

Over the years the old Nene at March has consistently been one of the best, if not the best winter venue in Eastern England and already it's shown why so many anglers are eager to get onto the March Opens. It rarely lets anyone down and the rain we had midweek helped to see the venue in top form producing a string of 20lb plus weights in the latest event. Top rod with a fine 26lb 1oz was Dan James, he drew one of the fancied pegs in the town centre close to the clock tower. He alternated between a whip line and long pole fishing bread punch for most of the day netting over 250 roach. Runner up was March rod and match organiser Bob Fitzjohn, Bob knows the water as well as any angler on the bank and regularly frames in these big matches. On the day he drew peg 1 down by the BMX track and fished pinkie over groundbait to take a net of skimmers and a few roach for 23lb 13oz. Dan Mason continued his run of form on the venue netting 22lb 3oz to claim third place.

The match was a good guide to those fishing this weekends round four of the East Midland Winter League, providing conditions do not change too dramatically. This year the league could not be much tighter, Sensas Mark One lead the way at the half way stage in the event but they will have to remain consistent to the end to see off the challenge of Maver Image and Browning Hotrods and even Stanjay Tackle Gold are not quite out of the running. All the teams know the venue well so I have a feeling a few big fish here and there particularly at the by pass end are going to make all the difference.

Over the weekend there were quite a few matches fished on the Decoy Lakes with clubs and anglers having very varied results. The Tuesday open match was very well

attended and the Beastie Lake saw Afe Edgley out in front, he fished a small feeder with hair rigged meat to weigh in 77lb 4oz. Mick King came second with a level 72lb taken close in on pellet followed by Andy Leathers with 64lb 1oz. Saturdays Open match was a real struggle on the same venue top rod from peg 24 was Simon Godfrey, he caught on the feeder to the island to start with pellet and then switched to the margins late on with maggot to finish on 56lb 1oz. Rob Goodson continued his good run of form coming second on 55lb 12oz, then came Tom Edwards with 53lb 9oz.

On Saturday Peterborough Conservative Club were at Decoy Lakes fishing the Six Islands Pool, as expected weights were down but it still produced a reasonable result with Pete Marshall topping the field from peg 8 taking 62lb 5oz on a small feeder fished close in. It was the same tactic that put Andy Field into the runner up spot, he caught on maggot for 36lb 4oz followed by Andrew Porter with 35lb 4oz.

In the Decoy 55-plus winter league fished on Oak and Yew Lakes gale force winds and driving rain from the start made many decide on a feeder approach for most of the day. Alternating between a maggot and Method feeder with maggot and pellet baits John Buckingham was into fish from the off and kept carp and F1s coming throughout the match to finish on top with 117lb 11oz from peg 12 on Oak. Over on Yew Lake Roy Whincup finished a fish away from the winner putting another all-carp bag to the scales for

116lb 4oz also from peg 12. In third place was Mick Mitchell, he caught on pellet and meat weighing in 100lb.

Also at Decoy at the weekend were Fenland Rods they fished the Cedar Pool which saw them struggling for bites, unfortunately the fish are usually at the car park end of this lake and most of the pegs were placed at the other end of the lake. Match organisers are never right when choosing pegs at this time of year and it was just one of those days. Top rod Mel Lutkin on peg 19 was not complaining too much though, he had a decent days sport catching on meat close in for 47lb 5oz and also went home £100 better off as he took the top spot from the Golden Peg. Weights fell off dramatically then, Dick Warrener came in second with 16lb 12oz with John Smith third on 10lb 13oz. This weekend the club fish their last fixture of the year and will be hoping the Six Island Pool at Decoy fishes a little better.

The Elm Pool on the Decoy complex fished really well for most of the JVAC anglers with the better pegs in the low numbers. Top rod from peg 9 was Steve Smith, he fished the pole with pellet to record 95lb 9oz. Second place on peg 6 was Andy Kelk, he also fished pellet for 82lb 13oz followed by Andy Gausden on 77lb 4oz.

Deeping St James AC fished for the latest new trophy donated by the clubs Chairman named the 'Remembrance Shield ' and this will now be fished for every year on Remembrance Sunday on the clubs stretch of the River Welland at Deeping Roadside. With the river running slow and clear very few anglers expected a decent result but

thankfully it surprised everyone with roach showing in some areas, but not all. The first member to get his name on the shield was Ray Torrington who drew peg 11 and fished a very tight match, keeping disturbance to a minimum and fishing a five metre whip to the centre of the river using bread punch over liquidised bread, he kept the fish feeding throughout the match to weigh 14lb 10.5oz. In second place on peg 13 was Pete Molesworth Jnr using similar tactics but using the pole but with a long line to his rig to take some quality roach to finish with 12lb 1oz. Third place went to Steve Cox on peg 21 with 5lb.

Once again the Carrot Wash section of Bevills Leam at Ponders Bridge produced a very good match with most anglers fishing the Whittlesey AA match catching roach and rudd despite the wet and wind conditions. It was the in form Jeff Tuttlebee who stole the show once again, catching steadily all day taking roach on the pole to finish with 9lb 3oz. On the first peg Mike Mohan was taking roach on the pole and the occasional perch to finish with 7lb 12oz and the runner up spot. In the middle of the pack Frank Bevilacqua continues to find small fish with ease on the pole he finished with 5lb 12oz.

The British Legion Shield was at stake for Yaxley, Farcet, Holme and DAC at Raveley, with plenty of fish for all, and a variety of hook baits being used. Finishing with a level 10lb was Mike Mahon, whose roach, skimmer and bleak haul were all taken on pinkie. Fishing the pole at four and seven metres Mahon took fish consistently from the start. Runner-up Frank Bevilacqua adopted a caster and pinkie approach

catching most of his skimmers and roach on a five metre whip putting 7lb 14oz to the scales. Third was Ivan Marriott with 6lb 4oz of roach and skimmers, using maggot before switching to hemp seed at five metres.

Its tough going right now at Haddon Lodge, I know first hand that there are more than enough fish in the lake but they just refuse to feed at the moment. The vast experience of George Bates saw him take the top spot with a net of silvers taken on the pole with red maggot for a modest 5lb 5oz. Second with 4lb 15oz was Alan Forrest followed by Richard Knight on 3lb 9oz.