



Kapiti Fly Fishing Club

April 2023 Newsletter



*You are invited to our next Club night on Monday 24 April when
Malcolm Francis and Pete Haakman will talk on fishing the
Manganui O Te Ao River meeting starts at 7:30pm venue is the Turf
Pavilion Sports Grounds*

This month's cover photo: This is a photo of Peter Haakman 7lb plus Brown trout caught on a small stream in the Central Plateau, a stunning trout from a small clear stream.

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Club activities

Date	Event	Coordinator
April date TBC	Wainuiomata River – day trip	Gordon Baker
Monday 24 April	Club night – Guest Speaker Malcolm Francis	Wayne Butson
19 to 21 May TBC	Rotorua Lakes	Ralph Lane
Monday 22 May	Club meeting – AGM	Wayne Butson
16 to 18 June	Tongariro and Tauranga -Taupo Rivers	Kras Angelov
Monday 24 June	Club meeting - Guest Speaker TBC	President
June-July date TBC	Hutt River day trip	Malcolm Francis
Monday 24 July	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	President
11 to 13 August	Tongariro and Tauranga -Taupo Rivers	TBC
Monday 28 August	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	President
15 to 17 September	Manawatu River	TBC
Monday 25 September	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	President
Sunday 1 October	Opening Day on Waikanae River	
13 to 15 October	Rangitikei River area	TBC
Monday 23 October	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	President
10 to 12 November	Tukituki and Waipawa Rivers	TBC
Monday 27 November	Club meeting – Guest speaker TBC	President

Presidents report

Our AGM in May is fast approaching, and it is a sentient moment in the affairs of the Club as it when our annual accounts are approved, and the election of officers and Committee for the next twelve months occurs. Sadly, I have not experienced as much free time as I anticipated when I retired from full time work in September 2022 and so I will not be seeking a second term of office as President.

I have greatly appreciated the faith and trust that members bestowed on me last year, as a relative newcomer to the club, by supporting my candidacy for Club President and I trust I haven't disappointed anyone. I will of course be on the Committee as immediate past President and so will continue to have a strong interest in club affairs.

I was reviewing the year in my mind earlier this week and it has been another very productive and active year for KFFC. Our club Vice Presidents leadership of Women on the Fly under the banner of our club, the fly-tying competition rejuvenation, The Kid Fish out and a plethora of club trip options for members all occurred. I personally have found the meeting talks by members talking about waters they love to fish very enjoyable and engaging and I hope they continue into the future. The April meeting will see Malcolm Francis and Peter Haakman talking about the Manganui-O-te-Ao River. This is a river that I have not fished and so am very keen to learn more about it.

Most of my fishing over the last month or two has been of the saltwater variety and I normally switch to a freshwater focus from May onward with the highlight being fishing the Rotorua close in the last week of June but sadly this year I will have to go earlier as I have a legacy work commitment which will see me in the Employment court during most of that last week. Great fun, NOT!

As I have an international trip to Europe in late May June, I will be absent from the AGM and so I will tender my apology now.

To those of you lucky enough to be hitting lakes or rivers currently, Tight Lines!

Wayne



The Kapiti Fly Fishing Club will be holding its Annual General Meeting on Monday 22 May, at this meeting you will be electing our new Management Committee.

Would you be interested in joining the team and provide your ideas and input?

If so, we would be interested in hearing from you, please contact Wayne or Greg.

Fly Casting Tuition by Gordon Baker

Club member Gordon Baker is available for one-on-one casting tuition. Gordon is a casting instructor with Flyfishers International (USA). He is available to help beginners get off to a good start and to assist more experienced members improve their distance casting skills. Although not yet an approved two-handed casting instructor Gordon is a keen learner willing to share new skills.

Email Gordon kiwiflyfisher@gmail.com or phone 0274946487 to arrange a suitable time for a lesson. There is no charge.

Mid-Week Fishing trips by Hugh

For those members who are lucky enough to be able to fish mid-week during the forthcoming season please confirm your desire to be included in the mid-week fishers email list to:

hugh.driver.nz@gmail.com

The emails are often sent out only giving very short notice to take advantage of the prevailing conditions and members availability, as an example the afternoon of day before the proposed trip.

