THE DESILTING OF PIPLYE GRUBBERO POOL, THE FULL STORY

Undoubtedly the biggest project ever undertaken by the Syndicate was completed during the winter and spring of 2011/2012 and has resulted in a beautiful lake with no less than three casting points and very fishable banks on the field side. The tree lined side however continues to provide a challenge for roll casting!

Grubbero Pool was first created in 1996, the site previously being a tree filled stream valley where all the trees were blown down in the 1987 Hurricane. Over the following 15 or so years, silt, leaves etc brought down by the stream, had settled in the water, reducing the depth and more recently, despite efforts to keep it clear, the lake became choked with weed.

The decision was therefore made to carry out an extensive makeover in 2011, with the intention of re-stocking and having the water available for fishing before the season ended in November.


Pic 1, Grubbero, 7 August 2011


Pic 2, Grubbero, 8 August 2011

Work started with the draining of the pool in early August to reveal a mass of weed and silt, (pics 1 & 2) with the lake being surprisingly deep in the main basin at the dam end, the few fish remaining being rescued and transferred into Piplye Pool.
At this time, we were in the middle of the long dry spell and no water was flowing in the feeder stream.


Pic 3, Grubbero, 24 August 2011


Pic 4, Grubbero, 24 August 2011

Things were allowed to dry out a bit before the contractor moved in (pics 3 & 4) and after some ten days or so all the silt and weed that had built up over the years had been removed and spread on the adjoining field, to reveal a hard clay bottom to the lake, with an additional casting spit created on the field side (pics 5 & 6) and two silt traps incorporated into the feeder stream (pic 7) to reduce the amount of leaves, debris and rubbish entering the lake via the stream.


Pic 5, Grubbero, 4 September 2011


Pic 6, Grubbero, 4 September 2011


Pic 7, Grubbero, 4 September 2011


Pic 8, Grubbero, 18 December 2011

Wooden stakes and nylon netting were installed around the perimeter of the two field side casting spits in order to create a clean vertical edge and while the lake was still empty, advantage was taken to trim back the alder trees which had grown up over the years and remove some to create gaps to make additional fishing stations. A quantity of large stones was also placed in the feeder stream upstream of the traps in order to slow the flow and allow the silt to settle out and not enter the lake. (pic 8)


Pic 9, Grubbero 18 December 2011

The drainage tap was finally closed in October, but with still no flow in the feeder stream, the only water entering the lake came via the springs flowing in from the surrounding fields. One unfortunate side effect of this spring water entering the lake while it was still empty, was that with no water in the lake to balance the pressure, the spring water percolating through the original casting spit caused it to gradually slump into the lake. In fact the JCB driver, while re-modeling it, described it as “like a great big blancmange”.

It took until November before we had sufficient rain to give some flow in the stream and Grubbero was finally completely filled during December to reveal both spits now under water. (pic 9).

With no chance of fishing until the 2012 season, the lake was allowed to settle down over the winter period, with the intention of completing the work, re-stocking and having it available for fishing for the start of the season in February. Unfortunately the weather Gods thought otherwise and the prolonged freezing conditions experienced in January and February, with thick ice covering all the waters, meant that the work and stocking had to be delayed and the start of the season put back to the beginning of March.


Pic 10, Grubbero, 22 February 2012


Pic 11, Grubbero, 22 February 2012


Pic 12, Grubbero, 22 February 2012


Pic 13, Grubbero, 22 February 2012

Work re-stated in earnest on 22nd February, with a willing band of helpers, importing soil from the back of the dam to build up the two spits to some six inches or so above water level (pics 10 to 13), clearing and burning all the brambles, weeds etc on the field side bank and digging drainage ditches to direct the spring waters into the lake to dry out the ground adjacent to the water. It took two or three work parties to complete this work, finally finishing on the 18th April.

With the ice long gone and the water now stocked, we then had a period of dry weather such that the powers that be were talking drought and hosepipe bans, although water continued to flow in the stream and springs. With the excellent water conditions, the lake fished well, the crystal clear water revealing that wildlife had re-established very quickly, it was now brimming with fly life, newts, tadpoles etc. with some weed starting to show in the shallow margins.

It had been hoped that the naked spits would quickly grass over naturally, but with the lack of rain, they had became a bit like a desert, not the best treatment for members expensive fly lines, so it was decided to bypass nature by laying turf and on 1st June, on a warm and sunny day, a team barrowed the turf down to the lakeside, where Will, the supplier, laid them (pics 14 to 20). He did say that in view of the weather conditions, we would need to water the new grass twice a day until it was established, however it rained the following day and has continued to do so on and off, with more emphasis on the on, ever since, such that the turf has remained as green as the day it was laid, with thankfully no effort on our part.

Planting of a few marginal plants has been carried out to provide habitat for damsel flies and the like and we are sure that when established, with all the bare patches grassed over, Grubbero will be a picture, a great asset to our fishery and we hope will provide us with good fishing for years to come.

Pic 14, Grubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 15, Grubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 16, Grubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 17, Gubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 18, Grubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 19, Grubbero, 1 June 2012

Pic 20, Grubbero, 1 June 2012 (A well earned rest!)

Pic 21, Grubbero, 13 July 2012

Pic 22, Grubbero, 13 July 2012

Apart from the ten days or so involving machinery and the turf laying, all the work has been carried out by Syndicate members, some risking heart attacks, bad backs and the like due to the effort put in and we owe a sincere vote of thanks to: Rod Yuill, George Martin, Steven Swan, David Burditt, Ron Staplehurst, Peter Neave, John Mullins, Alan Purnell, Brian Raw, Jem Lee, Ian Chandler, David Drury, John Lindley, Roger Mourton, Robert Nathan, Adrian Gossage and Mike Richardson, all who have contributed in some way or other to the project, to give us water as we see it today (pics 21 & 22).