

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.

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WELL, WE HAVE SEEN THE BEST OF IT FOR THIS YEAR - NOW FOR SEASON 2009 !



UK grayling fly fishing though should now be in full swing. Here is an uplifting image of the River San in Poland which boasts superlative but sometimes testing fishing for grayling . Photo taken in September during one of Invicta's visits. Isn't that a truly beautiful scene? A report of these contrasting visits is carried in this issue

INVICTA MEMBERS SUCCESS IN THE AW 4 MAN 'LOCHSTYLE' EVENT



Some members have winning ways. Here Chris McLeod and John Mees are pictured with broad smiles after winning Rutland Water's 4 man loch style match. Other team members were Stuart Hume (with shield) and Jim Watts (holding trophy.) Also pictured are AW's Fisheries manager Jon Marshall and Rutland Water's senior warden John Seaton, holding mascot 'Bracken.'

Congratulations to all concerned on this, obviously much appreciated victory on "Loch Rutland??!"

Photo courtesy of Anglian Water

invicta calendar of forthcoming events 2008/9

Oct, 16th	STEVE SKUCE (GRAYLING SOCIETY). Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Oct. 19th	HINCKLEY SHIELD Bank fishing competition Rutland Water	9 am to 5.30 pm
Oct, 30th	INTERNATIONAL FLY TYING. Stanislav Mankov demonstrates at Harston VH	7.45 for 8 pm
Nov. 13th	The ever popular MICK BEWICK. Mick makes an overdue return to Harston.	7.45 for 8 pm
Nov 15th	INVICTA 'FUR & FEATHER' MEETING Elinor Trout Fishery	9 am - 4 pm
Nov. 27th	BRIAN MARSHALL. Keeping Salmon and Trout in our rivers. Harston V.Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Dec. 11th	INVICTA DESTINATION FISHING & XMAS SOCIAL. Harston Village Hall.	7.45 for 8 pm
Jan. 8th	VICE NIGHT Fly tying at Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Jan. 22nd	Return of a favourite CHARLES JARDINE Harston Village Hal	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb. 5th	ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & Tackle auction Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb. 19th	JOHN WADHAM INSTRUCTS AND ENTERTAINS Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Feb.21st	INVICTA ANNUAL DINNER & TROPHY PRESENTATION Lion Hotel, Buckden.	7.30 for 8 pm
Mar. 5th	FLY FISHING FORUM. Come & get your questions answered. Harston V.Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Mar. 19th	INTER-CLUB QUIZ NIGHT. Can AW wardens win again?? Harston Village Hall	7.45 for 8 pm
Apr. 26th	GWFFA/EDFF INTER-CLUB COMPETITION Grafham Water	tba

FLOATING SINKANTS AND SINKING FLOATANTS.... WHERE AM I GOING WRONG ?

Technology reaches ever deeper into our lives and also into our fishing. Computers develop optimum rod and line profiles and even our fly tying materials emanate more and more from the laboratory and less from shooting parties and food production.

So, why is it that sinking leaders float and floating flies sink? The floating part has largely been solved for leaders and flies. I know that 'Gink' is very popular but that and other 'thick' floating gunges such as CDC Oil do stick fibres together, but they work. My own preference is to use 'Watershed' in advance of fishing on flies and, if then subsequently waterlogged, squeeze excess moisture out with a tissue and then give it a quick shake in Shimazaki 'Dry Shake.' If you have a problem in this area try them, they are little short of miraculous and can be used on flies incorporating CDC.

However, I am still plagued with leaders floating especially on still water, even fluorocarbon. This is due to a failure to penetrate the surface film and

warning shock waves broadcast with the slightest movement in calm conditions. The knots on tapering or for droppers are particular problems. The common remedy is Fullers earth and detergent paste such as in 'Ledasink' and similar products. They are effective to a limited extent but parts of the leader still want to float and it is only effective, where it does work, for very short periods. I did try 'Xink' but should have saved my money... anyone want a virtually full bottle? I have tried most of the advertised sinkants over the years and have been less than impressed with any of them but..... inadviesly I recently bought out of interest, a pot of 'Loon Snake River Mud' to see if it works any better than the others. It doesn't! Can anybody advise me a fail safe method of getting the leader through the surface film whilst keeping a dry fly above it? Conversely on fast river currents most of my leader sinks and is supported by my dry fly with the submerged loop bring the fly and fly line tip closer together! I just can't win! Why is it so difficult?



