

Summary of the 2018 "Winter Pools" Series (WP).

The WP matches are all on early season local pools and for the first time including Carp but caught on natural baits. Last year we fished mixed pools, this year it's "all in", should be interesting. The early January matches can be hard sometimes breaking the ice before fishing and fishing for bites. **This series sorts out the "scratchers" from the "baggers", or so we thought.**

(1)6/1/2017; Lower Park – Abbey Pool.

The weather leading up to this match was cold and wet with early morning frosts. A couple of days before the match we had heavy rain, match day was a severe frost. The bottom half of the pool was frozen, we pegged around the top half of the pool and everyone had a chuck. Eleven turned out, to keep the interest high there was a big bonus peg carried over from last season.

Cold was an understatement with a bitterly cold North-East wind and several squalls. We had a quick chat about what constitutes "Natural Baits" before the start. Some chucked others went on the pole for the bits. DO won with 2-9-0, two small stockies and bits with his back to the wind. Second was HP who persevered with the bits and weighing nearly 20 pole caught Ide for 2-3-0. Third was PW with 1-12-0 (a lucky Perch) and fourth was HJ on the big BP with 1-9-0. We set a world record for weighing in and glad to get out of the wind.

(2)20/1/2017; Packington - Gratuities Pool.

Eleven turned out and we pegged 1, 2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12, 13, 15 & 16, we drew in the café. We had rain which turned to sleet and 3 hours of snow, started wet, finished very cold. The pool looked ok but plumbing up we realised the far side of the pool was frozen and covered in rain. It was short pole only on the roadside, there was less ice on the far bank pegs. The only peg ice free, peg 8 in the corner also found a couple of Carp to win with 10-0-0. Result;- DO, peg 8, 10-0-0, DD, peg 4, 2-14-0, and HJ, peg 2, 2-7-0, first 3 on the road side bank. That's the first two matches won by DO, two lucky draws.

(3)24/2/2018; Lavendar Hall - Ben's Pool.

A very strange February Match. 12 turned out, we switched to Ben's, with ice in pegs 1 & 2 we put the rest in. We had a biting cold wind and strong sunshine. HP 92-8-0 and DO 64-0-0 were opposite each other on pegs 6 and 13 with the Carp shoaled up in the middle, HP caught on the feeder and DO on the Bomb. FB (next to DO) was bite less after 3 hours on the pole and feeder and switched to the bomb with three reds on a 16 hook the last two hours for 23-8-0. PF in the corner had one Carp for 10-3-0. With few fish in the corners and the silvers not feeding the rest were either odd fish or on a dry net. That's 3 good draws for DO and starting to look uncatchable.

(4)10/3/2018; Packington Sommers – Big Gearies

12 turned out on a mild but wet day, we used pegs 7-30. DJ won with over 50lb of Carp (peg 23) on long pole and single maggot with a couple over 10lb. BC was second with 16lb finding Bream close in on maggot responding to regular ground bait, third was league leader DO with 10lb who now cannot be caught.

(5)24/3/2018;Barston Lake Pegs 37-61.

After sorting out the pegs with Mark we trekked to the pegs. There was more amusing confusion when the late comers told us we were on the wrong pegs. With light rain and a mild day we all expected to bag up. FB was off like a train catching Ide and skimmers early. PW had 6 skimmers and PF and DH caught skimmers late. DO couldn't be caught and at the weigh in PF had 19-1-0 and DH had 15-3-0 of late skimmers. FB caught throughout catching Ide and the occasional skimmer but a proper Bream saved him in the last ten minutes weighing 13-15-0.

Overall result, after five matches omitting one worst result.

Darren Onley took the series with top two finishes in the first four matches. PF came out second with a late burst. Well done Darren.

Conclusion - An interesting series allowing Carp using natural baits. The series made the anglers think a bit rather than using the same pool throughout the series. The first two matches in January benefitted from allowing Carp.