

Challenging day for anglers in Fastmail Pairs at Glencorse

Lothians duo Jock Kettles and Mike Connet qualified for the final of the Fastmail Pairs, formerly the Sierra Pairs, one of Britain's leading fly fishing events, after a challenging day at Glencorse Reservoir in The Pentland Hills.

Kettles from Lasswade, Midlothian, and Connet from Edinburgh hooked their eight fish which totalled 31lb 01oz in just over five hours. With time bonuses the total rose to 34lb 8oz.

They were beaten by Dunfermline pair, Ross and Nicola Carnegie, who landed eight fish for 29lb 01oz which rose to 37lb 1oz with time bonuses, the team arriving back at the harbour four minutes under three hours after the match started at 9am.

Third were another Fife pair, William 'Fally' Cowan, aged 81, from Glenrothes, and 70-year-old Brian Abel from Cardenden, who call themselves the 'Pensioner Pair'. Their bag weighed 31lb and 11oz and rose to 34lb 3oz with time bonuses.

Kettles and Connet were quick to praise the winners who practised on the water on Saturday. Nicola blanked on the day and Ross tempted four and they agreed on their tactics over a coffee as they relaxed at home.

Ross, a joiner, and Nicola, a carer, caught six fish in under two hours during the competition and had to wait for the next two as they anxiously looked at the clock in the hope of adding major time bonus points.

They have qualified for the final twice and two years ago they were 21st with 66 boats in the water. At Glencorse, the last heat and their last chance to qualify this year, one used a floating line with two dry flies and the other a Di5 with lures.

Ross admitted: "We decided to make for the top of the water (towards Loganlea) and we should have been back in harbour by 10.30, but we dropped a number of fish. At 11am it became cooler but the sun came out again and we found the two fish we needed to come back to harbour. It was, however, a challenging day."

It was also a long wait to see if their impressive total would be beaten.

Kettles and Connet are regular anglers at Glencorse and were considered a major threat as they know the water so well, but even they struggled and the experienced pair did not arrive back at the harbour until 14.12. They still accrued time bonuses.

Overall, their best finish in the final was eighth and they travel south to Grafham near Huntingdon in Cambridgeshire, England's third largest reservoir, on Sunday, September 15, fully aware that some of the heavyweights in British fly fishing await them.

One fished a mini rabbit and the other a booby and three cormorants and they persevered throughout the match in The Pentland Hills. They made drifts towards the margins but admitted that fishing was tough even with their experience at Glencorse. They also missed fish and Connet was snapped by a

big fish early on.

Cowan hooked his first fish five minutes after the start and another at 9.30 but they dried up and the pair did not dock until 14.49. They still collected a time bonus which left them clear of the rest.

They fished a red head damsel, FAB and a small snake on a Di3 line and Cowan, a former Scotland international, who won a gold medal in his debut at a water in Kent, said their biggest fish was around 6.5lb.

Other Lothians anglers were also in the field including Eck Moffat from Bonnyrigg and Andy Hamlyn from Roslin and they had six fish for 24lb 08oz.

The full results were: 1, Nicola Carnegie and Ross Carnegie, eight fish, 29lb 1oz plus 8lb in time bonuses for 37lb 1oz; 2, Jock Kettles and Mike Connet, eight fish, 31lb, plus 3lb 8oz in time bonuses for 34lb 8oz; 3, Brian Abel and William Cowan, eight fish, 31lb 11oz, 2lb 8oz in time bonuses for 34lb 3oz; 4, David Wright and Keith Renton, seven fish, 26lb 4oz; 5, Eck Moffat and Andy Hamlyn, six fish, 24lb 8oz; 6, Dave Moody and Jeff McIntosh, six fish, 21lb 8oz; 7, Simon Thurwell and Derek Marklow, four fish for 19lb; 8, Colin Fairgrieve and Douglas Scott, five fish for 18lb 8oz; 9, Colin Moffat and Willie Jacobsen, four fish for 14lb 14oz; 10, George Amour and Jamie McLery, one fish for 3lb 8oz; 11, Andrew Glasgow and Mark Partizio one fish for 3lb 4oz.

PICTURE: Friendly rivalry at the weigh-in (left to right): Mike Connet, Jock Kettles, Ross Carnegie, Nicola Caregie and Kenny Knox, the fishery manager at Glencorse. Picture by Nigel Duncan



PENSIONER PAIR: "Brian Abel (left) and William 'Fally' Cowan who were third. Picture **Nigel Duncan**



WAITING GAME: Anglers line-up awaiting the results at Glencorse. Picture **Nigel Duncan**



HAND OVER: Jack Kettles (right) congratulates the winners, Nicola and Ross Carnegie, on winning the heat. Picture ***Nigel Duncan***