

A season's catch in a day - Part Two!

With a couple weeks away from the rods, I decided to get back on the same venue as last time. With 3 fish under my belt and the weather being very nice since the last session, I was hopefully of a few more fish.

I picked up some lobs and maggots from the local tackle shop and ordered a wychwood pike tube for future sessions and made my way over the Somerset levels to my chosen fishery.

With only fishing mid week, I thought I would have it easy for swim choice but on arriving, the central track between the two ponds was full of pole anglers! As I fished that side last time, I wanted to fish completely the opposite corner and hoped there weren't any anglers below the high bank.

I was in luck! The corner swim was vacant, another angler two swims up and then a big space to two other anglers at the top end. It oozed Eels. Really nice marginal reeds and a nice rooty tree in the corner. Also a nice island (the going feature last time) half way out! Plenty to cast too!

With the NAC forum buzzing with a lot of spring Eels captured on the C.D. rig, I decided to get one out with the lobbies half way across in open water and then rigged up my float rod to catch a small dead or two. Last time I fished, lobs took my three fish in quick succession but the fish, although small, were very broadly headed! A dead bait had to be worth a shot!

A small headless Rudd was soon lying next to the island on the ever reliable J.S. rig. The time was 10.45am, a bit later than I would have liked as I had to be off by half four but as long as there's a bait in the water.... That's my philosophy! With a nice breeze blowing straight at me and the air temperature around 15 degrees C., I sat back on the recliner and poured the 1st coffee of the day.



The swim with everything close to hand. Chub prowler mat, sling, Scales etc. are to the left of the picture.

11.05am and the ATTX starts a jerky dance in my pocket and sure enough, the rollover is making its way up and over! The run is a bit start stop but once it gets going a little, I wind down and strike! Missed it!

The baits gone so it's time to catch another. It doesn't take long and soon another small headless Rudd is back in the same area. This time, rather than just tail hooking it, I pull the hook through the tail and hook it back though just above the cut. Maybe that will help. A few minutes later and the chap a couple of swims up comes down for a chat. He's on the method, training for a match and says he hasn't seen an Eel for years! A few minutes later and he's back again, this time with a headless Rudd! It had drifted into his swim and he netted it out so I could use it again!

12pm on the dot and that Rudd has come alive! This time the run is much steadier, giving it a few seconds and then STRIKE! Missed it again! Think I had a little slack in the line and fluffed it. Baits gone again but I've got the other one so quickly hook it up and get it back out again. With all the runs coming on the ledger, I decide to stick the other rod out with J.S. rigged worms. It worked last time so it was worth trying again.

12.15pm and the line can't leave the reel fast enough! I don't think I've ever seen a run that fast before! I hit this one quickly and YES, there's the odd fight of an Eel. It quickly comes up to the surface and it's around a similar size to the fish from the last session. In the net 1st time and I can see the size 1 raptor perfectly in the scissors! She's easily unhooked as she is another of these mega broad headed fish. I don't bother with weighing or photos and get it in the keep net. With the sport dying so quickly last time, I want to see if the retention of this fish will keep the Eels biting. About 1pm, the rollover on the D.B. is over again but no line is flowing. I wind down and nothing is there so bring it in and put it back out again. Then, 10mins later, exactly the same thing happens on the worms! How strange!

1.30pm and there's a strange occurrence on the peg opposite me. The anglers keep nets, with fish in, actually lift out of the water and tackle goes everywhere! I thought a few ducks must have just taken off right in front of him. My new buddy a couple swims up shouts down asking if I saw what happened? He then tells me that it was a big wind that came from nowhere. Next thing, the water's surface has a serious circular ripple heading straight him. I shout up to him but he doesn't hear me for a couple of shouts. Then just in the nick of time, he ducks! The wind passes over him and picks up the dust on the track, showing it was a whirlwind before disappearing over the fence. He was lucky as he had his rod in a tulip grip, the other angler didn't. From what we can hear, he lost several mid sections of his pole and packs up in disgust! Only once before have I seen something similar but it wasn't as strong as that!

With the runs mainly coming on the deads, I change the worms over to another headless Rudd and sure enough, at 2.25pm, that fresh Rudd is off! I pick up the rod and the run stops dead. I've had this problem before and have a theory that as I am using fairly tight fitting butt grips, the 'plink' as I pick the rod and the rest lets go is felt down the line and causes the fish to drop the bait. I decide that as the weather is fairly good, I rest the rods on the top of the grips. Being rubber, they still stop the rod from slipping.

I don't think I've cover the island ends well enough so get bait on the very tip. The lakes are separated by some hoses with two aerators so you as you can't cast more than half way; I know I won't be troubled by some of the carpers.

3.40pm and there's a low rumble, the two fighter jets come straight over my head nearly deafening me! As I look back down to the rods, the island rod is away again! STRIKE! MISSED AGAIN! Again, I think it's too much slack between me and the fish. With only 20mins left till pack up time, I don't want to waste another bait so decide to roll up my sleeve and fish one of the Rudd heads out of the margins that I've been dropping in. Again, it goes on the tip of the island.



One of the venues mega broad head Eels.

4pm. The little tiny Rudd head is away. Again, a steady run, and I don't give it much chance to develop as the bait is so small. This time I just keep winding, trying to feel the resistance but I end up winding in the bait. It's time to pack up but I put that rod back out and pack away the other bits first.

Just as the 1st rod is going into its sleeve, the Rudd head is off yet again! I get to the rod and the run stops! 5 seconds later and its away again, this time I strike hard!

There is a little resistance this time but then it all goes slack again. That signals the end of a very eventful daytime Eeling session!

I think it just goes to show how contrasting two days on the same water can be! Last time it was a quick succession of runs on worms, this time it's been longer between runs but all on dead baits! With that one fish retained though, it did seem to make a difference as I ended with 7 defiant runs and 2 that I'm not sure about. Just to top things off, as I return my keep net, I'm told one of those pole anglers took a 3lb eel! Oh well, there's always next time! Watch this space!