



Sussex Branch Newsletter



JANUARY 2012

HAPPY NEW YEAR TO EVERYONE

Change of speaker for 2nd February

Unfortunately Paul Little, who was to be our guest speaker on the 2nd February 2012, has had to withdraw due to a change in personal circumstances. However we welcome back Tony Hern who has very kindly stepped in to take Paul's place. Tony Hern is fishery manager at Albury and professional tyer.

Happy New Year to all. I hope you have recovered from the Christmas excesses and ready to get back to tying your flies and putting them to good use. However don't forget, if you want to purchase your sweatshirts, polo shirts, etc. with the branch logo on, let me have your orders with sizes and colours required.

I was reading the Angling Times and came across the following article.

How this 50lb Carp fell to a fly



Top carp angler Jerry Hammond has lifted the lid on the secret zig rig tactic behind one of his best-ever captures.

At the end of March this year the 45-year-old landed a 51lb common from Kevin Nash's Church Lake in Essex along with mirrors of 35lb 8oz and 31lb 10oz.

At the time it was reported that his fish were taken on pieces of black foam, but he has now revealed that he used a clever fly presentation tied by none other than Angling Times columnist Matt Hayes.

"I'd had some success on my previous visit using zigs with bits of foam," said the Herts-based Nash consultant.

"I landed three mid-twenties, but what really opened my eyes was watching how the carp behaved around zigs. From up a tree I watched a huge carp approach my hookbait and pretty much drag it down its side as it swam past. Over an hour at least 20 times a carp swam directly towards the zig as if it was going to take it, but never did. I think because the bait is suspended in mid-water the fish see it almost straight away and home in on it to check it out. I went home with the whole zig thing playing on my mind and I knew I'd be doing a lot more of it.

"Matt normally comes to my Carthagena Fishery at the end of the season to fish for the chub and while he was there we discussed zig rigs. He is an incredible all-round angler, but I was particularly interested in his fly-fishing. I believed that if instead of using a standard bit of black foam, I could simulate a bug I might be on to something big.

"When Matt returned for his next session he brought a small bag containing some little zig beetles he'd made. I just knew they'd appear natural in the water, because they had little legs and looked identical to the real thing."

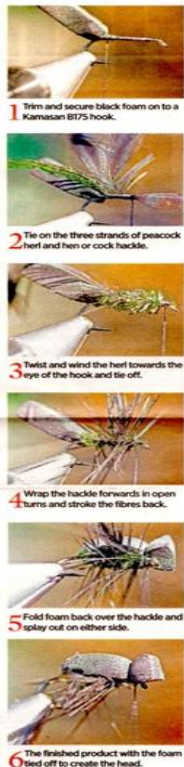
Arriving at Church Lake, Jerry set up in a narrow channel between one of the islands and the bank, fishing one rod at 4ft and the other just below the

surface at 7ft. The beetle zigs proved to be instantly effective and it wasn't long before he found himself holding up a 24lb 8oz mirror for the cameras.

"The rest of the afternoon passed without event and I recast both rods ready for the night ahead.

I was later woken by a very big carp crashing out near the island which I couldn't ignore so I made a cast in the darkness towards the area.

"nothing happened during the night, but I'd just finished my morning coffee when the recast rod burst into a



**Matt Hayes zig
bug**

one-tonner. I picked it up and instantly had to pay out line or

the fish would have snapped my hooklink. It soon weeded me up and Alan Bair and I went out in the boat to try and get it free. Before we'd even got over the fish it came out of the weed and we saw a huge common which then charged off into a second weedbed. At this point Alan told me it was the lake's big common which had topped 50lb and hadn't been out for a year. All I could think about now was my 10lb hooklink and tiny hook, but after a bit of plodding around Alan scooped her up in the net.

"on the bank, she looked even bigger and there in the corner of her mouth was the bug. The needle on the scales flew past 40lb and settled on 51lb – a new pb.

"since then I've had some great sessions on beetle zigs, including six fish from Lenwade Charity Lake in Norfolk. Unfortunately I've run out of the bugs now, so I'll have to pester Matt to tie me up some more for next year."

