



Sussex Branch Newsletter



MAY/JUNE 2006

FRANK DARRAH PAIRS COMPETITION

Twelve anglers in six boats turned out on a grey Sunday morning at Bewl. There was almost no wind and just the slightest of ripples on the surface. However, within 10 minutes of starting to fish it began to rain!

Fortunately the rain was the only disappointing feature of the day because every angler caught fish. Techniques varied from static buzzers, traditional nymphs and pulled lures. The fish obliged by taking confidently.

By the weigh in at 5pm eight of the twelve anglers had caught their 8 fish limit bags with three boats having sixteen fish. The weigh in results of these boats were:

David Painter (16lb 8oz) & Ray Love (14lb 8oz)

Ian Dunk (17lb) & Chris Croucher (19lb 4oz)

Gary Gwynne (13lb 8oz) & Ian Foster (18lb 9oz)

So this year's trophy goes to **Ian Dunk and Chris Croucher** with Chris's 4lb 6oz being the best fish of the day.

Jim Harris and I also caught 8 fish. Also of interest was the fact that my bag of eight contained three brownies (it must be four years since I last caught a reservoir brown trout). Everyone had a very enjoyable day and it was good to hear newcomers to big water fly fishing enthusing about the power of big water fish. One of my fish pulled all my fly line off the reel against a significant drag from the reel and weighed just over 2lb!

So perhaps this will encourage more of you small water fisherman to have a go. If you feel daunted then please contact me and I will gladly accompany you.

P.S. It stopped raining 15 minutes before weigh in, so even on a superb day's fishing, Sod's Law still holds!

John Plowman.

“Fly Tying for Beginners” & “The Fly-tying Bible” by Peter Gathercole

Each published at £16.99, we can supply either for only **£10.00** per copy. Roy Gurney has a small stock, so contact him now for your copies.

CASTING CLINIC

Some 14 or so members attended the casting clinic which took place in front of Patcham House. In past years we have had the playing field there to ourselves – this year the youth of Brighton had turned out to practice football and play a first class game of cricket! It was great to see the youngsters enjoying themselves with willing adult coaches, but it did mean trekking to the far end of the field to find sufficient space to cast.

Many thanks to our qualified instructors, Albert Horne, Alan Middleton and Michael Brayne and other proficient casters who tried (successfully in most cases, but not mine!) to improve our casting skills. Let us hope that it results in better casting and greater satisfaction on the bank for the future.

Whilst returning to our cars, Alan and I were approached by two very nubile young ladies, wearing very revealing disco outfits, who expressed their surprise as “there aren't any fish here!” We were unable to persuade them to join in, but it does give a thought for future recruitment; maybe a bit of glamour might bring in the youngsters – at least it would be a treat for the old stagers!!!!

Equipment Officer

As you know, Jim White has been our equipment officer for some years now, and despite his request to be relieved last year, has valiantly soldiered on. We are grateful for all his hard work and great contribution to the well-being of the Branch but we now urgently require his replacement for this task.

Volunteers please contact the Chairman, Secretary or Treasurer, who will be pleased to arrange the handover in time for the new “season”.

Heartfelt thanks to Jim for his sterling efforts, with our hopes that he will still organize our raffles!!

GAME FAIR 2006

Broadlands

Saturday, July 29th

Paul Bond still has some vacancies on the coach – departs Withdean Stadium 0615.

Phone Paul on 01273 420410 or Roy on 01273 506184. **Cost £34 including entry.**

Hurry for this great day out!

HEATHFIELD SHOW

Saturday 27th. May dawned grey and dull but at least the rain of the previous week had ceased. I arrived at the show ground at 8a.m. to discover that the main car park had been closed to all but four wheel drive vehicles because of mud! So after two long walks carrying all the gear for the FDG stall I was eventually ensconced between the beekeepers and saddle makers in an open fronted tent facing on to the Country Ways Arena.

Before I set about constructing our display I had a walk around the ground. The main entrance looked as though it had been used for a ploughing competition and in the lower areas of the show ground farm tractors had turned the ground into a thick slurry that closed over your boots and showed no footprints. Fortunately the rest of the day stayed dry but the difficulty with parking and the damp air deterred most of the general public.

