



St MICHAEL



FLYFISHERS

Match Report
ROCKBOURNE
April 2022



DAY CAPTAINS REPORT

Rockbourne remains one of my favourite fisheries, and certainly the most picturesque, with 6 lakes set intimately amongst some pristine New Forest countryside.

This was the club's first return to Rockbourne since September 2020, when despite an enjoyable day, conditions were definitely more challenging. This time, set against largely blue skies and more than a hint of Spring warmth in the air, the fish proved to be far more obliging, with 19 of the 25 anglers catching their 4 fish bag.

For this visit, for the morning session we decided to organise into 5 groups of five, rotating clockwise through the lakes in 45-minute sessions – the aim to give everyone a fair chance of fishing each of the lakes. And within minutes of the horn sounding, Group B on Oak were into some hard fighting fish, Peter taking a 11.01 Rainbow on the first few casts, and Joe quickly putting behind him the disappointment of a blank on the previous visit. Colin, Geoff and Ian were also soon into fish, setting the tone for what was generally a productive morning all round. The dark waters of Spring generally proved to be a bit more challenging, but on Alder, Bridge and Oak in particular, fish continued to be caught regularly, falling to a range of flies including damselfly, stalking bugs, small nymphs and buzzers.

Then one of the highlights of the day... breaking for a BBQ lunch in the Rockbourne lodge to celebrate the club's 35th anniversary. And what a fine spread it was too, accompanied by drinks and some alcohol-free wine (thank you Michael!), most enjoyable, and a great opportunity to catch up on some chit chat and socialising.

After lunch we returned to the lakes, most people in search of one or two fish to complete their tickets, which most of us managed to do before the weigh in at 4 o'clock.

In total 92 fish were banked at an average weight of 4lb, with 3 doubles nudging up the average stockie weight of 3.5 to 4lb. Best fish of the day went to Dave Haskins, a 13.14 Rainbow from Alder, who also managed the best bag of the day at 25lb exactly. Dave Broome and Peter Burdett also managed double figure Rainbows, 12.10 and 11.01 respectively.

As I mentioned in my talk at the beginning of the day, a lot of the regulars that fish Rockbourne choose to stalk the better fish – and I think really that is the challenge that Rockbourne has to offer. In the afternoon I spent 20 minutes or so with Simeon, the fishery manager, during which time he demonstrated his phenomenal fish spotting abilities (although to be fair he probably sees fish in his sleep...), jinking between the shadows cast from the trees on the far bank, pointing out one double after another. I must admit, I struggled to see most of the fish he was pointing out, but it occurred to me that for many of the regulars, this is the challenge, finding and then targeting those better fish. Alas, despite strong interest from a large Rainbow on one occasion, the only fish I managed was a stockie that nipped in as my fly disappeared into the dark where I'd cast it in the vicinity of a nice brown that Simeon had pointed out.

Overall, I think everyone really enjoyed the day, the feedback on the morning structure was certainly positive, and most of us managed to catch our full ticket. The lunch was a highlight, and just to spend a day with friends in such a wonderful location was special.

Stephen Argent *Day Captain*



SECRETARIES REPORT

After anxiously checking the weather forecast every day for the week before our 35th Anniversary outing to Rockbourne it turned out that we could not have wished for a better day, a little chilly first thing then unbroken sunshine all day with a gentle breeze.

Fueled with a hot drink and a bacon bap, Day Captain Steve Argent gave us his briefing, and handed out the zone sheets. The format was a little different from normal in as much the 25 of us had been split into five groups of five so we all had the opportunity during the morning session of fishing all of the six lakes, two of which had been combined. I must thank Steve for the excellent way he organised it so that no zones were overcrowded and we all had plenty of space to move around each zone.

At 1pm we gathered at the club house where beers, and soft drinks were provided before we sat down for an excellent BBQ lunch which I am sure everyone enjoyed. Our Chairman Vic said a few words welcoming everyone on this special occasion and proposed a toast to the club, the committee and members who had sadly passed away.

Bob Fulton, being one of the original M&S members, responded with a little bit of history about the early days of St Michael Flyfishers, and congratulated the present Officers, and Committee for the way the club has being run since becoming independent from M&S some years ago.