If you are interested in participating on any mid-week fishing trips, please email Hugh Driver with your contact details and you will be added to the email list.



Kapiti Women on the Fly by Leigh Johnson

Current activities

Kapiti Women on The Fly's next monthly activity is an on-river session at **10 am Sunday 30th April in Otaki**, thanks to the generous support of Gordon Baker and Michael Murphy.

Future activities

Central Plateau Women's Social Fly-Fishing Tournament

Registrations will open soon for the sixth annual women's social tournament to be held in Turangi on 21/22 July.

The NZ Fly Ferns will make a major contribution to this event which will also be a fund raiser to assist the [NZ Fly Ferns](#) attendance at the Sports Fly-Fishing Ladies World Championships in Canada in September.

Kapiti Women on The Fly Workshop 2023

Thanks for the support of TALTAC committee members, Marion Hall and Robyn Gray, the next **WoTF Workshop** will be hosted at TALTAC in Turangi on **10/11th November**.

Where to find WoTF?

Please follow our activities on our [Facebook Page](#).

There is also a private [WoTF Facebook group](#) that provides a safe space for women who fly fish, (or would like to fly fish) to share information, arrange fishing activities, and learn from each other about all things fly fishing. Or contact me directly at leigh@leighjohnsonnz.com or visit www.womenonthefly.nz.



Reading Water in Levels, Lanes and Seams by Domenick Swentosky



Reading water is a base level skill for every river angler. While mystifying at first, finding the features of moving water becomes second nature in short order. Then, the river opens up and reveals itself, signalling where trout hold, where to cast and how to achieve the necessary presentations.

From heavy pocket water to slow glides, there are three key features that make up all trout water. These are levels, lanes, and seams. They are the building blocks for all the other places on a river that we talk about, like riffle, runs, flats, undercuts, tail-outs and more. Because the water flowing through the pocket water of a great run, for example, can be broken into three components: levels, lanes, and seams. Likewise, the water flowing through an undercut may have a single, strong lane or two lanes, one fast and one slower, with a perfect seam along the merger.

Levels, lanes, and seams are not the structure of a river itself. Instead, the structures of a river — a wide gravel bar, a small island or a midstream boulder create the lanes and seams — the features of your favourite water.

This is how we read a river ... <https://youtu.be/H0VjZEBYvUY> (press Ctrl and click on link)

Watch the video and then continue to read the article for further breakdown of these features.

Levels

A level break goes across the river, from bank to bank — or at least part of it. A major level break divides one section from the next, very clearly, like the lip of a tail-out but there can be minor level breaks throughout a river that are not as apparent.

Levels are important because they signal the end of one section and the beginning of another. Most often, our presentations should cover water in only one section, but not necessarily all of it. This is especially true with dead drifts, as it is nearly impossible to set up a good dead drift in an upper section, then keep it going over the level break and into the lower section.

I'm convinced that trout see the river in levels as well. They feed in their own section (level). They consider these levels as territory or range. Surely, they move and migrate to new levels, but once stationed in a new level, that's where they feed.

I love fishing a river with lots of level breaks, because these natural borders permit a chance for new beginnings. A level break is a reset. Fish one level, reset and fish the next.

In most cases, fishing one level does not disturb trout in the bordering levels.

Lanes

Trout see the river in lanes. Known for their extreme efficiency, trout watch for food coming to them in these lanes of a river. Trout most often hold in one lane. They feed in that same lane, and they don't cross lanes much to capture food, especially in fast water.

Lanes are the strips of water coming downstream. They can vary in width and speed. A lane might be just a few inches wide, or it might be many yards wide. It can be very fast or super slow.

Look upstream to find where the lane starts. Whatever lane you choose to fish, look upstream and find the feature that creates the lane. It could be something very prominent like the exposed rocks. It might be a gravel bar, a small peninsula, half of a downed tree or a smaller rock underneath that changes the direction and flow of the water in subtle ways.

All seams have a source, so find it. Look upstream as far as necessary. Find where the lane begins and know what lane you're fishing.

Seams

Seams are where two lanes come together — most often a fast lane and a slow one. And that strip where they merge, is a great place to find trout all year long. Seams are the most guaranteed feeding lanes in a trout river.

