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Brian Crawford
Editor

EDITORIAL

Well, well, well, - things are beginning to look up after all. There are members out there who care about the future of the Club. Congratulations. Now how about the rest of you lot putting in some effort. Do it on Tue sdays - it's rubbish on the T.V. anyway.

The 1984/85 fishing season is drawing to a close. Dave Taylor's fine eel of 5:15 remains the best for our members although quite a few bigger eels were caught nationally. I hope to produce a list of eels over 4lb caught in 1984/85 soon. If you know of any drop me a line so that I can include them in my list.

Inside this Bulletin is a piece by the Club Analyst, Terry Jefferson. He has put in a great deal of effort, as usual, in its preparation. You should also receive the Guide to Reporting in 1985 with this Bulletin. Terry asks me to mention that to increase the value of members reporting of sessions in 1985, members should try to obtain a barometer to record atmospheric pressure details. A cheap one can be obtained for £4.95 + 75p post & packing from W.Hobby Ltd., Knights Hill Square, London. SE27 0HH. (cheques and postal orders made out to W.Hobby Ltd.)

Alternatively, obtain the information from news broadcasts. I know I personally, would be very interested to know if there is any pattern correlating eels feeding and atmospheric pressure. i.e., does it have to be high or low, rising/steady/falling, or how the relative positions of high or low pressure areas affect eels feeding, or their rate and direction of movement.

These are very valuable questions to answer, some may be resolved by direct observation of an eel feeding in a tank, but on the bank information has got to be more valuable. Within the next few months, my science department will be computerised and I am researching a possible programme to monitor the weather in the central Shropshire region to produce graphs of pressure fluctuations. I just have to design a suitable sensor. The rest is easy. However, I am well aware that pressures vary throughout the country due to the passage, usually in a west to east direction of cyclones and anticyclones. (low and high pressure areas) These also affect wind speed and direction, depending on the closeness of the isobars - the lines drawn on weather maps linking regions of the same pressure.

You can all help in forming an overall national picture by doing your bit.

Terry tells me he is abroad for most of February, let's hope he has had a good rest in preparation for all those session reports you are going to send him. I have to admit that due to changing jobs and house (twice) recently, I did not do my bit with the session reporting - the first time in 15 years of continuous membership and eel angling - but I guess there has to be a first time for everything.

In order to obtain information as well as permission to fish new waters in the central Shropshire area, I've got myself elected onto the committee of the largest club in the Telford area together with getting onto the Telford A.A. committee also. This has resulted in my being given permission to fish a water with good prospects during the close season with no restrictions.
Brian Crawford

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

I have just been looking through my National Anguilla Club file in which I keep all my old Bulletins and Newsletters and correspondence. Since I became Chairman some years ago, I have managed fairly regularly to include in the Bulletin a Chairman's Page. You may feel that I have said nothing very startling in these little pieces. On practically every occasion that I have put pen to paper and produced a Chairman's Page, I have ended up by asking members to contact me if they had any matters they wish to have aired. It is symptomatic of the current state of apathy from within the Club that apart from club officers I have received no correspondence or telephone calls from any of you.

I am thoroughly bored by making repeated requests to members to make more effort and contribute to the Club, and in particular write material for the Bulletin. You do not deserve to be entitled to call yourselves members of such a famous specimen group as the National Anguilla Club, and you have not only let down in a bad way the high standards that the Club has set in previous decades, but have also failed the clubs officers.

You have been notified in the most recent Newsletter that a provisional date has been fixed for the Spring meeting i.e. the Sunday the 17th. March. No doubt a good number of you will find a good excuse for not attending (although only a minority of those not attending the meeting will have the good manners and decency to offer their apologies). Since joining the Club I have not missed a club meeting despite the fact that I have to drive a good distance often in poor weather. I fully accept that I have let the Club down in that I have been unable to attend club trips. I have tried to regularly contribute to the Bulletin even though I have many other commitments and time is very precious.

As I stated at the 1984 A.G.M., to some extent as the Chairman of the Club I must accept some of the responsibility for its current state. If you didn't and do not feel that I am doing the job properly you have had plenty of opportunity to elect someone in my place. I would not in any way be offended and still would continue to do the utmost for the Club.

