



BLUE RIBBON WILDERNESS GUIDES

Dean P. Bell B.Sc.
Member N.Z.P.F.G.A.

Season Report 2015 / 2016

Back in 1374 Geoffrey Chaucer stated that "all good things must come to an end". And so it is, the good thing that was the 2015/2016 trout season has come to that inevitable end. But sustained are memories of wild tussles, streamside camaraderie, screaming reels, break-offs and heartbreak, as well as many fine trout landed throughout the season. Memories hopefully that endure the test of time.



Oliver Smith and a personal best 7.5 lb Brown



John Dreyer with an early season gem!



Chris Moore



Stu Cottrell



Tony Stent



Didi Toaspern



Dick Riordan



Jim Riordan

Reading this you are probably thinking these eight trout above have all come from the same river. And you'd be right! The Upper Oreti is, as many of you know first hand, an outstanding trout fishery. Not only does it provide the opportunity for large Brown Trout but it offers with it a sense of solitude and feeling of isolation. These are qualities highly sought by discerning anglers and something we've come to expect with little thought or concern of any threat to its continuation.

Currently Southland Fish and Game is appealing to the Environment Court a resource consent given to the Southland District Council that enables them to construct a cycle trail down the Upper Oreti Valley. The projection of 12,000 cyclists annually which roughly comes out at a 100 per day mid summer I feel would seriously compromise the existing angling amenity in the valley. In March this year I provided evidence as an expert angler in the appeal, duly supported by client and agent letters outlining their concerns, in the endeavor to stop this trail from progressing through this world class fishery. The hearing has sat already for two weeks and another two are scheduled in May and July with the hope a decision is forthcoming before the start of next season.

I'm full of hope that Chaucer, if still alive, could eat his own words and that the Upper Oreti as we know it will endure for generations to come.

We should all feel pleased that our fishing license fees go toward funding the efforts to protect the fishing resource. I can't be more complimentary towards Southland Fish and Game in this matter ... but if the appeal fails I may be looking for job offers!!

Winston Rod Company Pro Staff



In February I was approached by Winston to join their Pro Staff which I gladly accepted having had a relationship with them almost since I started guiding. What it means for you is that I will have the latest Winston rods for client use when you visit, starting next season. I'm a firm believer in their great rods and I know many of you will also be Winston converts, after being given the opportunity to put one through its paces.

Next Season

Two years ago I wrote "the big buzz for next season is all about a mice infestation". The top of the South Island experienced it but it was a no show down this way. To wave the fickle finger of fate once more the Department of Conservation are predicting the lower South Island, in particular Fiordland, to have a mice infestation this coming spring. Before labeling all this as "crying wolf" the image below was taken in November 2015 across Lake Te Anau. It shows massive pollen bursts from the beech forest and this was the first I'd seen it since 2008. Oh, and yes we had a mice year the following season!!



Anyone interested in fishing dates for next season I currently have good availability for all but January and February. Big fish early season dates are still possible.

To all I guided this past season a big thank you for choosing to use my services. You are aware you've been funding a new Wanaka house build. Move in date is only a week away though it will have to wait a couple of days as the opening of Duck Season is the same day. My continued dedication to providing all I guide the greatest sight fishing experience available in NZ I hope has manifested itself into some memorable and great catches.

Best to you all

Dean



Sven Hoffman showing we do fish other rivers!