However, despite the poor conditions it was a good day for the Guild. Bill Smith arrived mid morning as arranged and the two of us put on a good demonstration of fly tying to an interested audience. One customer wanted 3 grey wolfs tied on size 10 long shank hooks! They looked huge but he was pleased. Unfortunately, a day without the effects of Sod's Law is not possible so at 3pm. when I was due to give a casting demonstration, the wind, which had been negligible all day, picked up and then after 15minutes the public address system failed.

But the best was yet to come for as I walked back from the arena to our stand I was delighted to discover that the FDG stand had been awarded a "Highly Commended" silver certificate for the quality of our display.



I hope this will encourage more members to take part in these tying displays. You don't need to be an expert for the chance to encourage an interest in our activities both at the vice and at the water's edge.

Finally, my thanks to Bill for his help on the day and to Roy for providing the FDG display material.

John Plowman

Michael Martin

It is with great regret we have to advise of the death of one of our members from Uckfield. Our sincere condolences to his wife and family

Match v. East Sussex Salmon & Trout Association

28th May 2006

A beautiful day, everyone ready to go at 9 am, and the fishery as well stocked and gin-clear as usual. It was not long before the first rod bent and catching was regular throughout the day. Indeed, some were finished with four on the bank well before lunch was taken at 1 o'clock, though a few found it a little more difficult.

Nevertheless by weigh-in at 4 o'clock all twenty anglers had taken their full bag – a first for one of our competitions, I think. The sight of the whole of the SATA team giving encouragement and advice to the last two of their team to bag up was something to be seen!

With such a catch rate, it was inevitable that the regular stalkers would hold the balance on weights, and so it was. Chris Croucher led the way with a magnificent brown of 13lb 12oz, which coupled with rainbows of 9lb 10oz, 6lb 2oz and 2lb 12oz (what went wrong?) gave him a total bag of 32lb 4oz, winning the prize of a day's fishing generously donated by Jonathan Glover of Chalk Springs. The heaviest rainbow of the day went to Ian Dunk with 9lb 14oz.

Peter Neave of SATA took a fine brown of 5lb 12oz, but this was not enough to counter our big guns, who took the match with 140lb 6oz against SATA 's 108lb 5oz. What a magnificent day – all were delighted with the fishing and the excellent organisation of Chris Croucher. This will now be a regular fixture and by the return next year we will have a trophy in place.

Many thanks too to Jonathan Glover and Chalk Springs for providing such a great venue – we'll be back!!

2006 Big Fish Competition

Don't forget to get your entries in – some good fish being taken so far, but more to come! Do let us have your details so we can in effect have a "league table" by the end of the season.

Match v. Eastbourne F.F.

Our annual fixture at Arlington, and everyone managed to take at least one fish, with several full bags. The event was superbly organised by Mary Carden and many thanks to her for her efforts. Once again Sussex Branch managed to put it over the "home" side with a total weight of 55lb 9oz against 46lb, though the margin might have been much closer had one of the Eastbourne boats not been disqualified.

Best bag of the day went to Ian Dunk with 7lb 13oz followed by Eastbourne's D Holt with 7lb 2oz. Ian was aided by Bill Smith as top pair with 13lb 14oz, whilst Paul Bond took heaviest fish with 2lb 7oz.

To rub salt in the wound, Ian Dunk, Bill Smith and Ray Bond then took first, second and third prizes in the raffle run by Mary!

A great day with a great bunch of friendly fishermen – look forward to next year!

Match v. Eastbourne (contd)



Ian receives his prize



The victorious Sussex squad



Bill receives the Trophy (again!)

MEMBERSHIP

Some of our members have queried the recent document sent with the "Flydresser" regarding subscription payments by standing order. There is a misconception that this is obligatory – all the main Guild treasurer wants is get subscriptions in on time, and standing orders help enormously for those who are not members of a Branch.

Please rest assured that in Sussex we will continue to collect subscriptions for both Branch and main Guild from you, and reminders will be sent out with the August newsletter. However, it would be appreciated if you paid up on time (subscriptions are due on 1st September) as both parties rely on these to fund their activities and plan ahead.

We are pleased to welcome several new members who have joined over the past few weeks – they will NOT be required to pay up again in September so if you know of any potential new members get them to join NOW.

