

Tantangara Area Trout Fishing Outing 19-21 May 23

Eight club members had an adventurous fishing trip to Tantangara despite not knowing each other well beforehand. The cold weather made the warm fire a welcoming sight for everyone upon their arrival on Friday evening. Greg and Charlie, being father and son, already had a pre-existing relationship within the club.

As we gathered around the fire, the conversation turned to camping gear and the discussion of useful items for the chilly night. Someone suggested a hot water bottle, which caught the attention of most participants, as it would provide warmth and comfort during the cold night ahead. Many mentally noted the idea, considering it a perfect solution for staying cozy.

It seems like the group (Paul, Geoff, Callum, Trev, Claude) was bonding and preparing for a memorable fishing experience despite being relatively unfamiliar with one another before the trip. Greg and Charlie arrived after the rest of us climbed into our warm sleeping bags.



The following morning greeted the club members with grey clouds and mist, creating a moody atmosphere. As everyone emerged from their various sleeping quarters, ranging from swags to small single-person tents and different types of rooftop tents, the fire was once again lit to provide warmth in the chilly weather.

To kickstart the day, the group prepared a variety of breakfast options, including different versions of eggs and bacon. With the cold weather in mind, nobody strayed too far from the comforting warmth of the fire. The decision was made to not rush off early since the trout were unlikely to be very active in the cold conditions.

Most of the club members agreed to fish in the Murrumbidgee River above Tantangara. Claude, Geoff, and Trev specifically ventured towards the section where the river meets the lake. Due to the increased water level compared to a previous trip, we encountered some challenging 4WD terrain to reach our desired fishing spot. Despite the water being clear and at a reasonable level, only five fish were caught using a combination of tightline and NZ wool indicator fishing techniques, all with nymphs, despite the presence of rising fish on occasions. In hindsight, the group concluded that it would have been better to walk for about 30 minutes prior to starting fishing in order to access more traditional trout water.

The above photos depict Trev providing Geoff, who was on his second trip, with some helpful fishing instructions.

While Claude, Geoff, and Trev fished the Murrumbidgee where it meets Tantangara, Paul and Callum decided to drive an additional 20 minutes to explore an upstream section of the river. Paul, being the wise and wily fisherman, made sure that they walked for 30 minutes before starting to fish. This decision proved beneficial as Callum was thrilled to catch his first significant trout, filling him with excitement and joy.

Paul's knowledge came into play as he skilfully selected a rig that resulted in a remarkable catch of 12 fish. His success on the water earned him well-deserved praise from the group. It seems like Paul's experience and understanding of fishing tactics paid off in a big way.

Overall, despite the relatively modest catch for most of the group (except for Paul), the day was productive and filled with memorable experiences.

Upon returning to the camp, the club members wasted no time and started a fire to warm themselves up, even while still wearing their waders. As each person trickled in from their day's fishing adventures, they gratefully gathered around the fire for warmth and companionship. The comforting fire was a welcome sight for everyone, providing respite from the cold outdoors.

After warming up by the fire, the club members shed their waders and began cooking dinner over the hot coals. Interestingly, it turned out that at least three of us had sausages grilling on the campfire, perhaps a popular choice among the group. The aroma of the sizzling

sausages filled the air, further enhancing the sense of camaraderie and shared enjoyment.

In a delightful gesture, Greg treated everyone to a delicious dessert cooked in a camp oven. It was a special treat that brought additional warmth and enjoyment to the evening. The group likely gathered around to savor the sweet indulgence, further deepening the bonds formed during the trip.

The evening around the campfire, filled with good food, laughter, and shared experiences, provided an opportunity for the club members to unwind, reflect on their day's adventures, and strengthen their newfound friendships.



Trev, Paul, Charlie and Paul enjoying the fire



Everyone retired to their tents and warm sleeping bags not long after dessert was served. Despite the fire, the intermittent showers and cold wind dampened the mood. After a blustery night, we awoke to some leftover sleet/snow. The wind and showery morning led all of us to make a quick decision that it would be better to spend the day at home with family, friends or drying out our gear.

The intermittent showers and cold wind had a dampening effect on the overall mood. So, after enjoying the dessert and spending some time around the campfire, the club members eventually retired to their respective tents and warm sleeping bags. The challenging weather conditions continued throughout the night, and when morning arrived, the group woke up to the remnants of sleet or snow on the ground.

Given the persistent wind and showery morning, we collectively made a quick decision, concluding that it would be more prudent to spend the day at home, with families, friends, or simply taking the opportunity to dry out gear.



We were welcomed on Sunday morning by snow or sleet leftovers



Some great photos from Paul...following up from his photography presentation

The camaraderie among the club members was evident through our interactions, shared excitement, and support for one another's achievements. Fishing not only provided us with recreational enjoyment but also served as a platform for bonding and creating lasting memories.

The takeaway for me is....dont be afraid to go away on a weekend without your normal fishing pal. Club events are a great opportunity to meet new and interesting people.

The camaraderie among the club members during the fishing trip was great. Despite not knowing each other before the trip, the interactions, shared excitement, and support demonstrated the strong bond that can be formed through shared experiences.

The realization I took away was to not be afraid to embark on a weekend getaway without your usual fishing companion is an important one. Club events, offer a valuable opportunity to meet new and interesting people. By stepping out of your comfort zone and joining such events, you open yourself up to the possibility of forming new friendships, learning from others' experiences, and expanding your social circle within the fishing community.