

Newell Lures

The cottage lure industry is turning out so many high quality products these days, 'specially those aimed at the barra market, that commentators are finding themselves with an acute shortage of superlatives with which to describe the home grown timber minnow.

In our haste to heap praise on some of these designs, we sometimes lose track of a few things. It's always the lure that gets credit for the capture — not the way it was presented, or worked. And not a lot of thought is spent on just a plain hot to trot fish, that might have taken anything in the tackle box. On the other hand, it may well be that the lure had that certain something that triggered the strike. Out of such uncertainty grows much of the substance of lure fishing.

I'd been privvy to a new design from Peter Newell since its inception. At its unveiling in his backyard swimming pool, it struck me as a sort of "winged keel" minnow. It was that revolutionary.

Pete explained that his unique shape was not so much a means of getting action from the minnow, but to make a fair sort of departure from established design. Create something original, not merely copy a proven format. His understanding of the forces that make a lure work date back to years of building and flying model planes. In the air and in the water, the basic airfoil shape has similar characteristics.

The thing that really struck me about this design, christened the Scorpion by Newell, is its versatility. It has the capability for speed out in the bluewater to put it right up there amongst the CD Rapala & Co as a true high speed minnow, yet back at more sedate cranking speeds in the river it is one of the most consistent producers you can ever tie on. Its action is a tight shimmy. Much more in line with the preferences of tropical river fish, which seem to go more for a natural swimming action than wobblers that embody the wounded fish syndrome.

Newell's colour schemes show good imagination; an understanding of the natural tonings of river fish. His finish and all round durability are well up to Niugini bass standards — a stumbling block for many makers.

We stacked the Scorpions against most other minnows the market had to offer and, at trips end, the general agreement was that they were something special. But in all fairness, they were also the plugs we most used. There were reasons aplenty for that. Available from: Peter Newell, "Mayon Mount", Tenterfield, NSW, 2372.

Rod Harrison

(Note: Address is no longer current)