James Furness (Angling Times, December 13, 2011)

Paul Davis receiving the Tighyni-Roose Trophy



The Righyni-Roose Trophy is awarded by the Grayling Society, alternating years with the written word and fly-tying. This year it was fly-tying and Paul won it for the second time, having taken it in 2009.

Water – A personal view



Writing about water on a very wet news years day may seem strange but it is subject we should show concern. As anglers I am sure we are all aware that we did not receive much rain during last summer and autumn. Autumn

rainfall was almost nil and we saw little recovery of reservoirs, lakes and river flows or rather continuing deterioration. Many lakes stopped flowing followed by fish kills due to temperature and water quality failing very difficult for the anglers to find a solution to. The source of the river Itchen in Hampshire close to where my society has a length of chalk stream has not flowed for some eighteen months. Sea Trout returning from the sea to travel up to the headwaters of the Ouse to spawn have been caught by rod anglers on the coast close to Newhaven while they wait for freshwater to come down to the sea to signal their safe journey upstream. Much of our drinking water in the south comes from the chalk aquifers and these are now at their lowest levels possibly since 1976.

I know many of you will be thinking about the additional house building in the south that will require more water but do bear in mind future generations need somewhere to live but in a sustainable way. Issues that do need addressing are water usage currently the per capita per head per day is 160 litres and could be reduced with education and indicatives in water reduction. More could be done to save grey water that is water from drainage systems used for flushing toilets, water gardens etc. Leakage is being addressed but is it enough?

Our reservoirs' have been low come the end of November with Ardingly reservoir only 12% full and Bewl 40% full As a consequence South East Water company applied successfully for a drought order to take more water from the river Ouse. The reservoir provides flow in the river Ouse year round to allow downstream abstraction to provide water supply with a regulated minimum flow but would soon be very empty if it is not allowed to be filled. What this means is the water company can take more water from the river with a much less minimum flow and leave the reservoir to fill to give supply next summer. In reality as we do get more rain the impact of abstraction is less than indicated but nevertheless there will be some.

The government last autumn did publish a white paper "Water for Life" but it I felt perhaps not strong enough to really cover the long term issues. The EU Water

Framework Directive will also cover some of the issues by 2015 and 2023. Where it is perhaps not going far enough is by way of reducing abstraction licences that are currently destroying our natural environment.

Paul Knight CEO of the Salmon & Trout Association commented:

"Everyone involved with the health of our aquatic environment knows that the framework of water management has to be sustainable and planned for the long-term. Our fear is that this important document falls short of the Government's own commitments to deliver good ecological status, or at least potential, in all our rivers under the Water Framework Directive."

I will update you on water issues in further newsletters.

Phillip Ellis is Water Resources Officer in West Sussex as well as a council member and trustee of the Salmon & Trout Association.

REEL MAKER Richard Carter

It was back in 1991 that I first had the idea of using my engineering skills to make centrepin reels. My two sons who were then young teenagers had seen John Wilson using a centrepin on his "Go Fishing" television programme and asked if I could buy them one each.

A visit to quite a few tackle shops resulted in the purchase of a very poor quality reel that seemed to be the only model on offer. Soon after this a friend showed me a Match Aerial that he had bought back in the 1960's. At last, a piece of quality engineering I measured all the component parts, drew them up and got hold of the necessary materials to make a copy

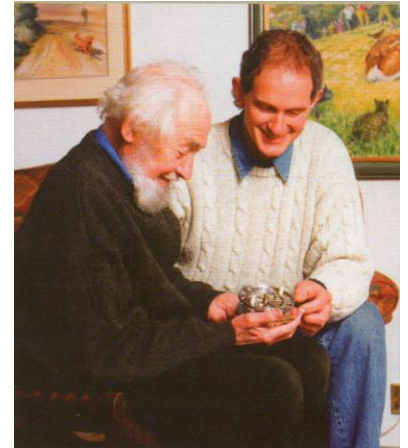
Because I had to make all the parts, including jigs and fixtures in my spare time, it took three months before the reel was finally finished. I was really pleased with the result. Then I started to think seriously about making a few more, after all, I had the drawings, jigs and fixtures so why not? But I couldn't make them in spare time at work as that would take too long. So I bought a second hand lathe, milling machine, tooling etc and set up a small workshop in my garage at home.