Match v. Surrey Branch

The annual match was held on 25th June at Avon Springs, and with the temperature in the seventies but with cloud cover, it was a promising outlook. However, as the day wore on, rain set in and we were all thoroughly soaked by the end of the day – fortunately not cold, however. As we made the journey home afterwards, it became clear that the rain was localized, and Sussex had remained dry and bright all day! No doubt retribution for leaving our loved ones and enjoying ourselves!

Chris Croucher once again organized our team and leading us to victory – but what a close match! All of the Sussex team managed to bag up and only one of Surrey failed to do so – had he got his last two the result could well have different. The final weights were Sussex 126lb, Surrey 117lb 9 oz.



Chris receives the trophy from Surrey captain

Tony Harrison took the prize for Sussex best bag of 15lb 15oz, and Bill Smith had best fish of 6lb 3oz (beating Tony by 2oz!!) Best fish of the day was caught by a Surrey member at 7lb 4oz.



Tony Harrison and his prize for best bag

DEMONSTRATORS WANTED

As you are all aware, we attend several shows, etc with our stand to demonstrate the art of fly-tying. More volunteers are needed to spread the load. You do not have to be a prizewinning tier to do this and we have great fun with other exhibitors as well as getting free entry to the shows! Give John Plowman a call on 01825 762975 – Michelham Priory on 15/16th July and the South of England Autumn Show on 30th September and 1st October are next. Why not volunteer?

CHAIRMAN'S CHAT *POLAROID*

At this time of year fishing can be difficult in the bright sunlight and good Polaroid sunglasses are essential both for our own protection and to aid our fishing. Polaroid has the ability to reduce significantly the glare from a water surface.

When light waves meet a mirror, nearly all of them are reflected but when light reaches a transparent material such as glass or water it has three options: it can pass through (transmission), it can be reflected or it can be absorbed. In practice it does all three which is why you can get weak reflections from a window pane as most of the light is transmitted through the glass.

Most of our light comes from the hot atoms on the surface of the sun and the orientation of each light wave is random. Some waves move from side to side, others up and down and any other orientation between these two. (Imagine holding one end of a rope while the person at the other end shakes it vertically or horizontally).

When light reaches a water surface the horizontal waves are reflected while the vertical waves are transmitted. The manufacturers of Polaroid use this phenomenon to our advantage. Before the plastic has set solid it is stretched so that the billions of plastic molecules are arranged in lines rather like the teeth in a comb or the palings in a chestnut fence.

This plastic is now mounted in our sunglasses with the lines vertical. Horizontally vibrating light waves from a wet surface cannot pass through the vertical lines of the Polaroid so glare from the wet surface is much reduced. A more mathematical approach shows that Polaroid works best when you are looking down into the water at an angle of 53 degrees.

Finally you can observe the Polaroid effect by looking down into the water with your glasses on and rocking your head from side to side!!

Tight lines and hope to see you at the many events arranged by your committee - John Plowman

TYING EVENINGS

As you know, our Thursday evening meetings at Patcham Community Centre start again on 28th September.

A number of members come along just to chat and perhaps do a bit of "freelance" tying, and to add interest a fourth "class" has been added so that the more advanced tiers have a choice of what to do. Full programmes will be sent out with the next newsletter, but you may have some ideas to put forward as to how we can make the evenings even more attractive.

If you have any suggestions please contact a Committee member, or e-mail, write or phone the Chairman or Editor and the Committee will consider your ideas.

PARHAM GAME FAIR

For the first time the Branch had a stand at this event (previously fly-tying had been demonstrated as part of the SATA stand) and it proved to be a highly successful day. We met many new and old friends, and gained several new members. Yours truly had a fairly hectic time on the Saturday, as he had to man the stand on his own – see our plea for volunteers elsewhere!! Alan Middleton joined me on the Sunday, although he was soon hijacked by SATA to do some casting instruction!

The weather was kind – even too hot – it is certainly a show not to miss – we look forward to next year.



The Branch stand at Parham

Theresa Coomber

We are sad to announce that Theresa, wife of some 50 years to our good friend and member, Dave, died suddenly from a heart attack following a stroke. Our deepest sympathies go to Dave and his family at this time.

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