From what you are reading, you will be right in presuming that I am thoroughly disillusioned with the Club, and do not feel in all honesty, that I can continue to buoy up the sinking ship by staying as Chairman or as a member. The fate of the National Anguilla Club is in the hands of you, the members. If you want the Club to be successful, you know what has to be done. All the officers of the Club now in office will do their best if you want them to. If you

show, by your absence from the Spring meeting, that yet again you can't be bothered, then as far as I am concerned, that is the end of my involvement with the Club. It will be a sad thing for me to resign, as I have made some good friends who I hope will continue as such.

You will see that this piece of paper is headed 'Chairman's Page', I had intended that it be included in the next issue of the Bulletin (if you can be bothered to submit articles for inclusion to make this possible). However I feel so strongly about the current situation that I have taken the liberty of sending it to you individually.

If you feel that my comments are unjustified, or simply not very constructive, even at this late stage I would like to hear from you, I am not alone in my views.

The poor old National Anguilla Club does not deserve to die slowly and painfully, and for God's sake, if you don't feel its worth continuing put her out of her misery.

(Editor's Note - even though Mark sent this letter out to members, I decided to include it in this edition of the Bulletin so that his remarks are kept for posterity. The hopeful signs are that some members are getting their fingers out and making an effort to raise the standard of the Club. We have a lot to live up to and all have a great deal to contribute.

I hope members to really support Mark in his plea and that he is not forced to resign at the SGM as I feel I couldn't cope with being Treasurer, Secretary, Editor, etc., etc., and CHAIRMAN despite my previous years in that position.)

EDITOR'S NOTE 2. Note the date of the SGM is now March 31st, not 17th.)

THE PREDATORY EEL by NEVILLE EVANS

I have been asked to write an article for the Club Magazine. As a new member, writing an article for such an experienced group of anglers is going to prove difficult. So I will write about my experiences over the last four years, fishing my own waters, and hopefully, provide some interest to fellow members.

You will find no mention of worms or other small food items, as they are completely useless on my waters, only resulting in a huge amount of bootlaces. My waters contain the predatory type of eel. From an early age, these eels learn to eat fish. They have developed large heads and require wire traces and the use of fish baits.

I have learned there is a lot more to deadbaiting than just throwing out a suitable bait to a likely looking area and then putting in the hours. True, it does work, but to get the best out of each water you need to be flexible in your approach, as each water can be very different from another.

I have found that eels have a definite food preference, what I term 'soft baits', such as rudd/roach sections, producing the most attention, while the use of hard baits, such as perch and eel sections, or my current favourite, roach/rudd heads, producing the better class of eels.

I have also found that where a water has been heavily fished, the use of fish baits that are alien to the water, such as trout, sea fish, etc., can produce a few extra fish. Modern flavourings could also be of use, something I intend to experiment with this summer. I firmly believe that like carp, the eel has the ability to learn to become very wary of certain baits.

SURFACE BAITS

These seem to produce well on some waters, but not on others, often taking the first fish of the session. The best type of water seems to be shallow and weedy, with dusk being the most productive time. The stage of the moon didn't seem to make any difference. A peculiarity I've found is that when an eel takes the bait on this type of rig, they tend to remain high up in the water, which makes the landing of the fish that much easier.

LIVE BAITS

A small livebait, about 4" long, fished on the surface rig or on a simple ledger rig, often outfishes any other bait. The trouble here is that large livebaits are needed to avoid catching the smaller eels, but they provide all sorts of problems such as the timing of the strike, and the hooking.

DEADBAITS

In our waters, the use of large deadbaits often produce the biggest eels, they also produce never ending runs and an awful lot of dropped baits. I think the reason for this is as follows:

on picking up a small fish, the eel runs off a few yards to get away from any competition. It then stops and eats it then probably resumes feeding. However, on coming across a large bait, it sees enough food here for a few days and so belts off home with it to its lair. This can be a long distance. Thus the long runs give more distance, more resistance on the line and therefore more chance of the bait being rejected. Having now developed some new quick-strike rigs for use with large baits, I intend to try 6 - 8" baits to attempt to sort out the really big eels (Ed. could be worth a try at BALA).

