Bobbin to better tying

**Ekich Ultimate Bobbin**

Label anything as ‘ultimate’ and someone will take potshots. I have a couple of minor gawdles with the Ekich bobbin holder, but on the whole it is rather good. Faruk Ekich is a retired Canadian engineer now living in Ottawa. Faruk also fets flies, fishes, and makes the most exotic fly-tying vices I’ve seen. Handling the Ekich Bobbin, I get a sense of a well crafted tool. All the bends are exact, the wire fits to the block precisely, like longer holders so this is a salmon model with a 32mm stainless steel tube, my options were 20mm tube and ceramic inserts. Stainless steel is very hard stuff; this stainless tube is cut and polished with care so thread is not damaged when it runs over it. I can see where the tip of this tube was polished.

While the frame and orientation of the brass block are distinctive the key feature of the Ekich Bobbin is in that black housing. This is built around a special spring. Used as designed, the tension in my thread can remain more or less the same when the bobbin hangs from the hook and when I am wrapping thread. To the best of my knowledge, no other bobbin holder is designed to do that. Normally my bobbin holders are adjusted so I can pull thread from the spool fairly easily, certainly without breaking the thread. My thread is under minimum (useful) tension when it hangs from the hook and under considerably more tension when I wind and do all those other jobs. Using a constant force spring and a reasonably hefty holder, Faruk has set the minimum force applied by his holder at 35g (0.35oz) – considerably more than the minimum working tension of my default Mataré holders (with a spool of thread that weights 14.5g.). Point to note there is that, used carefully wraps from an Ekich Bobbin are near uniform tension, where wraps from a conventional holder vary in tension, and when the holder hangs thread tension reduces which can have an effect on the last few wraps of thread – most obvious if you are tying with a springy-elastic material. The net effect of all that is the Ekich Holder means I need fewer wraps of thread and my tying is more secure – which is pretty impressive.

The force the Ekich applies was carefully judged, so catches even the most delicate threads. In my opinion, even very weak, fine threads are less likely to break on this holder than on my normal lighter holders. To get the spring working I found myself pulling a few inches of thread from the spool as I began tying. Afty. Then if I moved the holder closer or farther from the hook the tension remains the same – the spring releases thread as I pull away and takes back thread as I move closer. I hold this more or less as normal, the brass block encourages me to use my thumb and forefinger, one finger rests on the wire guard, I can add tension with my third finger if and when I need to. Tying with this holder feels different, to gain something from this I need to change how I work. I don’t pull off a length of thread and then wind – I simply wind the holder around the hook and let the spring decide the tension, the force being applied. A true rotary vice brings out the most from this holder. With more delicate threads this holder is exceptional.

Naturally, the spring eventually runs out and needs to be released, so learning to pop the spool off the pin on the holder is an essential skill (it’s not difficult to learn). I doubt I will dump my existing bobbin holders and replace them with Ekich holders; however, since this has been on my bench it has become my go-to bobbin holder. Price: $100US (£61/€75) plus carriage.

From: www.ekichbobbin.com
Tel: 001 61382 21930

Bleached early season next to select cow elk. Early season hair is finer.

**Cow Elk hair by Nature’s Spirit from FunkyFlyTying**

Four variations on a theme, bleached and natural versions of both ‘early season’ and ‘select’. All four patches are tanned and if you look at the skin side all four are near enough the same size (2 x 3 in). The tips are fine and sharp (and sharp but blunter tips on the bleached tips is a sense of a well crafted tool. All the bends are exact, the wire fits to the block precisely, like longer holders so this is a salmon model with a 32mm stainless steel tube, my options were 20mm tube and ceramic inserts. Stainless steel is very hard stuff; this stainless tube is cut and polished with care so thread is not damaged when it runs over it. I can see where the tip of this tube was polished.

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Not all elk’s are the same

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**On the bench**

**MAGNUS ANGUS** studies elk hair patches, uses a revolutionary new bobbin, and encounters a great threader – from his dentist

**Living in the material world**

**This month: Floss threaders**

A chat really, Faruk Ekich included a pack of dental ‘floss threaders’ with his bobbin holder. These are perfect bobbin threaders. It’s difficult to score or damage my bobbin tube with a nylon loop designed to be pushed between teeth. They’re available from most chemists and online – no more than a couple of pounds for a pack of five.

Feed the threader part way through the tube...

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