



Sussex Branch Newsletter



Dec 2013

This Year at the Trout Master Final

by Keith Verrall

This was my first year at the Trout Masters at Grafham Water and, to be honest, I only went after my family said I should. To be fair I suppose I was a little star stuck, never having fished before in such a large or well known competition.

I had advice and encouragement from Peter Winder, and with a hotel booked I left on Sunday 1st to get my first look at the water; after 4 hours driving I thought my sat nav had sent me to the English Channel. Grafham is vast water at 1500 acres, only to be told by local that Rutland up the road is twice this size! I then spent the next two hours having a good look round for a good spot for the bank fishing part of the competition, having checked the wind direction for the last week, finding what I hoped to be a good and quiet spot for the Monday.

On the Monday morning I was up at six, on the road by seven, and was soon at the water. The wind was quite strong with some white horses showing at times. I booked in, to be told I was in a boat in the morning. I was a little disappointed as that means the fish might be further out in the afternoon after being thrashed in the morning.

I was partnered up with gentleman from Wales called Fred, who was 74 years old and had never been in a boat before. So this could be hard as I had not been in a boat for two or three years myself, but the engine was bog standard and we set off like a le Mans start at 9.30. We both watched where the others were going and then decided to anchor in a bay on the north shore. After 30 minutes with not a touch for either of us we went for drift down by G buoy, where there were a few boats and bank fisherman. I opted to fish an intermediate line to combat the wave action that was about 12 to 18 inches by now, and then proceeded to go through my entire box of flies. When Fred said he had had some interest on black and green, I changed to a bushy Viva, and with about 40 minutes to go I had my one and only interest; then do I bully the fish to the net or play it? In the end the fish decided it wanted to play; those Grafham trout really fight well but I got it into the boat and soon after we motored back with no other sign of a fish. Then the weigh in - (why do they have to shout?) - one fish - 2lb 6oz.

The afternoon bank session started at 2; it was still windy, the sun was out and it was hot, I would guess about 25 degrees. I drove around to the north bank after a talk with Russ from the *Trout Fishing* magazine so my planning from Sunday went out the window; however the wind did favour me, being left handed. I was looking for deeper water as it was bright and I tried some spots, but having no takes, I kept mobile until I found some boats drifting close to shore and catching some fish. I stuck with the intermediate line as it was bright and fished some nymphs - no takers.

I look for any signs of insect life or fry movement but no signs to help at all, so back to the box and start going through all the colours and patterns again. A few casts and then move up and down the bank to try not to make the water dead in front of me. With an hour left and my arm feeling like it wants to fall off, I get a take on black and green again, and off it went it to the distance having taken the fly on the drop. My rod has bent double and all my line is out and I am on the backing - this fish must be 5lb!

The fish went on several runs but I was slowly getting line back and then I saw the fish, my fly neatly in the corner of its mouth. Now my heart is really racing knowing that with so few fish showing I may not get another, but one fish from both bank and boat I could be in the top 30.

At 5pm it was time to weigh in; I put my tackle away, climbed the bank and realized I had covered at least a mile of shore line!

Now I have got to power walk in the heat, with much more tackle than I needed, back to the car and get my tackle washed, card signed and then weigh the fish, all in 45 minutes. At the weigh in my fish went just over 3lb not even close to my first thoughts; at least now I can relax and enjoy the food on offer and talk to some other anglers.

At the presentation I found out that I came 24th - not bad on a first trip to Grafham.

In conclusion - would I go again? Yes in a heartbeat; it is a great day, well run and everyone was friendly and willing to talk.

Now if you don't mind, where's my tackle - I need to qualify ready for next year.

KV

AGM – JONATHAN GLOVER TROPHY

Dear all members as our AGM looms just after New Year celebrations, it's that time of year for you to nominate the one person you believe has done the most in the last twelve months for the Branch and its members. As the last three recipients cannot be voted again and for your guidance they were John Burt, John Plowman and Tony Harrison. Would you please either email your Secretary at paul.bond13@btinternet.com or write on a postcard (or bit of paper and fold) and let me have it on one of the Thursday's in the run up to Christmas.

CHRIS SANDFORD

who attended our iFISH Fly Fair has recently uploaded some fly tying instruction that you may find interesting and informative. You can find his video's on <http://www.chrissandford.com/chris-sandfords-stuff#Episode3> and <http://www.chrissandford.com/chris-sandfords-stuff#Episode4>

Chairman's Chat

To my great relief, iFish 2013 has come and gone and turned out to be a great success, I must confess it did worry me. Almost all the exhibitors have booked stands for next year. About 355 anglers showed up and we have received many compliments on the arrangements. The net profit was just over £1000 and subsequently three new potential members have shown up at a tying evening. We are now in the process of collating all the comments and advice from all those who exhibited or attended, in order to make improvements / modifications for next year. The good news is that we have more time to plan next year's event. Your comments are invited to me or any of the Committee members. My thanks to all those who were involved with the Fly Fair.

We are planning to produce a page of adverts in the Newsletter from working Members showing the services which they have available, if appropriate. If you are still working, please let me know if you are interested in this service.

Tony W



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Published by the Sussex Branch of the Flydressers' Guild

Chairman: Tony Woolnough 01273 483833

Secretary: Paul Bond 01273 420410

Treasurer: Roy Gurney 01273 506184

Editor: Andy Steer, Flat 6 Southdown House, 2
Silverdale Road, Eastbourne,
East Sussex BN20 7AL
Phone: 01323 439688
E-mail: a.v.steer@talk21.com

Visit our web site

Sussexflydressers.org.uk