

The fact that you have clicked on this link shows you have more than a passing interest in tackling the clubs waters on the River Dane. The purpose of this article is to offer advice and guidance on how you may develop that interest further and hopefully avoid disappointment and risk on the way to enjoying some excellent fishing. I have exclusively fished the WDAA stretch of the Dane for over 2 years now and, after struggling to acclimatise to the fishing environment on offer, I feel I have learned some useful information to help me in my fishing. I hope that by sharing my knowledge it helps you achieve some success and if you only appreciate one or two of the tips I give then I will consider my time to have been well spent.

I should perhaps be honest and state that I generally fish for Barbel and my tackle and baits will exclude me from catching most other species by accident. The only species I tend to catch other than Barbel are Chub but the following article is not intended to explain how to catch any particular species, it is designed simply to offer help in overcoming the practical difficulties faced in fishing our particular stretch of river regardless of the species you are likely to fish for.

### The River

Originally my own fishing on the river took place many years ago on the upper reaches where it runs over rocky terrain with only a few sandy bends where depth can be found. In these areas the banks slope to the river, the river runs quite clear, swim selection is easy and comfort is not a problem. The fish were relatively easy to catch but in those days did not reach any great size. Once the river passes through Holmes Chapel and under the M6 crossing it changes quite dramatically. The river starts to carve its way through a valley of sandier terrain creating deep channels and, as a result steep, cliff like banks. The river becomes more coloured and has greater overall depth, the bank-side undergrowth becomes denser and the fishable areas change almost every time there is a spate. On the plus side however, the fish do reach better sizes and Barbel become less elusive. By the time it enters WDAA's stretch, the river has become wilder and more difficult to fish and it requires a far different approach to that which would be needed for, say, the lower Weaver. In fact you must be prepared to step outside your comfort zone if you wish to tackle our stretch of the Dane. You must be willing to assess even your clothing as well as your tackle and your approach to fishing.

The WDAA water on the river is continuous but splits into 3 sections. The most logical place to start is the car park for the Croxton Trail as described in the club card as it sits as close to the centre point as is possible. The upstream length from Croxton Road Bridge to the confluence with the River Croco is known locally as Bullocks Meadow. (Don't worry, I have only seen cattle in the meadow once in 10 years and they were cows). There is a single field downstream from Croxton Road Bridge to the Trent and Mersey Aqueduct, which forms a barrier to further progress. To access the lower stretch it is necessary to return to the car park and use the ramp down to the canal bank and then walk along the canal and across the Aqueduct. At this point turn left into the first field and that is the start of a continuous winding length of river that stretches for approx. 2 miles. Within this first field there is the confluence with the River Wheelock and by following the river around the field the fishable length ends at a large bend adjacent to a white bridge on the canal. One needs to get back onto the canal towpath, turn left, and walk past Croxton Flash and across the new slipway until a small pathway appears on the left. Go down into this field and restart following the river. This is a single field which leads into a narrow tree lined section through into a huge expanse of fields that seem to stretch forever. At this point you are entering the unknown, as it is most unlikely that many members have fished beyond this point and, if they have, they have kept quiet about it.

From the Aqueduct to the extreme limit of our stretch is known as the Bostock section and any fishing from the opposite bank is controlled by PAAS. On Bullocks Meadow and the Centre Field at Croxton no other club has the opposite bank.

### Go Prepared

The most important piece of advice I can give you is to visit the river and walk the banks before you visit to fish. Doing this will allow you to understand the distances involved, the access points and all the other problems you will encounter. You can identify likely looking areas, judge how you can access them and even create a swim or two of your own to try.

I mentioned before the steepness of the banks and the denseness of the bank-side undergrowth and I urge you to remember these aspects before you set off. No angling club could possibly build permanent comfortable swims on a river that so frequently floods nor could any club control the bank-side undergrowth throughout a season. My advice to you is therefore obvious. Do not visit the river wearing training shoes, shorts or other flimsy clothing. The meadows are little grazed and their primary purpose is for occasional mowings throughout the summer months to provide winter food for cattle. This means the fields are left to grow and inappropriate footwear, including walking boots, will become sodden within minutes. Always wear footwear that offers protection to the lower leg or, if you do have waterproof walking boots, also use gaiters, which are available from GO OUTDOORS at a reasonable price. I advise against wearing waders as they are uncomfortable to walk long distances in and you will not be wading the river anyway. Wellingtons are similarly uncomfortable and my preference is for Derri Boots. You do need stout trousers to ward off the nettle stings so be warned.

