

# Cowichan River, My First Brown, February 8<sup>th</sup>

From: Tony Arruda [tarruda@shaw.ca]

Hi Bruce,

Bill Croft has harangued me to send you a detailed fishing report about our trip to the Cowy last Thursday, the 8th. The trip was kind of up in the air a few days earlier: rain, etc., but we decided on the Cowy vs. the upper Nanaimo on Wed.

We drove down on Thursday, decided to begin — well at the beginning: with a short and informative stop to the Fly Shop in Cowichan Lake where we picked up some useful info — and the recommended flies from Gord. We headed to Spring pool parking lot — half a dozen vehicles there already by 10 am. We encountered two young men along the pool, but they left within minutes — “real gentlemen” according to Bill. Bill suggested I get started while he set up. Well I was raring to go having just purchased an OPST 15’ shooting head from Keith a couple of days before. Bill thought water was maybe a foot and a half higher than optimal. Actual stage height was 1.08 m on Hydrometric Station at Lake Cowichan.

Short story is I was mostly casting 45 degrees downstream into seam between fast and slower current for about half an hour when I hooked into a Brown. Now this is after stepping into the pool where the young man, and no doubt half a dozen others, had been before so I consider myself quite lucky. Used fast 8w, lined with OPST head, 5 feet of T-14, 5 feet of 12 lb fluoro carbon leader and 18” 8lb fluoro tippet — yes a bit light in view of the fact I was hoping for steelhead! Bill and I had stuck with a Gorman Bead Head #8 egg pattern with UV wrap which had been recommended to us by fly shop — so Bill and I had not yet touched intruders nor other big uglies.

That OPST head rocks — not one false cast all morning. Rather, just picking up the line after the drift and swing and rolling it back out with a D loop — throws even heavy flies out 40-45 feet easy. I’m a novice as you know and only now am I learning about a Snap C to bring anchor upstream before the D loop — all on single hander, of course.

Anyway, what else is there to tell? Oh, yes, met two gentlemen walking back from Big Bend. They had hooked into a few fish: browns and cutties I think. Appeared to be rigged with small bead flies: Prince and Pheasant Tail and such. Boats had floated by already, surprising because trees were downed night before by high winds.

What a great morning, 3 degrees, although windy — never got it in the back of the head once — so no chuck ’n’ duck with that Head — even with Clouser types.

Big thank you to Bill, my mentor. (Sorry, not my nature to report, but Bill has repeated I should mention all details).



**Best photo I could get as I did not dare let Brown out of the water when I trying to take a picture. What hands, iPhone and struggling to enter the code not optimal!.**

Bill was off behind the bushes heard my hooting but didn't come to take a picture. LOL.

True 16" but thin, maybe pound and a half, in view of fall spawn and this colder winter?

T