

Etang La Saussaie - Lac Baliene Spring 2010

Saussaie

Here we go again, like a bloody hardy annual, flowering once a year. Right what's been happening? Firstly a big thanks to Tommy the bailiff for three years service on the lake, a good friend and truly one of lives characters. Hopefully soon to be seen on the banks of the lake as a fishing guest. Our new bailiff for this year is Joe, an experienced angler of some years who will be carrying on the light but firm hand of the Saussaie bailiffs. Joe is already familiar with the area and the lakes having spent some 4 months last summer /autumn on Baliene and Saussaie catching fish in late autumn/early winter to over 51lb.

If you are reading this you may well already have noticed that we upgraded the web site during last year with better navigation and gallery sections. Whilst mentioning the gallery section, does Saussaie attract the camera shy?? Please let us have good quality photos of your fish captures so we can keep the galleries fresh and up to date. Remember to put the date and size on the photo's please. If you are returning to the lake this year and would like your captures on the lodge wall please feel free to take them out and give them to Joe. I cannot guarantee everyone a place in the hall of fame but the best photos will be used (6" x 4" only)

We have also changed the rules this year to simplify the management of the lake, from this year a maximum of 3 rods can be used by each angler irrespective of it being a full lake booking or not. A fourth rod is not at the discretion of the bailiff!! Also we will be implementing sacking bans thro the hot months, you will be notified upon your arrival if sacking will be permitted, again conditions will dictate! I have also added a handling rule for the big common, again the reason should be obvious, at last capture the fish was 78lb and is difficult to hold weigh etc. even for the most seasoned campaigners. The rules are simple common sense and will not detract from the enormity of your capture, it will however improve the chances of catching the fish in the future.

There will be no winter tickets this year but the lake will be open until the end of November, the few hardy anglers sticking it out until the end this year managed to catch well in to December, even i managed to have a brace of Forties out overnight the week before Christmas, this having spent the daylight hours bashing about the banks in my Big Blue Digger 'improving things'. A lesson there possibly for the 'cutting the grass is spooking the fish ' brigade? Now you see what you've made me do, opened up my little rant....

The lake is well kept and should always looks well when you arrive- in order to do this the lake has to be maintained ready for you when you arrive, we generally have 3 hours on a Saturday morning, assuming you leave on time and arrive on time, to a) get rid of you b)clean up after you c)clean all the facilities and d) paint on a happy welcoming keen smile in preparation for your arrival

ALL OF THIS IN THREE HOURS

maintaining the buildings, trees, cutting the grass etc has to be done during the week. The grass alone takes 12 hours to cut and must therefore be done whilst you fish, the good news being that it is done

almost every week whilst we are open (apart from the height of summer where it is scorched to death for a few weeks) therefore the it is normal as far as the fish are concerned.... end rant!

Next year (2011) the maximum number of anglers on the lake will be reduced to six. In theory this increases your chances of catching and reduces the fishing pressure, wise up lads these fish are getting big and tricky, they definitely don't like lots of tight lines in the water.

Next is my 'improvements', nothing drastic, nobody liked the elevated swims in pegs 1, 2, & 3 so they went early last year, apparently i am not always right. I have also excavated swims 6 and 9 to 14 so it is now possible and mandatory to set up bivvy's on the gravelled swims, most of the swims are large enough to set up on the left or right of the swim and still have room to cast. I have also planted a load of evergreen trees around the lake, so fingers crossed for a wet summer, to replace those cut down over the last few years and at last have got rid of the worst of the roots (3 days on a stump grinder!! I honestly thought i had dislodged a bloody lung).

The lake will be weed killed again this year in February same as the last 3 years. Almost no weed was present again in 2009.

On to what it all really about, the fishing. Well this season proved very rewarding for high proportion of our anglers, personal best being beaten and sometimes doubled during the course of the year lots of multiple captures. The more notable captures (the ones who bothered to send in details and photos) Paul and his lake record mirror at 59.12 in may (53 last year) Mainline Brads' spectacular capture of the Big Common at 75lb in May (Also probably the best photos of the fish at that time – definitely had his shredded wheat for breakfast that day, he's holding it like a ten pounder) bested only by Bill Cottam's capture of the regal common at 78lb late September. Details of Bill's capture are featured in his long awaited book 'BEHIND THE RODS' which can be purchased by following the link www.nutrabaits.net The funny thing is that Bill took the final proof read copy to Saussaie prior to approving publishing, lady luck and Count Goodfishin certainly danced their dance that week. Lucky for us since Bill describes at length method rig and bait and i can tell from the photos that it was caught from the beach so should be fairly simple to pop along and bang the baby out and be back home for tea. The two Grays (tackle Consultant from) lads Grixxy and tony M had a late season foray onto the lake along with the Maverick and had a few very nice lumps out 3 x 50's to 54.12 with a very nice 51lb common – Now i'm getting the hang of this tackle consultancy thing, apparently it appears to be linked (unfairly in some's opinion) with ability to catch carp on a regular basis and of a respectable size, Bill can i just have a borrow of your book again please.

Lac Baliene

A slightly quieter year for the lake last year, lots of fish caught by those fishing with the biggest going upper forties. The average weight of the fish is rising year on year with average weight of the fish caught being upper doubles/low twenties. The great thing about the place is that every swim produces fish, given the stocking levels being 'generous' and the fishes preference to shoal up and move up and down the entire length of the lake it's pretty hard to avoid catching fish. Ideal for the first time 'French trippers' or the want a week of good fun fishing groups with added bonus of the chance of a whacker.

We carried out lots of work on Baliene in 2009 in regard to the swims. The problem has been the eternal water level changes governed by a climate, localised gravel extractions and irrigation by the farmers which has resulted in pegs 1 through 6 being unfishable (at least comfortably) during the first few months of the season. To resolve this we have extensively reworked the swims turning them into split level double swims, this should mean that at full water level you should be able to land the fish without having to wade out. This is not proven yet obviously because after 3 very wet winters this bloody winter was fairly dry so the lake still has not filled up. Whilst i had the big blue digger to hand i decided to smarten up the other swims too so now most of the swims are levelled and gravelled. Just a note to the bloody minded, fishing is not allowed from the clear areas in front of the facilities, the area is clear so you can view the lake whilst you eat.

The facilities on the lake are fully operational with cooking, toilets and showers on both sides of the lake. Time permitting we hope to add an additional toilet/ shower facility behind peg 1 in 2010. Common sense is required in regard to the tracks around the lake, if it has rained heavily the tracks will be soft and muddy, please stick to the main gravel track to the entrance side.

We were approached last year with a view to letting the lake out for Enduro carp matches, as it turned out nothing came of it but it has started us thinking. If there are enough interested parties (14 x 2man teams) we would run a 48 hour carp fishing match based on the popular international ones currently being run. The only difference being that we would expect the match to be 'Enduro' in the true sense of the word. This would not be a match were the draw was the crucial factor (see previous comments on stock levels), angling ability and stamina being the real factors. Anyhow as i said just a thought, anyone interested email me and if there is enough interest i will sort it out.

Anyhow, enough of my drivel all that is left is to wish you a successful season carping be it with us or wherever, i wish you well. Remember to leave a little for tomorrow because today should never be enough.

Phil G