

July outing To Brewitts

By Bruce Curry



One of my duties on the Durban Fly Tyers committee, this year, was to organise a club outing to Mt West.

This is FFA club water, it has to be scheduled through them and permission required. As there is quite a lot of synergy, in terms of members, this was easily accomplished, and the date was booked.

On the due morning, we agreed to meet at the garage at the top of the hill to Nottingham Road for a coffee and breakfast. I scheduled this for 0645, but as I had to detour to pick up the chairman we were late in arriving, only to find that Mike Backhouse and Ernie Stevens had already eaten breakfast as they'd arrived there just at sunup being so keen to get into the fish.

After a hearty breakfast and cup of coffee we drove the remaining 18 kilometers or so, to the farmhouse to check in. Strangely, Farmer John, who is a dairy farmer and has nothing to do with chickens at all, wasn't there to meet us. We drew the key for the gate and after struggling to get out of the farm yard drove to the main dam.

At the FFA meeting the previous week we had been warned that the water level had dropped as the farmer was drawing off the top dam to fill his lower dam, for irrigation purposes. I was a bit concerned that there might not be enough water for the 6 anglers that had put their names forward.

After the required amount of bundu bashing, just enough make the bakkies look like they had seen a bit of action!...we arrived at the dam. The guys from the previous week's meeting were right; the water was down by over a meter. This had drastically reduced the available fishing area, but we had driven all the way from Tekweni, so we were going to fish!

Less than 15 minutes later, Mike was on the water in pursuit of his targets and the others of the party entered the water soon thereafter. I told Mike that should he catch a fish before I was on the water, I was going to let his tubes down one at a time...since I was the "host"... I was almost last onto the water. But no sooner had I got settled onto the kick boat, I ended up with a massive overwind on my reel and mega time was lost whilst I attempted to unravel the knot. I had set up a 3 fly team and passing tag ends (*3) and the fly line through each other, nearly brought me to the point where profanities were about to pour of my lips. However I did manage to keep calm and unraveled the whole thing. Backhouse, meanwhile was playing in the preschool and had caught a stocky or two, despite my dire predictions concerning the airtight integrity of his float tubes. As I had spent so long doing the unravelling bit, I guess that the statute of limitations had kicked in...lucky for heeem!

To say that the fishing was easy would be a lie, except for Mike as he caught 8 fish during the days fishing, ranging from 30 cm to around 50 cm, nailing stockies on his suspender midge pattern.

I tried a pattern that had worked very well on my previous trip to Brewitt's as well as the Boston Festival "The White Whirlwind" and after been told by the Dung Beetle, that the fish were taking very gently, pulling very diligently on the line was able to feel the weight on the line. A quick set of the hook, followed by some jumping and a bit of head shaking, the fish was in the net, pics taken. She fish was given an obligatory hug, to divest her of some of the eggs she was carrying; she was returned to the water.

Mike was systematically dropping fish and catching them also. He experienced lots of fish on, only to be followed by cries of "Fish off!" I was quite surprised at this, as I know that he generally fishes without de-barbing his hooks. But whilst all this was going on, the rest of the gang where getting fish one at a time. Towards the end of the session, Andrew, on Mike's advice and using a version of Mike's buzzer pattern, using a faster than normal strip, manage to land a nice fish.

The end of day, the tally was Mike Backhouse had caught 8 fish; the rest of us caught 3 fish each except the DFTC chairman, who caught squat! Agh shame! Be that as it may, we all had a nice day. The fish ranged in size from 8/10' stokkies (caught mainly alongside the weed beds) through to a nice 20' fish.