We often find the bubble line that anglers talk about right on a good seam. The fast water creates bubbles that tend to slide out toward the softer water. That merger seam collects the bubbles, and trout love these areas, because not only do bubbles collect there, so do the bugs — both up top and underneath.

Small and Large

Everything I've learned about reading trout water came from fishing smaller streams. The smaller the river, the easier it is to read. So, fishing small to medium sized streams is great training for fishing bigger waters.

There are more level breaks on small waters. There are more defined lanes on high gradient rivers. And learning to read the pocket water on a small to medium sized river makes the big waters seam easy.

However, one of the toughest things about large trout water is how long the levels can be — sometimes hundreds of yards. Likewise, the lanes can be very wide, and the seams aren't as distinct. But the features are there, look upstream and find them. Then be disciplined about fishing just the merger seam, for example.

Someone once told me that a big river is best approached by breaking it down into many small streams. This is great advice when it works, meaning, some rivers allow you to break it down into lane after lane after lane, working across. But other large rivers can seem featureless. That challenge is made easier by, once again, looking upstream to find where the next structure changes the river.

Remember that levels, lanes, and seams are the building blocks for everything else, and seeing these water features provides the confidence necessary to read any trout water.

Fish hard, friends.

Club trip to Manganui O Te Ao River by Peter Haakman

Four club members went up to the Manganui O Te Ao River Trip on March 30th and stayed at Steve and Joanne Merson's farm in their cottage in Orautoha Valley. Frank Klus also brought his brother-in-law Chris, who fitted in well with the group.

We all met up at Brown Sugar Cafe in Taihape for a coffee and cake and travelled up via Ohakune from there.

Arriving at our accommodation early on the Thursday afternoon we had a brief chat with Steve the farmer, then set off to fish the big river. Steve warned us that fishing reports had been poor the last few weeks, with the Manawatu club having visited the previous weekend and hooking very low numbers.

While we set out optimistically to prove him wrong, we all struggled that afternoon down at the Ruatiti Domain with only a handful landed between the 5 of us. The river was running clear but was carrying maybe 250 to 300mm more water than normal flows, which made river crossings difficult and a lot of water inaccessible.

The good part was that we seemed to have the river entirely to ourselves for the weekend, and it's always a stunning part of the country to spend a few days in. There were plenty of blue ducks to be seen, there were many deer and goats around, and the weather was warm and dry.

We spent our evenings sharing some great home cooked tucker and the obligatory beer or wine and telling a tale or two. Another bonus was that nobody snored badly enough to be ejected from our lodgings!

On Friday morning Frank and Chris headed back to the Domain, while Mark fished a section close to the farm. Malcolm and I headed to an area of Steve's property that bordered both sides of the river and was connected by a stock bridge. Again, we all struggled, but caught 1 or 2 to keep ourselves in the game.

After regrouping for lunch, Frank and Chris headed upstream past the Orautoha school, Malcolm elected to relax for a while and then fish the Orautoha Stream from the farm upstream, and I took Mark back to the stock bridge and accessed water further upstream from where Malcolm and I had finished.

Mark and I both hooked up to a couple of good fish in some lovely water, so were quite satisfied with our afternoon's efforts. On our return Malcolm had enjoyed a nice walk up the stream but

hadn't seen or touched a fish. The stream was also running quite high and a little coloured after a bit of rain overnight.

Frank and Chris hadn't had much luck for the afternoon session, and had decided to leave on Saturday morning, intending to check out the Hautapu or Rangitikei on their way home. Mark was also leaving Saturday so that left Malcolm and myself. We decided to head up to have a look at the Whanganui River, stopping on the way at the top of the valley to check out the amazing waterfall I had discovered on Thursday evening when looking for phone coverage.



We got waylaid on the way to the Whanganui once we stopped to see what the Whakapapa looked like and spotted a couple of good fish from the bridge.

I hadn't fished the Whakapapa much, but Malcolm knew it well and guided me to the riverside track and parking area. We fished up a couple of pools together but didn't see any. I left Malcolm behind after the boulders slowed him down and fished the bottom section of the next run. It was full of pocket water, and I hooked up 2 fish in the first half hour.