If this sounds a bit obvious I apologise but last summer whilst fishing on Bullocks Meadow I listened to a chap wearing shorts and trainers (and towing a mountain of gear) who complained that he couldn't get near the river. He stated that the committee should arrange to clear the banks to make the river more accessible! He wasn't the only person who complained to me and comments like "its too peggy" and "there aren't any swims" also featured. Well, I can tell you that at the time of these complaints I was aware of 18 swims of varying types on Bullocks Meadow alone. 10 swims were old swims that either needed some repair or were immediately fishable and 8 swims that I had personally dug and were very fishable. On one occasion I told a complainer this and he responded by saying "well I can't see them". This close season and early summer I will be repairing as many swims as I can but some effort will always be needed to find them due to the dense undergrowth lining the banks. Down on the Bostock fields I play it by ear. I either drop onto a fishable area right away or spend a few minutes creating one on arrival and you must be prepared to do this or repair an existing swim wherever you fish on the Dane because the banks are constantly changing.

The two most essential items of kit I carry with me at all times are a small folding saw and a lightweight shovel. They needn't cost much. My saw was from Lidl and cost £2.99 and they will soon have them in stock for the spring. This item is perfect for trimming awkward branches and for slashing through nettles and balsam to get to the river-bank. My shovel is a simple kids item bought again for £2.99 this time from Asda. I have dug out or repaired many swims and cut steps down steep cliffs with this item, which is excellent for the job. The collapsible spades from camping stores are quite heavy so it is best to avoid them.

You should aim to always travel as light as possible. Trim everything down to absolute essentials and forget barrows, boxes and mega holdalls. Leave the keepnet at home and unless you are going for an extended period forget flasks and packed lunches too. Kilos of groundbait are not needed either. Always remember that there are styles to climb, fences to crawl under, bushes to squeeze through and rough fields to cross. Navigating around the river will be very tedious if you are carrying excessive amounts of tackle. I repeat, take only absolute essentials.

What do I take? I have an old quiver containing a made up rod, a telescopic landing net pole with spreader fitted and a 36" bow frame landing net, 2 steel bankstick's, a small plain golf umbrella and my shovel. I carry a Chub lightweight low chair and have a small ruckbag containing the other items I need like tackle box, scales, weigh sling, weigh mat, baits, catapult etc etc. I am 64 and have no problem carrying my gear for long distances so neither should you if you travel similarly light.

### Advance Knowledge and Planning

I am fortunate that I live within sight of the river valley but not everyone is so lucky. It is therefore handy to know what is happening on the river before you decide whether to visit. As the Dane is a spate river it is influenced by rainfall near its source in the hills around Buxton. The influx of additional water from the Rivers Croco and Wheelock also influence matters but they rise through local rainfall so those conditions are easier to judge. If you have a smartphone then it is worth using a weather app and list Buxton on it. This should give an idea of what rainfall is occurring or is predicted for that area.

The other useful tool is the website page for the EA River Levels Station at Rudheath. You can access the report by typing this name into Google and once the page comes up bookmark it for easy return. If you have a smartphone you can do the same thing so you are not dependant on a PC. Knowing how to interpret the information is very important so what follows should help.

The levels station is not telling you the depth of the river, it is telling you its height. On the right hand column of the report you will see the station height is shown as 13.19m AOD. This means 13.19m Above Ordnance Datum. Ordnance Datum is sea level. So a reading of 0.50m in the left hand report box means the river is currently 13.19m + 0.50m above sea level. The graph at the bottom of the page gives a 48hr history of levels up to the time of the most recent reading and readings are taken, on average, every 3 hours. This graph will show whether the trend is that the river is falling, rising or has been stable. Beneath the graph is a row of times when the height of the river has been recorded. The old adage 'never fish a rising river' is not always true but it usually is. What you should aim for is a falling river or a period when levels have been static across a few reporting time points.

Of course this information is not of much use unless you can relate it to a fixed point on the river and for our purposes I will use Croxton Weir. If the river is flowing so strongly that the weir is invisible then it is not worthwhile attempting to fish Bullocks Meadow. All the swims will be underwater. The centre field at Croxton will be fishable with care as will the lower stretch below the Aqueduct. Please bear in mind that at these times the banks will have converted to slimy clay so great care must be taken if attempting to fish. When the river is rippling on top of the weir the Rudheath levels station will be recording a height of 0.65m and when it is a foot below the weir, so that the weir is clearly visible, the levels station will be recording 0.58m. All the swims on Bullocks Meadow will be above water and fishable with care when the level is recording 0.50m or less.

