

NEWBURY ANGLING ASSOCIATION



Founded 1878

PRESIDENT – Steve Pallett

CHAIRMAN – Dougie Hall

VICE CHAIRMAN – Currently vacant

SECRETARY – Currently vacant

FISHERY MANAGER – Paul Futcher

MEMBERSHIP SEC - Dave Smith

MATCH SECRETARY – Currently vacant

TREASURER – Martin Strike

HEAD BAILIFF – Rob Allen

NEWSLETTER & WEBSITE EDITOR
- Martin Strike

See permit for contact details

Website - www.newburyaa.org.uk

THE NAAN Summer 2023

Welcome to our latest quarterly newsletter.

With another new river season upon us, this must be most angler's favorite time you year. So OK, the mozzies start wandering up your trouser legs and setting up home in your bivvies, and the pike are as out of bounds as one of your tee shots, but the days are long and warm at last and the tench are on the feed.

Since our last issue we've had a change of chairman, with Dougie Hull voted in at May's AGM. A warm 'thank you' and see you on the bank to David Marshall for an incredible 18 years' service (the lifespan of a Common Bream!) as Chairman. Both chaps write within. You'll also hear from our President, Steve Pallett about the days the countries most recognized celebrity anglers came to NAA as well as hints and tips from other esteemed members. There are also three special guests from Baitworks, Angling Heritage and Improve your Coarse Fishing magazine, so shake out those mozzies and fill your boots.

A big thank you to everyone who contributed to this edition of the NAAN. Remember we'd like this to be YOUR newsletter, so please send in ideas for content, brags about your catches and photos old and new to us at comms@newburyangling.org.uk

Have a fish-filled Summer.

The Editor



AROUND THE FISHERIES

Clubmate



In our last newsletter we announced that in line with many associations, NAA has elected to use Clubmate to administer its permits and guest tickets. With over 800 members, this migration is quite a task and we expect some teething problems. We are convinced that the vast majority of members will find the ability to purchase instantly on-line and have their permit available on their smart phones beneficial and simple to do. We also arranged two 'membership days' at Bellwood for those not comfortable, for those who do not have access to the internet or smart phone which will have taken place by the time this newsletter is published. We really don't want to lose a single member, so will have looked at the feedback on the two membership days we will endeavour to react accordingly if required to ensure no one misses out. Please bear with it – a significant proportion of clubs, presumably with similar membership make up have previously made the change and we are confident that difficulties will be kept to a minimum.

AGM & Open Forum– 4th May

A report from retiring chairman, David Marshall

It was good to see attendance levels at the AGM returning to pre covid numbers.

The chairman gave an overview of the work during the last year including;

- Completion of the Otter Fence at Pallett's
- Stocking of large Tench & Bream into Willows
- Stocking of 11 to 17lb Carp into Pallett's
- New notice boards and signage around the fisheries
- Swim maps showing Peg positions and area covered by each peg.

A presentation on the new membership system hosted by Club Mate was explained and this will come into effect for this year's renewals and new memberships.

Membership numbers continue to remain strong at 830 with the 70 cap on Associate members reached.

To comply with the legal definition of Juniors we have changed our age limit for Juniors to include 17-year-olds.

3 new regulations have been introduced.

- Pike fishing on all waters is only permitted between 1st October to 15th March.
- On Collins lake members holding a specimen permit may fish 3 rods between 1st November to 15th March
- Members must carry an unhooking mat at all times suitable for the target species.

It was agreed to increase the subscription cost for Seniors, Pensioners and Associate categories by £5. The proposal to remove the free permit for over 75s was defeated.

Thanks, were passed to the working parties and bailiffs for their efforts over the past year.

Thanks were also extended to.

- M Strike for his role as treasurer and editor of the newsletters
- H Sadler for organising the match scene
- R Sylvester for looking after our key lock system
- Tony in the tackle shop for assisting with the distribution of permits and guest tickets.

The following new officers & committee members were approved by the meeting

- Chairman - D Hull
- Fishery Manager - P Futcher
- Committee Member - K Haines
- Committee Member - J Pricor

Unfortunately there were no nominations for the following post which are currently vacant

- Vice Chairman
- Secretary
- Match Secretary
- Child Protection Officer

Following the presentations of trophies an Open Forum was held. A good discussion took place on a number of subjects which will be taken back to committee for consideration. The outcome of these will be communicated to members over the next few months.

Welcome to the two new committee members

Welcome to the committee to Ken Haines and Jake Pricor, both of whom are well known around the fisheries and will add a passion and life, as well as their good looks, to the onward direction of the club.



Dave Pricor



For those of you who don't already know, Dave resigned as Fishery Manager a few weeks ago. The club would like to take this opportunity to publicly thank Dave for all his hard work over the last five years or so. Dave's strong work ethic and passionate belief in the club was undoubted and will be missed. It's good to see Dave back on the bank enjoying his fishing again and he has clearly lost none of his know-how with some great captures so far. Cheers Dave, and best wishes for the future in your fishing.

Dave is succeeded as Fishery Manager by Paul Futcher, who will be known to many of you testing water quality and helping to control our cormorant population within the limit of our licence.

Notice boards for all lakes

We now have noticeboards for all lakes. These will give generic lake information, emergency contact details and any pertinent information such as the lake being closed due to spawning/flooding etc. For Collins, Knotts and Bellwood it will also show swim maps which must be adhered to in the event of two anglers fishing next or opposite each other. It will be presumed that all anglers will have read the relevant noticeboard before commencing fishing so there will be no excuses for breaching any instruction. The boards are up at Rawlings Retreat and the Widmead carparks plus Bellwood, with Collins, Dixons and Palletts due to have their boards in place before the start of the new season.

New signs at Avington



Did you know that until this month NAA has had no signage at all at this venue, leaving it easy for non-members to fish without guilt or simply be unaware of our fishing rights. Having obtained permission from the landowner and Canals & Rivers Trust, thanks to Rob Allen, Nigel Whiston and Martin Strike we now have three at key locations.

This is in addition to a further sign now screwed to the old brick railway bridge support at Enborne. Should you fish any area you think would benefit from additional signage please email us. We may be limited to where we can locate signs, but we would like to try and discourage poaching in key locations.

RETIRING CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

by David Marshall



After 18 years as Chairman the time was overdue for a change of leadership, and I am pleased Dougie Hull has stepped into this role and I am sure he will bring with him some fresh ideas.

The chairman's role is a bit like conducting the orchestra with the added challenge that each year the members of the orchestra change and are playing different instruments.

There have been many challenges during my time as Chairman mostly for the good but the sudden and unexpected fish kill in Alders and the large loss of fish in Bellwood being the low points. Much work was put into these lakes after these events which have improved these lakes and the introduction of the permanent aeration system in Bellwood has made a huge difference.

Predation has been an increasing problem with Crayfish, Mink, Cormorants and Otters causing untold damage to our fisheries. Whilst we have limited control of Crayfish, Mink and Cormorants the threat to our fish stocks from Otters has cost us a lot of money. We now have Willows, Alders, Collins, Knotts, Bellwood & Palletts otter fenced but this has been at a huge cost approaching £100K. An added benefit of the fencing is that it stops fish escaping to the river at times of flooding.

Flooding has been an increasing problem over the years which we are unable to do much about. Most of our waters are in flood plains which prevent us from building up the banks to protect us when the river & canal overflows.

The Crucian project at Warwick's whilst exciting probably hasn't been quite as successful as we had hoped but this still has time to develop.

The relationship I have had with the various agencies, Environmental Agency, CRT, Natural England, BBOWT, ARK & the Angling Trust have been invaluable giving us good advice and providing grants for Otter Fencing, swims at Enborne, disabled swims at Willows Alders & Bellwood and aerator equipment. We also like to think that we have influenced them to improve fisheries.

The one thing which probably had the largest benefit to the members that I was directly involved with was the lifting of the close season at Widmead. After the Environment Agency lifted the close season on lakes, we were left with 4 lakes - Dixons, Collins, Knotts & Dobsons that we could still not open because there were on a SSSI site with a byelaw within the 1975 Fisheries Act forbidding it. Following discussion with Natural England they said they would not raise any objections if we took this further. Unfortunately the Environment Agency were not prepared to consider a change to the Act stating the time & effort involved and the cost was not justified and as this would also need approval by parliament. After consulting Martin Salter of the Angling Trust who pointed us in the right direction, we managed to get the EA to remove bye law 6 from the Fisheries Act and we were able to open all our lakes all year. This also benefited many other angling clubs around the country.

Finally, I would like to thank the many officers & committee members I have been fortunate to work with over my time as Chairman. Without them none of this would have been possible. I wish Dougie well for the future and hope we can get some of the vacant positions filled soon which will allow an even smoother running of the Association.

NEW CHAIRMAN'S INTRODUCTION

By Dougie Hall

As the new chairman of Newbury Angling Association (NAA) I thought that I would introduce myself and talk about forthcoming challenges.

I may originate from the Northeast but I have lived in Berkshire for over 40 years and been a member of NAA for over 30 years. I look upon NAA as my hometown club and having been a member for so long that I wish to give something back to the sport that I love and NAA.

I basically fish for anything that swims be that freshwater or salt. On the fresh waterfront I prefer river fishing to still water. However, I also enjoy still water fishing. I will quite happily target all predators, barbel, carp, roach and chub, etc.



Looking to the future of NAA there is much to do to take this proud club forward that has been in existence for nearly 150 years. In the short term NAA need to secure a new 5 Year Plan for the Widmead Complex with Natural England. Hence the current Fishery and members of the Bailiff Team have been tidying up this complex of lakes. Once this is achieved, we will sit down with Natural England, after they have visited the site, to discuss NAA plans. Martin Strike did a very good overview of the restrictions Natural England place on landowners of SSSI Sites in the last Newsletter.

Brimpton is going to have some environmental improvement work carried out. This work is designed to improve the flow rate and help clean the gravel beds for better spawning / fry development. Also, to allow more light onto the river in certain areas so that more Ranunculus Weed can grow and provide areas for invertebrates and fry to live.

We also need to develop a strategy to get better use of Dixons, Alders, Dobsons and Warwicks Water.

The above are a selection of some of the challenges that need to be addressed in the short to medium term.

FISHERY MANAGER & HEAD BAILIFF'S REPORT

by Paul Futcher and Rob Allen

Bellwood –The recent sunny weather has at last dried out the banks allowing the lake to be opened for the first time in several months on 2nd June. We thank everyone for their understanding in keeping away through its many weeks of saturation. By the time this newsletter is published we hope that the flooding may have receded from the still affected swim and the rest of the bankside will be dry enough to allow access to barrows etc without the churning-up that we've seen at Collins.

Palletts – Is fishing very well with a number of our newly stocked carp coming out. Oddly perhaps, we have received increased reports of capture of the existing carp population. Maybe the new guys have given them new life, or perhaps more people are fishing the lake since last year's re-stocking and otter fencing. Bream to 8lb and some good tench have also been reported. It's also been said that with the otter fencing up the lake seems less 'eerie' at night than it used to!



Paul Fitcher - Fishery Manager

Fallen tree at Collins removed – Though we are not permitted to cut tree growth during the bird nesting season, we are allowed to remove fallen trees.

Unlocked gates. Unbelievably, we are still getting numerous reports of the otter fence gates left open at all venues. We can't understand the mentality of this! Guys, the fences are there to protect your fish, so surely it can't be asking much to do the opposite to Michael Caine in *The Italian Job* and 'keep the bloody gates shut!' We are considering moving our new mobile cameras to gates which are persistently left open to try to catch the culprits in action.

While having a moan It goes without saying that the depositing of 'human waste' on club venues is completely unacceptable. This is particularly apparent behind the canal bank of Knotts. Please ensure that you take a plastic bag, or whatever you think appropriate as part of your kit in case you're caught short, and if using it, that you TAKE IT AWAY and dispose of correctly.



Rob Allen - Head Bailiff

Flailing at key river and canal sections With the new season approaching there are plans to flail the long grass in key sections of the canal at Enborne and Avington and the river at Aldermaston and Brimpton. Please be aware that we are lucky enough to have miles of running water in the club and that all flailing/strimming is done by volunteers, so please, in the event of the section you'd like flailed not being addressed, please consider joining the volunteer parties. It is also planned to strim around the otter fences for better protection and to help identify any breaches

Working Groups We now run a Whatsapp group to advise people of working group arrangements as well as the traditional Facebook members page. Please let us know via the email at the top of this newsletter if you would like to help out or join the group.

Graveling new swims Now the banks are drying out we will be looking to gravel/chalk the swims repaired last year. We know many have been unfishable this winter in the floods.

Tethered Fish It is an inevitability that on occasion, large fish will snap line and become tethered in snags. If this happens to you please call the head bailiff on the number on the back of your membership card/on the lake noticeboard and we will arrange for someone to row out and free the fish. One of our bailiffs was called to release a fish tethered in recently but also sadly discovered a dead carp that had been tethered on the same snag that had not been reported.

On the lighter side. One of our carp anglers, Michael Ogden won't mind us saying that on an all-nighter at Palletts that both of his alarms went berserk at 2am. Anticipating an incredible double catch, he found the culprit was a muntjac deer that had jumped into his landing net and was now chasing round his swim, sending the 6ft handle twirling in all directions!

MATCH NEWS AND UPDATE

By Dave Smith

We're happy to confirm the summer matches in the table below. Many thanks on behalf of the club to Henry Sadler who has decided to retire from his role as match secretary after many years' service. We trust he will remain a key character in our match scene for many years to come. Long live the king, of course, so we'd like to hear from anyone interested in becoming the next match secretary – perhaps one of our existing esteemed match fishermen(?) Just think of the kudos the title might give you! Please speak to me at one of the matches or contact the club at the email address at the top of the newsletter.

Sadly we will not be running a Club Championship this season because of an overall lack of interest that left one match competed for by only three anglers. The Over 60's and Over 70's leagues remain strong and hotly contested.

DATE	VENUE	MATCH TIME	COMPETITION	TROPHY
June 2023				
Wed 28 th	Alders	10:00 - 15:00	Over 60s	Field & Stream Cup Col Maxwell
July 2023				
Wed 5 th	Bellwood	10:00 - 15:00	Over 70s Rover	
Sat 8 th – Sun 9 th	Knotts	12:00 – 12:00	24-hr Carp Pairs	
Sat 15 th	Enborne canal (up)	10:00 - 15:00	NAA v Shipston AA (0830 draw)	
Wed 19 th	Willows	10:00 - 15:00	Over 70s Rover	
Wed 26 th	Bellwood	10:00 - 15:00	Over 60's	Field & Stream Cup
August 2023				
Wed 2 nd	Dobsons	10:00 - 15:00	Over 70s Rover	
Sat 5 th – Sun 6 th	Bellwood	12:00 – 12:00	24-hr Carp	
Wed 16 th	Willows	10:00 – 15:00	Over 60s	Field & Stream Cup C R Sutton Cup
Sun 20 th	Willows	10:00 – 15:00	Silver fish only match	
Wed 30 th	Dobsons	10:00 – 15:00	Over 60's	Field & Stream Cup
September 2023				
Sat 2 nd – Sun 3 rd	Knotts	12:00 – 12:00	24-hr Carp	
Wed 13 th	Enborne canal (up)	10:00 – 15:00	Over 60's	Field & Stream Cup
Sun 17 th	River Stour	10:00 – 15:00	Shipston AA v NAA (0800 Draw)	
Wed 20 th	Alders	10:00 – 15:00	Over 70's rover	
Fri 22 nd	Enborne canal (up)	08:00 – 16:00	Venue Closed - Booked by Friday Series	
Sat 23 rd – Sun 24 th	Bellwood	12:00 – 12:00	24-hr Carp	
Tue 26 th	Child Beale	10:00 – 15:00	Reading Fishing Club v NAA	

An early plug also for our forthcoming Charity Match (in aid of Help for Heroes) on Sunday 1st October, more detail for this and our Christmas match to come in the Autumn Newsletter. At the recent AGM trophies were awarded to the following members. Hearty congratulations to all.



Dave Smith
Sam Buxey Memorial Trophy



Henry Sadler
Norman Unwin/Crownmead Shield



Bill Bowsher
Col. Maxwell Trophy, Field & Stream Over 60s



Brian Pallett
Over 70's Trophy
CR Sutton Club Specimen
Dick Taylor Trophy -
(Christmas match)



Richard Faithfull
Help for Heroes Shield
New Year's Day Shield
Keith Scrivener Memorial



Nathan Wheeler
Ben Smith Trophy



Kevin Richardson
Buckingham Pike Cup
Vicky Prater Pike Trophy
Club Specimen Trophy
(for this superb 22lbs 12 pike)

CLUB MEMORABILIA



You may recall that the Spring 23 issue of The NAAN contained a picture of Newbury Angling Association patch from some era unknown and the request put out for any other memorabilia. Thanks to club trustee, Richard Sylvester for showing us these two enamel badges. Curiously, the Centenary badge suggests NAA was formed in 1877 when evidence suggests it was 1878. Should anyone else have any club-logo'd property, or old newspaper articles, we'd love to see them and include a photo in our archive.



AN EVENINGS RIPARIAN ENTERTAINMENT

(Part I)

With Barry Murrer

When I have occasion to flick through the NAA Rules and Regs Book I see '3.1 Trout fishing, with artificial dry fly only, shall commence on 1st April and close on 30 September.'

I've always wondered if this is just a legacy from some far off days of J. R. Hartley (Google him, kids) and Plus Fours (better Google them too). Surely no one wets a fly in these days of boilies and bait boats, but it turns out I'm wrong, as Barry Murrer contacted me out of the blue as Editor of the NAAN, and one mid-May evening I was kindly invited to my first ever fly fishing session.

I'd only met Barry once before – he was catching big pike at Bulls Lock in the dead of winter - so I was thrilled and surprised to get the invite. Barry said he'd provide the gear, all I needed to bring was my wellies. We trekked down to Parliament Draft on Speen Moors, with only a whippy rod with light centrepin each to carry. Everything else we needed was stored in Barry's impressive utility gilet, with folding landing net clipped on the back, pockets zipped to hold small boxes of flies, leaders and other paraphernalia, and two small bottles held in easy access bands. I queried what they were. 'One's floaty-stuff to rub on the flies, the other's sinky-stuff,' Barry told me, my blank look betraying my complete ignorance.



Barry in action

Now on the bank, Barry took his left handed rod, explained his elbow action, the speed of his backward rod movement and gentler flick forward as his line made a swirl in the air and sent his weightless fly plopping gently on the opposite side of the stream. Then it was my turn with a right-handed reel and all I had to do was copy this graceful swish and watch my thick yellow line extend across the water to where the fat trout would surely be lying. They were safe for now, as I had not been provided with a fly on the end of my line for my first attempts. It was a wise move.



Barry was exceptionally patient as he explained for the fifth, sixth and seventh time that I was forward swishing both too fast and too far away from my body. The extra effort I was applying was counter-intuitively shortening the distance of my cast, albeit I was glad to at least be reaching water. What wasn't so good was that the speed of my swing was causing the leader to audibly crack. I felt like a circus ringmaster as time after time each cast was met with the same whip lash. Barry calmly told me to slow it down but that if I'd been allowed a fly on the end, each cast would probably have cracked off and lost to the undergrowth behind me. He had a point, as when I checked later on, Wikipedia told me that, 'The crack is produced when a section of the whip moves faster than the speed of sound creating a small sonic boom'. Blimey, I had been overcooking it. I slowed my technique sufficiently to avoid further sonic booms until I got to the point where I was trusted with a fly. 'It's a Hawthorn Fly,' Barry told me, 'a couple of weeks ago the air was full of them and the trout were going crazy. We're probably a bit late now.' He tied the small hook, sporting some dangly black bristles and a tiny piece of foam onto my line. It looked like a spider and quite unappetising. 'I tie them myself,' said Barry. 'Please don't crack off,' I urged myself, 'and don't cast into a tree...nor hook mine or especially Barry's ear.'

I was pleased that with the added incentive of having a fly and a spot to aim for that was quite close to shore I managed to avoid both crack and both ears. I'd slowed down my action, kept my arm nearer my body, stiffened the wrist and could now flick the diminutive artificial bug a half-respectable distance across the water on a good cast. The trees were more of a problem. The first time I managed to get it back without the line snapping, but ten or so decent casts later I lost a precious fly to the high branches. I felt dreadful, picturing Barry taking ages to painstakingly tie these tiny decoys with the help of a large magnifying glass and a study. Thankfully, he remained very calm – as least I hadn't cracked it off like a lasso spinner at a rodeo.



Speen mud

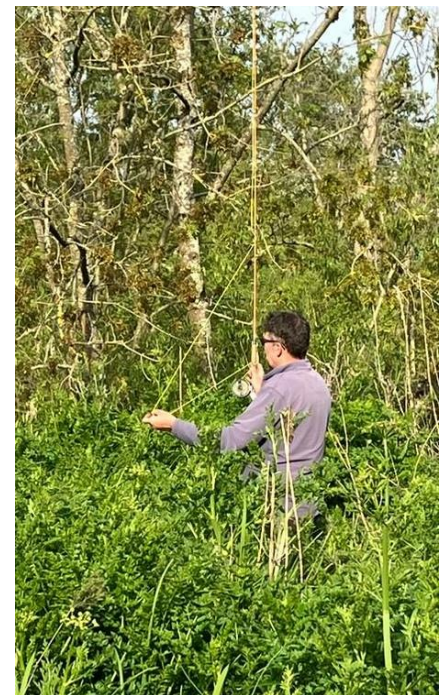
We walked the length of the Draft, fighting our way through long undergrowth, the evil-smelling mud trying to suck our boots off. Only two swims were fishable, far too overhung with branches for me, so I watched Barry effortlessly place his fly where he needed it, albeit no trout rose.

'The water being so cloudy,' Barry told me as we headed back to the main drag, 'means you can't see the fish to aim at, so it becomes a bit of a lottery.' We stood at the bridge at the NW corner and watched the water for rising fish. Barry had his eye attuned to spotting the occasional mayfly that had just hatched on the surface of the water to be carried downstream. I missed most of them. 'They will have hatched today,' he told me, 'and are called duns at this point, tomorrow they shed their skins to become adult spinners and then mate and die the same day.' I stared at the water and eventually started to see the occasional yellow fly.

'The trout aren't interested now,' Barry surmised as a robin fluttered out and caught one in mid-air, 'but come the 29th May the air will be thick with them,' and we pledged to return for another go then.



Turns out Barry knows his flies as he regularly volunteers for Action for the River Kennet (ARK) so is a dab hand at these duns. He told me about his work monitoring fly larvae each month to provide information of biodiversity and as an early warning of pollution. At the moment the river fly life is in excellent health. He also monitors spawning trout in the River Lambourn where it runs through Newbury. Last winter was a very good year with plenty of enormous female trout making their way up river to dig redds and spawn. These trout probably live in the Kennet and the canal for most of the year so look out when you're chub fishing!



Neither of us made any more casts.

Apparently there's little point – if the trout aren't rising to take the real thing, they ain't likely to be fooled by a piece of metal bound with a few twists of cotton. We walked back to the car in the beautiful Spring sunshine as he told me about recent catches, such as the one pictured here. It had been lovely to be out, in good company too, even if the trout had been elusive. I thoroughly enjoyed our short stint, even if it was between hatches. I was already excited about the planned return in a fortnight's time.

CARP TALK

By Kris Reddin

I have fished as a member of the NAA for the last 7 years, spending both time on the canals/rivers lure fishing and carp fishing the different lakes within the club. In this time, a lot has happened from the rebirth of Bellwood after the algae bloom; restocking programs at the Widmead complex; the otter fencing around Knotts/Collins/Palletts and so much more.



The Wood Carving - 28lb 12

When I was asked to write this piece, I felt the best topic I could share would be to talk about the amazing carp we have in all of the lakes (it's not just Collins!) and why I choose to fish all of the different lakes at different times. The variety of fishing gives something for everyone which will hopefully encourage a spread of anglers across the lakes – there is no reason for just one to be rammed!

My angling has always been a mixed bag enjoying social sessions, head-down campaigns, short evenings after work, surface fun in the sun.

Since taking a break from fishing, I re-started in January 2022 with a few personal goals to achieve on several of the lakes, predominantly focussed on catching 'specimen' carp. I hope to share my take on the NAA waters and my past 18 months fishing them.

Bellwood

Bellwood has always been a special lake in the club that has undergone huge transformations in its time. Following the algae bloom, I have fished Bellwood many times often taking advantage of the short drive from my office to fish evenings through the spring & summer. For this reason, my approach on there has always been to keep things light & simple. With the aerators pumping fresh oxygenated water around, I have always found Bellwood to be the first lake to wake-up after winter, and the fish really seem to get about. This has proven a big advantage as the lake can get quite busy and yet despite this, I have never felt too far from the fish due to how much they move around! Due to only ever doing short sessions, my approach has always been solid bags or singles with 20ish boilies scattered around. It would be hard to pick a favourite swim, but probably 80% of my fish have come from spots within 3ft of the bank all over the lake. Due to fishing so tight into the margins, I have often found light back leads to be a great edge when the lakes busy – it is of course important to only do this in swims where safe to do so due the snags and impact on bite indication! The other change I made when fishing the margins is plastic baits, the crayfish can be a nightmare! If you don't choose to fish the margin, the middle of the lake has underwater snags that newer members might not know of – never exceed the max wraps.

Due to the proximity of swims, Bellwood can also be a great lake for fishing with mates on a social – but that's not to say there aren't serious fish in there. A great balance of commons/mirrors & loads of fast growing 20s, which I have been fortunate enough to land a few of.

My highlight on Bellwood would have to be a bite I had in early March this year on solid bags, that resulted in the awesome looking 'The Woodcarving' at what I'm told to be an official lake record of 28lb 14oz. That isn't to say I don't think there will be a 30 in there very soon if not already!

Palletts

Again, Palletts is another lake that's seen a lot of transformation in my time at the NAA. A wild snaggy little pond, that up until recently had very few fish in it. A very shallow snaggy lake at one end... and a very deep snaggy lake at the other. It has always been a tricky little lake due to the low stock, but the arrival of 20 new fish seems to have improved the numbers being caught. Due to the snags (some more obvious than others) it's essential to have strong gear & fish appropriately with locked-up spools when targeting the carp.

I was given some essential advice by an angler who many on that lake will know often tears it up and has probably had all of the fish... twice. For me, that is what club lakes are about, they can be much less secretive

than syndicates and give you plenty of water to wet a line in – if I had one tip for joining members it would be to learn off those you see catching!



A Palletts Linear

Palletts was the first session I did after coming back to fishing in January of 2022. Doing a freezing-cold quick overnighter January 3rd, I would never have expected to land 3 fish including one of the sought after linears all in the space of about 2 hours the following morning! It's not a big fish lake, but all 3 went just under 20lb and were in immaculate condition. Safe to say this is when I got right back into it.

It is worth noting, Palletts is a small, low stock lake. For me, having 7 lakes in the complex, if there are already 3 anglers on I will tend to go elsewhere. Due to its size, the fish can be spooky!

Knotts

Personally, I have always drawn similarities between Knotts & Bellwood. Similar difficulties, both have a great head of 20s. Although the stock is 90% commons, some of them are absolute crackers. Fishing to the island, the margin, the reedy bay have all done fish – though the island can be very undercut in places with plenty of overhangs especially on the canal bank so tight drags are a must. Unlike Bellwood, I have found the fish in Knotts (possibly helped by some of the additional stocking from Dobsons) to respond well to a good hit of bait. Regularly baiting, especially after each fish to keep them coming. Arguably down to the two gate/gravel track, Knotts is often less busy than Bellwood so provides a great 2nd option if Bellwood is full.

Tactics wise, anything with a quick change hook! If you get a bite, there is a chance of a few so getting the rod back out asap will give you the best chance of building a hit.

Knotts for me was the lake I really practiced my carp angling on – doing my first my first 'un-supervised' night with a friend as kids, where I managed 4 bites including 2 mid doubles & 2 mid 20 commons (and a PB at the time too!)

More recently, I fished with a couple of friends in April where we managed 14 runs in 24 hours – great fun, little sleep.

Collins



The Big Lin - 36lbs

It is difficult choosing where to start with Collins. It can be a hard, backwards lake at times – bites at midday in blazing sun or blanking with a jacuzzi over your rod. Previously, I had only ever fished Collins for the Pike & so knew very little on it carp wise. It was probably the first proper Specimen lake I fished and as a result I have had to learn on the go. Making the effort to speak to other anglers on there and putting the lead work in to find spots across the past couple of years has been vital. Due to only ever getting to squeeze overnights in typically from 5.30pm on a Friday to 1pm on a Saturday due to other commitments, I have tried to adapt how I fish a lot. I did 15 nights for my first fish, changing rigs every session until I finally felt my baiting/tactics/spots all started to click. I then had a

pretty consistent run last year fishing 1 night a weekend every other weekend through March/April/May. It was always about finding the fish and not being disheartened when I turned up last and it was busy. I've actually found on there that the angling pressure seems to help move the fish around with anglers often catching from opposite ends of the lake. It's another Newbury lake, full of snags/pads/margin spots in nearly every peg but the carp can be very tricky & have several times left me clueless. It probably isn't a lake best suited to those hopeful of a few runs!

Most recently, at the time of writing this, I managed to pull a cracking 31lb 9oz common out from a snag that put up one hell of a scrap.

But I think most that know me, will know my highlight came May 2022 when I was able to slip the net under The Big Lin at 36lb. For me this was possibly the highlight of all my fishing catching the target fish and having a bunch of mates there to see it.

Though there are still plenty more I would like to have on the bank!

Summary

Going back to why I chose to write this, to show there is something to target in every lake, and these are just 4 of the 7 lakes. Dobsons/willows provide some excellent entertainment for testing new rigs, surface fishing & having a 'runs' session. Just because the average size might be smaller, there are still 20lb+ fish in both! Dixons is full of secrets too if you can bare the barrow walk.

My takeaways from my time on Newbury would be as follows:

1. Use bombproof tackle where needed & fish sensibly, you don't want to lose any fish and make sure you've done the leadwork to know what's under the water.
2. Sink those rod tips! The birdlife can be a nightmare with WWE style fights in your margin. No one wants a screaming swan run at 2am.
3. Use what your confident in, I wasted a lot of stress questioning rigs that have worked on many other lakes – spots, bait application, subtlety for me all play a much bigger part. Nowadays I only really change the lead set-up for different substrates.
4. Finally, talk to other anglers & pay it forwards. It's the best way to learn and if you share what works for you, most people have always been keen to share back – a shoutout particularly to Michael Ogden & Rob Allen whose tips across the last few years I still employ today!



31lbs 9

TROTTING FOR CHUB

By Chris Plumb

Picture the scene...

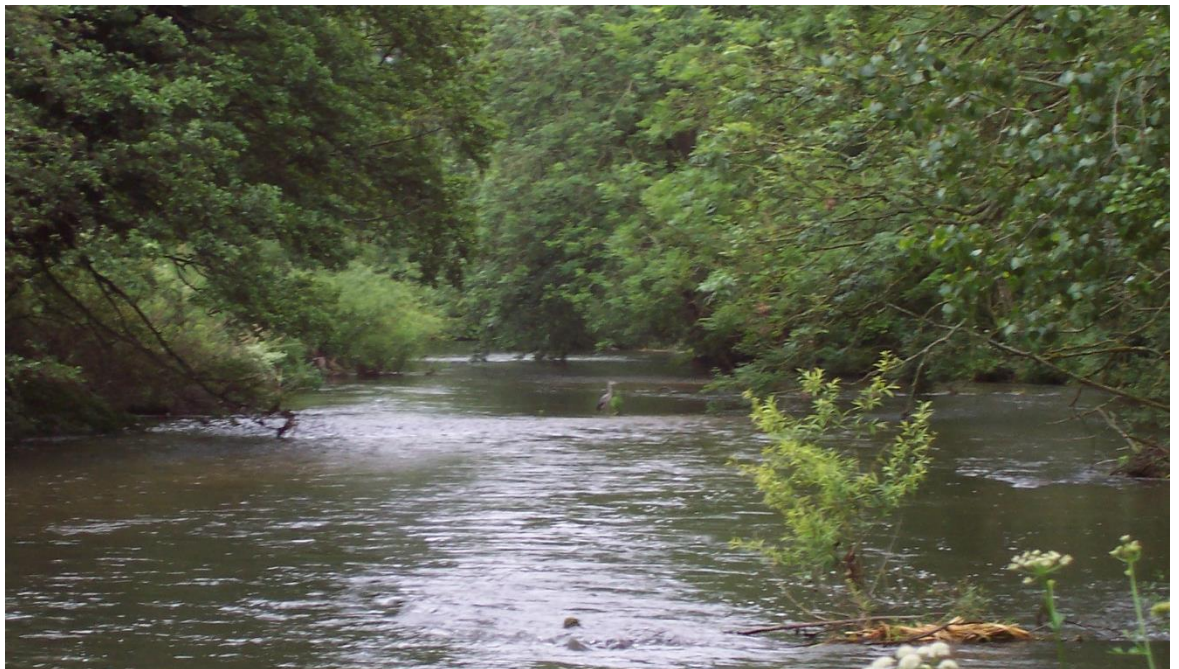
...it's mid-summer, the sun is high in a cloudless sky, the day is hot and sultry. The Kennet is low but running with a bit of colour as is usual since the K&A canal re-opened in the 1990s. Nothing stirs until a Kingfisher announces its approach with a shrill whistle as it flashes by like a fighter plane trying to keep below the RADAR. Conditions are not conducive for good sport and many a river angler is having a siesta - waiting for dusk and a better chance of a bite.

These conditions aren't entirely hopeless however. Chub and (in the 'good ole days') barbel, can often still be caught – sometimes quite easily - and using a method which gives immeasurable enjoyment. And if it means having to wade up to your thighs in cooling water – then so much the better.

Of course I'm talking about getting the float rod out, strapping on a centre-pin and Trotting for Chub. Anyone who regularly reads my blog on Anglersnet (thank you - BTW!) will realise that most of my chub fishing is with a float. Now I'm not knocking the bait and wait approach – and I used to spend many an evening poised over a quiver tip as the light fades. This was usually in pursuit of barbel, though a big chub was often a welcome 'by-catch'. Trotting however, allows me to be more mobile AND I have to admit catching them on the float is way more fun! This article is about sharing my approach and experiences in catching summer chub float fishing -honed over 50 years of fishing the Kennet.

Swim Selection

Early in the season chub can be found in surprisingly fast water. They spawn on shallow, gravel redds so are probably still in the vicinity of these spots when the 16th June comes around – if indeed they have actually spawned. Whatever the reason I definitely have 'go-to' summer chub swims which are usually devoid of fish 6 months later. I look



for a long fast glide with a 'glassy' appearance - preferably channels between weed and ideally slightly deeper than the rest of the river (this may only be by a few inches). I also look for some kind of cover or feature - an overhanging tree, a weed raft, a bridge - somewhere where there may be cover adjacent to the glide. Chub definitely like a roof over their head - and these features are particularly important, if your swim has suffered a loss of Ranunculus like many parts of the Kennet have in recent years. In this picture, you may just be able to

pick out a heron standing mid-river on the CSAS stretch immediately below Ham Bridge - those fast shallows were black with chub that June (probably still spawning) – I think the heron was being a bit over-ambitious!

My all-time favourite trotting swim on the Kennet has trees at the beginning and end of the swim. The run off from weirs in the summer are another place to investigate – again faster water than you'd expect chub to be hanging out!

Tackle & Set Up

I have been a huge fan of the Harrison 15' Gti float rod since that late 1990s – I don't think the blanks are made anymore – though I have acquired 3 over the years – 2 built to my own specification. They are slightly heavier than a lot of today's modern equivalents – but have served me well without a single breakage – though my oldest has been re-ringed three times in the last 25 years. Weight shouldn't be an issue with a trotting rod anyways providing the balance is right. Whatever rod you get I'd recommend going for 14 or 15 foot – you'll appreciate the extra reach over standard float rod. The Harrison is the perfect rod for the job as it has enough power to cope with the heavier fight that a large chub will give in a strong current.

My reel, of course, is a centre-pin. When I first started fishing at the age of 7 it was with a centre-pin (and tank aerial rod) - but like most of my contemporaries, pocket money was quickly saved in order to buy that coveted 'Black Prince' fixed spool from the local tackle shop. And my 2¾ inch 'boys' centre-pin reel and wooden star-back gifted to me by my Great Grandfather was consigned to the back of the shed.



My conversion back to centre-pins happened nearly 30 years ago when I started to do a lot more winter fishing and quickly realised that for trotting, a 'pin is simply the best tool for the job. Since then the number of pins I've acquired as grown and I'm guilty of becoming something of a 'Pin Tart'! My little collection includes reels from some of England's finest reel makers – 3 Paul Witcher's (including a fabled Bisterne), a Chris Lythe, and a Richard Carter – to name but 5! All have line on them and all get used – the Witchers' and the Chris Lythe the most. However most of the heavy lifting these days is done with a Speedia wide drum, left me by my late friend, Paul. It may not have the looks of some of those reels previously mentioned but is simply a super reel to use and if you can find one second hand they are usually reasonably priced.

All my pins are loaded with Fireline Crystal in 4lb or 6lb BS – though this line is over engineered in my opinion and even 4lb 'test' breaks way above that – I usually have a 6.6lb mono leader and that always goes first!. Fireline has a number of advantages for trotting. It is highly buoyant and thus easy to mend without disrupting the passage of the float. (Mending means taking up any excess line in order to keep in contact with the terminal tackle). The lack of stretch means it's quick into the strike – particularly important if your striking at distance (remember those swims which end in a feature - the chub may well be ambushing your bait from there).

The only potential disadvantage with Fireline is that it's not so easy to Wallis cast with. I'm not going to attempt to describe this technique - though there are plenty of YouTube clips demonstrating how to do it.

At the business end I have a length of mono - I usually use 6.6 lb - so that you have some 'give' in the set up - or you can do



what a friend of mine has tried and use a piece of pole elastic. For floats I use loafers - they carry quite a bit of shot - and I prefer to err on the side of too much shot rather than too little. I will usually use a 2.5 SSG float as a minimum - sometimes going up to 4 or 5 SSG if conditions dictate. As for shotting patterns I think this is a matter for personal preference. Some prefer putting all the shot together about 12-18 inches from the hook. I prefer to space them up the line 'shirt button' style as I believe this gives a more natural presentation particularly when you 'hold back' and allow the bait to flutter up in the current. (However, see 'Stret-pegging' below). A small swivel somewhere in the rig - mine's between line and hook length is an essential requirement if you want to minimise line twist. (Try retrieving double maggot from 40m in a fast current without one!)



Hooks - I usually start with 14's (and go smaller if bites aren't forthcoming) - something like a Drennan Super Spade is ideal. Mine are hand-tied to 0.18mm mono. (If I go lighter - my 16s are tied to 0.16mm dia). 14 is something of a compromise - small enough to allow me to pick up silver fish - large enough to cope with a nice chub.

Tactics



Trotting is fairly straight forward. The only really important fact to remember is that the current is faster at the surface than at the bottom. Set the float slightly over depth and ensure that the bait precedes the float down the swim. Do this by either checking the reel with your thumb - or if your using a reel like the Purist set the micro-drag so that the float only just pulls off line. Try different 'lines' through the swim - this may mean checking the float so it swings around in the current and then letting it continue its journey on a slightly different route. Occasionally stop the reel altogether and let the bait flutter in the current - bites when you do this will often be savage - you won't need to strike! Do this especially at the end of the swim. I'll often let the bait flutter for quite some time -30secs or so before retrieving.

What is a must, however, is in introducing bait into the swim. Little and often is a maxim which you should stick to - in this case little and VERY often. I like to keep an almost constant stream of maggots trickling through the swim. Ideally you should get the bait dropper out for the first hour and not fish at all! To be honest though, I'm usually too impatient as I will often only have 3 or 4 hours at the river. However I will ALWAYS trickle bait in for several minutes in each swim before fishing - and a first cast chub is often the result! A bait smock then is a must. My left hand will be constantly introducing half a dozen maggots every 30 seconds while my right hand holds the rod and controls the reel. Even when I'm playing a fish I'll try and keep introducing some bait. Maggots are my usual go to bait - but in the winter and particularly on venues with a lot of trout I will use red sweetcorn and lots of it. I'm convinced chub mistake this for trout eggs and I catch a LOT of chub on it in the winter - I've been known to get through 4 tins of the stuff in a day!



Rest and return is another maxim of mine when float fishing for chub. One of the advantages of travelling light is it allows you to drop into 4 or 5 swims in rotation giving each half an hour or so followed by a rest while you move on to the next one. I will often work my way down a stretch of river – have a break (for say, lunch) and return to the top swim and work my way down again.

Stret-Pegging

Something of a lost art - but a method which can be deadly - particularly if sport has been a little slow. Basically the rig is the same as before though now you fish a long way over depth as well as over-shooting the float. All the shot is bulked about 12 inches from the hook. Cast out to the head of the swim and ensure that you set the depth so that the float is on the surface. Your bait will be nailed to the bottom. The technique is about inching your bait through the swim. Do this by lifting the float so that the shot dislodges on the bottom and trundles a few inches downstream. Drop your rod tip to hold it in this new position. Wait a couple of minutes and repeat until the entire swim has been covered. The point where you move the bait is when you should be ready for a bite - which for some reason is always violent! I can picture what might be happening beneath the surface - perhaps the fish are inspecting the bait when it suddenly starts to leave their immediate vicinity - thus prompting them to make up their minds to have it! Pure supposition I know - but there's never anything subtle with the bites you get when Stret-pegging.

For Stret-pegging to be really effective your rod tip needs to be in-line with the float. Casting across the current won't work very well as it will mean you pull the bait out of line each time you lift 'to trundle'. Thus it works best on near bank swims - or it means having to wade. (And it's another reason for having a bit more reach that a 15' rod gives you).

Brimpton and Hambridge are my favourite NAA venues for a summer chub. These venues have provided me with a 5lb+ chevin during the opening week of the last 2 seasons – pic below is of a 5lb 11oz fish caught last year from Brimpton...



DIXON'S MERE

By Dave Clarke



This is a delightful lake of approximately two acres which can be found on the Widmead complex adjacent to the public footpath that runs alongside Collins. It can be reached from the club's car park at Dobsons, but it is a long walk and entry is via two locked gates either side of the footpath. It is also possible to access Dixons from the unsecured car park at the Reedbeds (or even from Willows car park) but great care must be taken when crossing the



railway line and there are tall, narrow and unforgiving metal kissing gates either side of the line to navigate. Maybe it's the long walk that puts a lot of people off but the beauty of the place is that it's very quiet and you will likely have the lake to yourself!

The lake is named after club stalwart Bill Dixon and was originally developed as a tench and crucian carp only water. It became a popular venue that provided a high standard of pleasure fishing, certainly up until the mid-1990's. The history of the lake is less clear after this but it does appear that the fishing has declined over time and I suspect fish stocks are a shadow of what they once were. So what do we know of Dixons in the here and now?

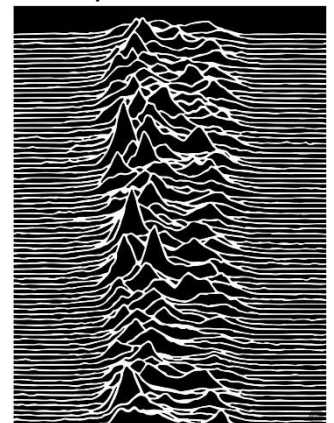
The lake has about 15 swims that are easily fishable and has benefited from some work in the past year to remove a couple of sunken trees and 11 of the pegs have been restored. The lake is relatively shallow as you walk onto it, but soon gets much deeper, with depths of over 8ft in places. This shallow end is very snaggy and undoubtedly holds the wariest fish. The current fish stocks are an unknown quantity. It is clear there is a good head of roach present and I have witnessed catches approaching double figures on waggler tactics using maggots and corn with fish up to 10-12oz. Perch of at least a pound present and pike to double-figures also suggests a decent number of silvers. There is also a decent number of carp with the best fish in the mid-20's. I hear that some of the carp anglers occasionally fish Dixons while waiting to jump into any vacant swim on Collins.

There are also tench present but what size and in what numbers remains a mystery. My friend John Cox caught one last season in the 5lb bracket and I also heard that a carp angler landed a 9lb, which would be the biggest tench I have heard of from any NAA water whilst I have been a member. This leads me to believe that there may be a small number of the old stock remaining, and I have seen discussion on the club website that some of the old crucians may also remain (in the same way that Dobsons occasionally throws one up).



The fact that the lake is not protected by an otter fence means that any existing stock may be vulnerable but there is no reason to suggest that Dixons doesn't contain a few surprises. We do know of talking of surprises we do know that is Terry, a yellow-bellied terrapin, and here's another picture to add to the

collection. I suspect this guy will have grown too big and aggressive for someone's tank and has been happily released into the lake! It certainly is a peaceful place and a water that has good potential and perhaps one that the committee may consider developing if funds allow in future? In the meantime it would be great to hear of any reports from members that do fish it. I think there might be one or two treasures left in the lake that would be worth targeting. It sort of reminds me of the classic Joy Division album 'Unknown Pleasures', the cover of which is very reminiscent of the lake bottom!



WHEN THE STARS SHONE ON NAA

By Steve Pallett

The club purchased the fishing rights at Brimpton in June 1980. At the time I had just been elected chairman of NAA at the AGM in April of that year following John Dobson's resignation. At the time I had been a committee member for six years. Jim Knott noticed an advert in the Angling Times for a stretch of fishing rights on the river Kennet for sale. I phoned the number advertised, but the times had printed the wrong number, so I contacted them for the right one. This was on the Wednesday.

I managed to get through to the owner of the stretch now known as Brimpton who told me that he had sold it to another club. I asked him if contracts had been exchanged and he said, 'not yet but the papers are all with my solicitor.' I told him that I would see him the next day at his home in the New Forest to see if a deal could be done. He told me I was wasting my time, but I could try if I wanted to.

I reported to the committee who were fully supportive even though it would mean borrowing money - something the NAA were not used to. The owner was a London East End scrap metal merchant who knew the Kray twins. and I was a little sceptical as I pulled into the property in the heart of the forest to be met by the gentleman's enormous bodyguard, sporting a big bulge under his left shoulder.

I met the vendor and we walked and talked as he insisted he was selling to another club and contracts were prepared and ready to be exchanged. I asked him how much he was selling for and he told me £15,000. I offered him £12,000 plus £3,000 for the trout in the river – there being no VAT on trout. I wasn't sure there were any trout in that stretch, but the Inland revenue couldn't prove to the contrary!

When he asked how serious I was, I produced my company chequebook signed by my fellow director and said it just needed my signature. He agreed the deal if it could be done before the other club exchanged contracts.

Armed with the letter of agreement I asked him to sign, the next day I set off for the solicitors at Guildford who were none too pleased to see me. After wrestling all the documents from them I returned to our own solicitor in Newbury and explained the urgency. They exchanged and completed the Monday after setting agreement for a loan to NAA by the bank.

After three turbulent years of personal family losses, a year earlier I had been asked to join the Lions Club of Newbury to raise money and gather good deeds for less fortunate people. Having acquired Brimpton in 1980, I came up with the idea of combining my two roles to raise funds for Lions' charities.

At that time I was fishing open matches on a limited scale and not doing very well, so I thought 'why not approach the superstars of the day.' Probably the best known of these was Ivan Marks who had a tackle shop in Leicester, with partner Roy Marlow and manager Graham Barry. My idea was to get as many match angling stars as I could to Newbury to raise money so I phoned Graham and put forward the idea of a charity match at our new venue of Brimpton. He was very receptive and I visited the three of them to discuss my ideas. They were so helpful, and told me they would sort out the line-up for their team. And what a team this turned out to be, with Ken Giles, Tony Scot, Frank Barlow, Clive Smith, Tony Davies, Wayne Swinscoe, Dennis White, Tom Pickering and Max Winter along with Messrs Marks, Marlow and Barry.

I set out deciding a format for the match and raising sponsorship from a lot of my clients and connections, who were very forthcoming.

I decided on a teams of twelve format to be fished on 19th October 1980 with the All Stars, plus anglers from NAA and Thatcham AA who were to obtain sponsorship for every pound of fish that they caught. The Newbury team consisted of Stu Dyer, Brian Pallett, Richard Wiggins, Henry Sadler, Jumbo Blanchard, Barrie Page, Jim Knott, Terry Bray, Clark Ayling, Tim Wellman, Bill Dixon and myself, with Richard Sylvester as chief steward.

I would like to say that NAA were the winners, but the weights were as follows:

Team	Weight	Points
All Stars	49-12-12	54
Newbury AA	31-8-8	42
Thatcham AA	14-5-8	27

I have to admit a small faux pas of mine. On the morning, I realised that I'd only set up 35 pegs, so hastily had to set up another. The only space I could find was on the Aldershot in just one foot of water. Justice was served as I drew the rotten peg and managed just two small trout for four ounces!

We all had a great day and a healthy sum was raised for the Lions Club who provided plenty of helpers handing out hot dogs and soup etc. All of the All Stars said they'd thoroughly enjoyed it and wanted to arrange another match, which we did at Willows/Alders on 4th July 1982, when even more sponsorship gained and money raised. We changed the format slightly by having NAA juniors instead of our friends at Thatcham AA. The main sponsor was Dutch Dredging whose MD Mike Stone was an NAA committee member, and it was very fitting that his daughter, Paula, won the trophy for Top Junior.

The All Stars team, according to the programme I had published were recorded as:

IVAN MARKS (Leicester and Barnsley) Undoubtedly the most famous angler in the country and a great ambassador for the sport. A regular England angler, finishing runner up in the 1976 World Championship in Bulgaria

ROY MARLOW (Leicester) Ivan's business partner and ex-international winner of the NENE Championship two years in succession and is an expert still water angler.

KEN GILES (Birmingham) Ex-England international Ken, is a member of the Shakespeare 'Professional' squad. He was the winner of the Embassy Challenge in 1975.



CLIVE SMITH (Birmingham) With Ken Giles, a major influence of the progress of the COFTON HACKETT match squad and a member of the Shakespeare 'Professional' squad.

MAX WINTERS (COFTON HACKETT) Shakespeare 'Professional' and winner of the recent BBC 'Hooked' programme. Must be one of the most consistent matchmen in the country. Recognised for his consistency by inclusion in the England team last year.

TONY DAVIES (COFTON HACKETT) Shakespeare 'Professional' DAIWA League winner 1979. Warwickshire Avon winner 1980. Tony won this event when it was fished in 1980 and will obviously be looking forward to repeating this performance.

TOM PICKERING (Barnsley) A regular money winner and member of the very successful Barnsley Squad. Has represented England and finished second in the BBC 'Hooked' programme recently.

DENIS WHITE (Barnsley) One of the successful Barnsley Squad and has represented England. Must be one of the most consistent anglers in the country.

STAN PIECHA (COFTON HACKETT) Most people know Stan as the angling correspondent of the Sun. But Stan has a very good record including winning the ATC Classic in 1981 and finishing third in the BBC's 'Hooked' event.



Meanwhile, the NAA team was made up from the following. Sadly, some are no longer with us, but some remain very much Newbury members to this day:

Seniors - Stev Pallett, Phil Smart, Jim Knott, Derek Bishop, Brian Pallett, Derek Wellman, Tim Wellman, Barrie Page, Clark Ayling, Richard Wiggins, Colin Gore and Terry Bray

Juniors - Adrian Gore, Adrian Ager, Rob Emmens, Michael Pawson. Stephen Pawson, Michael Drummond, Simon Mitchell, Hugh Davis, Mark Harrison, Kevin Merritt, Paula Stone and Richard Faithfull.

If you thought you'd read Richard Faithfull's name earlier in this newsletter you'd be right – out of the junior side now, but our reigning Club Champion. Asked what he recalls of the Willows match, Richard says 'not that much – it was a long time ago, but I do remember I'd have preferred to watch the stars and learn from them rather than take part in the match!' The result was as follows:

Team	Weight	Points
All Stars	108-13-4	53
NAA Seniors	47-4-8	38
NAA Juniors	30-5-0	34

Since then, my match fishing has progressed somewhat and I often see and still compete against the All Stars, (although sadly some of them are no longer with us) and we have a good old chat about how much they enjoyed these matches and the hospitality of the NAA and Lions Club.

As I look around the current committee, I often think of these good times and the help I have received over the years from them.

STARS SHINE

THE Superstars showed their class in the Zanen Dredging – sponsored charity match on Newbury AA's Muddy Lane Lakes and more than doubled their opponents' weight.

The lakes' famous carp were in obliging mood and some good weights were taken, topped by an impressive 35-15-0 score to Barnsley's Tom Pickering.

Tom fished a swimfeeder 30 yards out using double caster on the hook to take carp from 1½-3 lb.

Leicester's Graham Barry secured second place with 12-10-8, again carp, while the leading local angler was third-placed Jim Knott (Newbury) who had 11-8-8.

Superstars skipper, England International Ivan Marks, was fourth with 11-2-8 followed by Bob Stephens (Derby) with 10-6-12.

A junior and a senior team from Newbury AA, were sponsored for each 1 lb of fish taken, and between them raised several hundred pounds, for charity.

The Superstars team, including Max Winters, Ken Giles, Frank Barlow, Clive Smith, Denis White and Roy Marlow, weighed in a total of 108-13-4, Newbury Seniors had 47-4-8, and Newbury Juniors 30-5-0. Top junior was Paula Stone, daughter of the sponsor, who took a carp bag of 8-12-8.



ANGLING HERITAGE – PRESERVING OUR HISTORY

By Keith Armishaw



Angling Heritage was founded in 2009 in memory of Fred J Taylor, to preserve angling history. After several failed grandiose schemes for a National Angling Museum had faltered, Sandy Armishaw decided it was time to take a different approach after recording Fred J Taylor MBE and Fred Buller MBE, lifelong friends talking about their lives and how angling has played a significant part. Sadly, after recording this, Fred J died and that gave the stimulus for the establishment of the not-for-profit Trust.

The first stage was to establish a team of Trustees who are credible in the angling world realising that, although she was the owner/proprietor of River Reads, one of angling's largest bookshops, she was not widely known. Then Chris Yates, one of the best-known anglers in the country agreed to become a Trustee.

The recording of the two Fred's was made into a book with CD's, entitled 'Recollections', and was sold to raise the funds so necessary for the Trust's continuing development. Professor Barrie Rickards and Des Taylor volunteered to do the second recording in the series. Following the recording, Des also agreed to become a Trustee as he has always been interested in angling's rich history. 'Recollections III' was made with Len Arbery and Bob Buteux, and number V (Bob Church & Dave Steuart) Has just been released and is for sale through River Reads.

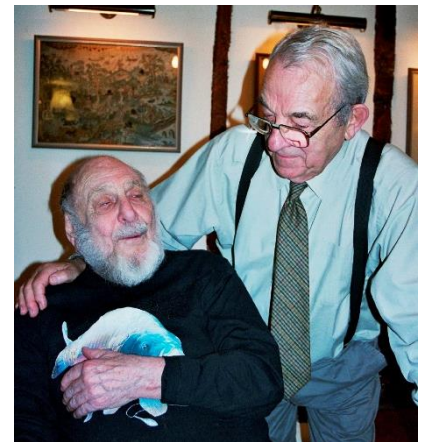
At the outset, the Trustees insisted that all donated items had to be made available for viewing by the general public. All the previous attempts for a museum failed in the main due to the finance needed, so it was decided that the best way for this to start was "from small acorns", one of Sandy's favourite quotes. So rather than acquire expensive items of tackle, the trust focused on people and their history, so the archive was set up on a cloud-based website www.anglingheritage.org.

This forms the backbone of the Trust holding film clips, recordings, photographs, letters, information about angling clubs, articles etc. No Trust can run forever without a constant trickle of funding so the website uses a pay-to-view system. Articles and Angling club data is free, photos cost about 1p to look at, audio tracks about 10-15p and a film about 50p. This funding pays for the continuing development and maintenance of the website.

The Trust has also been greatly expanded by the work of Phill Williams who has made over 300 recordings, adding them to a large number of films, plus even more photographs, many arranged on slideshows. It is well worth a look; where else can you see Richard Walker's carp "Clarissa", some of Fred J Taylor's anecdotes etc. But it's not just about iconic anglers, there are recordings of guides and gillies, fishery scientists, tackle shop owners; the aim is to cover the full breadth of the sport and its people.

Artefacts have not been sought, but have been collected along the way and a home had been found for them in Torrington Museum. There is a display of rods second to none, but again each with its own story. There are rods which belonged to Halford, Sawyer, Stone, Savage, Captain Tommy Edwards, the prototype 3-piece Barbus Maximus made by Edward Barder for Chris Yates, used in "A Passion for Angling". Even the first carbon fibre rod (donated by Fred Buller) is on display.

All these actions have ensured that the goal of openness for all has been maximised.



Freds Taylor and Buller

How can you help?

The archive depends totally on your support. If you have anything of interest; stories, people you have met, photographs, old videos, letters, films etc then AH would like a copy. If you don't have the facility to copy, then please loan it, we have the equipment to do this and all material is returned to the owners, it is the information we seek, not items which may be of financial or sentimental value

We are also looking for volunteers to help with the workload. Can you interview people, write articles, research angling clubs or simply help with the scanning? It is fascinating work and a great way to support such a worthwhile cause. However, it is totally voluntary; no-one, Trustees included, is paid a penny for their work. Everyone does it for the love of the sport and the opportunity to put something back into it for the years of pleasure everyone has enjoyed.

You can also help by donations which can be cash, or by just buying tokens to enjoy looking at the archive.

There is also a membership scheme where for £25 per year, you have unlimited access to the archive on line.

From its small beginnings, the Trust has grown rapidly in a very short time due to the work of this committed team. With your support, who knows just how far this worthwhile project can develop.

ROD CAST then PODCAST

By Martin Strike



Non-anglers just don't get it, do they? They wonder how can we sit on a riverbank all day, with a length of string tied around our toe waiting for a dim-witted lethargic fish to tug on our worm every now and then. And to think we throw them back (after a loving kiss, of course) seems even more pointless waste of time, and in a way, particularly after a blank, it's hard to disagree.

In my book however, ALL wastes of time are to be encouraged and treasured – apart from golf, obviously, where paying vast sums for privilege of knocking a ball into a small hole is surely the

definition of futility. But us anglers know that fishing is actually a constant mental challenge. The hours fly by in constant calculation and recalculation over is the bait in the right place? Is it the right bait? Is it still on the hook? Should I chuck in some more free offerings? Did I bring my sandwiches? Have I already thrown in too many free offerings? Are those fish bubbling over there, or has a frog farted? Should I change swims/lakes? It's hard work. But then there are days when the place seems devoid of fish – where you can't believe there is so much as a gudgeon in the lake, and even if there was, it wouldn't be hungry enough to nibble on a pinkie. But even on these 'Alders' days, as I call them, the alternative of giving up and going home to our loved ones, or even our families is as unpalatable as a maggot and caster soufflé.

This is when the podcast can come in. The whole world is making a podcast these days, and on every subject with titles ranging from 'Cosplay Stitch and Sew' to 'People in Tax'. I'm sure these would be a perfect accompaniment to another blank under the broly, but perhaps more relevance might come from the number of fishing-themed ones, albeit most are American and are loud almost unlistenable shows about bass and catfish. There are also a number of fly-fishing themed shows that were not, until my trip out with Barry Murrer, my thing, but virtually no mixed coarse fishing podcasts that would probably appeal to most. This said, while I am not a dedicated carp angler, there are a number of carp-related podcasts that I regularly record and listen to on headphones during those quieter moments on the bank.

My 60th birthday is looming this issue, so I'm no techno-whizz, and for those who feel equally leaden-fingered I can confirm that recording and playing podcasts is easy. There are doubtless other ways to get the recordings, but I download them via [Libsyn Directory](#). Here you can search either a specific podcast's name, or area of general interest. Of course many podcasts are only available after paying a fee or subscription, but this site has thousands and are all FREE!



A few simple clicks has episodes downloaded to your PC which you can play live at home, or else transfer easily to a MP3 headset device, such as my preference, a Sony Walkman Sport which charges up from my laptop and gives me over 8 hours of play on a hands-free, wireless set for around £100. As a gardener as well as an angler, it provides great company. I listen to numerous football, comedy and documentary titles, but also the following fishing shows:



The **Thinking Tackle Podcast**, from Korda, presented by Rich Stewart and assisted by studio hand Toby, is an entertaining listen, each episode consisting entirely of a guest interview with someone celebrated or otherwise from some aspect of the carp fishing world, or otherwise. Inevitably, those connected with Korda make an appearance, such as Ali Hamidi before his departure for fields anew, make an appearance, with Korda Managing Director and big personality Danny Fairbrass making quite a few. At time of writing there are 88 episodes that can be downloaded, most of all around 2 hours or over, and I've found that all have been enjoyable despite my angling interest being mixed, rather than exclusively carp. I still find hints and tips to bring into my own fishing, particularly, for example, tactics to catch in winter cold etc.



The **Fishing Gurus Podcast** comes from Tackle Guru, who are part of the same stable as Korda. It also consists of a single guest interview each week, but concentrates exclusively on the match fishing scene, from the big UK tournaments, such as Fishomania, to members of the England international fishing team. Presented by three-time Junior World Champion Matt Godfrey, assisted by the same Toby who helps out in Thinking tackle. The match scene is dominated by the north of England, so there's not much local interest, nor as many tips for pleasure anglers, but the 28 or so 3-hour episodes are still a good insight into the methods and thought processes of the big names in match fishing.



Two Pints of Maggots and a Packet of Hooks promises a much more rounded coarse fishing content. There are 21 episodes at time of writing, at about 1.5 hours in length with varied guests such as Keith Arthur, Tommy Pickering and a number of characters from the modern match fishing scene. I found the first episode I listened a little disappointing – it seemed a little amateurish compared to the others reviewed here, with the interviewer's microphone virtually silent making it a difficult and one-sided listen, which was a shame as I think it was trying to give advice about using expander pellets. Perhaps they have cured this problem in later episodes, but I must admit, the sound quality in the first show was so irritating I didn't get to the end.



The **Carp Fishing Podcast**. Presented by Baitwork's owner, Mark Bryant and General Manager, Mike Holly and is a monthly podcast with currently 57 episodes of generally around three hours available. As well as an always interesting guest, this is my favourite of these podcasts as it also follows the presenters month-by-month with their own fishing journeys. Though these days running a successful bait company, they are primarily just good guys and great angling mates with their friendship passion for angling and the fish very clear. This leads to a very human podcast, as like most of us, they struggle to fit in as much fishing as they can between commitments and pressures of family life and candidly share with listeners the problems and tragedies they have suffered through the time they have been recording. The show also contains other

regular features, such as a monthly recommendation for different meals to cook on the few longer sessions they can get away with, as well as general chant and banter. There are always plenty of tips which I can introduce into my own mixed fishing, but refreshingly, never pushes any of their own products. With this article in mind, I wrote to the show to let them know how much I appreciated their hard work. I was delighted to receive the following reply from co-star, Mike Holly:

Oddly, we never really set out to produce a Carp Fishing podcast, it just happened one day while we were sitting on the bank. Us anglers all love to put the world to rights while on the bank don't we, daydreaming of the next bite. In fact it was a mate, Elmo, that recently described carp angling down time as a sort of counselling session. You can share a cup of tea with a fellow angler and before you know it the conversations flowing in all directions. It often includes deep chats about life, health, fish, fun and family until the wee hours. Me and Mark do exactly the same when we're fishing so we just decided to press record on a microphone and The Carp Fishing Podcast was born.

It was clear from the early days of our recordings that our listeners were able to resonate with lots of our topics, and over the years the messages of support and kind feedback have been overwhelming. You may find this surprising but each episode we record is never underpinned with an agenda or even a loose topical theme, we just go with the flow (excuse the pun) and before we know it a few hours have passed and we've found something to debate in detail.

Yes I'm the manager at Baitworks, a very busy bait manufacturer based in the Cotswolds but we never wanted the Podcast to be a sales platform either as that's not the reason why we started it in the first place. The world is changing and the way people like to consume content is too, the Podcast market these days is huge, it's estimated that 420 million people consume podcasts these days all over the world and we're pleased to be a tiny part of that stat. I listen to all the fishing podcasts on the market and enjoy them all, they help pass a few hours in the car when on longer journeys that's for sure.

So if you've listened to our Bristolian tones over the years then it's a big thank you from Me and Mark. Nothing puts a smile on faces more than when we get a message of thanks from someone who's been having a hard time and they've found the podcast has helped in some, small way. We also get plenty of messages asking for angling help or advice on a daily basis so always feel free to reach out on our social media if you have a question or you have a great theme or topic you'd love us to discuss.

You can find us on Spotify, I-tunes and all other podcast apps. We only record once a month, we usually release them on the 1st of the month and along with mine and Marks chat we'll always have a guest on too. Gaz, Chris Ball, Elliott, Nigel Sharp, Si Bater and many more have kindly given me a few hours of their time to make the podcast what it is today and for that we're extremely grateful.

As I type, I'm looking out the window at a strip of bluebells, everything is in bloom at last. Spring has sprung and this is the time to be out on bank, the catch reports at Baitworks HQ have been a little crazy but I've always considered the first few weeks of May to be the best time in the carp anglers calendar, the biggies slip up and the fishing can be extremely productive if you get it right, so if you're out on the bank be lucky!

Best Fishes

Mike Holly



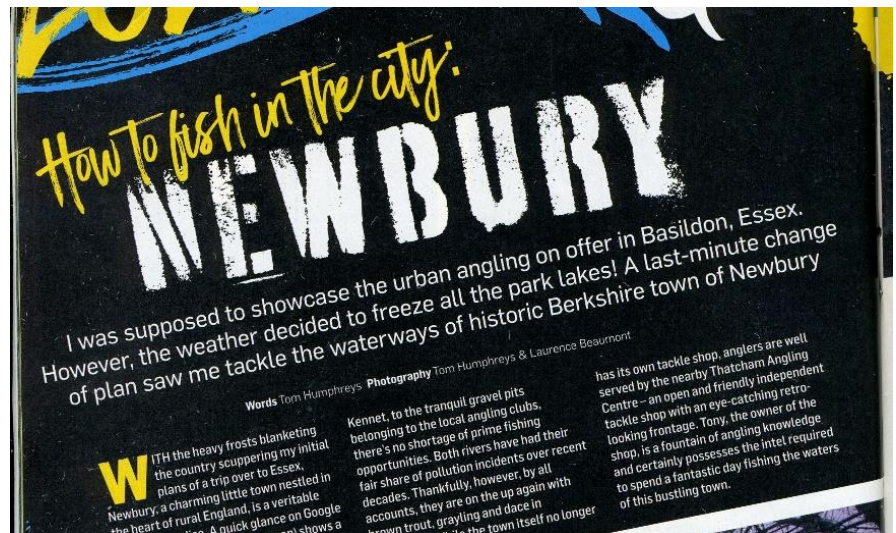
Wow - , what a lovely reply and speaks volumes for him and Mark Bryant as good eggs. There are other fishy podcasts, of course, though I haven't felt the need to listen to any as yet. If you have any recommendations, please let us know. So if you're walking the bank and I don't reply, I'm not being rude or have nodded off, probably, but picking up tips to break a fishless spell.

IMPROVE YOUR COARSE FISHING

By Martin Strike

Regular readers of the NAAN may recall that last month's issue detailed an article in IYCF magazine that focused on the fishing in Newbury. Our intrepid reporter caught up with its author, Tom Humphreys to find out more of the background to his visit, and enjoyed a very entertaining chat with a lovely and generous man.

'I pitched the idea of a regular article to the magazine where I would visit towns across the country, visit the local tackle shop and fish local venues that were either free, such as the town centre in Newbury, or available on a cheap day ticket. ITCF came back with a "yeah, OK" and off I went.'



'My idea was to fish as if I had little angling experience, using tackle and methods I could pick up easily and relatively cheaply.' This fit in with Tom's credentials as is Regional Angling Development Officer (East of England) for the Angling Trust, where he encourages participation in the sport, be it through charities, clubs and often fisheries themselves.

'Actually, the impetus behind my article was to perhaps monetize my fishing, but more importantly, I sensed that with our first child on the way my fishing time would become limited, so I might be able to justify it to my family along the lines of *Sorry Dear, I HAVE to go fishing today - it's my job!*' I applauded Tom for his pure evil genius, and it worked too - albeit he admits that, 'my other half includes travelling to far flung cities as time spent fishing, and when I get there I usually spend far too much in the tackle shops on stuff I don't need.'



The infamous Donnington castle shot

'Newbury was freezing on the day we turned up . 'I've fished the town centre a few times before and had roach, chub, dace and some big trout, but on the day - next to nothing! But that's fishing.' Tom's other great passion is photography, which this project also allows him to put into practice. I ribbed him about the shot of his marching with rod and tackle past Donnington Castle, highest point in the area and probably the furthest from any water. 'Ah,' he explains, 'one of my maybe stupid ideas was to have a sort of semi-tacky shot in each area I visited with the blue Shakespeare box that reminds me of my early days fishing. I've learned to love history too, so I look out for local architecture of interest. My aim with the articles is to tell a live, local story, rather than the regurgitations I see in



many of the angling magazines.'

It was a total pleasure to talk to Tom and hear of his passion for our great sport. His enthusiasm and generosity with his time can only serve the Angling Trust well. You can see all of the pictures Tom took of his day in Newbury at http://www.instagram.com/tomhumphs_angling and read of another of his projects, showcasing independent tackle shops on http://www.instagram.com/tackleshop_project.

AN EVENINGS RIPARIAN ENTERTAINMENT (Part 2)

by Martin Strike



The two weeks passed since my first attempt at fly fishing, and Barry was kind enough to again meet me and lend me a rod at Speen Moors. This time as he predicted, the female mayfly were laying eggs in the water, while others were hatching and taking off. Delicious!

I found that the two-week gap had made me a better caster, and I didn't crack a single fly off all evening. We both tried our luck in Parliament Draft, but with clouds building and a gusty breeze, nothing fishy was showing. Barry speculated that the fish had probably been gorging on the gangly delights all day and were

probably having a break before resuming the feast, usually at around 6:30.

So, we walked the river looking for action and sure enough, at the allotted hour, we started to see fish rise. Typically, most were in zones that could not be reached by us, but as the topping got more frequent, what appeared to be a shoal started gulping flies with abandon right in the middle of the flow. Gentleman Barry allowed me first go. I found my casting as smooth as it had been at any point, and my tiny mayfly-themed lure landed time and time again amid the increasing number of actual mayflies floating down the river and past the furor of fish gorging on them. Apart from the casts that the breeze blew into the annoying overhanging branch, I felt that I just HAD to catch. Then one cast Barry shouted 'YOU'VE GOT A TAKE!' I must admit, I had mistaken one of the actual flies for my artificial one and didn't see it. 'WHAT DO I DO?' I yelled back. 'STRIKE!' he exclaimed. I did, but of course I'd long missed it, but now had an idea what to expect.



A Mayfly chilling out bankside



The illicit roach being wound in

I allowed Barry his turn at the spot and after many casts reassuringly similar to mine, a fish took his fly. Excitement! It wasn't big, but when it came near, its red fins were unmistakable and to his embarrassment and horror, particularly in front of a committee member, he brought in an out of season roach of maybe 5oz.

We carried on, and on my turn I saw a take – and struck – but it didn't connect. Feeling my first catch was not far away, the fish gods decided I'd fluffed my chance, and as if an unseen switch had been turned off, the rising stopped and the river returned to rolling on by with its payload of mayfly totally untroubled by trout or roach.

We only fished for an hour, Barry having moths to catch and then give a lecture on, but it was enough to make me fall in love with the artistry and guile of a whole new aspect of our wonderful sport. If you can, I urge you to give it a go. We could all do with a Barry Murrer in our fishing.

THAT'S ALL FOLKS! Or is it?

As ever, we hope you enjoyed this issue. We do try and provide a mix of topics regarding our great sport and amazing range of venues. Should you wish to make comment (or even better, submit something for publication, please do so at comms@newburyangling.org.uk

By the time most of you have read this I will have left Newbury and will be living abroad. Ok, it's only Wales, but still means I will be largely absent from my beloved banks of the NAA. I intend to keep this newsletter going from afar but obviously a distance of 130-ish miles means I'm less able to react to news on the water. If anyone is interested in being my reporter on the ground, or feels they can help in any way with production of the newsletter I'd be delighted to hear from you at the above address. Thank you!

Martin Strike

Editor

