

Millan Waters

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Welcome to the third Newsletter of the 2005/ 2006 season. Unfortunately we have encountered a second successive warm dry summer and this did have an impact on our fishery during the hot summer months. We got off to a cracking start in March & April with the total number of fish caught at 2207, an increase of 61.56% over the previous season. May saw a drop over the previous season to 606, compared to 990, but with an "average" of 2.94, very acceptable. June improved with total fish caught at 620, an increase of 33.90% over 2004 / 2005. Although July was down on last season at 431, compared to 655 the average was still 2.23 when many fisheries in the South East had closed. August returns of 185 were very similar to last year and has proven to be our worse month this season as you can see from the detailed return attached.

In September and October the number of fish caught was 297 and 445 respectively but with visit numbers well down the "averages" of 3.38 and 4.49 shows the cooler weather has improved fishing conditions dramatically.

Total fish caught so far this season stands at 4792 (at 31/10) compared to 5089 last year, a modest drop of approximately 5.8%. Pretty consistent returns I am sure you will all agree.

We have encountered our best season with Browns with 328 already caught against last season's total of 213. Blues are on track to equal, if not beat, last season's total of 90 with 69 currently accounted for. Tigers are well down on last season's total of 85, currently 36. Our supplier has been unable to provide us with any additional Tigers this season but it does show their excellent survival rate. Please remember ALL Browns, Blues and

Tigers are strictly catch and release **only**.

Now for some general comments. The locks on the gates, hut and container seem to be having the desired impact and there have been no problems with children again this season I am delighted to report. There have been some signs of limited poaching, but nothing compared to the problems we were encountering several years ago. As I always point out, we police ourselves so don't be afraid to ask anyone you don't know for proof of membership if they are not displaying their badge. If you are not showing it, don't be offended if challenged!

For the first time in many years, I have only one name on the waiting list for next season, having taken membership up to the agreed maximum last season. The individual will of course be offered a place similar to previous years. There are always a few members who do not renew, so if anyone has a colleague interested in joining up, now is the time to contact me.

I have been in discussion with the Environment Agency several times since the last Newsletter regarding our rudd population. We are on their list of "things to do" and have promised to contact me before the end of the year. I hope to have any update for everyone at the AGM.

This brings me nicely onto the AGM. Although the WOOLPACK is under new management, I have been successful in booking the restaurant area again. As I mentioned last year, I hoped to lay on a buffet to accompany the AGM and I am delighted to confirm this will be the case this year.

The AGM will therefore take place at the

WOOLPACK, IWADE ON MONDAY 5TH DECEMBER 2005 at 8.00PM. All existing members and potential members are most welcome. As always if anyone has anything specific they wish included in the Agenda, please give me a ring or e-mail me and I will ensure it is included.

I have already spoken to Tom Ledger regarding next year and no price increase was mentioned. Accordingly, it is my intention to freeze subscription charges at last season's level again (given we obtain enough members of course!) This price has now been applied for 4 consecutive seasons and in my humble opinion represents the best value around. For around £4.50 A WEEK where else can you get the sort of sport we enjoy?

As in the past I do need a measurement of commitment. A post dated cheque for £225.00 (PLEASE DATE CHEQUES 1ST MARCH 2006) ON THE NIGHT OF THE AGM WILL SECURE MEMBERSHIP FOR THE 2006 / 2007 SEASON. If you can't make the AGM, please contact me before hand in order that the £225.00 discounted price can be honoured. No show or no call and the price is £250.00. A husband and wife / father and son (under 16) joint membership will be £340.00 on the night rising to £365.00 if no show or call. As in the past, closing dates for existing members will be 31/12/05. After that date, I regret I cannot guarantee an automatic place.

For new members there will be a "one-off" fee of £50.00 in addition to the above charges. The same deadline of 31st December will apply to guarantee an automatic place. Please note new members for 2006 / 2007 season can only commence fishing from the start of next season.

I have attached a copy of the membership application for completion.

It will assist me greatly with my records if everyone can **complete** a fresh application for the new season in capitals showing full Christian and Surname for the new season badges.