When the river has risen so the height is recorded as 1.8m or above it will have flooded large parts of Bullocks Meadow and the field immediately below the Aqueduct and if anyone has any doubts about the foregoing information this highlights a perfect example of why you should not mistake the river height for the river depth. Immediately below the River Croco confluence is a sweeping bend bordered by steep sandstone cliffs. I have plumbed the depth of water here as 9' when the river is at normal summer level. The cliffs themselves are 16' high from the surface of the water. When the river floods and spills into the Meadow the combined depth at this point will be 25' (8.0m) however the river levels station will be reporting 1.8m or a little above.

### Useful Tips

There are a number of useful tips I can pass on which may make a difference to whether you land your catch or not. They are really aimed toward those who may wish to fish for Barbel or Chub for the first time so forgive me if your interest is in other species.

- The fashion of having your rod pointed skywards when Barbel fishing is mostly un-necessary. The logic behind the method is that by raising the rod tip it reduces the amount of line in the water so as to reduce the risk of debris collecting on the line and dragging the bait out of position. If you fish the centre line or the nearside then this isn't such an issue. Raising the rod tips does not improve bite detection and in fact, unless you are using bait-runner reels with the facility set to ON or have the clutch screwed to the slackest settings on other reel types, the downward force exerted by a taking Barbel against a locked reel can suddenly pivot the rod handle upward so that if you are not quick you could lose your rod and reel. If using this method you must ensure that the length of rod behind the rest is greater than that on the river side of the rest and always push the rodrest well down into the riverbank so there is no risk of it being pulled forward and dislodging if a vicious take occurs. Personally I never use this method as I don't consider it bird friendly and there are other alternative areas I prefer to fish. I always fish with my rod at right angles to the position of my bait and have the rod pointed slightly toward the water.

- Never ignore the nearside bank. There does seem to be an obsession with fishing the far bank, be it on stillwater's or rivers. Thinking logically, the far bank is the one opposite to where you are now fishing but if you were fishing from the opposite bank then the far bank becomes the one you are sat on now. Fish do not understand the concept of the 'far bank' they simply visit everywhere there is likely to be food and there can be an abundance of food available against either bank. When you put your bait/feed in then you increase the attractiveness of that particular bankside area. Fishing the nearside bank is easier. You need less weight, casting becomes a more accurate underhand flick, bites can be more savage and loose feed can be presented more accurately by hand. I rarely fish the far bank unless it offers considerably greater potential than the nearside bank.
- Always use front rod rests that have sides higher than your rod when the rod is in the rest. Do not use rests where the rod is perched on top of the rest. Takes from Barbel and big Chub can be quite savage so rods must be secure in the rest and the rest itself pushed solidly into the bank. A taking fish will exert strong sideways force hence the need for rodrest arms that will hold the rod in position.
- Never attach your ledger weight directly to your reel line. This is the most likely item to snag so between the ledger and the main line there should be a link of line that is of a lesser breaking strain than the main line.
- After casting out slacken the clutch of the reel or switch the baitrunner facility to the on position regardless of how your rod is positioned. Immediately after you strike into a fish it will make a powerful run and an overly tightened clutch could leave you flat rodded instantly.

### The Fish

Most of you will be aware that in 2005 the river suffered a pollution incident. Pollution flowed down the River Croco and into the Dane at the head of our stretch and there was a heavy loss of fish life. There were survivors though and soon after the fish kill some of the larger Barbel were caught. Re-stockings took place in 2006 and now the river is coming back toward its previous standard. Grayling are being caught which is always an indicator of good water quality and minnows, another indicator of good water and although a pest at times, are also in abundance again. The other usual river species are also present including Eels although they are more likely to be encountered below the Wheelock confluence.

As the pollution moved downstream its effect would have been gradually diluted and the added water from the River Wheelock would have further reduced its strength. It is quite possible that in our lower stretch of the river the pollution had minimal affect therefore fish stocks in those parts are unlikely to have been reduced.

That the river is back in excellent condition was seen this summer in the amount of 2 or 3 year old fingerlings all over the river and in some areas this years fry was very evident. What species this fry was is impossible for me to say but what it shows is that we have fish stocks mature enough to spawn and, despite some heavy floods, we are getting a good level of fry survival.