The run itself is long, deep, and intimidating, and could easily take up a whole day to fish it thoroughly. I decided to just move on to the top 50 metres and fish it with heavy nymphs. I hooked another 3, but only landed 2 of them. I don't doubt that I could have hooked several more if time allowed, but time had already flown by and when I returned Malcolm had been waiting for me at the car for some time. Rain had been off and on for much of the afternoon, and it was time to return for a well-earned beer and dinner.

Malcolm and I tidied up the cottage Sunday morning and departed, with options to fish either the Mangawhero or Hautapu on our return journey. Stopping briefly to peer into the Mangawhero we weren't inspired as it was somewhat coloured up, so continued on our way.

Stopping at the Hautapu we accessed the river after gaining permission from a farmer. Once

again, we found the river fuller than normal and fairly cloudy. We spotted a small number of large browns but couldn't entice them.



Eventually we found a lovely run that appeared to hold a couple of actively feeding fish. Malcolm attempted to catch them for 20 to 30 minutes before getting snagged and then a big tangle, so he offered me the chance to fish the run.

One of the fish appeared to have spooked or moved on, but the other was still visible from time to time right up in the faster water at the top of the run. It was difficult to get the dry and nymph dropper to land in the right spot and achieve a decent drift to be visible to the fish. I had put my casts into the correct zone several times but couldn't be certain the fish could have seen my nymph. I had put one further cast into the right spot, and it hadn't been taken, so was about to give it a break and lift my flies out of the water when the fish raced downstream and snatched my nymph!

In the ensuing battle I believed at first that this was only a 3- or 4-pound fish, however it was amazingly strong, and I struggled for some time to bring it to the bank. With Malcolm's assistance on the net, we eventually landed this beautiful brown, which tipped the weigh net to 7 pounds.



Needless to say, I was pretty pleased with the result, and my weekend was pretty much made by that one fish.

The sky had been dark and threatening for the last hour or so, and upon our return to the car the rain arrived with a vengeance. We counted ourselves lucky to time our retreat so well. The journey home was wet for much of the trip, but dry when we reached the Kapiti Coast. The Rangitikei had looked pretty dirty still as we'd crossed it at Bulls, which left us wondering how Frank and Chris had fared on their return.

Safety Tips for Fly Fishing by Pudge Kleinkauf



Question: “What safety precautions should I take when I go fishing?”

Answer: We seldom think anything is going to happen to us out fishing, but you never can tell. Most people who enjoy the outdoors recommend not going by yourself if you'll be fishing where there aren't other people around, but even if you're going with a friend, here are some recommendations that should become part of your fly-fishing life.

Before you leave home, always check the weather where you're going so you're prepared with proper rain or cold-weather gear. I tell my clients to bring a warm hat and gloves in case of an unexpected change of weather. The old saying that most of your body heat goes out through your head is absolutely correct. Hypothermia is a real possibility whenever you are outside. Did you know that you can even become hypothermic when the sun is shining.

If it's been raining, check the stream flows on the Internet for the river where you're going so you can choose another fishing spot if the CFS (cubic feet per second) is too high for safe wading at your planned destination.

Always be sure to let a neighbour or friend know where you'll be going and when you expect to return. If you're going to be off the beaten path, leave a map or list of landmarks and even GPS coordinates, if you have them, with that person, as well as on the kitchen table at your house. Always start with a full gas tank too.

If you will be hiking in an area without defined trails that you aren't very familiar with, leave markers along your route with bright yarn (not crumbs) so that you'll be able to find your way back to your car. Track your route with a GPS if you have one. It is incredibly easy to get lost just a short distance from the road, and it's very scary to find yourself suddenly wandering around trying to figure out where your vehicle is. It's also scary to discover that you have waded up or down a stream for quite a distance and you're not sure where you first entered the water. Always leave some definite marker on the bank at your starting point.

It's a good idea to take signalling devices, such as road flares, and your cell phone with you, but small things are also valuable. A whistle (storm whistles are the loudest), or a mirror with which you can signal of alert other anglers on the water such objects. Hopefully, you've already learned the lesson that you stayed on the river too long and are now going to have to hike back to the car in the dark, so you'll always carry a headlamp or small flashlight hooked to your vest.