INVICTA EVENING LEAGUE IS A JUNIOR SUCCESS STORY - David Moore

In my 'Anglian Water days' I was always keen to encourage angling clubs to organise and manage club and friendly competitions on the company's reservoirs. These events demonstrated community involvement for the Company and regular profile in the local media with added value to the season ticket too.



Left to right Kieran Bonas, Ryan and Adam Worker ready for another Tuesday evening at Grafham Water

Although a keen game and coarse angler I haven't fished in many competitions until having a bit more time post-retirement. How enjoyable it has been to take part in regular Tuesday evenings with Invicta this year. They are run so efficiently with good spirit and its not surprising that more than 50 anglers took part during the ten week series.

Typically I was one of 24 members fishing each evening and it was great fun fishing with a different partner each week and swapping stories of success and failure in the Wheatsheaf afterwards.

Amazingly the age-gap between my oldest and youngest boat partner was 72 years and I learnt something from every one of them.

In particular the Invicta club has done a fantastic job in encouraging young anglers through these

evenings resulting in two qualifying for the England team in the 2009 International to be fished in Wales (Adam Worker 12 and Kieran Bonas 13) and a third (Ryan Worker 14) who has been a previous international. Two other young Invicta members, Andrew Johnson 15 and Oscar Boatfield 14 have also been successful Tuesday league regulars at Grafham Water over the past couple of years. Brothers Ryan and

Adam live in Oakley and Ryan explained 'it was Ray Jenkins the Anglian Water warden who first suggested we should try the Tuesday league and our Grandfather Mick Whittle who has fished the boat league in the past. We really enjoy fishing with different people each week.'

Ryan can certainly teach a few of us a thing or two after qualifying for the England Youth team in 2007 & 2008 and taking 5th place in this year's Invicta evening league.

Thank you Invicta and the Grafham staff for running these evenings I'll certainly be fishing them again next year.

THE INVICTA TUESDAY EVENING LEAGUE..... THE SENIOR STORY.

This very popular and sociable fishing event was again well supported in 2008 as witness the AW fishing report published shortly after the conclusion of this years series.

"Last Tuesday was the final night of the popular Tuesday Night Boat League. Nerves were tense and with every fish counting the battle was on. Mark Searle of Cambridge, in the lead with 39 points, recorded a rare blank. So it was up to the rest of the field to catch him up. Chris McLeod caught a fish early on and that brought him level with John Mees in second place. With his last cast of the evening Chris hooked and landed a fish to finish on 33 points and to secure second place overall behind Mark Searle on 39 points.

1 st	Mark Searle	39 points
2 nd	Chris McLeod	33 points
3 rd	John Mees	32 points
4 th	Mick Facey	27 points
5 th	Ryan Worker	25 points
6 th	Lawson Wight	24 points

Invicta has had another very successful year running this evening league with 68 different individuals taking part over the past 14 weeks. Especially well done to the five regular juniors Ryan Worker (5th), Kieran Bonas (12th), Andrew Johnson (17th), Adam Worker (19th) and Oscar Boatfield (30th). All of these youngsters have given great support to this league and finished in the top half of the table. Ryan has just fished for England Youth in Ireland this year and Keiran and Adam have both qualified for next year's team so good luck to them."

So, yet again Mark Searle has made this series his own, showing quite remarkable consistency. Runner up for this year, Chris McLeod, who has done much in the past to establish this event in the calendar commented "Thanks to Anglian Water for allowing us to hold the event on Grafham and to Lisa at the Wheatsheaf for providing the sandwiches and chips. This has proved to be a very satisfactory arrangement and has increased the sociability of the event which in turn has helped us gain a good number of new members. Roll on May '09 when we can start again!"

THE AMFC COMPETITION NEWS - GROUP THREE. INVICTA 'A' TEAM OUTSCORES THE OPPOSITION WITH 2/3rds OF A TEAM AT CHEW.

Well, well, well! Due to a variety of reasons, including the Invicta` trips to the River San, Invicta A team were only able to field 4 members out of a 6 man team for Chew on the 14th September. However, this notable quartet certainly rose to the occasion, beating all the other teams on the day, including the highly fancied Royal Navy/Marines on effectively their home water.

John Caldwell led the way with the only limit bag of the day fishing close to the surface with claret hoppers, diawl bachs and a silver invicta. The Invicta B team was not represented and neither were the Soldier Palmers B team. Invicta A now stand a realistic opportunity of winning the Group Three title and promotion, there currently being only two points separating the top two teams.

RESULTS ON THE DAY

John Caldwell	8 fish	22 lbs 1 oz
Graham Williams	5 fish	10 lbs 12 oz
Alan Taylor	2 fish	4 lbs 11 oz
John Brownbridge	6 fish	14 lbs 12 oz

HOW DO THEY STAND AT PRESENT ?