The Chub are of a larger average size than in the higher river and 4lb fish are not uncommon. Clearly there will be much larger specimens particularly in the quieter, lower stretches and it is very possible that there are some huge Chub present.

The Barbel stocks in the river are from two known sources. The original (pre-2005) fish were from River Severn stock and they are characterised by being lighter and more silver in appearance with faded red fins. It will be a fish from this original stock that holds the current club record of 10lb -10oz and the documented river record of 14lb - 04oz caught in 1994 from the Cotton Farm section of the river immediately upstream of the M6 crossing. This latter fish was likely to have been part of a migrant population of fish that had moved downstream from Cranage Weirpool and I know that the weirpool fish were Severn fish. There are mentions on a couple of out of date angling forums of a 12lb fish having been caught from our water around 2007 but there is no firm evidence to suggest that this was a factual capture. That is not to say that such fish do not exist. If fish that were over 10lb in 2005 survived the pollution and have continued to grow at a modest 4oz a year they would be 12lb now. A growth rate of 8oz per year would make them 14lb. The truth is non of us know just how big some of the Barbel are but the river is rich in food and given that Barbel in some rivers have achieved a growth rate of 1lb per year then is it really impossible to think that Barbel of 14lb could exist in the Dane? A similar situation exists with Chub. If fish to almost 5lb are catchable from the river within the previously polluted area then how big are they downstream where the pollution had less serious effect?

The newer Barbel, introduced in 2006, were from Hampshire Avon stock and are quite different in appearance. They have richly coloured red fins and an olive hue to their body. The 2006 stockings of barbel were spread between various points on the river so this seeding supplemented the surviving stock. The new fish appear to be doing well and, after studying my own photos, I see that this past season I caught a fish of 9lb-04ozs from this stock. Assuming the fish was around 2lb when stocked in 2006 this indicates a potential growth rate of 1lb per year. Another Avon strain fish this year weighed 6lb-12oz to suggest a 6oz per year growth so although the actual growth rate clearly varies between fish the average rate of growth seems sufficient to allow the 2006 stock fish to grow to attractive sizes in a short time.

I have no desire to upset anyone but compared to say Carp I do believe Barbel are more difficult to catch. Carp are usually captive in an enclosed water with few places to hide and do develop strong preferences for certain areas. Once such an area is found then they are quite catchable, often on a number of occasions. Barbel are different in that they have a river to roam in. They can develop preferences for certain areas but they will quickly move from them if they feel under threat. Barbel can be nomadic and a fish caught on Saturday can be a half-mile downstream on Sunday. In terms of sport, whereas Carp largely rely on their body weight to try and escape from the hook and the fight can quickly become a matter of hauling in a dead weight, Barbel are sleek muscular fish used to constantly fighting the river current and once hooked they use that current as part of their escape plan. A fight from a decent Barbel is really something to be experienced and once you have netted the fish, believe me, you will sometimes be glad the fight is over. Barbel (and Salmon) are our only indigenous species that really can make your arm ache! Another couple of positives are that it is unlikely you will experience repeat captures of the same fish and when you do land one someone won't look over your shoulder as you weigh it and say "Oh, its Bent Tail" or whatever other name takes your fancy.

## Tackle

Over the past two years I have met various anglers who had set out their stall for anything that came along. Based upon their tackle and methods they were seeking to amass a decent catch of fish and from what I saw they were doing well. In a few cases the anglers reported they had been dinking out small Roach and Dace with the odd Chub when all of a sudden they had hooked a fish they could not stop and it snapped them. Obviously a Barbel was the culprit. I think this really points to the logic of knowing exactly what fish you are going to target when fishing the river. Barbel will not be landed on light tackle and small fish will not often be caught on heavier tackle intended for Barbel. I mentioned before that I personally fish for Barbel so I use tackle I consider appropriate for the job. When I started to fish our stretches I fished for anything that came along but still used 6lb line and the first Barbel I hooked snapped me. I upped to 8lb line and the next one straightened my hook. I hooked another on 8lb line and it snapped me. I upped again to 10lb and changed to a stronger pattern hook and I have only lost one fish since and that was a fish which came off whilst I was playing it; meaning it was not hooked properly in the first place. Now, the only species I catch other than Barbel are Chub and I am happy with that. I don't want to leave any fish trailing tackle so I have settled on tackle up to the task of fishing the river at various levels of flow and believe I have a very good chance of landing everything I hook.

