

NO 5lb RAINBOWS HERE!

From our own correspondent...Peter Oldham

A Report from the Northern Regional Office of Invicta.

The River Dane originates on the western slopes of the Pennines, springing from numerous underground waterways and aquifers together with run-off from the hills, making it an invertebrate-friendly alkaline environment for numerous species. By the time it reaches the lower lands and approaches the Cheshire plain it has an added piquancy of acid moorland water before reaching the rich alluviums of dairy country. As it nears Congleton, where your correspondent has recently spent some time, it is meandering through wooded gorges and flat pastures, making a river with much character. Water levels can rise and fall fairly quickly, as the by now spate river is subject to rainfall many miles away in the Pennines as well as local weather.



Looking downstream, the water ripples into a nice trout holding pool, with bugs and nymphs being swept into the bank, where they are joined by various terrestrials falling from the trees. The trout are not large: a 1lb-er is a reasonable fish, and a 2lb-er a good one but they are wild and do not come to the net easily.

With a rich and varied diet, including olives and the usual river flies (at the time of writing, early May, Mayflies are just starting to show themselves although the trout appear not to have noticed them yet) the fish are strong and healthy. A mainly wild and indigenous breed, augmented with a sprinkling of stocked browns, which seems to liven up the inhabitants.



Where the river runs through a wooded section, a fallen tree and the bank-side trees create what some would call “structure”, with a channel creating a conveyor belt of food close to underwater safety. Some of the better fish can be found in such areas.

Because of the trees, a 7ft rod is quite long enough, even then there will be many flies left dangling in the trees. When the angler’s patience – or fly box – is exhausted, the riffles and glides through the pastures, with less bankside vegetation, can make life a little easier.

With over 3 miles owned and controlled by Eaton Flyfishers, formed over 100 years ago, who have purchased river and access rights from landowners and spent much work on general river management, parking area and stiles, the river is a little delight. This goes to show the broad spectrum of the joys of angling, from the vast expanses and powerful trout of Grafham and Rutland to the much smaller but equally feisty fish of the smaller spate rivers.