As I mention to everyone in previous Newsletters, I had problems in the past with some members changing e-mail address' without advising me, some mail boxes were full and some firewalls didn't allow the Newsletter and / or accompanying attachments through. Accordingly, each member will receive each Newsletter by post to ensure safe receipt. I am however happy to deal with queries / enquiries / comments via e-mail at any time. One thing I have done

this season is to have the Newsletters copied at Staples locally, as the number and content was becoming an issue utilizing my employer's time and resources!

I mention this every year but I do need to put a rider on the proposed subscription price as this assumes similar support to last year. If, in the unlikely event, membership slumped I may require to revert to you, indicating an amended subscription charge. This has never happened as far as I can recall.

Whilst on the subject of e-mails, I am delighted to announce the launch of our new fully interactive website. It can be found at www.millan-waters.co.uk. Besides regular updates on the Returns, Roles of Honour etc. it contains an on-line application, comments section, rules and all previous Newsletters. I will be able to post up to the minute reports and news for everyone who has internet access. I have downloaded some photos which I took recently, but given the weather conditions that particular day; I don't think they do the fishery justice. I will ensure I take some better pictures during the summer months and would be delighted to post members photographs taken at the fishery at any time. To do so merely attached your images (*.jpg) in an email to faz_dickson@hotmail.com or check the Photos page on the website for more information and guidance. My son works in I.T and will be the Webmaster to ensure everything runs smoothly.

Please e-mail with your thoughts regarding what else you want to see on our website. It is ours to populate!

I would at this juncture like to sincerely thank Tony Russell for his own Millan Waters website which has been in existence for a number of years. A number of existing members first got to hear about us through Tony's site and we all owe him our thanks for setting it up.

Time to turn our attention to the returns and the annual trophies which will be presented at the AGM.

Returns up to the end of October are attached for reference. To date I have stocked 1869 fish, 1669 rainbows, 150 browns and 50 blues.

Six stockings have taken place so far this year with a final small stocking to take place in January 2006 to conclude the 2005 / 2006 stocking program. This ensures everyone's subscription is used whilst they are members. To give you some comparison over the past few years, converting the pounds of fish stocked into tonnes the results are:

Season 2000 / 2001	3535lbs	1.44 tonnes
Season 2001 / 2002	4595lbs	1.88 tonnes
Season 2002 / 2003	4805lbs	1.96 tonnes
Season 2003 / 2004	5300lbs	2.16 tonnes
Season 2004 / 2005	5866lbs	2.39 tonnes
Season 2005 / 2006 (up to 31/10)	4796lbs	1.96 tonnes

I don't think I need to say any more regarding the quantity of fish stocked!

Our average is holding up well at "3.06" and I anticipate by the end of the season more fish by weight and by number (which has already been exceeded) will have been stocked in comparison to last season.

There are two trophies from last season which will be awarded at the AGM. These are 'The Phil Sutton Memorial Trophy' awarded for the most brown trout caught in a full season (2004/2005)

Joint Winner	G. Dickson	17
Joint Winner	K. Robson	17
3rd	S. Emptage	16

and the heaviest Rainbow Trout caught in a full season (2004/2005)

Winner	Roy Seeley	12.25lb - Caught 30/03/04
Runner-Up	Steve Barton	12lb 2oz - Caught 07/04/04
=3rd	Pete Atwood	11.5lb - Caught 10/04/04
=3rd	Rae Law	11.5lb - Caught 19/05/04

As far as the current season is concerned the heaviest Rainbow Trout Role of Honour looks like this:

1st	Pete Atwood	13.25lb - Caught 23/03/05
=2nd	Pete Atwood	10lb - Caught 3/4/05
=2nd	Rae Law	10lb - Caught 18/05/05

3rd	Gordon Dickson	9.25lb - Caught 02/04/05
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This will stay open until the end of this season.

I have kept a record of the lucky members who have caught fish over 7lb and over this season. Although there is not a trophy up for grabs, the returns are pretty impressive with some familiar names appearing. Please remember fish for this category should be witnessed if possible.