Royal Navy/Marines	23 points
Invicta A	21 points
Crawley FC	12 points
Invicta B	8 points
Soldier Palmers B	7 points

So it looks as though we face a very exciting next match.



Just a reminder that we are entering the 'Show Season.' There is also the Burghley Game Country & Angling Fair Stamford on May 23/25th. If you are aware of an interesting winter show event of appeal to other members, please share that information with other Invicta members via the secretary. Perhaps we may be able to organise group visits.

YOBS WITH BLOBS ! Peter Firth enters a highly controversial subject.

Some of you will have read, or heard of, an article in the Telegraph of 1/6/08 entitled YOBs with BLOBS. Implied was a criticism of competition fly fishing for making the blob culture so important, although both Chris Ogbourne and Jeremy Lucas, who contributed to the article, owe their fame to being extraordinarily talented competition anglers.

One criticism was the very concept of the Blob. Chris Ogbourne said they were tantamount to cheating! Jeremy Lucas said their use by experienced fishermen 'was repulsive' If you look in Bob Church's book 'Guide to the Champions' Fly Patterns' published in 1998 you will find the following:

page 143 Adams Pink page 151 The Classic page 155 Yellow Fellow.



I find it difficult to comprehend the difference between flies like these and blobs. (*Material mobility simulating life maybe?* - Ed.) There wasn't too much criticism of the many successful anglers using these patterns then (although I wonder how many of the owners would acknowledge them today?)

In comparison we can confidently regard this criticism as prejudiced rubbish. There were, however, two other criticisms both of which deserve serious consideration. I consider the most serious that too many anglers, and in particular young anglers, regard pulling blobs as the ONLY way to fish. Their knowledge of entomology is disgraceful and their ability to use other methods like nymphing and the dry fly is non-existent. I believe that Charles Jardine was so concerned about this that on one England Youth Team training day he made them all fish nymphs on floating lines.

Pulling blobs etc. on sinking lines is ultimately boring and too many of our youngsters leave fly fishing without appreciating the wonderful variety in fly design and fishing techniques.

A third criticism was of the effectiveness of the method to take fish quickly and so gain the maximum time bonus. I have dealt with every result in the Association and there is no doubt that

time bonus is usually the deciding factor. Indeed in the last match I dealt with the winning team had two fish less than the second team, but a better time bonus.

The AMFC introduced the concept of the time bonus and should be proud of the fact. Unless the competition is catch and release and results based on length it is now the usual method of calculating the results

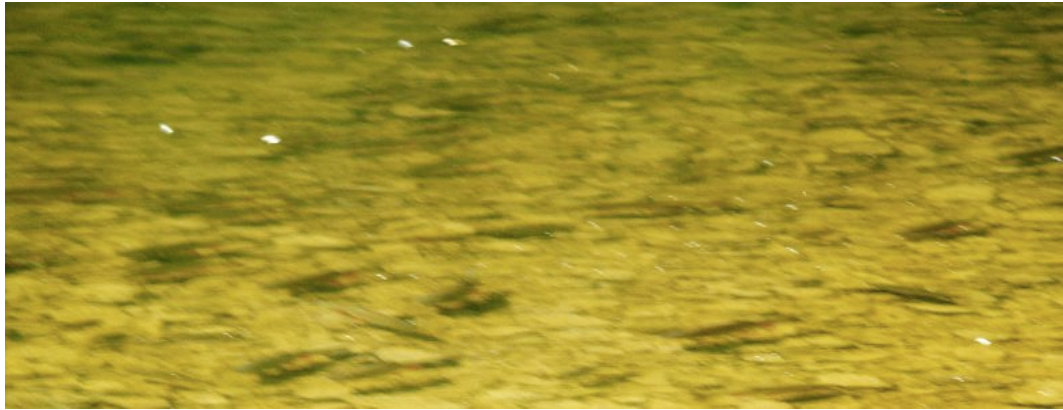
In the late 70's competitions were won by the angler/team which killed the most fish. As reservoirs stocked even more generously (and in particular just before a big match) on a few occasions this produced huge bags of dead fish (I know of one angler who killed more than thirty fish in the day). This was completely unacceptable.

River competitions developed the catch/measure/release method. The problem was that at this time no reservoir allowed Catch and Release. (Bewl Water still does not). In any case catch/measure/release does not overcome the problem of catching 30+ fish a day. My own view is that anyone who just wants to keep on catching suicidal fish using the same method needs a personality transplant! Additionally the practical problems of recording on a day when everything in the boat is drenched would be a nightmare.

