

Cressbrook & Litton Flyfishers

Fishing Report

16 April 2016

I'd been watching the weather forecast carefully all week and it was looking like Saturday might just be the day. Rain was forecast in the morning but it was due to clear rapidly and by mid morning we were told to expect the beginnings of a pleasant Spring day. Wrong! It was still raining at lunchtime and the little stream at the bottom of my garden was beginning to colour up. However, I noticed that there were a few Large Dark Olives on the wing. My mind was made up.

The EA Flood Warning web page for Buxton showed that the river was starting to rise but the Ashford gauge was as yet unaffected. A quick glance at the river in Miller's Dale confirmed that it was up and dirty so I carried on down to the Locked Bridge. The river was carrying a bit of colour but it looked eminently fishable. By now, about 2.30, the sun had started to shine and I was concerned that I might have missed the rise. I went downstream and set up my new Sunray 10ft 2 weight at the little seat below the ford. As I did so I watched a Large Dark narrowly escape a determined rise by a good brownie. An IOBO Humpty seemed the natural choice and I began about 30 yards below this fish. As soon as I started I became aware of more rising fish in the run. I marked them down and within a couple of casts the Humpty was taken by a brownie. The fly dried and dusted, out it went again. It had hardly travelled a foot when it was engulfed by another brown of around a pound. More drying and dusting and I placed the fly in the glassy water between two faster streams. I held the rod high to keep the line off the fast water and I

watched in awe as a huge rainbow came up to take a look. The fly was right beside me, less than a rod's length away, and I'm convinced I saw a look of shock on the rainbow's face as he saw me. He turned away, giving me one last glimpse of his pink stripe before returning to his lie. The fly was becoming water-logged so I changed to a more robust Klink, with a dirty olive body, size 16 but more like a 14 had it been on a regular hook. By now I had reached the deflected run created by the fallen ash tree, which was running knee-deep and quite fast. My first cast was really just a sighter and as I looked ahead trying to locate the wing post I saw a movement out of the corner of my eye. Striking instinctively, I thought I'd hooked something substantial but it turned out to be a modest brown, hooked in the dorsal fin. With subsequent casts I explored the relatively quiet water next to the bank, holding the line off the current. A fish took and this time it was a rainbow which, had it been in better condition, would have weighed at least 2 and a half pounds. A few more fish came to hand, including a beautiful wild rainbow, fat as a little pig. Meanwhile the sun had gone over the hill and the rise was over. Content, I made my way slowly back to the Hut, noting the first signs of Spring along the path, glad to be alive. And back at the Hut, with the kettle on, there were the EHK and Immediate Past President to welcome me. Another perfect day.

My next visit was more in the way of Club business, for I was hosting, along with Keith Burtonwood, three Swedish angling journalists who wanted to put a piece together for their magazine *Altt Om Flugfiske*. They had sampled Haddon earlier in the week and were keen to explore the upper waters and our free rising fish. They also wanted to learn about the Club and its history and to compare and contrast our relaxed, sociable and

minimum rules policies with the anti-stocking/no-wading/no Klinkhamers authoritarian regime further downstream.

The forecast was for falling temperatures, overcast with rain later, ideal weather for Olives. We weren't disappointed. I took Ulf and Johan down to Harry's, dropping off Jan-Ake at Signposts on the way. I wanted to show Ulf our wild rainbows - he was more interested in getting some good photos so he insisted that I fish. No pressure then! I started in the little run behind the island between President's and Harry's, always a good spot for rainbows. Within a couple of casts I had a rise to my Parachute Adams and a beautiful fish of about 10 inches was safely brought to hand. Now I could relax! Meanwhile Johan was having great success with the nymph in Harry's, while Keith did the honours with the camera. After a barbeque lunch, courtesy of the EHK, they had a play around in Duffers, after which we took them up to Slitherford and Cheedale. There was a good hatch underway and we took fish all the way through Slitherford, the Steps pool and in Cheedale gorge, in my case all on the P Adams. Back to the hut by late afternoon for tea and cakes and a thorough debrief, all in all a very happy and successful day.

It was interesting to note that the flies hatching were much smaller than those I saw on my last two visits and my fly was a size 18 rather than the 16/14 that I'd used on my previous visit. They could have been Medium Olives or as Stuart Croft's suspects, just a smaller generation of Large Darks. Or maybe even Iron Blues. Who knows? The fish didn't mind because as we all know, size and presentation is everything.

Skol!
David Marriott