SUB-SURFACE RIGS

See FIG 1. This shows my normal off the bottom rig or surface-fishing of shallow water up to 6'. The other rig (FIG 2.) is for surface fishing of waters over 6'. For this method, there is an additional swivel which helps cut down on the tangles. On both rigs, the bait hangs head down, with the eel usually attacking from below. The hook needs to be in this position as shown to avoid burying the hook into the bait. On a long cast I use a simple idea of Vic Bellars, a small circle of thin plastic is placed on the trace next to the hook to act as a buffer. The strike is made fairly quickly, usually after a few yards of line only is taken.

LARGE DEADBAIT RIG

This rig is made up as shown (FIG 3) - a pike rig with one small difference. The added nylon link allows you to retrieve the bait should you miss a run.

There are three reasons for this:

- a. I'm just naturally tight with my baits.
- b. Leaving such a nice meal lying around, a large eel (over 11lb) is bound to pick this up, rather than your nice fresh one, and that's the last you'll see of it for several days.
- c. Most important - providing the bait isn't too mangled and is re-cast, its surprising how often a run is quick to follow, something I've also noticed in my piking.

These are comparatively new rigs, only developed at the end of last season, and as yet have not had sufficient trial to evaluate their effectiveness, although early results look promising.

To finish off, it has been quite noticeable that most of our best eels have been caught at dawn, that is, one hour before the sun rises to about two hours after, and in most cases, the baits have remained untouched during the night.

Last point - FIG 4. is the rig I use for my small fish sections and other small food items.

(Editor's note - a very fine article from one of our newest members. This, I hope, should stimulate you all into trying these new ideas this year and loose your stereotype image. Be lucky - try something new. Well done Neville)

