

All roads lead to Newhaylie for bank international

George Murray and his wife Senga have hosted four national bank fishing finals at their Newhaylie Trout Fishery around 400ft above Largs, but never an international, until now.

Final preparations are under way for the event on Wednesday despite the really dreadful weather which has buffeted Scotland in the last few days.

However, the 70mph-plus winds had not stopped teams practicing on the 3.8 acre fishery which is less than half a mile from the Irish Sea.

Indeed, Ireland arrived on Thursday, dropped their bags and tied on patterns in a bid to learn as much as they can before competition day on Wednesday.

Wales, with star man, Hwyl Morgan, a world champion fly caster and consultant for Scottish-based tackle manufacturer, Daiwa, plus being a regular YouTube presenter, checked-in on Friday and they also got straight to the water to have a cast.

England arrived on Saturday morning and immediately started their build-up and Scotland, with Edinburgh angler, David Harrington in the six-man squad, arrived on Saturday night. They have already had several practice sessions on the water in the last few months.

The water, which is 18ft at the deepest point but which averages around 5ft, has been well stocked. Murray said that his normal winter stocking was introduced ten days ago and he topped that up with more fish last Wednesday.

The owner said: "Plenty of fish has gone in and the guys are catching, despite the weather."

Wild brown trout of up to 13lb live in the lake along with rainbow trout up to 24lb and Tiger trout of up to 9lb and Murray is delighted to be granted an international. He said: "We've been involved with the qualifiers for the Home Bank International for 11 years now and hosted four national finals but never had the honour to host one, now we have."

The weather last Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday was really bad, he said, with winds up to 70mph and double-glazing units being added to the front of their main building had to stop.

Murray added: "We wanted somewhere to allow the anglers in the competition a place to shelter in bad weather and they installers hope to complete before competition day on Wednesday."

He added: "The Irish anglers arrived on Thursday and went straight out onto the water. Wales arrived on Friday and did the same and England have just arrived and they are going out.

"The conditions are tough but there is great interest here among our regulars. They are really keen to see how the top guys do it and they have come in to see how it is done during the unofficial practice days."

The prevailing wind is from the west and Murray is hoping the weather eases for next week. He said: "We have an eco-climate here and it can be wild elsewhere but flat calm here so we hope for the best for practice and competition day."

The biggest problem so far for Brian Quinn, Scotland's team

manager, was placing banners at the water because of the high winds and he is hopeful that his squad can perform well on home soil.

The fishery, which also has a tackle shop, is on Haylie Brae, Dalry Road, Largs KA30 9QA and is open from 8am daily with aspects over the Isles of Cumbrae, Rothesay and Arran ring 01475 676005 or contact Murray on murrgeo@aol.com

PICTURE: A view of Newhaylie from the air. Contributed