

Wantage and Grove Aggregate Trophy

Race for second place – Match 10

Congratulations to Bill Hailey

Unfortunately, the match was a rather disappointing end to the aggregate series, but after a dramatic drop in temperature over the preceding day or so no one was expecting high weights.

Nathan Steele, having already secured victory with an unassailable 161 points decided that a warm duvet was preferable to a northerly wind on the pond, and that left the field open for a battle for second place.

By the narrowest of narrow margins, Bill Hailey sneaked in, half a point ahead of our esteemed match secretary Bob Steele.

Bill weighed in 1lb 7oz, sharing fourth place on the day with Phil Mansbridge, each picking up 18½ points. Bob came third with 2lb 8oz (a first put in tench of over 2lb should have set him up nicely but only a few small roach came along after that) and his 20 points weren't enough to lift him out of third spot for the aggregate series.

The match itself was won by Des Bushnell from peg 20, whose 11lb 7 oz of decent roach with a couple of bream put him ahead of second placed Vicky Knowlson, whose single carp (caught in the first quarter of an hour) weighing 7lb 9oz gave her bragging rights over third placed Bob. Vicky's 21 points for second place on the day lifted her up to equal 5th place with Danny Dance in the aggregate series.

Your roving correspondent managed to catch up with Danny after the match and in his usually good-humoured way said, "*I was gutted*", having taken a specimen perch of almost 1oz early on he saw Bob take his tench from further down the pond and only minutes later spotted the purple streak of Vicky's pole elastic as she tried to subdue her carp. As Danny to muttered to the press-pack on Tuesday evening – "*Well, that was my plan out of the window*"

There would have been a lovely symmetry if the total weight for the day on the pond had reached 47lb 2oz (instead of the paltry 24lb 10oz total) because that would have given 1,000lb weighed in for the 10-match series. I think better weather when the club was at Chadlington would have made all the difference.

I have illustrated this page with the marvellous photographs taken at the draw and weigh-in – oh No! Sorry, I didn't get sent any. I fully expect that to be rectified and be sent lots of photos from the Christmas match on 9 December, where Santa and elf outfits will dominate (possibly).

Well, that's it for the year from your devoted and humble correspondent.

So, come-on you match anglers, here are your targets for next year:

1. Beat the Plough on Grove Pond
2. Beat the Plough on the away venue
3. Weigh-in a total of over 1,000lb for the 10 match aggregate series
4. Someone give Nathan a run for the title