FIG 1

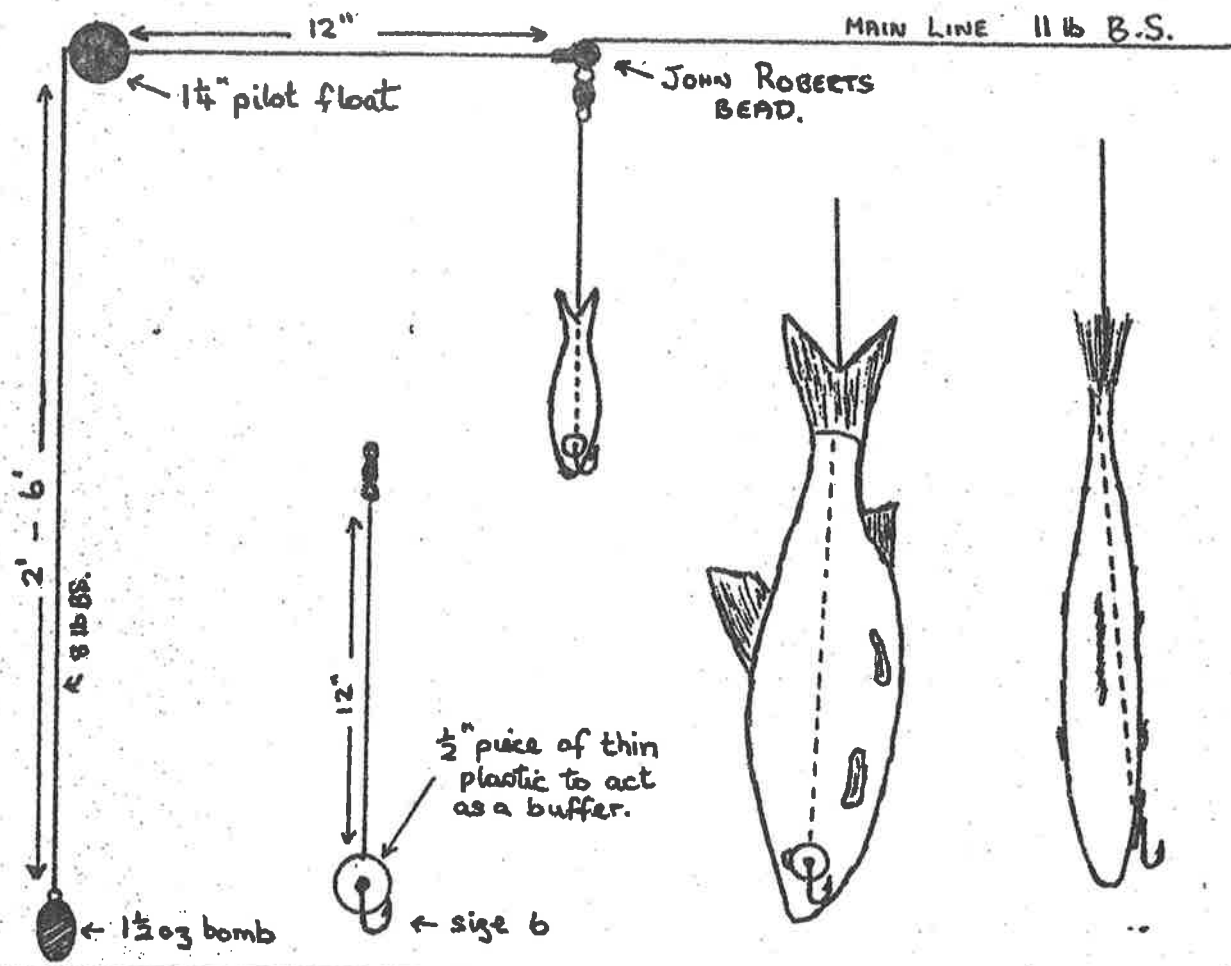
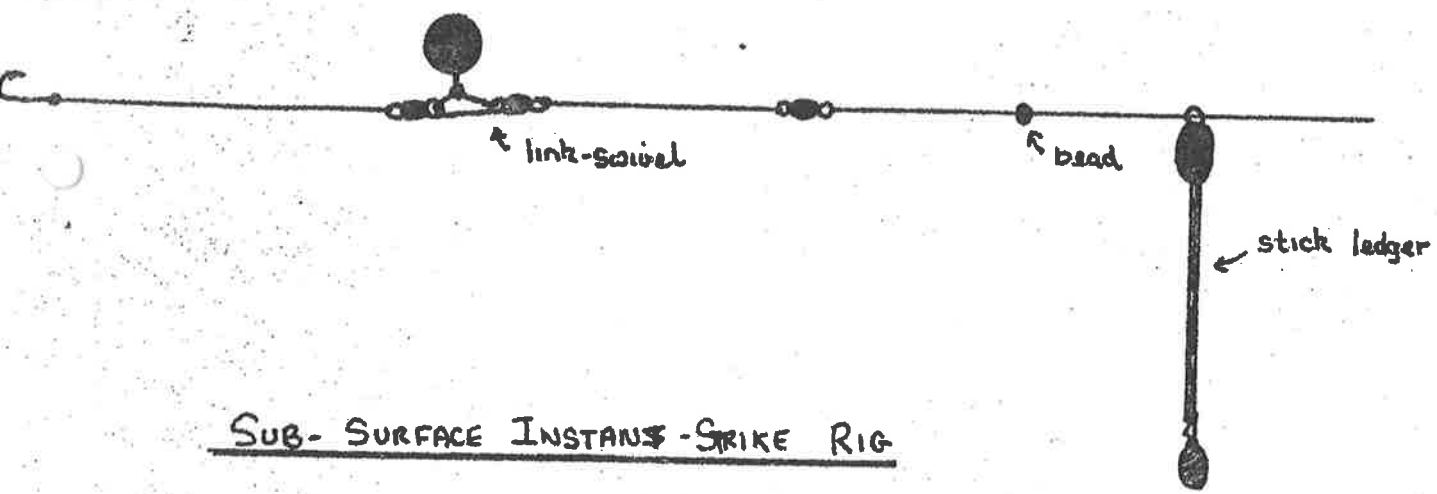


FIG 2



SUB-SURFACE INSTANT STRIKE RIG
FOR WATERS OVER 6ft DEEP.

FIG 3.