There is another old adage I have heard and it goes 'if Barbel grew as big as Carp we wouldn't land them'. Well, given that the Carp record is currently over 60lb I think I could agree with that. We often make lives difficult for ourselves and, in truth; there is no need for anything elaborate or overly specialised in the tackle you use if Barbel are your chosen target. Personally I use an 11ft 1.5 test curve carbon rod matched to a Mitchell 2250 reel. If I ever have need to replace this rod I will probably opt for a 1.75lb version. They no longer make my reel, and I don't think it was very popular at the time, but I feel it was the best model that Mitchell ever made. The clutch is the smoothest I have ever used and the settings are very precise. Bite alarms or indicators are totally un-necessary. Barbel, like other species, will often betray their presence by hitting the line when they move over your baited area. Often this will be just before a take occurs and so that I am alert to this possibility I use a simple visual indicator to help me see these knocks and pulls. I have glued a small strip of metal (a piece of a small split pin) above the top eye of my rod. This strip has a short upward bend in it and I have glued a piece of plastic sweetcorn over the end. Couldn't be simpler! I use 10lb line (olive green) and Solar stronghold hooks in size 10 or 12. My 'bomb' length is made up of some old 4lb line. I never carry ledgers above 1oz in weight and most often use 1/2oz. The only other item worth mentioning is the landing net. I use an extending handle teamed to a 36" bow frame net. I was using a 30" net but the first decent Barbel I landed showed me the net frame was too small. The only modification I employed was to shorten the mesh depth to help avoid it becoming tangled in underwater twigs etc. Although this tackle has landed Dane Barbel to 10lb+ I am confident it would handle much bigger fish. It is also worth noting that your tackle is tested severely every time a decent fish is hooked so it is essential that the best knots are used. I attach hooks using the knotless knot and other items using the Clinch knot or Palomar knot. None of these have ever let me down so they can be used with confidence.

## Fish Welfare

We are used to handling fish carefully and ensuring they are returned in good condition but bigger specimens need to be handled even more carefully. Large Chub recover swiftly after capture and after a short recovery period in the landing net will go back to the river strong enough to survive. Barbel however are different and much greater caution is needed to ensure they survive the experience of capture.

If you have spent a great amount of effort in catching a Barbel the last thing you want to do is anything that would see it come to harm. Barbel give everything in the battle to escape capture. Immediately after netting they are weak and would be quite unable to combat the current if released too soon. The last thing you should do is hoist the fish onto the bank for unhooking, weighing and photography. The correct procedure is to leave the fish in the landing net whilst you sort out your items for unhooking, weighing etc. Ensure the fish is out of the main current, faces the flow of water and is upright. It is a good idea to use a spare bankstick to hold the landing net in position while doing all of this. The fish has recovered when it supports itself and is showing signs of wishing to swim against the flow of water. It would now be safe to lift the landing net from the water and lay it on a soft unhooking mat before extracting the hook, slipping the fish into a sling and weighing it. Take a photo by all means but have everything prepared in advance so it all becomes a smooth exercise. After all of this lift the landing net into the water and go through the earlier steps of giving the fish time to recover again. I would allow a minimum of 10 minutes for this last recovery period. Once you are satisfied beyond doubt that the fish can safely return to the river simply submerge the net and allow it to swim free.

Barbel, despite their potential size and definite strength are very fragile after capture. Please respect them for the sport they have given and could give you or someone else in the future. Also bear in mind that the next time you catch it, it could weigh considerably more. Be patient with them, allow them to fully recover before allowing them to return to their environment.

Lastly on this issue, please, please do not retain Barbel in a keepnet. A Barbel's dorsal fin spike can easily snare in the mesh and in its struggle to free itself the fish can tire and become twisted and trapped with its tail toward the current. If this happens the fish can easily drown and if this occurs in a submerged keepnet you would not be aware of it. It goes without saying that Carp sacks are a totally inappropriate means of retaining fish in running water and should never be used on rivers for any fish at all.