Since unlimited catch and kill was not an acceptable option and reservoirs would not allow catch and release, the Association came up with the idea of the 'Time Bonus'. In the days when other competitions were still operating an unlimited catch and kill policy it was felt that the time bonus was a fair way of compensating anglers who had caught their limit for the additional fish they might have weighed in during the time they were not fishing. To date I know of no angler who fishes competitively who complains about the concept. There has been discussion about the amount of bonus, which, in Association matches, is currently 4oz for each full quarter of an hour of the remaining time. I acknowledge that the time bonus does put pressure on anglers to catch fish as quickly as possible. If, therefore, the time bonus is the genesis of the blob mentality, perhaps we need to rethink it.

Hmm! I think that Peter has said it all. It is boring and lacks skill therefore it is an unrewarding method for 'pleasure' use. It does nothing for imitative fly fishing and as for fly tying is as demanding as lashing a bunch of carpet wool to a hook with fuse wire. I am sure this subject will run and run. What do you think? Blobs... innovation or desperation? - Ed.

THE INVICTA RIVER SAN VISITS REPORT - Peter Reeves



THE RIVER SAN IS NOT SHORT OF FISH. A POOR PHOTO - BUT MAYBE MY HAND WAS SHAKING!

So after months of waiting there we were at Rzeszow airport as the first Invicta group. A small group as it happened since the third member of our group was obliged to cancel just before departure. Our driver picked us out immediately, how I cannot imagine, and we were quickly under way to our temporary home. The journey was interesting as he took the view that all of the road was there to be used and after some 2 hours, decided to go off road in total darkness as a short cut to our base 'Bazyl.' It was just before departure that I bothered to look at a map to find where exactly we would be and was surprised at how close the Ukrainian border was to us.

The next morning Norman and myself took stock of our very rural surroundings and enjoyed a short walk prior to breakfast. There we met Richard, our guide, and John an Australian lawyer who had been fishing there for 5 days already. After a very substantial, late breakfast we put our tackle into a well used minibus and set off for the section of the River San selected for us. A short trip but slow as the road then track was exceptionally bumpy. We tackled up away from the river and walked to the river bank and soon were greeted by sight of the River. It looked vast to us and we wondered just where and how to address it. John, with the advantage of earlier knowledge pitched straight in, whilst Richard took us through the basics and pointed us to various spots. We then were both using weighted small nymphs. Fairly soon we had knotted up a number of small brown trout both fishing small weighted nymphs upstream and also across and down, the latter method seeming more productive especially of smaller fish. John meantime was using dry flies to good effect

and managing an odd grayling here and there. It had been some time since I last fished this way and it took a little time before I felt confident. Lunch, the afternoon and early evening seemed to flash past and we were heading back in the gathering dusk to a huge but very tasty Polish dinner but still without benefit of grayling!

The next day we were taken to a different stretch with great character, several islands and confusing currents. I elected to go downstream fishing a nymph as I went and then switch to dry fly as I fished my way back. Norman opted to fish a deep pool where larger fish lurked and also reputedly huchen. John wandered off upstream. Crossing the river I duly nymphed my way downstream with the impression that it was devoid of fish then, as I approached a group of wading, chattering French anglers I tied on a size 20 parachute black gnat. Immediately the river seemed to come alive and after missing a few takes got my timing together and was soon into my first grayling for about 20 years. Not particularly large but immensely satisfying. Wading slowly and casting upstream to likely looking spots trout and grayling up to 30 cms came thick and fast until I reached the deeper water where Norman had been nymphing. I had a great morning finished off by an enormous lunch of Polish sausage washed down with a few beers, chilled in the river. After lunch we were taken further upstream to more 'organised' currents and were advised that the fish were bigger. They were, I managed a grayling I estimated to be 40 cms and Norman claimed a 50 cm grayling which was not diplomatic as Richard stated his best from the San was 49 cms! I still believe

