

BEWL WATER FISHING REPORT

December 2025

The Bewl Fur and Feather Match – Competition Report

The Bewl Fur and Feather match kicked off on Sunday under remarkably kind December weather. Blue skies, a light south-easterly breeze, and mild temperatures set the scene as sixteen anglers set out at 9:00 a.m., fishing through until the 3:30 p.m. finish.

I was paired with Paul Vizard, and we began in the middle of the main bowl, drifting toward the red buoy with the aid of a drogue. The water quality was decent—although still on the low side—and a gentle ripple covered the surface. I started on a hover line (1 ips sink rate), fishing a four-fly cast: FABs on the point and top dropper, with a buzzer and a diawl bach between them.

Within the first hour Paul landed our boat's opening fish on an orange tequila FAB on the top dropper. That was an important early clue: the fish were sitting surprisingly high in the water, even under bright sun. I slowed everything right down. All I did was hold the line steady, keeping the flies almost static. Then—bang—my line twitched, tightened, and crept away. I resisted the urge to strike, waited a few seconds, then lifted into a much firmer take. Fish on! My first of the day.

As we continued the long drift toward the dam, I picked up a second fish, this one taking very close to the boat. A white cat's whisker clearly caught its attention, but at the last moment it changed its mind and inhaled my size 12 red diawl bach instead.

Back at the jetty for lunch, I discovered I was still in the running—Rob Toptallo was leading with three. After the break, Paul and I headed toward the Playground, where eight bank anglers were catching consistently. I tucked in as close as courtesy allowed, keeping a good 50 yards off, but despite several drifts neither of us managed another take.

We then pushed south toward Hook House, spotting George Keywood working a single drift repeatedly. He looked purposeful, and rightly so—George later reported a very productive session in that area. Unfortunately, the afternoon brought a colder wind, and I couldn't add to my tally before lines-up.

At the prize-giving we learned that Ian Watts had won the Fur and Feather Cup with four fish. Ian found his success after lunch, fishing pink and olive snakes as well as black-and-green lures tight to the right-hand corner of the dam and around Chingley Point. In hindsight, I

should have explored more of the main bowl instead of committing to the same drift for too long.

Takeaways & Summary

Fly Lines: Floating or slow-glass lines performed best. Fish were sitting high—even in full sunlight.

Flies: Less critical than location, but reliable starting patterns included Cat's Whisker Booby, Orange Tequila FAB

Alternatives: snakes, black-and-green lures/tadpoles

Retrieve slow... very slow. Minimal movement—just stay in contact and let the boat do the work.

Locations: Long drifts across the main bowl were productive. Fish are now spreading out and moving closer to the banks. Bank anglers at the Playground did particularly well.

Final Notes

Thanks to John for this well-written report—it even gave the Bewl Phantom a week off... though rumours say he was still spotted drifting aimlessly somewhere near Ferry Point, muttering about “the one that got away.”

If you hear mysterious splashing next Sunday, don't worry. It's probably just him.

Pictures below Liverpoolian warrior-angler Ian Watts faced the trout hordes. With a single cast that could silence storms, he conquered the waters and claimed the crown.