I called my little enterprise "Traditional Angling". I made a total of six copies of the Match Aerial and they all sold as soon as I had finished them (I wonder where they are now ?). I then decided I didn't want to just copy reels already in existence but design an "Aerial style" reel of my own.

So the Avon Classic was born. I thought I would advertise it in one of the national fishing magazines. When I called the magazine to enquire about advertising rates, they asked if I would like to send one for them to review as there was a growing interest in centrepins. I was a little apprehensive but sent it to them anyway. The review, to my delight was extremely favourable: in fact it

got the maximum 5 stars. Over the next few weeks I received a lot of phone calls from anglers and collectors, wanting an Avon Classic made for them. Soon I was in my garage working past midnight on many occasions to get them made. It was decision time, either stop making them or give up my job and go full time reel making. With the backing of my wife Sue, I decided the latter. I rented a small workshop and bought some more machinery.

Over the next two years, Sue and I attended many exhibitions and angling fairs promoting our reels. These shows were extremely hard work, but very rewarding, meeting like minded anglers.



Me presenting Bernard with the first "Venables" Aerial

It was about this time "A Passion for Angling" came to our screens, which started a tremendous interest in the "traditional style of angling", soon we were meeting split-cane rod manufacturers, float makers, wicker basket makers, angling artists etc. There was a real "buzz" in the air. We became friends and went fishing a number of



Venables Aerial 4" & 4.5"

times with Chris Yates, who honoured me with the title of "Official Reel Maker" to the infamous "Golden Scale Club".



Aerial Perfection black with ivory handles

My proudest moment, though, must have been when I met Bernard Venables. Like so many of us, I was fascinated by the "Mr Crabtree" books when I was very young. I suppose he must have been mainly responsible for my interest in fishing. To meet Bernard after all these years was a real privilege and to be asked to make a centrepin with his name on it, well what can I say?



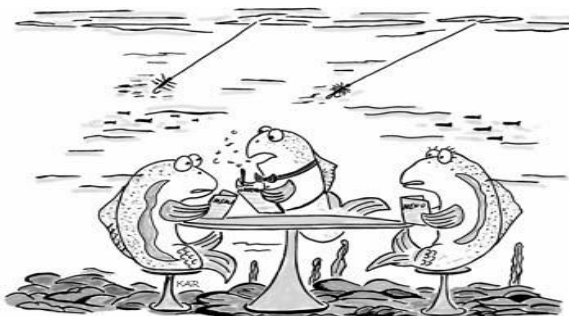
Roach Aerial 6 & 12 spoke

As the years went by, my first model the "Avon Classic" was joined by the Aerial Gem, the Aerial perfection", the "Roach Aerial", the "Merlin", the "Bernard Venables Aerial" the "Chris Yates Dragonfly" and "Damsel fly", the Millennium Aerial" and the "firefly" reel. The majority of my reels were sold in this country, but quite a few were sold, not only to customers in Europe, but Australia, Canada, South Africa, New Zealand and the USA.

In 1999 I decided to cease trading, partly because I thought the trend for the traditional style of angling was slowing down, partly because I had lost some of my enthusiasm, and partly because I was offered a job that I really couldn't refuse. I still make centrepin reels now and again, but only when I feel like it. But I must admit, just lately, my head has been buzzing with new ideas, for instance I wonder if I made a reel with.....?



Aerial Match 4" & Aerial Perfection 12 spoke



"I recommend the flies. Try them once and you could get hooked!"

Chairman's Chat

It is my experience that anglers who have not visited a particular venue may have difficulty in finding it. Fishery owners frequently make no attempt to direct anglers to a particular site. I have had difficulty in the past. I know of one fishery where the first direction is placed half way down the drive to the site. In another case, I asked for the address of the site and was given detailed instruction turn by turn for a 60 mile drive - even if I could remember the directions I was not going to make the effort. The address or the post code would have been fine.

The help members navigate, with Committee approval, I have obtained three site locators for the FDG members - as above. The proposal is that the person who arranges the fishing will place these at suitable positions (eg each side of the road etc) and remove them when all the members have found the site. The locators are to be kept in the store room.

Tony W

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