

fly fishing club. cambridge.

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Affiliated to the Federation of Midlands Fly Fishers (Anglia), the Anglers' Conservation Association and the Salmon and Trout Association.

Website: www.invictaffc.org.uk



LATE BREAKING NEWS - SPECIAL BULLETIN

THE ENGLISH YOUTH TEAM IN CRISIS

You will all be well aware that the Junior Invicta members are notching up some really impressive performances on the competition scene.

Bobbie Worker, mother of Adam and Ryan, has recently taken over as the Secretary of the English Youth Flyfishing Association and in adjusting to this new area of responsibility, has not been helped by the sudden resignation of both Coach and Manager.

Clearly this presents problems and I have doubt that you will all wish to support Bobbie as much as possible until more normal circumstances apply in the EYFA. Currently Bobbie is endeavouring to organise training days and National Qualifying days for the Association. Quite a daunting task going into the deep end like this. There are practical ways in which Invicta members can assist as Bobbie writes -

"I know that many of your members do as much as they can to support the youth and I was wondering whether any of them would be willing to come and be boatmen for us on either the National qualifier Day (12th July 2009) or Welcome day which is 4th April 2009 both at Grafham. We will also have some other training days but dates for these have yet to be confirmed.

I would be really grateful if you could pass on my request to Invicta members, (sorry I didn't get my request in before your newsletter) and if anyone can assist in any way I would be grateful if they could contact me direct on 01234 825112 or 07962391278 or by email to bobbiejamie@hotmail.com

I will also be at the dinner on Saturday night if anyone wants to ask any questions."

So, I would urge you all to look at your diaries and offer a little time to act as boatmen for the youngsters as they appear to have more problems than enough at present and I am sure that you will all wish to do your bit to help.

As Bobbie mentioned, she intends to be at the Invicta Dinner and Trophy presentations at the Lion Hotel, Buckden on this coming Saturday evening, February 21st. I am sure that she will appreciate some words of encouragement from you for the plight in which she finds herself... and even more appreciate any offers of practical assistance that she may receive!!

INVICTA PROGRAMME

The Invicta summer fishing programme detailing the main club fishing events for 2009 is now available and is attached hereto.

This does not include AFMC and other non-club events but the calendar in the newsletter will have information on these as and when details are received.

ARE SEVERN TRENT WATER AUTHORITY TOTALLY LOSING IT???

IS DRAYCOTE UNDER THREAT????

Maybe we are spoilt in largely being influenced by Anglian Water who take their responsibilities very seriously with regard to recreational aspects of their facilities and offer encouragement in a wide variety of healthy, outdoor activities. Until today I had assumed that the Severn Trent Water Authority were similar paragons of virtue but you can imagine how disconcerted I was to receive the following e-mail from Dave Coates, Secretary to the Foremark Fly Fishers' Association.

“We write to you, most urgently, as fellow anglers. We are about to suffer the ignominy, in about three weeks time, of having most of our fishing taken away from us, on totally spurious grounds, by Severn Trent Water Authority, one of the handful of major water companies in the country today.

We are seeking support, in part, simply because we are all anglers, but also because what is happening to us today – unless we can make STWA change its attitude – may be happening to others tomorrow. Maybe indeed to your members. We hope you might read what follows and thereafter feel it worthwhile to write to STWA, to support our cause, and to disparage their uncaring and high handed management style. (STWA contact details at the end of this letter).

At Foremark, Derbyshire, fly fishermen (and women) have been able to fish, for most of the last 30 seasons, on the west bank, the east bank and the dam wall on the north side of our 230 acre reservoir. This we negotiated with STWA, through open discussion, and it has worked admirably since about 1980. When therefore STWA announced their wholesale changes in early 2009 we politely asked for a discussion with them, a positive one, including one or two possible concessions from our side. But: our two representatives were treated dismissively, our proposals were not listened to, and they felt nothing but scorn and open hostility from the representatives of an organisation that says it has the power to ignore whomsoever it chooses to ignore. The parting message from STWA was that if we continued to protest publicly ALL FISHING AT FOREMARK COULD SUDDENLY DISAPPEAR. This we felt was the last straw; a disgraceful instance of might is right used on anglers who have done no wrong.