1st	Ken Belcher	6
2nd	Roy Seeley	5
3rd	Pete Atwood	4
4th	Rae Law	4
=5th	Gordon Dickson	3
=5th	Phil Haynes	3

Fish 7lb and over are summarised as follows with last season's figures in brackets.

7lb + Over	47	(47)
8lb + Over	23	(including one brown) (25)
9lb + Over	6	(11)
10+ Over	3	(3)
11lb + Over	1	(3)
12lb + Over	1	(2) (heaviest 12.25lb)
13lb + Over	1	(heaviest 13.25) (0)

The other trophies which will be presented at the AGM are 'The Jack Smith Memorial Trophy' for the heaviest Brown Trout caught by the end of October.

Winner	Ken Belcher	8.5lb - Caught 26/06/05
Runner Up	Roy Seeley	6.75lb - Caught 21/03/05
=3rd	Roy Seeley	6.5lb - Caught 16/04/05
=3rd	Ken Robson	6.5lb - Caught 13/06/05

'The Bob McMillan Memorial Trophy' awarded for the most brown trout caught by the end of October.

Winner	Roy Seeley	23
2nd	Phil Haynes	20
3rd	Gordon Dickson	19

Blue Trout trophy, awarded for the most Blue Trout caught by the end of October.

Winner	Roy Seeley	10
2nd	Phil Haynes	5
3rd	Mal Pratt	4

Tiger trophy awarded for the most amount of Tiger Trout caught by the end of October. Usually we have three joint winners who will all receive a trophy!

Joint Winner	Gordon Dickson	3
Joint Winner	Phil Haynes	3
Joint Winner	Mike Lawrenson	3

Congratulations to all our winners, with some familiar names appearing again. Please remember the trophies are not to be taken too seriously and were introduced to provide a bit of fun. I'll bring along my digital camera to the AGM so that the winners can have their pictures taken and I'll put them on the website.

It's probably opportune to mention weather conditions at this point. It has been another very dry, warm summer and although the water clarity cannot be faulted, water temperatures and levels have had an impact. The returns attached as mentioned earlier are for your scrutiny.

Tom Ledger has confirmed he appreciates our concerns regarding the water level and has advised he will be pumping in as soon as we obtain some water in the ditch behind the lake. Please remember we were faced with similar conditions last year and although pumping in didn't achieve the maximum water level, it wasn't very far off! It is the one thing I cannot control but if anyone is not comfortable with the water level before the end of February 2007 and does not wish to take up their 2006/2007 membership, please contact me before 1st March (prior to me banking the cheques with the Building Society). Tom has indicated he will not require the same level of water for the orchards next year as fruit growing will be reduced and he is undertaking a replanting programme.

No doubt this will be discussed more fully at the AGM.

Next to my list of topics to raise is our catch and release policy. Although the numbers of fish killed by members is well down at 445 compared to last season's 657, a drop of 32%, we did lose some fish during the summer months through weather conditions / stress and/or poor handling. I am grateful to Pete Atwood who was concerned at fish losses and directed me to a useful website (www.troutlet.com) which contains useful tips for Catch and Release. I felt it was well worth sharing part of the article with you:

"We urge anglers to follow the simple rules below to increase the survival chances of the trout that are released.

Never

- Squeeze a fish or rip the hook out
- Throw a fish back into the water
- Put your fingers in the gills
- Let the fish thrash around on the ground

Always

- If possible leave the fish in water and unhook it without touching it
- If this isn't possible, use a soft knotless net and carefully lift the fish
- Leave the fish in the net, and without touching it, remove the hook using a hook remover or long-nosed pliers
- If you must handle the fish, wet your hands first
- Hold the fish gently upside down to remove the hook as trout lie more gently in this position
- Support the fish gently upright in the water until it swims away

Resuscitate

If your catch is exhausted from a long, drawn out fish it will enter a state of almost unconsciousness. In this condition the trout will not be able to swim off when you release it. Instead the trout will float belly up. If this occurs or you suspect that your trout is too weak to swim away you will need to perform Trout CPR.

