



# Trout Reports

## Brick Farm Lakes Herstmonceux, East Sussex

I had a dream last night; well it was more of a nightmare actually! I was alone at Brick Farm Lakes with dozens of children! They started arriving in large groups, with adults but none of them having fly fished before, all trying to hire rods, ask questions (without stopping to listen to the answer), eat picnics, play with kittens... as I say it was a nightmare! I was trying desperately to remain professional, keep calm and sort them out but it wasn't working. All my training at Plumpton could not have prepared me for the circumstances I found myself in. No one wanted to pay any money for anything, no one had any glasses or hats and all the kids were dressed in flip-flops, shorts and short sleeved tops. I tried in vain to gather them together and sit them down quietly but they were screaming and running around! I was trying to talk Health and Safety to the adults and issue life vests but realising we were woefully under equipped and when a large troupe of boy scouts arrived that was the final straw I'm afraid to say I flipped. I have to keep reminding myself it was JUST A DREAM. I went through every emotion you could think of and awoke utterly exhausted but at least I knew at once what to write about today!

CHILDREN... the little darlings! I know all about them, I am a Mum and have helped out at school with dinner lady, book reading and Christmas Grotto duties in my time... (I'm so sorry to mention the "C" word!) How to get them fly fishing is another matter altogether. Officially we are supposed to keep them SAFE, make it FUN and, if possible, just on a one-to-one basis with the adult present at all times. Without a doubt, the key thing is their age. I have found from years of experience that kids under the age of sixteen struggle with learning to cast. I have tried roll cast, overhead cast and the "tick-tock" methods and have found good and bad issues with each. Kids tend to expect it to be an instant skill that they can master, losing focus, attention and interest very quickly when they realise what is involved. Going back to age, children under sixteen lack the coordination necessary. We all know that fly fishing is not about being tall and strong. The little ones of say eight or nine struggle to even hold a rod (weighing a few ounces) for any length of time and toddlers anywhere around the lakes is a definite no-no! Having lived through another school holiday season I have now have set myself a new set of rules to which I **MUST** adhere. Children **MUST** be taught on a one-to-one basis. When you have even two, as nice, polite and lovely as they are, they do not do what you are telling them! Just as I leave one to retrieve, "slowly with rod tip pointed to the water", I go to spend time with the next child and within seconds the first has lifted the rod and is swinging it wildly around their head in an effort to cast, always resulting in hooking up in a tree or bush to be untangled! Then there is the problem of them constantly removing their eye protection. You start off with them equipped as they should be but within a matter of a few minutes you look up to see their glasses perched on top of their head to look cool with a glib response of "I can't see with them on". My next rule is that I will cast for them. I have realised that kids can learn more from watching someone than trying to cast for themselves and failing (as indeed is the case with some adults)! The FUN part is hooking a fish and this is the part the kids have come for after all. They expect results, (as indeed do some adults) so, to encourage them to stick with it into their old age, I **MUST** try my hardest to get them a fish and not concentrate too much on desperately teaching them to cast the line. They need to feel the weight of the line with a fish on it and I need to show them the dispatching... children need to realise this is a blood sport and where their food comes from.

There! My dream has re-focused my coaching of children rules. I have been very tempted at times this year to say "That's it! No more kids!" I have sought the advice of other coaches only to be met with responses I cannot let go to print. So I know it is not "just me". You do occasionally and very rarely, (it has happened only once for me), have a young one who has the knack and just simply get "IT". They picked up the rod and right before my amazed eyes were quickly double hauling! You could have knocked me down with a wet copy of the informer! I could have had a lesson from them! So, never assume anything! Young David Carden of the Eastbourne and District Fly Fishers Club learnt from a tireless and wonderful Grandma, Mary, from a very early age who had David at the water's edge weekend after weekend, spending so much time encouraging him. He has recently won: the Casting trophy for time-limited casting into hoops, scoring five as to everyone else's one or two... accuracy casting to a log with five casts beating everyone by hundreds of centimetres... and ... distance



Young angler ready for his second lesson

casting to his dad's wallet, casting so far he was down to the backing and nearly in the oak tree! So, lesson... be patient... don't ever give up on them! They are all worth it!

Ahh yes, I nearly forgot... Fishing at the Lakes here has taken off again with gusto! We are well into the wonderful autumn period when the nights are cool, the lakes are cold and fully stocked, the water levels are returning to normal, and the fish are hungry and hard fighting. The majority of anglers are catching a full bag and returning for a second ticket. Amazing arrays of flies have been fooling the trout so maybe it's a good time to treat yourself to a six fish ticket!? Finishing work is continuing on the new lake and progress is good! We are back on schedule now to hopefully put the first fish in the first half of 2019 - water levels permitting. We can't wait!

*Tight lines Annie and yours truly.*

## Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

The Trout are starting to feed on Lake 3 (in particular) now that the weather is starting to cool down and therefore colder at night. The fish are about a foot under the surface feeding on fry. It has been challenging fishing because we have been enjoying an Indian Summer and the days have been very bright. The evening rise has produced some exciting fishing with good sized fish being caught. Carl Wheelhouse, who was new to our Fishery, caught a 5lb 8oz Rainbow which fought well for him and he enjoyed his day out with his 7 cousins making the most of our new Fishing Lodge and its facilities. All the Lakes are fully stocked with Rainbows, Brown and Blues and we hope that as we move into Autumn (as you can see from our photos) the colours in the trees are starting to change that fishing will return to normality for the time of year. We have done a lot of Fishery maintenance whilst we were closed this Summer opening up the swims and cutting trees back etc to make casting easier for our Anglers.

Fishing Tuition has been very popular this year at the Fishery - this can be the perfect present for some special who wants to learn a new skill set. To book a lesson with Richard Stokes please visit the Tuition Page on our website. We can provide Gift Vouchers too for permits and/or tuition please email Gaynor for details on our website.



Lake 1



Lake 2

We look forward to welcoming you this Autumn.

*Tight Lines, Gaynor*



Lake 3

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