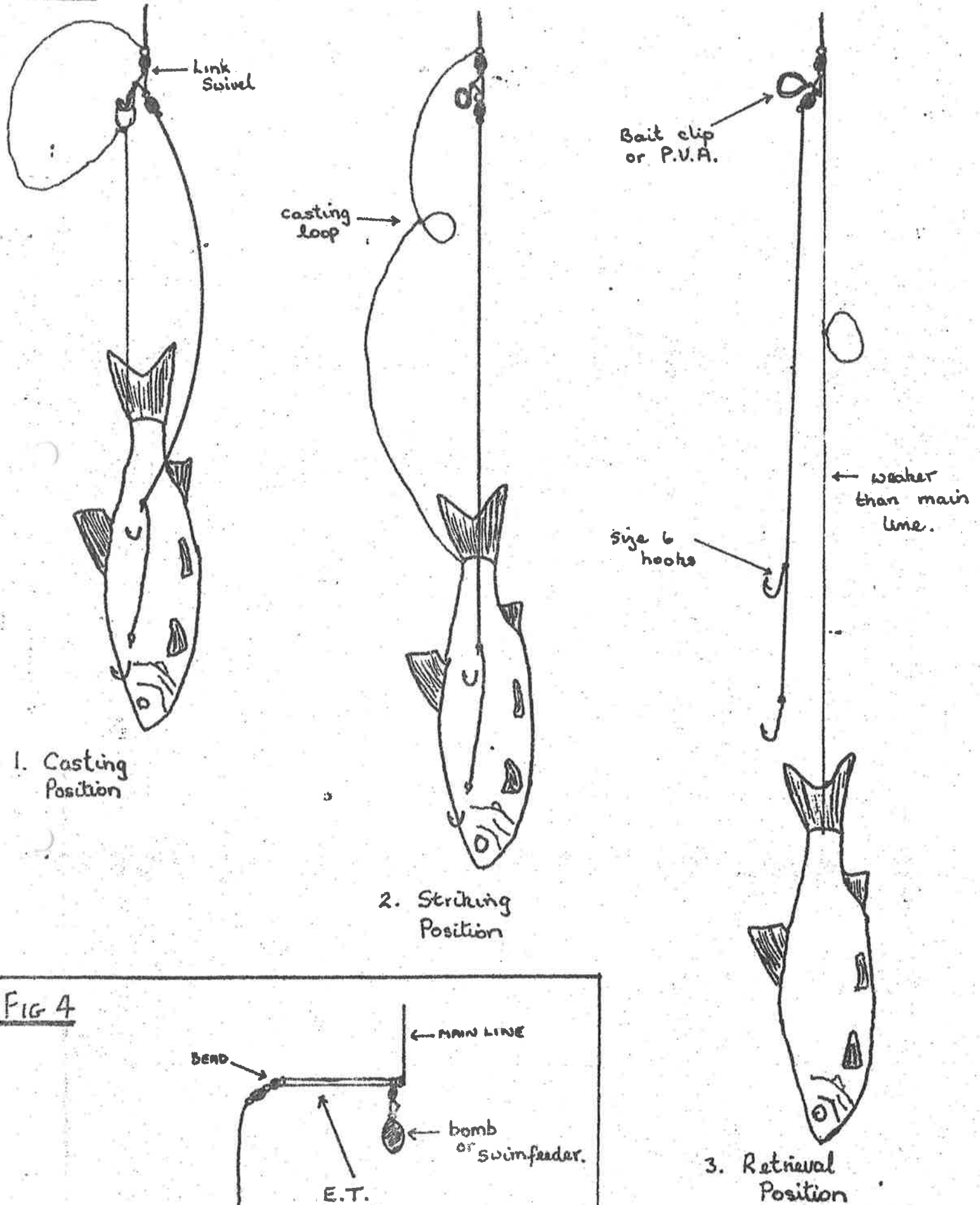
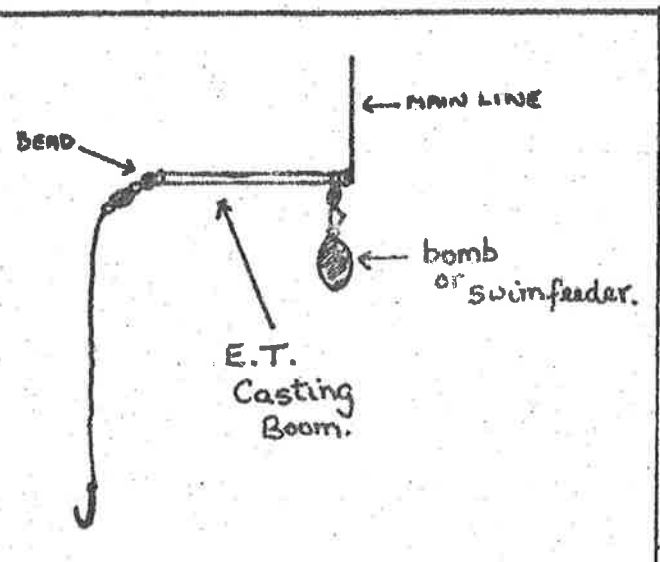


