

2011 EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP, ROZMBERK, CZECH REPUBLIC.

This years selection maintained the continuity of developing a new squad to represent England in future years, however with Mike Tinnion and Phil Dixon being selected for the World squad in Italy later in the year, it gave the opportunity to try out another potential team member (John Emerson) and input World Team experience (Davey Parker) into the squad.



Rozmberk Czech Republic



2011 European Squad

To facilitate the development of the squad, the practice of fishing all 6 team members during the championship was maintained due to the 3 River, 1 Lake Bank & 1 Reservoir Boat session format of the Czech Republic 2011 European Championship.

The team selected was Scott Nellins, Andrew Gooding, Davey Parker & John Emerson all fishing 5 full sessions, with the last rod shared between Alex Bobba fishing the river sessions & Baz Reece fishing Boat & Bank sessions.

Based at the Pension Romantik Rozmberk on the Championship's River Valtava with guide Vit Misar, an accomplished Czech European & World Team Member, the team set about their practices.

The River Valtava held a large stock of resident course and game fish, and had been heavily stocked with rainbows etc for the Championship.

The 2 river practice waters were either immediately upstream or down stream of the Championship Sectors, the team concentrating on the downstream water as it was close to the Pension and hence could be accessed easily throughout daylight hours and could be fished heavily to try out the effectiveness of different methods and flies.



Practice discussion



Evening bedroom fly tying

The first days practice on the river indicated that the team had some work to do as Vit our guide had out fished everybody on his Czech method. Over the next couple of days this was sorted out with a couple of methods and a range of flies that brought most of the team catching more than the guide.

The team also practiced on the upstream practice water however it was totally different and was only applicable to the top few pegs of the adjoining sector.

The river level was controlled from the dam and throughout the practices the river kept rising and falling as they established the right settings at the dam to provide the guaranteed flow rate for the Championship, unfortunately the team never got to practice very much at the final championship level which turned out to be when it was at its highest.

The Bank Lake practice water was heavily stocked and considerable numbers of fish were caught by the team on a few methods, unfortunately no other teams practiced there when the team was there so we couldn't get a bench mark.

As in most Fips Mouche Championships we were allocated only 1 boat for 3 hours practice for the whole team on the Championship reservoir. Half an hour's practices each!

The reservoir was a course fishery 2000 meters by 500 metres, dam at one end; feeder river the other; steep generally wooded bank on one side; and a steep roadside bank on the other. The reservoir had been closed to the public and stocked with 1.5 tonnes of rainbow trout for the Championship. Along with other teams the practice session produced copious numbers of fish to a wide range of methods. Again little was learned

After 7 days practice the Championship commenced.



Andrew Gooding (right) comp reservoir



Scott Nellins on River Valtava 29P

The River Valtava is a major canoeing river, so to avoid the hundreds of canoeists that we encountered on the river, sessions on two of the sectors were scheduled for 7.00 – 10.00 and 18.00 – 21.00. This meant very long days for some during the 3 day Championship.

The team got off to a good start coming in 6th after session 1, John Emerson fishing his method on the lake bank providing the only Individual 1st for England in the Championship.

A disastrous second session produced England a 14th place with Andrew Gooding our best rod in that session only managing a 41st and Baz Reece on the Boat a 42nd. We plummeted down to 9th place. It would be all uphill from here.

Quite often England rallies in the 3rd session, which if you are up there in the top 4 puts you in good stead for the medals. We rallied and obtained the best session result of 4th place. Andrew Gooding producing our best Boat placing of 4th and 19th Individually overall with Davey Parker 20th & Scott Nellins 21st. Thus improving England's overall position, back to 6th place.

Another unexpected performance by the team in the 4th session, despite no blanks which other teams were experiencing, things were getting harder. England only managed to achieve a 12th place dropping us down a placing to 7th overall. Scott Nellins still lead the England squad with a 4th place in the session with Alex Bobba continuing to produce a solid mid position performance.

It was becoming obvious that we were finding it difficult in the river sessions and letting ourselves down in the boat sessions.

The 5th and final session was a matter of how do we protect our overnight position. Other teams had struggled for fish on the lake bank, so avoid the bank was the tactic there and give it everything you've got elsewhere. The bank was avoided and tackle and clothing destroyed, unfortunately we achieved another disappointing 12th place, which dropped us down to a final position of 9th



Davey Parker powering back with a fish



Baz Reece practicing

In summary:-

We did well in the lake bank sector sessions coming 3rd overall; we were out classed in the 3 river sector sessions, coming 9th, 12th & 13th; we did terribly in the reservoir boat sector sessions only coming joint 9th!

Our top rod was Scott Nellins 25th (6.8 av placings) Davey Parker 44th (10.2 av placings), Andrew Gooding 47th (9.8 av placings), John Emerson 65th (11.8 av placings) & Alex Bobba (10.0 av placings), Baz Reece (8.5 av placings). Alex & Baz shared the 5 fishing sessions between them. Av placings indicates the individual's contribution to the team result.

1st Czech 98 placings, 2nd France 122 placings, 3rd Spain 137 placings.
9th England 235 placings

1st Ivan Vancura (Czech), 2nd Jean Guillame Mathieu (France), 3rd Marek Walczyk (Poland).

The team are continuing to develop. 2012 will be an extreme challenge if Portugal fishes similarly to how it fished in the last World and Youth World Championships. Catching fish will be at a premium.

Paul Page
England European Team Manager
15th July 2011