After our celebration lunch those with fish still to catch went off in pursuit, enjoying the free roaming session that lasted until we had the final weigh in at 4pm, we then awarded the prizes for the day, and drew the raffle. All in all, it was a wonderful day, both fishing wise, and socially. We caught 92 fish weighing a staggering 365 lbs with three double Rainbows, the biggest being 13lb 14ozs by Dave Haskins who won the trophy for the day, and I must congratulate Summer for her lovely Brown of 5lb 2ozs. Somehow the double Browns avoided our flies on this occasion, maybe next time!

As I said previously it was a great day socially among friends, and good to see our three lady members doing well.

Thanks to virtually everyone for staying till the very end, you all made this a very special day. I look forward to seeing you all at Lakedown where Joe Tufo has kindly offered to sponsor lunch.

Michael Littlestone Hon secretary

35th ANNIVERSARY EVENT

At our outing to Rockbourne on the 9th of April we celebrated the 35th Anniversary of the founding of **St. MICHAEL FLY FISHERS**. We the rank and file members are so very grateful for the continued dedication and effort of our committee whose hard work has enabled our club to flourish over many years and on this special day allowed us to enjoy breakfast, a BBQ lunch, good fishing and most important of all the company of like-minded friends some of whom have known each other for many years.
So, it might just be apt to remind ourselves how it all began.

St. MICHAEL FLY FISHERS was originally formed 35 years ago by a group of Marks and Spencer employees who had shared a passion for fly fishing.

To this day we remain in touch with the founding Marks and Spencer roots and principles of sportsmanship, comradeship, a respect of the countryside and a love of our wonderful pastime.

I am sure you will agree it was something worth celebrating.

Bill Berloth Editor

ROCKBOURNE WINNERS AND PRIZES



Dave Haskins:
Best Bag. With the top weight
of
25lb 0oz. Wins a trophy

Dave Broome:
With a Rainbow of
12lb 10oz.
Wins a pack of flies

*(Dave Haskins had the best Rainbow of
the day at 13lbs 14oz but club rules mean
he could not take two prizes)*

Peter Burnett:
With a Rainbow of
11lb 1oz.
Wins a pack of flies

Secret Weight:
Charles Thomas wins £10

Lucky Draw Raffle
Brian Bloom: Day ticket for
Rockbourne
Alan Butler: Travel expenses
£30.00
Five other prizes
were won by members

Summer DeGraffam
With the best Brown of the
day
5lb 2oz.

Total No of anglers 25
**Total number of
fish caught 92**

Lynne, Summer & Linda
Were each presented
with a box of Chocolates
for herrrm ?????

Oh Yes...Being ladies!!
And bringing some
balance and much
needed charm to our
midst

GALLERY



A Little Tip:

Observe the fly life on the banks

While still water trout will happily take blob's, blue flash damsels, cat's whiskers, squirmy wormies and yellow dancers all day every day, they're going to predominantly be used to feeding upon naturals either in the water or landing upon the water.

It pays to observe and look at what's hatching on the banks if you spot flies touching the water or crawling around then do try switching to smaller more natural patterns. Unsurprisingly it's often very effective and if you can, then pull yourself away from the lures and the blob's.

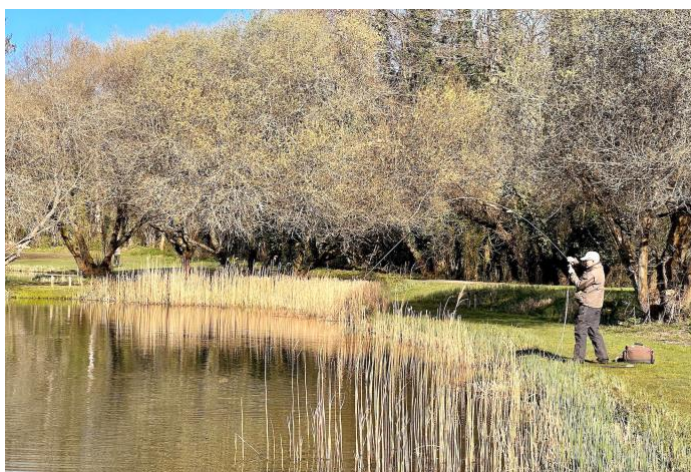
If you see flies around try matching the Hatch



GALLERY



GALLERY



You really must visit the St Michael fly fishers website to see these and more of Joe's great photos in more detail