FIG 4



ANGLERS 3 EELS 0.by Dave Walker

I was tempted to start this article by saying that the 'Silly Season' was upon us again but thinking about it, I believe that all is not as absurd as it first appears.

Depending on when this is published in the Bulletin, you may know or not of the existence of the new Eel Study Group, headed by an old acquaintance of some members, Mr. Kevin Richmond. Now, most eel anglers reaction to this news is OH NO... not another eel group, but I'm not sure that this is such a bad thing, depending on whether the groups all work together in some form or just become competitive and childish in their attitude to each other. This may sound like I am throwing the first stone but we all know it can so easily happen and hopefully this time one and all can live in harmony and get on with the really important things like actually getting out and catching eels and making sure that the people who are prepared to fight for the future of our sport get the help and money they need and deserve.

On reflection, I wish Kevin and his pals the best of luck and hope all goes well for them as any new group is hard to establish and this is Kevin's second attempt to form a similar group (his last one was the 'Elite Eel Group' or similar - Ed.) hopefully, it will be successful this time. My only apprehension is that if the Eel Study Group decide they are a class above every other eel angler, then we are all banging our heads against the proverbial brick wall. I personally don't really care if other eel anglers knock each other as they are only doing themselves a power of no good. The real harm that occurs is the time and effort wasted on bickering and ego boosting that should be used to present a more united front against real enemies like pollution, bans and all the other trial and tribulations that we are sent to keep us busy!

Co-operation and links, however vague, between the various eel groups can only lead to better fishing and more awareness of any threats that may come along. I am very pleased that I know members of the British Eel Anglers Club as well as a couple of the new Eel Study Group and of course for your sins, all of you know me.... The 'jump up and down, waving your arms' style of Mick Bowles of the BEAC has its faults but also gets results, as does the firm and determined approach of the Anguilla Club. Hopefully the Eel Study Group can formulate its own way of exerting pressure on the 'hard of hearing' as most of our real opposition seem to be.

One aspect that I feel could go some small way to bringing the ever increasing ranks of eel anglers together, is the idea of occasional guest writers in our respective magazines. If nothing else, it might keep the three editors happy as they could get a few nasty letters from members about the 'other lot's' contribution! There are certainly some members of the BEAC and (probably) the ESG who don't really understand the way the NAC runs and all that, and doubtless some of our members don't understand the other organisations. This can't be good and can only lead to confusion and worse. This cannot be tolerated and all of us must make an effort to bring the three groups together for everyone's benefit.

In 1984 I met and fished with about 20 members of the BEAC and had a thoroughly good time with a great bunch of lads, as enjoyable as any of the Anguilla Club trips, especially as I had only met 3 or 4 of them before the trip. Many of these obviously keen eel anglers had some very odd ideas about the Anguilla Club and as usual I wasn't short of a few answers to their questions. Funnily enough the most common one was 'how big an eel do you have to catch to join?' Quite a few of the lads had caught big 4's and a fair sprinkling of 5's and I could not find more than a couple who, if they applied for membership of the Anguilla Club, would not be accepted almost immediately. Hopefully, the lads from the BEAC that were on that trip to Westwood Park went away with a better idea of the Anguilla Club. I certainly reinforced my belief that the BEAC lads are a great bunch and really keen. The outcome of that weekend was the fishing I enjoyed this year with John Sidley and Gerry Rogers as well as the correspondence and friendship of Nev. Evans and Andy Barlow, and as you all know John and Nev are now provisional members of the Anguilla Club, so contact and co-operation can't be all bad.