You should carry a space blanket and Swiss Army knife or Leatherman tool as well. Make sure you know how to read a compass and take one along. Light-anywhere matches should always be in your pack as should a disposable lighter. Zip-lock bags, adhesive tape, any medications that you must take daily, Tylenol, power bars, and sunscreen are also necessities.

It's not a bad idea to have a couple of small pouches of dried food in your vest, either, except, perhaps in bear country. A couple of folded-up black plastic bags don't take up any space at all in your and they can turn out to be useful for a lot of things including morphing into an emergency raincoat.

Most people neglect to take enough water with them, never dreaming that they will get lost and need it, but if you want to avoid having to drink from a stream that may be filled with *giardia*, carry some water-purifying tablets or a water bottle with a built-in filter.

Both men and women often avoid drinking water when they are fishing so that they don't have to take down their waders when they have to "go." That's a big mistake. It's amazing how quickly you can become dehydrated in the outdoors and go into shock. Don't risk it. Drink plenty of water (not coffee or even energy drinks.) If you have taken a first-aid or CPR class, also put the laminated skills cards you get in those classes in the back of your vest along with a map of the area.

Safety on the water starts with wearing a wading belt at all times. It should be snug around your waist so that if you fall in the water your waders won't fill up right away. Wading itself can be very dangerous, and a good rule to follow is "don't wade in water over your calf."

It's also a good idea to follow any instinct that says the water is too deep or too fast. Simply don't go there. Look for other places in the river where you feel safer. Remember, no fish is worth drowning for.

Women need to keep in mind that they often cannot wade where men can wade. That is not just because guys are usually heavier and taller than women, it's also because a man's centre of gravity is in his shoulders and a woman's is in her hips. Just imagine how differently the water is going to push against each type of body.



One of the very best safety devices for people fishing rivers is a wading pole-staff. Man, people think that they are good, competent waders and don't need a staff. Then, when they find themselves in trouble in the water, they'd give anything to have one. The Folstaf is without a doubt the best wading staff on the market. It folds up like a shock-corded tent pole into a small pouch you can wear on your wading belt. Just slide the pouch around behind you when you don't need it, and it's there when you want it.

My staff has saved my hide more than once.

Polarized sunglasses and a hat with a good brim are two essential fishing items that also help us avoid eye damage from sun glare. Other important items are sunscreen, which prevents sun poisoning, and bug repellent, which helps avoid bee stings and other biting insects. If you have even been stung badly by a bee, hornet, or wasp, then you should (with your doctor's advice) also carry an EpiPen injector in your vest. It could save your life

The trout will let you know by Tim Schulz



If no one's swinging, it's probably because you're not throwing strikes.

The great Ted Williams once watched three pitches go by without offering the slightest evidence of a swing. The umpire yelled "ball" each time, and—upset with those calls—the young catcher behind the plate turned and complained.

"You're squeezing us, man!"

“Listen, bud,” the umpire responded, “when your pitcher throws a strike, Mr. Williams will let you know.”

Ted Williams was among the most potent hitters to ever play major league baseball. His hand-eye coordination and physical skills were superb, and he devoted nearly all of his substantial intellect to the game. The comedian Billy Crystal once met Mr. Williams on the field at Yankee Stadium, long after the baseball icon had retired. Crystal told him he had a thirty-year-old home movie of Williams striking out against Crystal’s beloved Yankees in the second game of a doubleheader, to which Williams replied, “Curveball, low and away. The catcher dropped the ball and tagged me, right?” He was right.

Because Williams devoted so much of his mind to the game he loved, the respect umpires gave him was understandable. If he didn’t swing at a pitch, it probably wasn’t a strike. Williams was also a skilled fly fisherman, so he likely gave the same deference to trout that the umpires gave to him. If a trout didn’t take his fly, I suspect he knew it wasn’t a strike.

I thought about that as I stood in the middle of the river, clipped off Clarence Roberts’ Drake, and replaced it with Ernie Borchers’. Clarence Roberts and Ernie Borchers aren’t household names like Ted Williams, unless the household is in Michigan’s Crawford or Roscommon Counties. They might be there, though, because every fly shop around the Au Sable River system sells the patterns they invented, and nearly every angler on those rivers carries at least a few of those flies in their boxes.

