

# A comedy of errors - Ravensthorpe Reservoir

6th May 2021

-Chris McLeod



Last Saturday I fished with a new Invicta member, Andrew Bate. He must have regretted drawing me as I stumbled from one basic error to another, doing things I'd never done before and making a right twat of

myself.

First mistake; after two cups of tea at home, I happily accepted a cup of coffee from breakfast maestro Tony Smith. Why did I do that on a day when zipless bib and brace was essential given that it was absolutely chucking it down? My bladder is really just some sort of tiny carrier bag delivering its contents by gravity only. And that it needs to do regularly. Never mind, I can just about get an Anglian Water bailer inside my bib and brace trousers and position it very carefully and, hopefully, accurately. All fine, until I try and lift the bailer out. Unbelievably I managed this about 6 times without spillage. Although this was a success, the ridiculous effort and frequency must have set Andrew's mind wondering who was at the other end of the boat.

As I thought it might be windy, I started with a long leader and a single blob, hoping that I'd avoid tangles and it would make casting a little easier; it did – for about half an hour. I only hit Andrew once, but also gave myself whack on the back of the head. I thought back and realised I hadn't been on the engine for months – must practise more!

Now the set up might have been reasonably sensible from a casting point of view – but was it right for the fish. The simple answer is definitely no. But I made the mistake of catching a fish on it; a fatal error early on. I was set on that course far too long. So I put another fly on and eventually another, and somehow managed to catch my second fish.

Andrew quietly caught two while I was wrestling with tangles and bladders at the other end. I had tangle after tangle, in my leader, in my line, in the drogue rope, around the rod, around the boat seat, around the rowlock, around the oars, around and in the engine and anywhere else that anything tangle-able could tangle..... Oh, and I ran over the drogue rope.

Meanwhile David Moore was absolutely knocking them out and we were on two apiece with little prospect of getting any more. A quick chat with Mark suggested David was on a floater – he wasn't, but I misunderstood the message and put on a floater which didn't help our catch rate. So instead of simply thinking, I decided to try and copy – with the inevitable result. I wasn't catching.

At this stage, my leader set-up was perfectly sensible, but things were about to get silly. Andrew announced that he'd caught on a squirmy wormy. I don't have a squirmy wormy. So he kindly gave me a self-tied one and I put it on. Bang, smashed off. Never mind, here's another says Andrew. I tied it on catching the wormy bit in the knot and cutting the fly in half. I only have one left says Andrew but you're welcome to have it which was exceptionally kind as he'd had two or three on it by now. I cast it out, bang, a piggy tail. Profuse, embarrassed apologies and I tie the half squirmy back on. I then thought a shammy fly might do the trick. I'd never caught on one but things were desperate. By this time David had caught about a hundred and word was coming in of successes elsewhere. Luckily for my sanity, Gary How managed to be blanking so we knew we had company in the low scores.

Very little was happening, I think we had four apiece with a couple of hours to go. What to do – a snake maybe? No!!! But I did. It was that sort of thoughtless, mad decision that was my approach to the day. So my 18' leader comprised a big, green and black snake with bead chain eyes on the point, half a squirmy and a shammy on the top. What a joke. I'm ashamed of myself. The trouble is, for some strange reason, I had loads of action and caught four more fish in quick succession, and Andrew had two more so we ended with fourteen to the boat when we should have had a shedfull.

My apologies to my boat partner and those that didn't get their fifty points because I certainly don't deserve mine. I've been doing this for well over thirty years but didn't fish anywhere near as well as my partner in the beginners' day we had the week before – and he's only been fishing three weeks! However Andrew was the perfect partner, a gentleman and gave no hint of his disbelief in what he was witnessing. Next time, please partner him up with a real angler, rather than the Frank Spencer of the club.

Right; off to tie up a Squirmy Wormy or two – they're a pound each Gary.