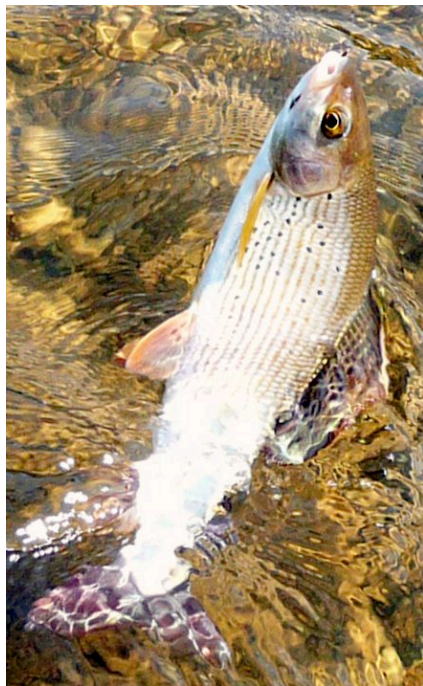


INVICTA'S PRESIDENT IN PURSUIT OF GRAYLING ON THE SAN "BAZYL" - OUR TEMPORARY HOME

Richard suspects a little judicious stretching went on!

We later fished the same stretch and were amazed at the shoal with some very large fish in the clear water which opened up before us and then closed in behind seemingly not unduly bothered by our presence. In fact we found that grayling were not easily spooked - or hooked on

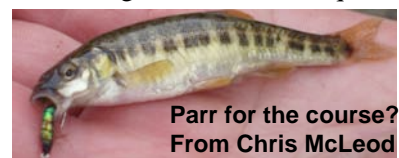
species were in a defined locality. John managed, fishing from the same spot, 6 different species to fly and nymph on the day, these being trout, grayling, perch, dace, bream and chub. He was somewhat miffed at moving but not hooking a small pike since, as he told us, there were no pike in Australia. There was also a carp in front of him which resisted his efforts otherwise he might have ended up with 8 species.



MY FIRST SAN GRAYLING

some days! It was one of these days on which the grayling seemed to switch off as only one or two seemed to take interest although in the clear water I could see the occasional grayling lift in the water as though to take then drift back down in the current eyeing up the fly until deciding to leave it alone. This in fact was to be the pattern, days when grayling were taking and those when they were not, although the smaller trout were always receptive. It was in this spot that our Australian fellow guest decided to branch out following Richard's observation that several

I then continued with the small dry flies for the rest of the week except for the last day which was very windy whilst Norman carried on with the nymphs and we both had very good sport under cloudless skies and heat ... which seemed to encourage the mosquitoes. The second Invicta group had a shorter stay a few days later and apparently the weather changed dramatically, the temperature plummeted (I heard 20° C drop mentioned) and the fishing became much more difficult. Whilst they admitted to enjoying the experience the sudden change in conditions did mean that they did not experience the full potential of the river and were trying all methods. Oh well that's fishing all over, I feel sorry that group 2 could not enjoy the excellent sport Norman and I had but it was pleasant to be fishing at the right place and the right time for a change. The only flat spot we had was when there was a power problem and the dam on the header lake was adjusted and the water rose quickly and significantly and became very coloured but we only lost an hours fishing due to this. In all we thoroughly enjoyed the fishing, the ambience, the food and the people we met and would certainly recommend the River San, a river we, the first group, found very generous. Further information on the River San can be obtained from the Pioneer Flyfishing website or I will be pleased to give advice and assistance to those wishing to share this unique experience.



THE BBFC GRAND MAX FLOATING LINE COMPETITION - Peter Reeves

This was an invitation event that I had awaited with some eager anticipation. I probably spend 97+% of my time with a floater and had never fished Bewl previously. Being some distance it did mean an

early start but when Lawson pulled up I was ready and waiting, if not totally alert. On arrival at the water and threading through the maze of approach tracks, we entered the sailing clubhouse opened up early especially for the competitors, and pitched straight into a very decent breakfast in company with the other four Invictas taking part. I began to feel more like myself. We then were introduced to our boat partners for the day, mine being Len Childs a regular on the water and I understand an English International - a lucky draw for me as it turned out.



DRIFTING TOWARDS THE CAGES DURING THE GRAND MAX COMPETITION

The day was perfect with cloud cover and a light breeze giving an ideal ripple. I was to discover that Len was very organised and had distinct ideas on where to fish and at what time of day, particularly when I told him that I had never even seen the water before. In fact with almost indecent haste, on our second drift Len was into and landed a very lively rainbow. Things were beginning to look good when my line tightened in dramatic fashion then came back at me. Broken and 2 flies and most of my leader lost in the process. Oddly, most of the Invicta team admitted to have been broken at least once during the day. However, as Len started the inexorable process of accumulating his limit of 8 fish I hooked into and landed a very fit fish on a wingless Wickhams followed very soon after with another to an Alexandra. I was loving this, strong fighting fish on traditional small wet flies. However at one o'clock we had to be back at the clubhouse for lunch, clearly the horrors of malnutrition are greatly feared at this Bewl event and, to be fair, slim 'n trim competitors were in the minority.



