sterling effort from one of several Silver Invicta variants that live in my box and see much daylight as we ease out of summer and begin our descent into autumn. The abundance of fry is an obvious factor in the success of Silver Invicta variants at this time of year. Indeed, that weekend on Chew, the classic trout tactic of corraling fry to the surface and picking off the stunned and confused casualties was very much in evidence. Small patches of water would visibly boil, then crackle and fizz as small fry fled for their lives. A quick cast in the general direction of the commotion invariably resulted in a solid tug. The hues of the fry are beautifully mirrored in a Silver Invicta, and the "darty" dynamic of the Dabbler profile seals the deal.

But there's more to a Silver Invicta variant's repertoire than a passable turn as a small fry. As the last of the summer sedges make their way to the surface, a Silver Invicta variant will often do a better



Hook Size 10, 12 or 14 Kamasan B175 or B170

Tail Yellow cock fibres **Rib** Silver wire

Body Flat silver tinsel **Body hackle** Grizzle hen dyed ginger

Shoulder hackle Grizzle hen dyed Silver Doctor Blue

Cloak and Throat Bronze mallard **Cheeks** (optional) JC splits

Thread Black UTC 70 denier



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job for you than will many an imitative pattern designed specifically with ascending sedges in mind. Then there's Corixa. Again, a small Silver Invicta variant will often get the glad-eye when a close-copy, complete with flapping paddles gets ignored. Shrimp are covered too, and if you're headed for Grafham in the next month or two, and looking for a fly to pass as one of those big, bad, and very naughty killer shrimp, then look no further than the Silver Invicta Dabbler.

Why carry five patterns when one will do? As always with suggestive wet-flies, vary the size, and the way you fish it, and anything is possible... maybe even winning the Lexus sometime! **T&S**

TYING TIPS

- Select long cock hackle fibres for the tail - twice as long as the hook shank - and tie in along the full length of the shank. This ensures a smooth, flat base upon which to lay your silver tinsel.
- Do the same with the wire rib - tie in along the full length of the shank - again, to keep the underbody smooth and flat in readiness for the tinsel.
- Use hen for the body hackle to gain extra movement. For me, the Silver Invicta, in all its guises, is a middle dropper or tail fly, therefore I want it to get down to business as soon as it hits the water. Using cock hackle will delay its descent slightly.