

Start a fishing diary this year.

David Moore, March 2021

I still have records of all my coarse fishing from my teenage years and they bring back many happy memories. I was quite obsessive for both specimen hunting and match fishing too, mostly on the lower Nene and natural still-waters before the days of 'commercials'. My handwriting was just as bad when I was 17 but I can still decipher a lot of hours and a lot of fish. January 1966 was my best ever with three wild 20lb+ carp from the Nene Cut at Peterborough in 24 hours and it's great to still have my notes along with the whole plate photos taken by Angling Times who came out to witness all three!

Year	Hrs.	No.	Wt.	Ave wt.	Fish/hr.	Wt./hr.	Records broken
1962	?	803	185.0	2.5g	?	?	thick carp and roach trout rudd
1963	739½	2185	369.5	2.6g	2.98	0.47	thick carp and roach thick brown rudd thick carp and roach
1964	867	1907	369.0	3.1g	2.19	0.43	thick carp and roach
1965	413	1374	341.10½	4.0g	3.32	0.83	thick roach
1966	281	334	353.8½	17.0g	1.19	1.27	thick carp and roach
1967	289	162	179.5	17.5g	0.56	0.62	thick carp. rudd.
1968	110	97	55.6	9.2g	0.9	0.54	thick carp
1969	113	212	84.15	8	1.9	0.76	thick carp
1970	314½	836	255.10	5	2.7	0.81	thick carp

Year	ln	Wt.	Notes	Wt.
1966	5	4	2 carp 140m 140m	65.6.0
cut	3	1	1 carp	20.8.0
cut	5	3	1 brown 2 pike	10.12.0
cut	6	19	1 brown 2 brown 2 pike	10.0.0
cut	3	-	-	-
Total	22	27	3 carp, 4 brown, 1 pike, 15 roach	86.10.0

It's quite scary to look at a summary page from my teenage years on the river bank, I guess school wasn't my highest priority!

I started my log again in 2011 when I began trout fishing more regularly but in a more methodical format using XL rather than a biro. I record the date, venue, bank or boat, hours, fish and then notes on methods, boat partner and importantly any lessons learnt. Here are some notes from 2015.

27/4/15 Graf AMFC G3 with Jim Wright, Soldier Palmers A, midge tip green buzzers off deep water point 4 in 2 hours then v slow in strong sw wind 1 off G buoy and brown off seat for 13-7oz Team 5/6 with 9 fish 19/72 overall Jim =5 on blob & boobie D15 winning method for most

28/4/15 Police match practice with Chris McL bright breezy slow in Toft but better action off Biggin point straight buzzers

29/4/15 Police Shield with Gary Haskins bright & W gale nothing in waves in Toft or Biggin straight but good on deep buzzers & hang Gary easy top rod 12 fish My 3 but all big 12-9 won best fish of the day G15 and EFA team 2nd of 7.

1/5/15 AT Qualifier with Mark Rose bright & windy started off lodge midge tip then sailing club 4 fish & lost 2 all deep by 12.00 then nothing all pm lost 1 near lodge on Di7 Mark 3rd -8 by 1pm 40/66 Top rods with Di7 B6-B & buzzers

2/5/15 Invicta with Mick Thorpe SE breeze v cold Midge tip 1 in East creek Nothing in long drift Inmans to Old Hall moved Normanton, boobies 1 on each slow glass, fast glass and D15 fish near the top in open on daphnia best 3lb 3= of 19 Only Joan got 8 (Di 7)

I use an XL spreadsheet so at the end of each season I can summarise results and then compare with previous years, very useful if you are aspiring to improve your consistency and catch rate. It's also interesting to look back to see people you have fished with. I am surprised to find some top rods that I was drawn with 10 years ago but whose names meant little to me at the time and it must have been a big learning experience for me as I frequently recorded an 0-8 catch in my boat!

These are the headings I use:

Date Venue AW Other Boat Hours Bank Hours Day Fish Season Fish Notes

It's been encouraging for me to see a fairly steadily increasing catch rate over the ten years and probably more significantly a reduction in blanks. Just looking at my AW boat days I was blanking on one in 4 or 5 of my trips whereas now it's only around 1 in 20. Last season was exceptional on our AW reservoirs and I think I have peaked these past few years but we still keep learning.

The key to keeping a fishing diary is to write it up the same or next day while details are fresh in your mind and often it's what your boat partner did that made a difference and worth recording.

Most club calendars follow a similar pattern every year so you visit the same venues at the same time which gives you a head start. For example, every September I fish Draycote with both Invicta and EFA and so looking back through my diary in advance gives me a good idea of what will work and some confidence before I arrive, even if I haven't fished there for a few months previously.

My results have peaked now but if you have only recently started flyfishing it's a great way to monitor and analyse your development and well as interesting reading and memories for the future.