LEN WAS VERY BUSY WITH FLY CHANGES

After lunch I decided that dry flies were worth a try even though there were only a few fish seen moving. Second cast it seemed I was correct as I was broken again on what felt a heavy fish. It soon transpired that Len was also fishing dries, he had been keeping this quiet. Not secretive exactly but slow to volunteer information as befits a regular serious competitor. I paid more attention and noted that Len's dries were bigger and bolder than mine. Regrettably I had no very bushy high floating patterns with me but as clearly the fish were high in the water and prepared to investigate anything creating a disturbance in the surface, I looked in my boxes for competition legal hook size boobies, pinched

off the excess tail to enable them to conform with international 'loch-style' rules... I ask you 'loch-style boobies &/or blobs' just how absurd can these rules become? Anyway I put the booby on the point with the Alexandra on the dropper (I only fish 1 or 2 flies) and then set out to pull back the deficiency, Len had 4 fish in the morning to my 2. As we hit the moving fish I was able to take a couple of fish on successive casts and I was closing the gap but could not catch up. Len eventually achieved his 8 whilst I was on 6 but I was quickly into number 7. Then almost immediately another fish was on but after playing it for some minutes it dropped off. Damn! It then seemed to go ominously quiet but Len took me closer to the shore and eventually number 8 was hooked and landed at 5.10 pm with a 6.00 pm finish. We went straight back and I looked in vain for another Invicta team member waiting on the shore. I have to admit I enjoyed my initial visit to

Bewl with fish well up in the water and had some indication as to the breakages, one of my better fish had a black muddler and 30 cms of hefty monofilament impaled in its flank. Len, who had finished some 45 minutes earlier was gracious in saying that although he was faster, my fish were better. I had not realised he was paying that much attention but the weigh in proved him totally correct. We finished with a dinner which, by comparison with meals 'enjoyed' at Grafham in the past, was positively 'Cordon bleu!' Well done Bewl BFC, The event was organised and conducted with total precision and all aspects to a very high standard indeed. I thoroughly enjoyed my day and introduction to Bewl with a good, friendly boat companion and an overall rod average of 6.31 fish surely speaks for itself!

Thanks Ray, it was a real and great pleasure!

- 1 KENT & SUSSEX FLYFISHERS
- 2 QUEEN MOTHER
- 3 GRAND MAX TEAM
- 4 FLYFISHING FOREVER
- 5 MERIDIAN
- 6 ENGLAND LADIES
- 7 WEALD OF KENT
- 8 BEWL BRIDGE FLYFISHERS
- 9 LONDON FLYDRESSERS' GUILD
- 10 THE FRIENDLY FISHERMAN
- 11 BEWL BRIDGE CHAIRMAN'S SELECT
- 12 FISHING FOR FUN
- 13 TUNBRIDGE WELLS FLYFISHING SOCIETY
- 14 FISH HAWKS
- 15 FORDHAM & WAKEFIELD
- 16 INVICTA
- 17 IVER FLYFISHERS
- 18 OUSE VALLEY

Total Weight:

111 lb 13 oz
107 lb 4 oz
103 lb 6 oz
102 lb 10 oz
95 lb 4 oz
95 lb 1 oz
95 lb 0 oz
94 lb 12 oz
89 lb 4.5 oz
78 lb 14 oz
77 lb 9 oz
71 lb 0 oz
70 lb 10 oz
57 lb 8 oz
54 lb 9 oz
52 lb 0 oz
50 lb 13 oz
23 lb 12 oz

RESULTS:

Total fish caught: 682

Rod average 6.31

Average fish weight: 1 lb 13 oz

Largest fish (Brown Trout): 6 lb 2 oz Mick Bewick - Queen Mother

Smallest fish: 0 lb 12 oz Kim Green - Fish Hawks

Best Total Bag: 28 lb 15 oz Rob Barden - Weald of Kent

INVICTA

Weight	Fish	Best Fish	B/R	Bag Weight	Finish	Time Bonus	Total
Graham Williams (capt.)	3	2 lb 2 oz	R	5 lb 14 oz	18 00	0 lb 0 oz	5 lb 14 oz
Peter Reeves	8	2 lb 8 oz	R	15 lb 2 oz	17 15	1 lb 8 oz	16 lb 10 oz
Alan Taylor	3	1 lb 14 oz	R	4 lb 13 oz	18 00	0 lb 0 oz	4 lb 13 oz
Lawson Wight	3	1 lb 12 oz	R	4 lb 13 oz	18 00	0 lb 0 oz	4 lb 13 oz
John Mees	6	1 lb 13 oz	R	9 lb 11 oz	18 00	0 lb 0 oz	9 lb 11 oz
Chris McLeod	5	2 lb 6 oz	R	10 lb 3 oz	18 00	0 lb 0 oz	10 lb 3 oz

