

SOUTHERN



The Newsletter of the Federation
of English Fly Fishers, Southern
Region (FEFFSR)

What an outstanding year 2010 has been for the Southern Federation. Membership has risen to 116 and we have attracted 37 new members. We had the greatest number of entrants, from any Federation, into both the Loch-Style and River Qualifiers; over 20% of the total numbers, making us the only Federation entitled to four delegates at the CEFF AGM. We will have 10 anglers competing in the Home Internationals next year, 4 of whom will be gaining their first England Caps (Ben Bangham, Harry Fox, Graham Lumsdon & David Wortley).



We also have John Horsey & Howard Croston in the World Team 2011 (Italy) and Baz Reece in the European Team (Czech Republic). Clive Collier has been elected Chairman of the CEFF.

Congratulations to those who did well in the competitions including: John Horsey of Hardy & Greys Team England who won Individual Bronze Medal at the World Championships in Poland. Howard Croston who captained Hardy & Greys Team England at the Rivers International on the Tees and achieved an emphatic victory; the top four places were all English with Simon Robinson becoming International Champion with a 'perfect' score. Tony Cosens and Jim Reid at Hayward's Farm; new member and Club Champion Chris Sherwood; Ben Bangham who became the National River Champion and Graham Lumsdon who came fifth on the Dee in August. Alan Williams, Nikki Long, Clive Collier, Baz Reece, John Horsey, Harry Fox, David Wortley and Andy Haskins for gaining places in the England Loch-Style Teams 2011. The Secretary awarded the 'Tom Carter Cup' to Malcolm Price. Malcolm works tirelessly helping me raise funds for the CEFF which, in turn, allows me to devote more time to the Southern Federation.



Inaugural Bank International: The inaugural Bank International was hosted by England in 2010, at Innis Trout Fishery in Cornwall. England won a closely fought competition with Ireland not far behind in second place. Simon Robinson added to his long list of angling achievements by becoming Individual Champion. Much of the ground work for this, long overdue, addition to the competition calendar was put in place by Alan Tonge & Richard Wood over the preceding 6 years. I know small still-water bank fishing is the preferred option for many of you but recent entries from the Southern Federation do not reflect this. Please support this competition in 2011.

Test River Qualifier, Saturday 20th February. Although I went through a worrying period when I only had 6 interested in competing, we eventually ended up with 18 entrants including a few 'first timers'. We arrived to find Robbie trying to thaw the gas bottle regulator so that we could boil the kettle and although the river bank looked very 'Christmas Cardish', the sun was trying to break through and it appeared as though we were in for a pleasant February day. After my brief, which included some rubbish about the tail feathers of a grayling? (my brain was obviously frozen too!), the morning session started with a great deal of enthusiasm & expectancy. Unfortunately, the grayling were much less enthusiastic and it wasn't until about 1100 that they started to cooperate. Even so, there were just 17 fish caught by the 9 anglers and, once again, lost fish were to prove costly. England Loch-Style angler Martin Burgess in his first river qualifier did well to register 6 fish with Richard Wood close on his heels with 5.



Historically, the afternoon session has proved to be more prolific but, on this occasion, not by that much. Ben Bangham, a vastly improved competition angler, led the way with 8 fish followed by Andy Croucher & Rob Thomas with 5 apiece. A total of 44 grayling were caught throughout the day. Relevant results: Morning Session: Martin Burgess 6 for 314pts, Richard Wood 5 for 281pts, Rob Wilson 2 for 111pts, Mark Withyman 2 for 108pts. Afternoon Session: Ben Bangham 8 for 400pts, Andy Croucher 5 for 284pts, Rob Thomas 5 for 268, Andy McMahon 4 for 193pts. Many thanks go to Ivy for the tea & coffee in the morning and the soup at lunchtime.

