

# Kiewa River trip report

## Lachy and Greg W

As the river fishing season is rapidly drawing to a close and many of the regular rivers (Eucumbene, Thredbo, etc) have been running a bit low, we thought it may be worth venturing a little south of the border to check out the action in Victoria. A chance sighting of a short video telling the story of Shane Jacobsen (Aussie actor of Kenny fame) buying the local pub at Dederang, about ½ hr southeast of Wodonga, planted the seed for accommodation. Dederang's proximity to the Kiewa River, and a little further to the Mitta Mitta, ensured that a plan for a trip soon took shape. Originally it was going to be three of us, so a two room cabin was booked (1 x double and 2 x single beds for \$160/night) at the Dederang Hotel.



## Friday



A late morning start on Friday saw us take a lunch break at Gundagai and then a stop at Bluey's Outdoors in Wodonga for a bit of a squiz at the fly selection and to ask for some local advice – Oscar gave us the good oil. We arrived at Dederang about 4ish. Noting the sun was getting low on the horizon, we

decided to check out a couple of access points that were originally scoped out on Google maps. Then it was off to the Dederang Hotel to check in and grab a cleansing ale and a meal. For a small town, the pub filled up surprisingly quickly – good thing we had reserved a table for dinner.



## Saturday

**Mt Beauty** – taking the advice of Oscar (from Bluey's), we first went to Pebble



Beach at Mt Beauty after first getting some brekky at the Mt Beauty Bakery – they do an awesome toasty (called a 'press'). As advised by Oscar, we parked at the Pebble Beach Walk Carpark and then walked the sealed path to Pebble Beach to fish the Kiewa River West Branch. Lachy met another fisherman in the river on the way there who advised he had caught a lovely 1.5 lb brown. Thinking, blast, there goes my chance of

getting anything, Lachy decided to continue onto Pebble Beach and push a little further downstream before heading back up river. Hopefully (wishful thinking) this

would allow a bit of a re-set!  
Initially it was rather tough going. Lots of overhanging branches saw at least four tangles resulting in re-rigging – the tangle Gods had to be appeased! It was a lovely stretch of river with riffles, deep channels and structure that was sure to hold fish. But alas, it was not until almost back at the carpark that Lachy managed to land a chunky 35cm Kiewa River rainbow – the Blue Ninja nymph strikes again! Unfortunately, Greg had no luck, even breaking out the spin rod on some of the deeper pools near the carpark.



**Tawonga Recreation Reserve** – after taking a late lunch at the Rocky Valley Snow, Bikes Café (the bacon, egg and onion jam toastie is delicious), we went to the Tawonga Recreation Reserve (Google Maps ref -36.66007, 147.14226) which is just a stone's throw from the Mt Beauty Car Club & Alpine Raceway.



At our previous spot, a local had advised that further downstream of where the Kiewa River East Branch joins in, the water was much more discoloured. Given the rain that had recently passed through the region, the river at this location was up, discoloured and certainly moving at pace. This made wading a very cautious activity, but not impossible. Depths varied from knee to waist deep, but a wading staff was a must.



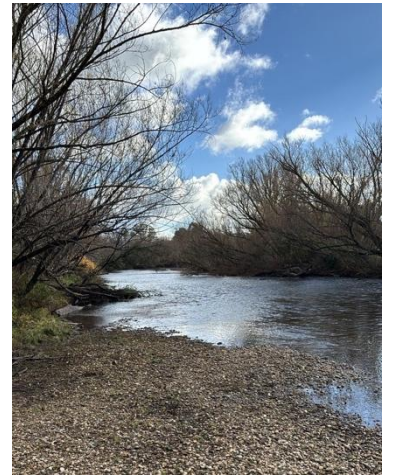
Returning to our accommodation at the Dederang pub, we noticed that the final game of Aussie Rules footy was still underway and there was a massive crowd in attendance. Again, it was just as well we booked a table as the crowd soon migrated to the pub for after game drinks and a feed.

## Sunday



It was decided to fish somewhere close by before heading back to Canberra. The picnic area adjacent to the Keegan's Lane bridge was only about 5-6km from the hotel and provided quick and easy access to the river. The river was still up and moving, especially as it had

rained overnight, but it was a little clearer. Again some nice stretches of water, but it would provide more opportunity when at more normal levels and with a bit more clarity to the water. No more fish were caught, so we wrapped it up and headed home, grabbing a bite of lunch in Wodonga on the way.



## Wrap Up

Although not many fish were caught this time, it was a great opportunity to explore a new fishing area. The Dederang Hotel provided a good option to base ourselves from with comfortable accommodation, good food and a great atmosphere. A few points to note:

- A 3-day VIC fishing licence is \$10 online
- Mt Beauty is about a 30 min drive from Dederang and some options to fish the Mitta Mitta River are also about 30 min drive away, but not explored this time.
- The Dederang Hotel has three 2-room cabins plus rooms in the hotel as well. The area where the cabins are was packed with caravans/trailers. You can stay there overnight for no cost, but there are no shower, toilet or cooking facilities apart from what is in the pub.

Noting that the VIC and NSW river fishing seasons close at the same time, but the VIC season re-opens on 5 Sep 26 (as opposed to 3 Oct 26 for NSW), it may provide some options for those wishing to get back into the rivers a bit earlier. If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to get in touch.