Roberts’ fly has a deer-hair body tied with yellow thread to imitate a light-coloured mayfly. Borchers’ has a turkey-quill body tied with black or brown thread to imitate a dark-coloured mayfly. With those two flies in small, medium, and large sizes, you can fool most of the trout most of the time. But not all of the trout all of the time, because—after all—you are still fishing.

The previous evening, I used an odd little emerger pattern and caught every fish I put it over. Tonight, was different. Tonight, the trout ate every fly on the river except for the ones on the end of my line, and this was the tenth time I changed the pattern, the size, or both. My friend Dave was fishing downstream, and his story was the same. When another ring expanded just upstream, I turned and protested to the fish. *You’re squeezing us, man.* Then I cast the Borchers and begged the fish to eat as the little imitation drifted toward its target.

“He took the Borchers! He took the Borchers!”

I don’t usually yell when I hook a fish, but I don’t usually get squeezed like this either.

“Looks like a big fish,” Dave said as the line sped from my reel.

“Big, or foul hooked, or both,” I said.

After a couple of long runs, I realized I’d hooked the fish in its side, so I tightened up to break the line. Just then, though, the trout swam straight toward Dave, and he tried to land it. But the fish rolled when Dave made his move, and the line snapped.

I fished alone the next evening on the same stretch of river. About an hour before sunset, a colossal cloud of mayflies hovered in the air, darkening the sky. Airplane silhouettes of dead bugs soon covered the water’s surface, inspiring the trout to gorge. I had a half dozen trout within casting distance, but I focused on a large one that stayed just out of range. Everyone who fishes

this river enough eventually encounters the same situation. A monster of a fish surfaces like a porpoise as it gorges on mayfly spinners, rising perpendicularly to the current while swimming in a random zig-zag pattern up and down the river. And, like me, the obsessed anglers will ignore several good fish while chasing after their siren's song.

Like a purposeful worker on a production line, I cast my fruitless fly, let it drift over the fish, clipped it off, replaced it with another, and did it all again.

Cast, drift, clip, tie. Cast, drift, clip, tie. Cast ...

The big fish ignored nearly all of my offerings, forcefully rising to devour a natural fly just behind, in front, to the left, or to the right of mine. Finally, when I offered an extended-body pattern smaller than the others I had been using, the big fish rose toward the surface in pursuit of my fly, then gently pushed the counterfeit to the side.

You're squeezing me, man.

Then, like a spurned lover on the rebound, I cast my fly in frustration toward the first new riser I saw, and that fish took.

With darkness descending, I hoped for a brief scuffle so I could get back after the big fish, but the fight lasted longer than the light. With the fish finally corralled in my net and resting in the water, I removed the fly from its jaw and reached for my camera. Then I noticed an odd growth on the fish's side.

Wait a minute, that's a fly. Not just any fly, that's a Borchers' Drake. Not just any Borchers' Drake. That's mine.

"Listen, bud," the fish seemed to say. "I know you think we're being unreasonable out here, but we'll let you know when you throw a strike."

The New Sporting Life Turangi

[Visit website](#)



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If you have never seen a Kiwi in its natural environment (near natural) then I would recommend the Kiwi Night Encounter at Nga Manu, you will need to book as it is limited to 10 people each night.

Newsletter content with built-in links to other documents by Editor

Readers of our newsletter may not realise that when you see a name or wording underlined in an article, as an example [a Harvey leader](#) this is a link to another article where you can find more information. All you need to do is hold down your CTRL key and click on the words and the link will open.

*Newsletter copy to be received by
Second Monday of each month; your
contribution is welcome just send it to:*

malcolm1@xtra.co.nz

Purpose:

To promote the art and sport of Fly Fishing.

To respect the ownership of land adjoining waterways.

To promote the protection of fish and wildlife habitat.

To promote friendship and goodwill between members.

To promote and encourage the exchange of information between members.

Club meetings

You are invited to attend our club meetings that are held on the **Fourth Monday** of each month.

The venue is the **Turf Pavilion Sport Grounds**, Scaife Street, Paraparaumu,

Our **meetings start at 7:30pm** with fellowship followed by speakers of activities.

Club Committee meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month and the meetings are held at the Waikanae Boating Club and start at 7:30pm.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Please remember that the club has two Five Weight 8'6" fly rods that members are welcome to use, just contact Malcolm Francis

Contacts

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