Spring Match, Haywards Farm, Theale, Sunday 28th March. Despite the awful forecast, the weather was probably as good as we could expect; overcast with occasional glimpses of the sun and the rain holding off until we were well on our way home. 36 club members, including 4 new members, had a great day out and, once again, Michael Stratton must be congratulated on his outstanding fishery and the superb quality of his fish. Quite a few rods were bending into fish early on and it was good to see that there was no particular 'hot spot'. By lunchtime there had been 110 fish caught and 19 anglers had 'bagged up'. The club provides a buffet lunch with wine at this event and, as always, Ivy did us proud. Despite second, third and a few fourth helpings there was plenty for everyone, and then some; once again, Marion kindly helped Ivy out with the final preparations. The auction had some interesting lots, the main two being fishing on exclusive waters: a day on the 'Wilderness' beat on the Kennet, kindly donated by Michael Stratton and a day on the Ebbel/Wylle, kindly donated by Stephen Millington. Fishing results: 1st Tony Cosens, 2nd Adrian Cole, 3rd Jim Reid, 4th Pat Damant, 5th Ron Davey; Jim also won the silver salver for the 'best bag' by an Honorary Life Member. The 'Best Fish' trophy was won by Dave Husein, a new member from the Army with a lovely Rainbow of 4lb 11oz and the 'Smallest Fish' trophy was won by Graham Lumsdon also from the Army; I'm sure he enjoyed the conversation in the car as they drove back to barracks

Loch-Style Qualifier, Bewl Water, Sunday 25th April. I had another infuriating year where I couldn't help but catch fish on the practice days but then struggled for takes on competition day!

There was a total of 104 fish caught by the 21 competitors for a rod average of 4.95. Qualifiers: Bob Shaw 8 for 21lb 2oz, Harry Fox 8 for 19lb, Clive Collier 8 for 18lb 6oz, Tony Fox 8 for 16lb 13oz, David Wortley 8 for 16lb 13oz: Reserve Lee Shergold; Clive Perkins had the Best Fish a 4lb 6oz Rainbow. Best lines were DI3 & Fast Glass and best flies were Nymphs & Boobies, although Tony had his fish on a floating line & Buzzers. Many thanks to Stephen Collins for helping with the results, Ivy for running the raffle and, to Bewl Water for providing us with tea, coffee & biscuits as well as supporting our raffle.



Loch-Style Qualifier, Chew Valley, Sunday 23rd May. Scorchio! Bright sunshine, high temperatures & little wind, plus tales of Chew being 'rock hard', resulted in a lot of the 41 competitors having concerned faces at breakfast. I fished, to even up the numbers, and was delighted to draw 'local' Nikki Long, he would know where the fish were. Sure enough, we headed straight for Walley Bank and would have had it to ourselves, if it hadn't been for the rest of the fleet being there too! First cast I had a fish on, but as I had put the rod down and was busily applying industrial quantities of Factor 25 sun cream, it was perhaps appropriate that it slipped off. Floaters or Midge Tip with nymphs and/or buzzers seemed to be the most successful method but it was never going to be easy and the pre-match forecast of 3 fish being enough to get you through, was largely correct. Once again, missed takes & dropped fish would prove to be costly.

Only 2 anglers 'bagged up' and some struggled all day without a take; a total of 89 fish were boated for a rod average of 2.2, with the best being rainbows of 3lb 1oz caught by Andy Haskins & Rob Honour. Qualifiers: John Humphry 8 fish for 19lb13oz, Mark Miles 8 for 17lb4oz, Tony Baldwin 5 for 9lb10oz, Nikki Long 4 for 9lb7oz, John Horsey 4 for 8lb, Alan Williams 4 for 7lb8oz, Rob Honour 3 for 7lb3oz, Andy Haskins 3 for 7lb2oz, Baz Reece 3 for 6lb5oz, Ron Tutt 3 for 6lb 4oz, Tim Balding 3 for 5lb10oz and Will Lear 3 for 5lb6oz; Reserve David Drake. No raffle because only 3 of the 41 competitors could be bothered to bring prizes! Once again, many thanks go to Alan Tonge and Iain Mackay for co-ordinating the results.

Pond Fishing, Wherwell, Saturday 29th May and Monday 14th June. At last ...enough takers to have two days and not disappoint anybody. The fishing, as usual, was not too demanding and the fish were in excellent condition, albeit not as big an average size as in the past. Almost any flies worked but, once again, David Wortley out-fished everyone on the Saturday. This year the weather was not good enough to eat outside on either day but the cold roast turkey & ham (pork and peppered salami on Mon) with new potatoes & various salads followed by tiramisu & cream and cheese board and biscuits made very pleasant lunch-time breaks. Ivy & I had to leave soon after lunch on the Saturday as we also had the catering contract for our Grandson's 18th in the evening!