INVICTA 'FUR & FEATHER' EVENT

This is a new (or renewed) event in our calendar. A winter, sociable, bank match for members at Elinor Trout Fishery on Saturday 15th November commencing 9.00 am and fishing until 4.00 pm. After the match it is envisaged that participants will withdraw to a suitable hostelry for debriefing, excuse making, prize awarding and generally thawing out.

Each participant to bring along a seasonal prize (wine, spirits, game, chocolates, box of biscuits, flies etc.) and the winner has first pick of the prizes and then down the line of results so that nobody leaves empty handed. This is principally a sociable fun day out and if you are not familiar with it, Elinor is a popular 'intimate' water. Doubtless a system of lifts or car sharing will take place once those competing are known. Our bookings officer is in charge as usual so let John Caldwell know of your wish/intention to take part in this novel event in Invicta's calendar of events now.

Ode to a Salmon

(Courtesy of Gerry Bailey)

I hesitate to be unkind,
But the Salmon has a one track mind,
Once every season, full of fire,
He swims upstream, higher and higher
From dawn to dusk, and dusk to dawn
From morn to night and night to morn
Up rocks and rills up streams and hills
Up cascades, up grassy glades,
Up canyons steep, through waters deep
Up stones and rocks, up dams and locks
From day to night from dark to light
Until at last on one bright dawn
He gets there just in time to spawn
Now having done his salmon duty
Now having woo'd his salmon cutie
And weary from his trip uptown
In quiet waters he will drown
Pondering with his dying bubble
Just why is SEX so much trouble.

Salmo.



Graham Williams supplies these photos from a Vancouver museum showing a salmon butchering and cleaning machine capable of handling a fish a second. Graham also suggests that Anglian Water installs one at Grafham Water!



MEMBER'S PROFILE No. 13 - Peter Oldham reveals all to Peter Reeves.

PR - Peter, do you remember when you first started fishing?
PCO - When I was about 10 years old, on a family holiday in Blackpool I think, I saw some blokes fishing from the pier. A minute later...."Dad, can I do that, can I have a rod, can I go fishing please?" I obviously pestered Dad, because when we got home I received my first rod.....bamboo, with brass ferrules, probably cost about 5 bob. With a friend, I took it down to Bridgewater Canal three or four times, where others fished. I never caught a fish, never saw one caught, so I lost interest for while, but eventually I ventured to Lymm Dam, where I caught a few roach tiddlers.

PR -When did you first target trout and was it with fly or bait?

PCO - I lived in Harrogate for a couple of years in the 1980s and saw some fishing on the local dales rivers. Again, it seems as though I was spurred on by watching others. In 1983 we moved down to Earith, where my employer, Amey Roadstone, had a gravel pit (not the same pit as the existing Earith trout lake) which was leased out to a trout syndicate, with a retained season ticket. So I used the ticket. I caught my first trout there, and I remember being so surprised. I knew it had to be killed, but did not have a priest, so with nothing else handy I took my welly off and clobbered the poor thing with the heel. Probably the best trout I've ever tasted.

PR - In your early years (supposing you can still remember) was fishing readily available to you?

PCO- Yes, the canal and dam fishing cost only a few pennies, often the bus fare there was the greatest expense.

PR -What is it about fly fishing that appeals to you?

PCO - Dunno, still thinking - is it getting up in the dark, the cold and rain, the wet hands, blanking, sitting on a hard seat all day, getting home late with a bag full of fish to gut.....?

PR - What is your preferred method of fly fishing?

PCO- Theoretically, it would be on a small river, but in practice it is slowly drifting a team of nymphs....when the line suddenly tightens.....that's lovely.

PR - Do any other species than trout interest you?

PCO - Yes, I have enjoyed some salmon fishing, but on a limited scale. Maybe one day a bone fish may interest me.....

PR -Where would be your dream fishing venue?



PCO - Probably the Test: the bits of chalk stream/river fishing I have done has been most enjoyable. Or, a salmon river with real chances of good fish.

PR - Do you have any unfulfilled fishing ambitions?

PCO - I'm quite happy after good day on a boat on a water such as Grafham or Pitsford. I sometimes wish that I lived in Hampshire, maybe somewhere near Salisbury, with a few good local rivers.

