

BEWL WATER FISHING REPORT
Week ending Friday 21 October
by Ray French.

The Autumn stocking programme and the drop in water temperature has certainly made a difference to the fishing at Bewl for this week. We have seen a rapid increase in the catch rate by both Any Method and Fly rods.

Last weekend some fish were seen but were difficult to catch, mostly due to water colour which I commented on in my last report - a mixture of algae and 'mud wash' from rain on the barren banks. But a couple of windy days and some cloud turned it around and by Wednesday it was game on with the water clearing!!

Wednesday was 'The Grand Max' day. An annual international boat fly fishing competition fielding 11 teams of six paired in a random draw and fished exclusively on floating line to International Flyfishing rules.

The event was organised by the Bewl Water Flyfishing Club and sponsored by Anthony Fordham. His company brand 'Seaguar Grand Max' is a leader in fluorocarbon line and formed the title for this annual event of long standing.

The weather was a mixture of cloud and sun with a hint of wind from the Northeast, coming over the dam, as 33 boats set off for a 9.30 start. The reservoir is about half-full with plenty of exposed banks but even so there is still a lot of water. Practice day had shown that although the dam and main bowl held pods of fish they were also well spread over the whole basin, which is a big area, plus Bewl Straight as far as Dunstars which often holds fish at this time of the year.

Fish were being caught from the off but as usual not by everybody. Some had a method & scored whilst others struggled, but that's fishing. That was the story of the day really but at least rods were regularly seen bending so there was always evidence of action. The fish for the most part were high in the water so the floating line was ideal and most fished the 'washing line' format with a mixture of Boobies, Nymphs, Hoppers and Blobs/Fabs. The latter being the 'colour' contribution with the smaller fly's mostly black.

The fishing stopped at 1-2pm for lunch, a pint, and the opportunity to 'chew the cud' with teammates. Always popular, the break allows everyone to regroup and approach the afternoon session refreshed in thought. Just as well for myself as I was blanking with no takes at all despite my flies having caught a couple on practice day.

The afternoon saw the boats spread out much more, the morning boat pressure in the Dam area had pushed a lot of the fish further out and the wind had also freshened a tad making for a good drift. The best tactic in the afternoon was long drifts varying the retrieve from almost static to a fast pull and wait for a reply. Almost always the drift produced some reaction, a swirl, tug, or a follow. Often like the proverbial London Bus though, you waited for a long time for nothing and then suddenly three come along at once!!

I tied a new long leader and fished four flies, pastel coloured small Booby in pink and yellow with yellow eyes on point and 3 small 'Pseudo' Diawl Bach's with red rib on the droppers. Fortunately, I managed six on this combo and should of had more drifting from CHINGLEY Point down past the white buoy towards Ferry Point. It certainly made up for my morning session.

As usual the competition finished at 5.30. An early but necessary finish to accommodate the weigh in, the evening dinner and prize giving.

RESULTS

Results were good and more like Bewl should be fishing at this time of year, but what with the summer drought, our water temperature, and the problems the fisheries have had growing the stock, I was truly amazed at the outcome and I don't think there were any blanks.

286 Trout were caught on the day for a very creditable rod average of 4.1, although the average size was a fighting 1lb 11oz.

England Ladies Team Captain **Jane Robinson** caught a very nice fish of 3lb 7oz to take the largest fish prize.

Gert Janssens had the best bag of the day at 19lb 9oz. Good fishing!

TEAM WINNERS.

Once again **TEAM VISION** topped the charts with a fabulous total weight of 67lb 13oz. Will they ever lose?

Second place went to overseas competitors **FLYFISHING FOREVER** with 73lb 13oz.

Third place went to **BEWL CHINGLEY CHOMPERS**, my own team of veterans, the infirm and the insane who managed to creep into the frame once again with 67lb 13oz.

After the disappointment of 2021 this year was very much a success. A good day's fishing, great camaraderie with excellent food and organisation from BBFC and the Bewl Water management team.

OUTLOOK

Looks very good with plenty of fish.

The only problem will be muddy water when it rains but it does clear fairly quickly and varies so look for the cleaner areas. Certainly, during the milder weather, the fish will be high and the sun won't bother them too much, it didn't on Wednesday.

Tight lines to you all....

Ray F.