Place the Trout in the water gently, supporting it's mid-section moving the trout gently back and forth until you feel it start to swim away"

Some pretty straight forward / common sense actions which I trust members will keep in mind when practising catch and release. I don't wish to place any more restrictions on the membership as everyone has their own feelings when and how to fly fish. One comment Pete made is worthy of passing on.

It is a fact that during the warm summer months we will lose some fish due to the conditions. Even with the greatest care taken in returning fish it will still happen and all fisheries encounter it. However if you are intending on killing a trout for your own table consumption why not consider doing it during the summer months. With almost everyone having a deep freezer planning ahead to store some trout shouldn't be a problem. Taking a trout or two which may be stressed and may not survive anyway, may reduce the losses we encounter in the summer months. Please remember this is only a suggestion which I think makes a lot of sense. If you want to kill a rainbow, subject to the rules, please do so.

Unfortunately, I must get serious for a moment. David Murphy who owns the land at the pumphouse end of the lake has advised me he challenged a member on 13th September, who was accompanied by someone. He was not sure if the other individual was a member. The individual was spinning from a platform nearest the pump buoy and when challenged it was fly fishing water only, he said he was using a spinner to try and hook dead fish from the water. David saw years of membership badges displayed on his waistcoat but didn't get his name. As the individual and colleague did not sign in or out on the day / time in question I can only come to one conclusion. The rules of the fishery are quite clear. Spinners are not allowed to be taken onto the water, never mind used. If the individuals have an explanation for their actions I would be delighted to put the record straight and will communicate it to the other members at the AGM. If I hear nothing, well..... Please remember if anyone is found breaking the rules, membership will be immediately terminated.

As far as the 2005/2006 season is concerned the fishery will close on Saturday 18th March at 3.00PM. The new 2006/2007 season will commence at 8.00AM on Saturday 1st April 2006. Keys, badges etc will be mailed to you with the March 2006 Newsletter.

Well that's about all for now. Some concluding comments before my usual thanks list.

By way of information for all new potential members, your March Newsletter will include a waistcoat badge,

windscreen badge, and key which will give you access to the car park, gate to the fishery, returns hut and containers where the boats are housed. Boats are for members use only and used at your own risk.

During the past few years I have had several instances where member's cheques have not been honoured when presented to their banks. Should this occur this season I regret to advise that any discounts allowed will be forfeited and no guarantee will be given regarding membership until a replacement cheque is provided and cleared by their bank.

For the heaviest fish categories, it would be beneficial if weights are witnessed and noted in the returns log. Although all the trophies are really a bit of fun, they are becoming quite competitive and sought after. I try to be as accurate as I can in recording all the returns data each season but I'm only human and the odd mistake may happen. If this occurred in the past or occurs in the future please accept my apologies.

Time for me to have a complaint or two about an old chestnut. In a word – Rubbish. I've noticed lately more rubbish / litter lying around the lake. Leader line is also randomly discarded. As I have said before no one will pick it up for you. If you bring it to the lake, take it away with you.

As I mentioned earlier "killed" fish numbers are well down on previous seasons. I would like to record my thanks for this. Only 4 members have taken 15 or more fish so far this season. Out of the four only two have taken more than 15 but both have only taken 19 to date.

Before signing off, the usual list of thanks.

To Roy Seeley who has overseen the stockings and done a tremendous job.

To Tony Russell & Ken Robson who have assisted with the stockings

To Mal Pratt and Bill Francis for dispensing the Clarosan. Assume the same again next year?

To Roy again for securing the new scales in the hut

Clive Belsom for some fencing jobs

John Cordingley and John Golding for removing a num-

ber of dead and decaying fish around the lake last month.

Those that cut the grass – forget who but thanks!

Each and every one of you for your continued support

Well I guess that's about it for now. If anyone has a query or wants anything raised on the AGM please give me a ring and I'll ensure it is put on the Agenda.

Hope to see you all at the AGM.

Tight lines to you all.

Gordon Dickson
Manager & Secretary
Millan Waters
www.millan-waters.co.uk