## Predation

It may seem an odd item to mention but predation on the river is increasing with each year. Gooseanders are increasing in numbers, there are a large number of Cormorants, the Dane valley is infested with Mink and now Otters have arrived. I am aware of 3 populations of Otters at this time (Jan 2014). Two I have personally witnessed and one I have been told about by a trusted source. One population is upstream from the River Croco confluence but may have been moved due to work involving heavy plant machinery being done on the opposite bank by the landowner. I have visited the area twice recently and failed to see Otter tracks on the sand banks so they could have moved upstream. The work on the opposite bank has extended for a good way down river and started opposite where the Otters were last seen by me. I suspect and hope they will have moved upstream to get away from the disturbance. The unfortunate thing is that the work will soon stop and then once peace is restored they could return and move downriver to threaten the Bullocks Meadow length. There is another population of Otters that reside on the bend of the river adjacent to the white cattle bridge at the downstream end of the first field on the Bostock length.

I have seen spraint (droppings) under the canal bridge suggesting they prey on Croxton Flash as well as the river and I have seen them in the river on the bend itself. The Eel population of this bend appears to have disappeared however Steve Beech fished their recently and caught a few Chub and I have not been able to detect Otter tracks on the sandbank on my last 3 visits. It was noticeable this last summer that the amount of waterfowl gathering to nest on Croxton Flash was a lot less than previous years and the Goslings born late April were all lost. I doubt Otters will have left this area completely as there are rich pickings for them in the canal, Croxton Flash and the river. The third population of Otters is downriver in the 'unknown' territory toward the extreme limit of our fishing. My source for this information is a local chap with interests in wildlife and he has hidden cameras in place to film their activity. Naturally he doesn't wish to divulge the exact location and I have to respect this.

Waterfowl can fly so we have no chance of limiting their access to our waters and predation by them tends to be seasonal but Otters are a different proposition entirely.

Please accept that to gain access to introduce Otters on the river means someone has trespassed onto private farmland and has introduced them without the riparian owners consent. If they explode in numbers and denude the fish stock so that the fishing becomes unattractive to fishing clubs means the riparian owner could face a long term loss of income, the fishing clubs a loss of investment in the fish they have stocked and all the anglers who fished the river a loss of amenity. All of these have a monetary value yet the interfering amateurs who are responsible are never brought to book for the damage they have caused. It is therefore vital that if you come into receipt of information regarding who is responsible for seeding Otters to the Dane or Weaver, in the area we hold the fishing rights, you should pass that information to club officials even if you do so anonymously. Similarly if you sight Otters anywhere on the river please report it to the Fisheries Team. Knowing where Otters are is a valuable first step in our being able to monitor the damage they do.

If anyone has any doubts about the indiscriminate damage Otters can do to fish stocks (and ground nesting water fowl) they should visit the website for the Predation Action Group. Carp anglers to their credit are at the forefront of bringing this problem into the open and they deserve the support of all other anglers in their efforts. Some of the finest Chub and Barbel fishing in the UK has already been lost to Otter predation and it is in our own interests to keep a watchful eye on both the Dane and the Weaver so we are at least aware if we have a problem.

#### Last Items

If you have got to this point then thank you for reading this article. I sincerely hope it has been of some help and gives you encouragement to visit the River Dane and try and catch some of its residents.

You will see that I have not mentioned where on the river I have caught Barbel. That is deliberate because I have fished a great many swims over the last 2 years and found only a certain number to have produced fish. In the coming season the unproductive areas could change again and become productive so if I were to say specifically where I have caught fish it really would not help you. It is a case of trying various swims until you find one that produces the goods. Certain swims produce Dace and Roach and some do not. Chub have favourite lairs but can come from anywhere and Barbel are very unpredictable throughout. What I have done however is tell both the Secretary and Fisheries Officer about the fish I have caught. I have not actually told them where I caught them but they need to know how fish stocks are doing in order to monitor the success of previous stockings or to assess whether additional stocks may be necessary. It is not necessary to divulge the specific swim where you caught fish but passing a simple e-mail to a club official to report a catch is very important and please I am not talking about any specific species here nor am I restricting it to specimen sized fish, it applies to catches of any fish because if one counts; they all count!

There is one final item I would ask you to consider. I personally feel it is very disrespectful to the club that has provided us with the fishing opportunity in the first place to discover news of our catches in a third party fashion on the grapevine, from the press or any other form of media before we have notified the club ourselves. For us to behave in this manner is a disservice to the club because withholding such information is unhelpful to the Fisheries Team in that it deprives them of valuable information and undermines their efforts to provide sport for everyone. Please be open about your catches but of course you may be discreet about the finer detail of precisely where on the river you had success.

Good luck and thanks for reading this.

Tight Lines

Kevin McNeil