The public and the fishers have co-existed happily, without a single instance of the public being hurt by an angler. We are aware of 2 – I repeat 2 – minor fishing accidents (broken wrist, sprained ankle) on the dam wall, with no-one demanding to sue anybody else across the period 1979-2009. Foremark in this period became a superb fishery, well run, host to some big matches, but mostly a place for a few hundred anglers, aged from 10 to 90, to go catch a trout or two. Plenty of bank, little crowding, how fishing was meant to be. This scene ends abruptly, March 2009.

2009: Enter the bully boys of the 21st century Severn Trent Water Authority

No more fishing from the east bank

With zero consultation, none at local level, none at regional level, none at national level, STWA announce that the amount of fishing will be reduced dramatically: no fishing on the east bank, no fishing from the dam wall, no fishing from parts of the west bank. Why? Surprise, surprise, there are overpowering Health and Safety grounds (remember those 2 accidents in almost 30 years?) that have just been noticed by some zealous and eagle-eyed Health and Safety fiend at STWA. He sees it as his bounden duty to protect the non-angling public from those nasty fishermen on the east bank – never mind the care fishermen (and public) take when the latter are watched by the former, and ask what they're fishing for, what they've caught etc etc. Never mind that we know of numerous people whose interest was aroused to the extent that they joined Foremark Fly Fishers and took up fishing. In 30 years of co-existence angler and bankside strollers got along very nicely: now east bank anglers are a prohibited species.

No more fishing from the Dam Wall
Similarly STWA has noticed how dangerous it is - for the safety of the dam wall !!!- if anglers walk upon the rocks: millions of tons of them. Evidently the weight of say 8 or 9 heavy footed anglers may interfere 'with the integrity of the dam wall structure'. This is STWA-speak to say that the dam, that took 3 years to build, may be 'seriously damaged' by we anglers in our wellies. (Who'd want to live in Milton, 100 feet below the reservoir,

if the weight of a few flyfishers on the dam could lead to their homes being washed away as the wall disintegrates, releasing millions of gallons of water on them.) Obviously this is not a serious possibility at all. The truth is of course that the 'integrity' of the dam wall is nothing to do with the decision – the aim is simply to get rid of fishing from the modest 40% of the wall we have always been allowed to fish. Why? The answer we were given, repeatedly, makes no sense – it is that 'Foremark Reservoir is for the supply of wholesome drinking water; it is not a fishery', and, as mentioned above, if we anglers 'continue to create bad publicity for STWA we may well find ourselves with no fishing allowed at all'. We take this nonsensical non-reason for denying us access to the dam wall as nothing more than hiding behind Health and Safety in order to hit the fly fisherman, for reasons that no-one explains. The unlamented Joseph Stalin enjoyed using the tactics being used by STWA to crack our handful of Foremark anglers – not what one expects!!!

The implications if STWA succeed?

1. They openly state they will do the same on all STWA controlled waters, from the big, such as Draycote or Carsington, down to the quite small (presumably including coarse fisheries), as fishing leases reach renewal time. We are questioning the dubious legality of this.

2. If they succeed then other water companies might be induced to make life easier for themselves by doing the same things. (However, authorities such as Anglian and Wessex are in fact very progressive in terms of encouraging and consulting with anglers – so why are STWA suddenly so anti? Might STWA persuade other water companies to join their H&S crusade?)

3. There are waters all over England and the UK where casual bankside strollers mix with fishermen – this may be stopped if the STWA model succeeds. Various tourist boards offer upbeat film boasting of what STWA deems a Health and Safety risk!

4. There are dam walls fished at just about every reservoir, for trout or coarse fish. If STWA get away with their loony excuse for stopping it at Foremark so can others. Foremark could be useable as a template for waters nationwide.

5. There are 5 million+ anglers - why should the amount of water available be reduced on spurious grounds by a water company? This is the nanny state gone mad.

Who else is fighting for Foremark Fly Fishers?

The Angling Trust is doing a wonderful job in supporting and advising us.

A number of MPs have agreed to help; even the Health & Safety Executive is sounding useful.

The media have been targeted, and we are doing well. The Daily Telegraph and Radio 5 live featured our plight last week, and we are striving to get onto more radio and TV, and to involve angling celebrities.

We intend shortly to send a minibus load of members to the offices of STWA to present very publicly, banners and all, our views to the top brass in Birmingham – the very bully brigade boys who want to make us safe by ruining our quiet enjoyment of fishing. The Angling Trust will be there

So – what can your club do? Please Email STWA: Customer.Relations @severntrent.co.uk for attention of Martin Kane, Director of Customer Relations, and support our fight. (And a copy for us, to sender of this letter, would be appreciated).