PR - Has the attraction of fishing been constant?

PCO - Not really. Sometimes I get involved in other activities, but sometimes feel the pull of the water, especially if I haven't been out

for a while. This pull is especially strong in February and March, when there is a strong urge to go fishing. It may be a bit of a primeval thing, but can be compelling.

PR - What was your most memorable fishing experience?

PCO - Apart from the first trout I caught and despatched with my welly: late in maybe the season, about 1990, I went on a course at Grafham with Henry Lowe. Up until then I had only fished small waters, (I was a regular at Orton Meadows fishery, where I had the water record with a 10 ½ pounder for a while, and Aveley, where Chris Poupard had a water stocked with 6 pounds upwards) being scared of places like Grafham where the real fishing was. Going out in a boat with Henry was enlightening: the fish were hard on fry, on the surface, and casting a white lure my full distance of 15 yards resulted in some 4 or 5 fish. After that, I knew I had to be out on the water again before too long.

PR - Do you have any misgivings over fishing at all?

PCO - Yes, that I don't catch enough. Seriously, occasionally I do feel sorry for the fish, but then I think of them as food, and also that if it wasn't for fishing the fish probably would not exist.

PR - Where do you go from here in a fishing context?

PCO - From here? Next stop Hanningfield on Tuesday.

PR - How important has your involvement with 'Invicta' been to you?

PCO- Quite important. Apart from the friendship, and the sharing of ideas and information, I do enjoy the club outings and social days. I have also enjoyed the semi-seriousness of the club matches, and always feel that representing Invicta to be an honour.

REFLECTIONS FROM THE WATER

IN PRAISE OF SMALL WATERS

Peter Reeves re-appraises his fishing.



In my seminal (I hope that is the correct word) years of fly fishing I looked on large lochs and subsequently the midland reservoirs as providing the cream of trout fishing. With larger water areas nobody could predict what you may encounter next as the inventory was totally unknown. Each new water was like casting into a new planet... there was always the possibility of something special, sadly not always the anticipated reward..... but maybe on the next cast!

Small waters were held in less regard, the more so as many to attract a viable customer base and income resorted to stocking overweight rainbows and adjusting their prices accordingly. Very small waters holding very large fish which the natural feeding cannot sustain still do attract my disdain. However, the passage of years has seen a softening of previously entrenched views and most of my fishing recently has been on a small (ish) water. Two years ago I was fortunate to gain membership of Whittle Lake, (approx. 14 acres) and this has changed my whole approach to fishing. To start with it is remarkably convenient for me, only 2 miles from my front door so I can fish leisurely for an hour or so very regularly without planning and also avoiding punitive fuel costs. On arrival access is via security swipe card barriers and padlocked gate and once inside the well maintained grassed areas are surrounded by a variety of trees and wild and cultivated plants supporting all manner of wildlife... instant tranquility in a park-like environment despite the adjacent minor road and all manner of antique aircraft from nearby Duxford overhead. No rabid cyclists, no manic kids, no demented dogs but instead woodpeckers, stoats, muntjacs, kingfishers, buzzards etc. Although it has 4 boats available virtually all of my fishing has been from

the bank (no wading and neither is it necessary.... or safe.) A good percentage of the water on small waters can be covered from the banks and covered with light tackle, I use 9' #6 or #5 outfits according to the wind conditions. Small waters have different characters to large reservoirs and a different seasonal change pattern. Early season pretty much the same except it is usually fairly obvious on the small waters where fish are... and they can be too easy to contact early season. However, small waters warm up faster, cool down faster and the contained (surviving) fish also wise up faster. Scientific research has shown that some trout are much more risk averse than others and this will obviously mean the more circumspect fish are less likely to be caught early. Additionally they will learn by observation and appear to be more line and leader shy yet some anglers persist with heavy lines and large flies splashing down on the water which I can see clearly 100 yards away, a total giveaway to any fish in the area. The use of lighter tackle is not just more pleasant it is also I feel more productive.

The subtle changes observed on frequent short visits do inculcate a feeling of intimacy with the contained ecosystem of small waters and personal preferences can often be supported. Some members appear to be using big Montana nymphs or similar lures most of the season but I like to fish more imitative patterns in realistic sizes, the fish don't know but I do, Lightly dressed nymphs or wet flies work well early on but the fish can be receptive to dry flies, on good days in the size range 12 to 18 throughout, although during the hot summer months (July and August) catch rates reflect the agreeably challenging nature of small waters reacting quickly to ambient temperatures.