I sincerely hope that some future trips between the Clubs can be arranged and with luck we can involve the ESG as well. Perhaps this is a way of increasing the attendance at Club trips and also the enjoyment. Just think Bob, Golly and Dan may be able to go on a Summer trip without having to put up with me all week!!! (Ed. only if you can persuade Golly and Dan to stay with us.)

There it is then. I hope you all think about the above and respond even if you say, *e&***e@e* or something - at least Brian will have something to print.

Dave Walker

p.s. perhaps members would like to comment on the possibility of sending a copy of this article to BEAC and ESG as a starter?

(Ed. an excellent article and a great idea. We do need unity. All clubs should compliment each other and present an united front to those outside.)

TURN AGAIN ARTHUR

by

DAVE WALKER

My first reaction to Arthur's problem regarding his crayfish was 'the silly old sod can't see the wood for the trees' or indeed the 'crayfish for the crayfish'!!!

Surely the simple answer is to use the 'big black beasies as bait. I can't see the logic in trying to obtain small soft crayfish as these will probably only be attacked by the larger variety that exist in the stretch. Since reading the article I have spoken to Arthur about the stretch and have been down to have a good look at it. The crayfish are present in the winter and I managed to catch two on fried bacon left over from breakfast (who's - not yours Dave - you never leave any....). They are indeed big, black and 'orrible, but I still see no need whatsoever to assume that if eels feed on the crays, that they would prefer a soft one as opposed to the indigenous population. Another problem also occurred to me regarding the use of soft crayfish and that is the resident chub population. That, although small, is probably the main crayfish predator. My reasoning for this is that I believe the eel population to be relatively small and the abundance of natural food in the form of snails, shrimps, etc., is vast and I do not believe that the crayfish would form a large part of the eels diet. But I would like to hear from the senior Club members regarding eels feeding on crays.

I am a bit worried about Arthur's seeming predominance with trying to place a bait under the far bank trees. I think my old mate is possibly getting a bit stereotyped in his old age. Really Arthur, how can you look at this stretch as is it was just another bit of canal? In the summer it is closer to a deep section of the Hampshire Avon than the mucky Lea downstream, and the amount of cover afforded by the weed should surely point to the fact that the eels will feed all over the stretch, and as in cleaner rivers they will be caught anywhere in the flow. I may have got the wrong idea from your piece but I think you ought to sit down and think again my old friend. Better still, I'll come and fish with you and we can both get a double figure eel...

David Walker

p.s. I do have a few ideas on how to catch the eels but I think I'll just come and show you what they are in the summer.

DAVID ANDREW COUNTRYWEAR LIMITEDFACTORY PRICE LIST1st DECEMBER 1984

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	Cord	£ 18.00
	Derby Tweed Stripe	£ 16.27
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	Derby Tweed Stripe	£ 43.36
	Tyrolean Loden	£ 45.43
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Fishing Coat	Waterproof Moleskin	£ 44.28
	Tyrolean Loden	£ 45.94
	Waxed Cotton	£ 32.14
Hoods	Mole	£ 5.69
	Loden	£ 5.69
	Waxed Cotton	£ 4.31
Shooting Coat	Waterproof Moleskin	£ 45.94
	Tyrolean Loden	£ 50.54
	Waxed Cotton	£ 35.59
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	Loden	£ 5.67
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(Editor - If you are interested in the above - contact Mark Davies)

PURPOSE OF THE REPORTING SCHEME

By way of an early introduction to the Session Reporting for 1985, I think it well worthwhile sitting back and reminding ourselves that the scheme does not exist as a form of torture: far from it. It should serve to foster interest in our eeling and at the end of the season should hopefully provide us all with ideas to apply to our future fishing to improve the quantity and quality of our eels.

In its simplest form, a reporting scheme is merely a way of collecting the results of each member so that at the end of the year, we know who caught what, where and when, what they fished with and how long they fished for.