A letter now – this February, and the sooner the better – may help get Foremark Fly Fishers back to where they have been able to fish these last three decades. We need your support!

WITH THANKS FROM ALL THE MEMBERSHIP OF FOREMARK FLY FISHERS, and on behalf of all who fish Foremark”

Well, ok this is only one side of a story... but what a story! Clearly Invicta needs to take serious account of this and no doubt your Committee will take a hard look at this information and the possible consequences at a very early date. Clearly the newly formed Angling Trust will be looking closely at this situation which appears to ignore government encouragement to become involved with sports. If you have views on this subject feel free to fill my inbox. If you do not have views...WHY NOT?

NEW RODS ANNOUNCED

I have received some news from Allan Sefton of some new developments in the Lennox Road Range. Nice to get something for inclusion in this bulletin which is not bad news!

Allan advises, "Lennox Rods have just launched some new rods for 2009. As I said at the recent Invicta meeting all members qualify for 'instant' membership of the Lennox Club which entitles them to 10% discount on any rod. All they have to do is to use the Discount Code 'STA' when prompted by the website shop. The new rods for 2009 are being heavily discounted (15%) for three months and using the Discount Code will add another 5% to this!

Invicta members may be especially interested in our new "Loch Style" 10'6" #7wt. which comes with an extra second section which converts it to a #5wt. for those days/evenings when the wind dies and delicacy is essential. Two premium rods for the price of one!

The "First and Last" 9'0" #7wt is also interesting!"

In a recent press release the rods were described - In response to client demand, Lennox Rods, have added three 6-section Stowaway double handed salmon fly rods (lengths 13', 14' and 15 feet) and two innovative trout rods to its range of hand-built, bespoke premium fly rods. "It has taken us a year of hard work to design and test these new rods because they are all unique," explains Allan Sefton, a partner in Lennox Rods.

"Some of our clients who fish for salmon asked us if we could make a 6-section, double-handed salmon fly rod that could be packed securely in a suitcase. Our challenge was to create such a rod without compromising the world famous Lennox action and casting power. We have succeeded!"

"Other Lennox clients enjoy loch style trout and sea trout fishing. They encouraged the company to design a rod for them. I believe we have exceeded their expectations," says Allan. "We wanted to address an inevitable dilemma. Loch style fishers cast continuously for long periods in both strong winds and in gentle conditions. We have created the "Loch Style", an incredibly light 10'6" rod that can be used all day. Uniquely, we also experimented with providing two second sections. One allows the rod to handle a #7wt. line in a decent blow but the other converts the rod to a #5wt. for calm days and evenings when delicacy is essential. In short, two top class rods for the price of one!"

"The third new rod is specially designed to make casting easier. Many Lennox clients wanted such a top quality rod, perhaps as personalized gift for a newly enthusiastic partner, child or business contact. Typically, it was someone whose casting ability was still improving and was keenly trying all aspects of fly fishing. They required a rod with 'feel' that really encouraged their developing skills. And, it had to perform across the widest range of fly fishing challenges."

"Alan Brown, our famous founder, who designed most Lennox rods, believed his success was due to creating each rod for a specific fly fishing task. He could see a place and its challenge in his mind's eye as he worked. We have applied the same philosophy... and created a rod specifically designed to make fly casting easier. Believe me, this is **not** the purpose of most premium rods! "In trials, this unique, 4-section 9'0" #7wt. rod proved an immense aid to the developing casters who tested it. It also proved its wide-ranging ability dry fly fishing for river trout, casting for bonefish on the windy, coral flats of Los Roques and by landing grilse from a flooded River Findhorn."

"There was also a bonus! Many fly fishers are getting, let's say, a little grey haired. Their 'muscle-memory' may not be what it was. Our more mature testers just loved a rod designed to enhance their prowess rather than one that demanded extra effort! Unsurprisingly, the "First and Last" rod is the name Lennox Rods have given it."

"There is no other world class rod like this one!"

For those who would like more info go to www.lennoxrods.com and if you wish to try one under fishing conditions, Allan will be holding evening casting clinics at Elinor trout fishery in conjunction with an evening ticket arrangement later in the year with Lennox rods on trial. For full details, dates, times prices etc. contact Allan on allan.sefton@ntlworld.com.