Southern Federation Championships, Bewl Water, Sunday 4th July. Although, up to the previous week, the fishing had been quite good at Bewl, the long period of very hot weather had finally driven the fish very deep. To add to our problems, there was a very strong wind blowing all day which made fishing in some exposed areas most uncomfortable; in hindsight I should have allowed anchoring however, in my defence, those boats I saw anchored were not catching either. Just 4 fish were caught between the 19 of us for a rod average of 0.21.

Results: 1st Chris Sherwood 2 fish for 4lb 4oz, 2nd John Ball 1 for 1lb 15oz, 3rd Bob Shaw 1 for 1lb 6oz; probably our worst outing, ever! To add to our woes, the queues on the A21 & M25 going home were horrendous ...roll on Wimbleball next year. Many thanks to Tony Buckland for again compiling the results (not over-taxing this year) and to Malcolm Price for raffle ticket sales.

National Rivers Final, River Dee, 2nd & 3rd August. We provided 9 of the finalists this year: Ben Bangham, Martin Burgess, Andy Croucher, Jay Curry, David Drake, Graham Lumsdon, Andrew McMahon, Baz Reece & Robert Wilson. Little rainfall for the preceding months meant the Dee was very low and many of the competitors found practice difficult. Warmer weather on the competition days turned the grayling on to dries and this plus the duo proved to be the best methods.

There were 277 trout & grayling in excess of 20cm caught by the 32 anglers over the two days with the best being 43.1cm. Ben fished brilliantly to take 21 measurers to become the 2010 National River Champion and Graham had 12 to finish in fifth place, both will gain their first Caps representing England in Ireland 2011. Other Southern Region placings were: 12th 14th 19th 20th 27th 28th & 32nd.

Southern Federation v Kingsbridge Heavyweights v Pheasant Flyfishers v Ringwood Flydressers, Blagdon, Sunday 22nd August.

Despite an adverse weather forecast, it was a case of 'more of the same' with weather & water conditions almost identical to last year. Light breezes from various directions and warm enough for us to sit outside to eat. The fishing was challenging but if you found a pod you could usually tempt one or two. Andy Miles was the only one to 'bag up' (by lunchtime!!) and seven unfortunately blanked. Intermediate lines with nymphs, buzzers and particularly Damsels were the most productive methods with the Dam and Pipe Bay the best areas. I fished with Nick Parish (RF) who was in the bow of the boat. Whilst my elevated position gave me unparalleled views over the reservoir, getting the propeller deep enough to 'bite' proved a problem.



As always, the lunchtime get together was probably the highlight of the day! Relevant results: 1st Kingsbridge Heavyweights 41 fish for 78lb4oz, 2nd Southern Federation 31 for 57lb3oz, 3rd Pheasant Flyfishers 22 for 42lb6oz, 4th Ringwood Flydressers 12 for 23lb. Individuals: Joint 1st Jay Curry (KH) & David Wortley (SF) 7 for 13lb8oz, 3rd Andy Miles (SF) 8 for 13lb5oz, 4th John Ball (KH) 7 for 12lb14oz. Tony Hill (PF) had the best fish a 3lb2oz Rainbow. The 36 anglers had 106 fish for a rod average of 2.94.

History is made when Jay Curry becomes the first angler to underestimate the size of 'the one that got away'.

National Loch-Style Final, Chew Valley, Saturday 25th September. We provided 19 of the finalists this year, having fluffed my chance of qualifying at Bewl I was relegated to doing fly checks! Practice days varied, Thursday was warm and the fish on top, Friday was cooler with a northerly wind and not so many fish showing. Competition day was cooler still and although the majority went out on floaters, intermediates & sinkers were soon appearing...the fishing proved to be very testing. The Dam and Woodford were the most popular areas but as the day progressed some boats moved further afield to seek the elusive fish.

One angler 'bagged up' nineteen blanked and the rest were spread fairly evenly in between. A total of 219 fish were caught between the 100 anglers for a rod average of 2.19 with the best fish a rainbow of 3lb14¼. Alan Williams, top Southern rod in 3rd, Nikki Long 4th, Clive Collier 13th, Baz Reece 14th, John Horsey 15th, Harry Fox 19th, David Wortley 23rd and Andy Haskins 26th all gained places in the England Teams to fish in 2011. Other Southern Region placings were: 30th 31st 34th 40th 46th 47th 58th 61st 68th & 2 at 100th.