In recent years, the Anguilla Club has instigated various reporting schemes, which have all been aimed at finding out more than just the basic details outlined above. A complete analysis of these schemes is seldom achieved: one which considers all possible variables and provides positive information with which we could set forth with supreme confidence, and know that given certain weather conditions, we could select a particular bait and method and catch eels.

Oh that it could be so simple. The amount of analysis work done in the last ten years or so has varied considerably from year to year, mainly as a result of the type of scheme operating at the time, and perhaps more importantly, the amount of collective effort recorded by members. To derive the greatest benefit from any reporting scheme, it must contain information which will help to answer the questions we want to ask - and to ensure that confidence can be placed in any such conclusions, as much effort as possible must be recorded from the members. The greater the amount of information put into the analysis, the greater the accuracy of results derived. Quite simply, that means that everyone must fish as often as possible and to complete each session report with as many specific details as possible.

That might appear to be stating the obvious, but the last few years have seen a very poor overall effort, leading to poor results and a lack of information, without which, no reporting scheme can hope to get off the ground. It is up to you all to fish as often as you can.

Assuming that the overall effort is forthcoming, and sustained, then the analysis work can commence in earnest.

I dare say that we all have our own ideas as to where we would like to see the analysis concentrated, but as the analysis is to be my concern for the time being, then the scheme has been so arranged to make the analysis of the particular areas I hope to consider as easy or straightforward as possible.

That's not to say that the analysis will be easy though. Far from it, with the basic yardstick of rod hours to relate to all results there will be a great deal of diligent extraction of information to do before some of the more detailed analysis can even begin.

To that end, I shall be asking repeatedly for you all to complete the session reports as directed in the Reporting guide. I realise that this will entail a little more time in completing the report forms, but if the analysis is to be a viable proposition, then I must have the right sort of information to put into the analysis.

Lastly, but by no means least - at the risk of devaluing the analysis - I am not prepared to tolerate a deluge of session reports at the end of the season. You MUST send in your session reports at the end of each month. It doesn't matter if you've only fished a couple of sessions in a particular month, get them to me as soon as possible, and I will be able to do a monthly breakdown of results as well as gradually building up the overall analysis. Something I have no hope of achieving if I am suddenly inundated with report forms in September or October.

Attached to this article, is an example of the type of session report forms we shall be using for 1985. Apart from one or two additions to the sections carried on from last year's reporting, the main difference with this year's form is the inclusion of the section on weather details, which must be completed every time you fish, and every time you catch an eel over 2:00.

This is going to mean a bit more work for you, but, being high time for fingers out, I hope that there won't be too many complaints!!

I hope, in the very near future, to have the Guide to the 1985 reporting scheme printed and sent to you together with a couple of session reports completed as examples of what they should look like when completed. This should allow you all plenty of time to study the guides and forms, and if you do have any points to raise, let me know as soon as possible. I hope that any problems which may arise can be sorted out in time for the Spring Meeting so that it is not necessary to spend hours ploughing through it all on the day.

Terry Jefferson

14
 THE NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB
 SESSION REPORT FORM

DATE/S:		SESSION NO:
NAME:	MEM. NO:	NAME OF WATER:

1 FISHING DETAILS:

ROD NO.	START TIME	FINISH TIME	ROD HRS	NO. OF EELS	BAIT	BAIT POSN	TRACE MATERIAL	ADDITIVE	PRE-BAIT	GROUND BAIT
TOTALS:										

2 EELS CAUGHT: 1:00+ WEIGHT ONLY: 2:00+ ALL DETAILS MUST BE RECORDED

EEL NO.	ROD NO.	lb:oz	LENGTH	GIRTH	TIME	BAIT DESC	BAIT POSN	ADD	PRE-BAIT	GROUND BAIT
1										
2										
3										
4										
5										
6										

3 WEATHER DETAILS: TO BE COMPLETED AT START OF SESSION AND AT CAPTURE OF EELS OVER 2:00

TIME	AIR TEMP	WATER TEMP	BAROMETRIC			PRESSURE			CLOUD COVER %	RAIN	WIND DIR	WIND STR
			LOW	MED	HIGH	FALL	STEADY	RISE				

4 NOTES:

