

An Hour of Madness in the Kidney Pool.

The morning of 14th April 2007 was warm and bright at Frank's Pool and I decided to fish on Peg 20. I had tried the peg once before with only moderate success but given the calm conditions in that corner of the lake I thought that it was worth a second go. Unfortunately a brisk wind picked up shortly after 12 o'clock and float fishing became very difficult on that side of the lake. At first I was reluctant to move as the peg had been quite productive during the morning giving me two respectable Tench of 2-1 and a new personal best of 3-9 together with two dozen Bream and Roach up to a pound. Also I had invested a tub of trout pellets in the swim and the benefit of this bait would be lost upon relocation. I persevered for as long as I could but eventually was beaten by the wind and decided to spend the last hour on the Kidney Pool where conditions were better.

Remembering back to Phil Hodgson saying that the 'Kidney Pool was full of Tench and Carp' I decided that I'd give it a go for my last hour.

The day had already been fruitful in spite of the windy conditions but I wondered whether I was lucky enough to catch anything else. I carried my gear round to Peg 1 in three trips, dropped my 'snow man' ledger in the margin out of the way and set up the bite alarm just in case. I put two fresh red maggots on to my size 14's hook and placed the rig in the centre of the clearing at the end of my pole. Automatically I fed the swim with a couple of handfuls of trout pellets and catapulted a few maggots round my float for luck.

The pond weed was growing rapidly even though it was only April and I estimated that it would not be long before it covered the water completely. I figured that it was best to fish in the centre of the clearing giving me optimum time to strike before my float was pulled in to the weed by anything resembling a decent fish. I was not at all happy about using my pole in such a small swim but for less than an hour I couldn't see the point of setting up my other rod. My view was that I should take a chance, cross my fingers and hope for the best.

Feeling famished I decided to eat the last apple which I knew was still lurking in my bag from lunch-time. I put my pole down on to its rest and turned to rummage for the apple. Within seconds the thin end of the pole pivoted round on the rest following the float which shot rapidly across the swim.

Instinctively my right hand grabbed the end of my pole just in time to stop it coming off the rest and splashing in to the water. I could see that the fish was very strong as it had no trouble stretching my elastic as it pulled first one way then the other in an attempt to break free. It was clearly fond of the swim and was determined to stay in it. I, on the other hand, had a different view and was equally determined to land this, my first decent specimen, from the Kidney Pool. I remember that I had to work very hard initially to prevent the Carp pulling out too much elastic and getting in to the weed.

After a fair old tussle I got the fin perfect fish on to the bank for a photograph and weigh-in. The 6-4 Common looked powerful, had large fins and was perhaps destined to become

a clonker!. I got it back in to the water as quickly as I could, replaced the maggots which unsurprisingly looked bedraggled and went back in to the swim for more action.

Amazingly it was still only 4.10pm, everything had happened so quickly and relaxing back in my chair my stomach reminded me that the apple was still in my bag patiently waiting to be eaten. I did not however, try to get it immediately as the water in the vicinity of my float appeared disturbed giving me the impression that other fish were on the prowl, perhaps enjoying the trout pellets I had supplied earlier.

Things went quiet for the next few minutes so I seized the opportunity to try again for the apple. Unbelievably, as if by magic, exactly the same thing happened as before. The float shot under and the top of my pole was jerked downwards as a frantic fish tried to bury its nose in the weed. It has to be said that this 2-0 Tench although fast, was obviously less powerful than its companion but even so gave an excellent account of itself before coming to the net and kindly obliging for a photograph.

I began to wonder whether fish in the Kidney Pool had somehow got together and agreed a campaign against the eating of food on the bank. Strangely on both occasions when I had reached for the apple violent bites had almost yanked the pole in to the water. This time I got the apple out of my bag before my float went back in so that it was ready in my pocket when the action subsided.

The next few minutes saw me catch three small Perch and an 8 ounce Tench in quick succession and thinking that the action was over for the day I succumbed to the pangs of hunger and started to chomp the apple. Instantly my float disappeared yet again and the seconds I lost whilst juggling apple and pole, allowed the fish to snag up my line. Try as I might I could not budge the fish and I soon came to the conclusion that I would probably lose the fish, rig and perhaps some elastic as well. I suddenly had the bright idea that by walking around to the other side of the pool I could apply tension from a different direction and perhaps pull my line free. To my relief it worked and I got my tackle back with the two red maggots still wriggling after their ordeal!

I decided to quit whilst I was still ahead and put my pole away. The hour was almost up anyway, the sun was sinking and it was definitely time to go. Astonishingly whilst packing up the silence was broken by the sound of my bite alarm indicating that something had made off with the 'snow man' that had been sitting quietly in the margin for almost an hour. In the few seconds it took me to pick up my rod the run was over and the fish was able to eject the bait as it felt me attempting to set the hook.

And so ended my happy hour of madness in the Kidney Pool. I'll certainly be giving it another try in the future but with only one rod and definitely no apples!

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