

NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB BULLETIN



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EDITORIAL

In the last issue of the Bulletin I informed you that, because our secretary was so very busy, I had stepped in to produce the Bulletin. I mentioned it merely to keep you all informed, and not once did I anticipate any response. But what a response there has been, with about one third of our members offering to help in any way they can. Thank you all - it does much to restore ones faith.

Unfortunately, and Terry will tell you the same, the production of the Bulletin is very much a single-handed job. Even split into two, as with Terry and myself in recent times, the job becomes fraught with difficulties, and mistakes are made. Obviously, to delegate the work among even more would prove to be impracticable. Your offers to do any necessary typing are noted and well received at this end and it may be that I will take you up on the offer. It may be best to leave things as they are at present. Hopefully, we will get along OK until our AGM and then we can discuss the matter. Meanwhile, I must mention that our Chairman - Brian Crawford - has offered to take all the Bulletin work off Terry's shoulders, leaving myself as Editor and Terry to concentrate on secretarial work.

In the last issue, I reproduced a letter I had sent to Angling Times. That letter evoked a response from John Sidley in the form of a very sincere letter to our Chairman, so at least it had some result. However, now that the ice has been broken between ourselves and the British Eel Anglers Club, let us hope there will be some form of co-operation between the two Clubs, both of whom share a common interest. Domestic issues and the way in which we tackle the taking of eels will remain OUR business, and our own identity preserved. The National Anguilla Club will have lost nothing, and might gain much. I say this because I know that there are members - PROUD MEMBERS - (and I am one) who might fear that we would lose our identity by co-operating with another eel angling club. But I feel there is no danger of that as long as we ourselves are active as a Club. As long as we do just that, we can always feel that WE are the premier eel Club - FOR WE ARE!

Soon after sending out the last issue of the Bulletin I started to receive letters saying "thanks, what a great Bulletin". I endorse those remarks but in my case my thanks are to you - for you wrote the articles without which there would be no Bulletin. Keep the articles coming my way, and I will do my best for you.

Each season I seem to make a very slow start with the eels, and it is not for want of trying. This year I do not feel so alone for it seems that most of you are suffering similarly. There's a favourite saying which I find myself often repeating - "Things can only get better" and you will do well to bear it in mind. This year, more than most, it will be the back end which proves the most rewarding. It may be a surprise to some, but there are quite a few waters which start to produce their best just about the time when most of us are thinking of packing it in. Whitemere, for instance, comes into form late in September, and who can say for how long the sport would continue? Long before the disastrous weather of this early summer I had vowed that I would continue eel fishing much later this year, and that I will do.

EDITORIAL - Cont'd

I often wax romantic about the seasons, but honestly, the Autumn can be as delightful as any Spring. My mind goes back to balmy Autumn afternoons when the late afternoon sun is more pleasant than at any other time. The smell of "ripeness" brings one an air of satisfaction and despite the lateness of the season there is real promise in the air. The nights are both long and cold, but with suitable preparation they need not be arduous. The longer nights plus the increased chance of eels during daylight hours often make a longer journey that much more worthwhile. Company by the waterside is a delightful bonus in the Autumn and you can, like me, cater for this by carrying those extra tea bags and the odd rasher of bacon and such like.

I can never adequately describe the delights of Autumn eel fishing - you must try it for yourself. Then, like me, you will have no cause to fear the coming of September. Lastly - will you join me on the banks of the GU this Autumn? I hope you will. (The tea bags do too!)

A J Sutton

 CHAIRMAN'S PAGE (MAY)

This should be my last Chairman's page before the Whit Trip to Bala and possibly the start of a new season. I am looking forward to the Bala Trip and hope to be taking Dick and a 4th year boy from my school who fishes regularly with Dick and myself.

So far at Butlers sport has been slow. I have managed just one eel at 1:10 in three sessions, although there is reasonable activity from the eels. I have had several twisted traces and two new pikestrand 12 lb b.s.traces bitten through with hardly a twitch on the indicators. I suspect either pike or 12 lb+ eels. The water temperature is in the very low 50's and weed is still a problem. However, we will plod on. I intend a few sessions on the Nene and Welland and possibly the Delph or Ouse when the season opens in an effort to locate more eels.

Andy Lister appears to be the first member to go over the 4 lb barrier with his fourth session of the year (22. 4.80) out of six sessions. Steve Enkel has had six sessions for 13 eels including two over 2 lb. Dick has had eight sessions so far to the time of this article. Terry and Dave have also visited Butlers several times, together with Jan. It has been very nice seeing members there. I only wish a more productive water was available.

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE (MAY) - Cont'd

I thought Alan Mitchell's article on eel netting was excellent and hope he will forward it en bloc to the various angling publications as it does carry a strong message. Especially as the AWA has announced it is to carry out extensive gill and trawl netting in the fens to exterminate zander. How many species will also suffer?

Regarding the NASG. I attended the AGM on Sunday 13 April together with Andy Lister and about 50 other members of the Association. There were various mixed feelings regarding the association. A new Chairman was elected, Pete Haywood. After a nervous start he should progress reasonably well. The main topics discussed were the role of NASG, the NASG magazine, freeline, the conference, finances and one or two minor disagreements between members. The NASG is to become more political. It has an ever increasing number of members on Water Consultatives and who are now in touch with developments within water authorities. Their activities are to be centrally co-ordinated within the NASG Executive Committee. I was elected onto the Executive Committee as the representative to the NAC and member responsible for collating relevant data. Because of the popularity of the NASG Bulletin, a recent copy of which is obtainable for circulation from Terry, and an excellent book too, NASG subs are to be substantially increased for individual members. Club members may be pleased to hear that our block membership is used as a strong lever in attracting new members, and associate clubs such as the Bankcatchers and the Northampton Specimen Group. It can only bode well for the future.

The conference was so successful that it is to be an annual event at the same location. I realise it may be difficult financially for many members to go but I hope to attend as usual. Two weeks after the NASG AGM, I attended the first Executive meeting at Quorn, near Leicester which was well attended with new members Des Taylor and guest Trefor West. It was very busy, lively meeting concerning NASG policy and future plans. I will try and give a further report on future meetings.

I realise that the Club has once more been honoured with a request to supply a speaker on eels at the next conference and I feel this will need to be discussed at our AGM in some depth before we fully commit ourselves. Due to recent problems over the last year or two we will have to see how the Club develops this season. If we have a repeat of last year's poor overall effort and results, I do not think I could carry on. Due also to the hammering I, and the Club, took in recent editions of Coarse Fisherman, I have also decided not to write any more articles, at least for the next season until our record is more acceptable. That is not to say that the letters by Henry Hansen, Alan Billington and John Watson were true or a valid criticism of what I said in my last article published in Coarse Fisherman, but it is painfully obvious that the vultures are out to inflict as much damage as is possible. I also realise although I must not really say this in print, but at the NASG AGM, Dave Hall, the "editor" of Coarse Fisherman told me he had received the very nasty letters that he had no wish to print as his "Snide rumours and dirty lies" pages were bad enough - but suffice it for me to say that John Watson was staying with him for the weekend, and had taken my article as a personal attack on his character. For those members

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE (MAY) - Cont'd

who do not read Coarse Fisherman John, in his article, recommended killing all eels that were deeply hooked. I replied by saying only kill deeply hooked eels that were bleeding as other deeply hooked eels had a good chance of survival. I went on to try to further the cause of eel conservation by a plea for all anglers to be careful with eels as there were not that many big ones about, and that has been demonstrated by ex-club members, who have become household names since leaving the Club (ie Bob Church, Fred Wagstaff, Jim Gibbinson, etc) but not with eel fishing, as few anglers (apart from John Sidley) can boast of long lists of big eels. Well, the trio mentioned before took this to be a slur on JW - I was not even thinking about his record.

I get the feeling, any answer I give to those letters will be misinterpreted and abused so I feel disinclined to answer them. I hope members bear with me on this and of course you can table your criticisms with the secretary for the AGM.

Going onto another news item. I see John Sidley has at last started his British Eel Anglers Club, in opposition to the NAC which he calls a "closed shop". His subs will be £2.25 for juniors to 16 and £4.50 for the 16+. No restriction on membership. I wish him the best of luck. Honestly.

Brian Crawford

 CHAIRMAN'S PAGE (JULY-AUGUST)

Well, I am not sure what happened to my last Chairman's Page. It appears to have got itself lost. However, to spare my poor brain having to think it all out again, I will assume it may turn up to be published with this dirge in the next issue of the Bulletin.

The main question is - where have all the big eels gone? Apart from Andy's 4 lb+, no-one else has had one. I hope that as the weather improves, we shall see better quality eels.

My season is no better than most, after twenty five sessions for 900 rod hours and 31 eels to only 3:0, I am feeling despondent. All being well, I hope to manage another ten or so sessions so there is still time for me to catch a decent eel.

Another point that disturbs me is the lack of session reports from some members who I know have been eel fishing - in fact have fished with me. I do not think it is good enough. Some members owe session reports from April and May. In my next Chairman's Page I hope to publish an up-to-date list of who has done what and who owes

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE (JULY-AUGUST) - Cont'd

session reports. If the members do not catch up then I would suggest they consider their position within the Anguilla Club. Either they should or I will.

I still feel that 1980 will be make or break year for the Club. With the rise in fortunes of the British Eel Anglers Club, although John Sidley has intimated their co-operation in the furthering of eel studies, they are still competition of sorts. We have our image to protect so there will be no room for carrying dead wood for more than an odd season or so.

I tried a new water last night, Wednesday 23/24 July. It looks an ideal small pit of about $\frac{1}{2}$ acre, surrounded by trees and farmland. It goes down to 50 foot in the middle, with 20 foot under the rod tip. This pit is very old and well established. This is where I caught my 3:0 so it looks well for future sessions.

My personal best fish of the season is a rudd of just 2:0. A very nice fish. It now resides in my garden pond with a tench and carp of about 2 lb also. I had thought about adding the 3:0 eel but decided to reserve it for my 11:3 eel when I catch it.

Next week I am off to Looe for a couple of weeks, I hope to give you news of gigantic conger and shark to add to our lists, but knowing my luck it will only probably be a few under-sized mackerel.

Last night, Thursday 24 July, I attending the NASG Executive Committee meeting at Quorn, Leicester, among the items discussed were the 8th British Angling Conference, 27/29 March 1981 at Loughborough University, and a list of speakers were discussed. Apart from ourselves, there will be Jim Gibbinson, Ian Gillespi, John Darling, Dave Phillips, Barbelcatchers, James Gang, Bryan Culley/Mark Lister, Chub Study Group and a few others.

The other main item discussed that will affect us was the proposal that all NASG subscriptions be raised to £5 from 31 December 1980. We will therefore require to have this item on our agenda for the AGM. Their latest magazine, Freeline, is now published and a superb issue it is too. The increase in subscriptions will cover sending every member their own copy of the magazine. The NASG is presently composed of 47 groups and 181 individuals.

Best wishes for the rest of the season.

Brian Crawford

 COMMENTS

The recent Bulletins were very interesting and revealing and I would like to make some comments and observations, regarding the contents.

COMMENTS - Cont'd

Firstly, Brian's idea of printing a Top 20 was one of the best items to have been in the Bulletin for years. It has certainly provoked a lot of good comment from the other members I have spoken to. Definitely something to include every year.

Secondly, Brian also said that 1980 is "the start of a whole new ball game". I hope you are right, Brian, but I feel the tactics you are looking for are a little wrong. You seem to be placing the emphasis of this "new ball game" on the amount of effort put in by members. I believe that the success of the club is, in the final analysis, based on how efficient we are at catching eels. Not just any old eel, but larger than average specimens. Whilst not forgetting to learn about them as we go along.

This basically, to my mind, means making the best possible use of every second spent eel fishing. This in turn means concentrating on those waters which provide us with the best possible chance of contacting numbers of large eels. And it is here that I think the "new ball game" comes into play.

Over the last few years the session report analyses have given us a long list of the waters fished by members - with the same waters cropping up year after year. This may be the root of the problem. I, myself, have been searching for three years to find a few waters that will produce the kind of eel fishing that I want. Namely, fairly consistent captures of above-average eels and I now have a list of some eight waters that can and have produced the goods. Many of them have never been fished by club members although they are (in some cases) almost on their doorsteps.

This is in no way a kick in the face to anyone in the club.....but - if you look hard enough - there are literally dozens of waters in any given area that have possibilities. I do not advocate fishing these waters to find out their potential, but carefully plying people with questions, and in some cases pints, to acquire the most reliable information you can - even then, don't go rushing off to your new eely paradise, until you have confirmed this information in some way. Then, and only then, can you think about actually wetting your lines there. Better to be sure about a water before wasting valuable fishing time there.

So, Brian, may I suggest that it is the "search for pastures new" that is this year's goal not the all out, slog yourself to death approach.

Thirdly, Dick Baczyk's piece, My Way, was both entertaining and informative. However, Dick, I must take you to task on one point. Why use sprats all the time when you state that rudd are a first class bait on Butlers? I would have thought that even frozen rudd would have been superior to sea fish baits, at any time. (I prefer mine all fresh and gushing blood). I personally have never had an eel pick up a sea fish bait even when treated with pilchard oil. Surely one weekend spent bashing rudd would remove what I can see as a big handicap to your chances of contacting Butler's larger eels. Alternatively, if the rudd are not very easy to come across,

COMMENTS - Cont'd

then use eel sections. I need not say any more than read the best article in the last Bulletin namely Eel Steaks by Alan (The Bells) Mitchell.

Finally, let me say that I think Dave Holman should be given a Bulletin edition all to himself. Mr. Holman you make Harold Robbins boring, reading your articles is almost as good as actually going fishing.

Dave Walker

MORE ON BALA

I enjoyed reading Ernie Orme's "My rethink on Bala Lake" which appeared in Bulletin Vol. 17 No. 2. I know Ernie has fished this water many times each year since he first proposed it for a club trip in 1974. Since then it has received considerable attention from many members and yet I think it is still fair to say that no-one has really got to grips with it.

As Bala is the site for the 1980 spring trip perhaps it may be a worthwhile exercise to review the story so far.

The start was all roses and I can recall the smile on Ernie's face one early June morning in 1974 as he raised four big eels from the bin, the biggest of which looked every inch 4½ lb but refused to bend any of our scales past 3:14.

Using freelined perch deadbaits we continued to catch well in 1974 and during the club's summer trip plenty of eels were caught including a superb 4:7 which Bomber Holliman took from 45 feet of water at 7 am one morning.

At the 1975 spring meeting all the votes went to Bala for a return trip for the summer week. Waiting for the season to start that year was too much for many of us and four foolish souls spent the Easter break in a snow storm at the place that season despite a tremendous effort by a large number of members, the results took a nose dive. Gone were the 3-4 runs a night and blanks reigned supreme. It seemed that despite 10 miles of banks to work at we had cleaned the place out!

Since then the sad story has been the same. Terry Jefferson did catch a 4:10 along with several other good fish, Ernie had another 3:14 and yet if you look at the time spent to the eels caught it

MORE ON BALA - Cont'd

makes extremely poor reading. It is fair to point out that at this time the big draw for Bala was the marvelous pike and roach fishing. Ex-member Alan Hawkins and John Watson took a great tally of double-figure pike and although this sort of size does not sound big by national standards, a fight from a Bala pike of any size can only be described as incredible.

A search through back Bulletins will reveal a string of articles on just why this water of such great potential should suddenly dry up on us. Ernie's latest piece is another to add to the list on this baffling problem.

My own idea is that those eels do eat lampreys, roach etc., but will still feed well on the small perch which abound in the lake in millions. A check on the habits of these bait fish may just hold the key to the whole problem.

I know bait can be easily caught on a float in shallow water but catching perch at range on a leger is a fair art all on its own. The way to do it is to groundbait heavily with plenty of maggots mixed in with it. The perch, always eager to feed, follow the loose bait down and by using a long hooklength it is a fish a cast usually on the drop.

Fish a swimfeeder with maggots and there is plenty of roach but few perch. From this observation I think it is fairly obvious that the perch inhabit the top 6' of water and only go below that level to follow down food items.

Eels wanting to feed will be searching this top layer of water and not down where our freelined baits are spending the night. At this point it is worth noting that the best eel taken from the water last year was caught on a livebait and also that very few pike (the other main predator on the perch population) are never caught on bottom-fished deadbait; yet, put on a surface swimming bait, and it hardly goes a few yards without a take.

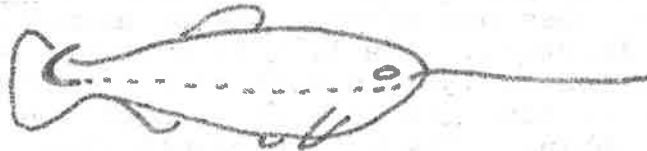
Surface or near-surface baits have been discussed at length in past Bulletins after the idea was first proposed by Arthur Sutton. Perhaps Bala would be the ideal water to prove the value of the method.

I have another plan - which I intend to try out when I visit the water again this summer. As I have said it is fairly easy to get the perch to follow bait down and reed on or near the bottom. By using conventional dead and live baits, and regularly baiting around them, great numbers of both perch and roach should be attracted to the area, not only these but maybe a few eels will move in to.

Fishing in this manner should commence at dawn and continue through the day rather than fishing the night. One point I would have to disagree with Ernie on is on these fast runs which sometimes occur. The line pours out from the reel and no matter how much time or line is given the strike results in a miss.

On retrieving the bait usually has the tail flattened as if by a vice (ponder for a moment how much power is required to do that) - the solution is to change the hooking arrangement like so:-

MORE ON BALA - Cont'd



Strike immediately the line takes off and you lip hook eels; not trout as Ernie suggested. The problem arises on how to get any distance with baits mounted in this fashion as unlike Ernie I can never get a run close in and add any lead and again nothing happens. Fishing this method is therefore restricted to times when I can use my boat.

When the weather is kind Bala Lake is the most splendid and delightful place to fish; all the rules are on our side. Solve the problem of the lack of runs, keep your eyes peeled for Welsh Nationalists burning down broilley tents and there is little doubt you will be making many a return journey to this beautiful part of Wales. But - oh those Bala winds and rain - that's another story best not told to those with a nervous disposition.

Dave Holman

BETALIGHTS - SOME THOUGHTS

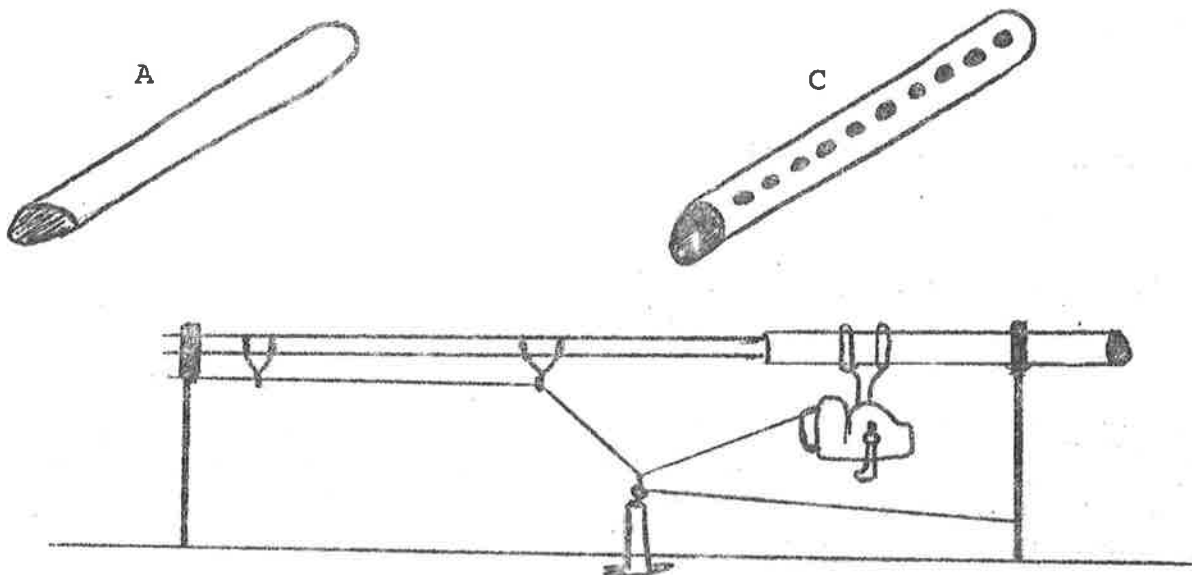
I, like other members of the NAC, appreciate the value of light-emitting isotopes used for fishing during the hours of darkness and semi-darkness, either as a float or a ledger bobbin.

I began about six months ago to use betalight ledger bobbins for all my night fishing and found that if I decided to stay awake I could cut out the use of electronic bite indicators completely. If used properly the ledger bobbins provided a very sensitive method of bite indication, but I found that after a few hours of staring at four

BETALIGHTS - SOME THOUGHTS - Cont'd

bobbins on four rods, that ones' eyes became somewhat strained and any slight movement of the bobbin was not noticed. I have seen articles in the Angling Press which showed how, by using a clear plastic tube, the bobbin could be held steady in windy conditions. As far as I was concerned, although this cut out any movement of the bobbin caused by the wind, it did not do away with the need to concentrate ones' sight on the bobbins. The idea I have adopted during my last three sessions, all in 1980, (one run, but all blanks) has adopted this basic idea but instead of using a clear tube I have made the tubes out of sections of aluminium tent frame cut into eight inch lengths. The line is cast out and the bobbin is slipped onto the line in the usual fashion and then lowered into the tubing which I have found it is best to position vertically directly under the bobbin. The bobbin cannot then be seen (you may ask what is the point of a betalight bobbin?) - the bobbin should be positioned as high up in the tube as possible without it being able to be seen from your bedchair. You have no need to stare with great concentration at this indicator. If a run develops and line taken the bobbin rises out of its tube - the effect of its emergence being quite startling; it is so startling that anyone who was awake could never miss the bite indication even with tired eyes. Using this method in January on the Shropshire Union Canal on a very mild night, the bobbin shot out of its tube like a polaris missile, and the line was taken confidently, the bobbin fell away and after allowing the fish plenty of line I struck and missed. On this occasion I was using as bait single lob worm.

To make the tube, simply cut a piece of aluminium or other metal tubing to the length of about eight inches, then to make a spike, with hack-saw cut diagonally across one end of the tube. The tube could of course be varied in length to suit differing conditions.



BETALIGHTS - SOME THOUGHTS - Cont'd

No doubt somebody has thought of this idea before but I have found it very effective, easy to set up, a clear indication of a run being given and with no additional line drag. The one disadvantage is that a drop bite will go undetected. However, on the waters I fish the occasions when an eel will run towards the angler is rare and no doubt to cover this contingency an Optonics type bite indicator could be used in conjunction with the bobbin by those millionaires in the club who can afford to buy this piece of equipment.

PS Another development of the tube which I have not had an opportunity to test, is illustrated at C. The only difference between this and the tube I have illustrated at A is that half inch holes have been drilled right down the tube at regular intervals. This in theory will enable the betalight bobbin to be placed well down in the tube and as the bobbin rises or falls it will be exposed through the holes. I am going to test this along the standard tubes and will report as to its effectiveness in the near future. Any resemblance between this devise and a tin whistle is purely coincidental.

Mark Davies

WHIT TRIP 1980

Friday 23 May, the day I had long waited for, had finally come. This was the day that we would leave the polluted air of Peterborough and venture down the M6 and A5 towards pastures green and fresh, clean air. The destination being Bala, North Wales.

