

Fishing – Jimmy's trout tipped the balance



Gary Gormley (left) and Jimmy Rhind with some of their prize-winning catch from Morton Fishings. Picture Nigel Duncan Media

Gary Gormley and Jimmy Rhind booked their place in a Lothians-based heat in of Britain's top fly fishing competitions.

The pair from Speyside bagged eight fish for a total of 27lbs 6oz in the latest heat of the Scierra Pairs at Morton Fishings near Edinburgh.

And Jimmy landed the biggest fish of the day, a superb 9lbs 04oz rainbow trout which made all the difference at the weigh-in.

The friends, who regularly fish together, will now make their debut in the national final at Grafham Water near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire on Sunday, August 26.

The Scierra Pairs carries the highest prize fund in British competition fly fishing.

And their success on Sunday proved their decision to come early to practice on the West Lothian-based water was rewarded.

Aberlour-based Jimmy was on night shift at Baxters before jumping in his car with Gary to drive to the water near Kirknewton.

They fished all areas of the seven-acre water on Saturday and crashed out on a caravan on-site overnight.

Both admitted the day was tough, with the mirror calm conditions and no wind making finding fish difficult.

But they persevered and Jimmy struck gold with his fritz pattern on an intermediate line after five hours of toil in the boat.

The 57-year-old hygiene worker said: "It was really difficult and we tried all sorts of flies and lines and places on the reservoir to get the fish to bite, but eventually we made it.

"I've caught an 18 pound fish before but this is my best of the season so far and it came at the right time."

It's the third time the pair have entered the major event and their first time in the final.

Jimmy said: "This is a tremendous win for us. We'll be rubbing shoulders with the best in Britain but we are confident we can take them on.

"I've fished Grafham before and we'll be going down for a recce before the event."

Gary, a 41-year-old heating engineer from Dufftown who works in Aberdeen, said: "We had to work hard and it was trial and error, but Jimmy landed five and I hooked three.

"And Jimmy's fish made all the difference at the final weigh-

in.”

Second place went to Rab Sneddon from Broxburn and Stephen McLean from Bathgate with eight fish totalling 18lbs 7oz.

Rab, a regular at the popular fishery, said: “We started with two fish in the first ten minutes but then it became really hard.

“All our fish were about the 2lbs to 3lbs mark but that big fish from James made all the difference.”

Both pairs qualify for the final which carries a first prize of £1,500 with the second-placed pair landing £1,000. The best fish on the day price is £250.

The next heat at Glencorse Trout Fishery near Edinburgh on June 17 is fully-booked but there are spaces at Black Loch near Falkirk on Sunday, July 1 and Lake of Menteith near Stirling on Sunday, July 22 for anybody who wants to join Gary and Jimmy in the final.