Everything was ready at approximately 3 pm and we left - Brian, David Taylor (non-member) and myself. We looked eagerly towards this trip which we hoped would provide us with spontaneous results.

Our main problem seemed to be the traffic on the A5 but fortunately it did not last too long. When we finally reached Bala we selected our swims and began setting our broley camps up. By the time we had our rods set up we didn't eventually cast out until 1 am on the Saturday morning. During the first night David and I had quite a few bites from very small eels which we put down to the fact that we were using worms. When morning came the fishing stopped - fortunately - so that we were able to get some sleep.

After a couple of hours kip we saw the arrival of our Ernie who then persuaded me in the nicest possible way to make him a cup of tea. Ernie, who had his son with him, did not waste much time in getting their rods in. It was a great relief that Ernie donated a few

WHIT TRIP 1980 - Cont'd

livebaits, ie roach. On the same day Arthur Smith and a few others turned up. After the formal greetings we retired back to our brolley camp had dinner and went to sleep.

2.15 pm on Saturday, not a bite all day. I then went to see Ernie who suggested that his son and I walk down to Bala and row back his boat, which happened to be in the Warden's thingy. The walk, a long and strenuous one, didn't yield fruit as the Warden was not there - so we did not get the boat.

At 4.45 pm Ernie drove us down and we eventually did get hold of the boat. I must say that I am a lousy oarsman. We got in the boat at the waters edge at 5.15 pm hoping to arrive at our swim at approximately 6 pm. What a joke that turned out to be! By the time we got half way the boat was half full of water and I was wishing I had stayed at home. But good old Ernie came to the rescue. After retrieving the boat, carrying it up steep mountains, we dumped her behind a gravel hill. Have you noticed from my previous encounters of other NAC members I always get my feet wet. I am not too sure whether I will be going to Emberton just in case I wet something else apart from my feet! However, back to the original script, after returning from my first ever course in ship scuttling, changing clothes and seeing to my rods, David Taylor our companion, went and caught a 13:8 pike. Many photos later it was returned to the water. By the way, I forgot to mention that earlier that day I caught a pike of 3 lbs!!!*?

That particular night a slight westerly breeze produced thick black clouds - we were in for either another downpour or a warm night as the day was absolutely dreadful ie too hot for some. Apart from the odd shower I had a few runs, but I met with disaster on all occasions in that I kept getting caught in all of those bloody boulders out there. Even with PVA!

Sunday, Brian went and caught a couple of trout, which soon became his sustenance for the day. Briefly and quickly Ernie left on either the Sunday or Monday with not much success, along with Arthur Smith and Alan Mitchell and his mob moved further down the lake. Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday went just like that with another couple of trout being caught and a 7lb pike (captor B.Crawford). Eventually on the Wednesday night I caught my eel of all 2ozs of him/her Size 16 hook tail of lob. What joy erupted! I must admit it was returned alive.

By now our hopes were definitely dwindling, as our efforts were not being rewarded as we hoped they would be. So on the Thursday at 4 pm approximately we left Bala and returned to Peterborough where I caught an eel of 1:5 at Butlers. David Taylor caught an eel of 2:4 and Brian caught another pike. Still pouring with the rain we finally called an end on Saturday morning May 31st.

I think that in future anyone who dares appoint Bala as a club trip venue needs.....(well, I will leave that to your imagination!) But I must emphasise that we did enjoy ourselves, but as proven there are better venues - no offence Ernie pal, friend, bosom buddy etc.

Conclusion: there ain't no big ones there!!

Richard Baczyk

PHOENIX RISES

At long last I find a spare moment and the inclination to pen a few words.

While Bala is being give some thought and discussion, I shall have my two penny-worth.

Dear Richard - there are very big eels in Bala! One day, I might tell the full story again, but for the time being perhaps you will take my word for it. I have struggled at Bala along with the rest, but it has also produced quite a few eels for me. The most notable being 4:10, 3:08 and 3:07.

The fishing has undoubtedly become harder in recent years as Dave and Ernie have pointed out. In fact, in the last four or five years, I have reckoned on one run for every two nights fishing.

Until this year that is. Jan and I spent a week at Bala at the beginning of June, just after the Whit trip and caught quite a few compared with previous visits. In fact, it was just like the old days with three or four runs a night. The simple reason for this "PERCH LIVEBAITS".

This may seem a little callous to some, though it is a method I have had success with in the past. I thread the livebait on the trace, as a conventional deadbait would be, but carefully, in an attempt to do as little damage to the bait as possible. If you are careful, baits mounted in this fashion will stay alive for several hours, and in some cases, I have retrieved baits in the morning still alive and kicking, provided they have not been taken of course.

When we started using baits in this manner, the results improved dramatically. In fact, the first livebait cast out, was taken within an hour, just after darkness had descended. We did, however, suffer from the crushed baits, as mentioned by Dave, indeed I have experienced crushed baits since I first started fishing Bala.

Dave's suggestion of mounting baits the right way up may well be a solution, though I have tried this in the past without success, but perseverance may pay off.

The idea of sub-surface baits may well produce also, but the depths of Bala would make the tethering of a bait near the surface physically very difficult, and I suspect that a free roving bait would be too vulnerable to the effects of wind and drift which can be notoriously strong as most are well aware.

Incidentally, I understand that members had great difficulty in obtaining baits on the Whit trip. One reason being the scarcity of maggots. Some of the local "kids" who fish the place had maggots, and it seems that the "new" tackle shop in the high street, near the monument sells "maggies".

I was not able to verify this at the time but I shall give the number of the shop so that anyone planning a trip in the future can check if maggots are available and order some over the 'phone to avoid disappointment.

PHOENIX RISES - Cont'd

The shop is called YR ERYR, 31/33 STRYD FAWR, BALA, GWYNEDD, LL23 7AF. The telephone is BALA (0678) 520370.

As Dave says, catching the baits should not be difficult if you go about the job properly - and I am sure that perch are THE bait for Bala. It is just a question of how you present them.

As a matter of interest, trout have often turned up in the past when fishing for roach or perch, but the job has been made even easier now, because the Lake has been stocked with several thousand brown trout. I had them going stark staring bonkers, loose feeding with chrysalis, and had great fun extracting a few, especially on a "roach pole"!

Finally. In the hope of prompting or provoking discussion on a different subject, which I have had some experience of. Has anybody ever deliberately set out to catch eels during daytime consistently, and if so, with what results? I would like to know and I reckon others would too.

Terry Jefferson

HOLLYWOOD'S ANGUILLA CLUB

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Midnight Express | : Alan Mitchell emerging from his pog at 100 MPH to hit a run |
| Towering Inferno | : Arthur Smith's pog in flames |
| "10" | : Something we all dream about!
(Bo Derek or a double figure eel?) |
| Return of the Pink Panther | : Terry Jefferson is actually seen fishing |
| The Pink Panther Strikes Again | : Terry actually gets a run (and misses it) |
| The Life of Brian | : Ten years of session report forms from a Peterborough School Teacher |
| Jaws | : Alan Mitchell and Dave Walker after a few pints |

HOLLYWOOD'S ANGUILLA CLUB - Cont'd

- Deep Throat : Own up those who sleep through the buzzers
- The Poseidon Adventure : Dave Holman's inflatable boat deflates
- Butch Cassidy and the Sundance Kid: Arthur Sutton and Dave Walker or Brian Crawford and Dick Baczyk
- One flew over the Cuckoo's Nest : I have told Pete Nunn not to strike so hard at close range
- Night Games : Pete Nunn extracting the 8oz eel from a bush as a result of the above
- Death Race 2000 : Midnight June 15th or when Ernie Orme's wallet surfaces near a bar
- Star Trek : The long search at night to find a brew going
- The Hunchback of Notre Dame : Memories of Emberton '79 Courtesy of Quasimodo (sorry Alan)
- Close Encounters of the Third Kind: A new member at an AGM
- Apocalypse Now : Keith Sykes meets John Sidley in a dark alley
or
 King Kong meets Godzilla

Dave Walker
