

FRESHWATER INFORMER ^f

No. 281

APRIL 2020

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Hello and welcome to the April issue of the Freshwater Informer!

The news has been totally dominated by one subject in recent weeks! It would appear that angling has to be the best form of protecting yourself out on the banks and beaches in the fresh air and away from the crowds should be the way forward! However, at the time of writing, the news is changing on an almost hourly basis. It is indeed a very worrying time as everything is out of the hands of us mere mortals. I am hoping that events will not affect the distribution of this month's magazine and it will go out as planned, but anything might happen between now and then!

A significant casualty of the crisis was the cancellation of The Big One show at Farnborough. With the dramatic escalation of events, the decision was made to postpone the event and it is hoped to be rescheduled later in the Autumn. It was an understandable and inevitable decision and the organisers ultimate aim was to protect visitors, exhibitors and show staff. I am hoping that the new date for the show will fit with the Informer's diary. It goes without saying that the next few weeks and months will be a difficult time for all of us, but I am sure we will come out the other side. Support of our tackle shops and fisheries will now be even more essential, so please let us all come together as a community and support and help each other.

The weather has continued to play a major part during the past month. Every weekend has seen strong winds and rain preventing many from getting out. The rivers have been in flood and the banks of many lakes are sodden. However, those hardy souls who have ventured out have been rewarded with some great fish. The carp have looked spectacular and in prime condition. With the mild conditions and low pressure, they have continued to feed right through the Winter. The Closed Season is now in force for three months so many anglers will look to stillwaters to get their 'angling fix'. We have plenty of great venues to choose from here in the South East so have a flick through the magazine to find one near you.

I have important news for magazine subscribers. Due to postage rates being increased at the end of March, it has been necessary to raise the cost of subscriptions by £5 per year to £20. The new rate will apply to renewals and new subscribers from April 2020. We have 'absorbed' postal increases over the years, but I am afraid I have been unable to avoid passing on the increased cost following the latest rise. However, the subscription rate still represents great value and ensures you receive the latest issue every month delivered direct to your home.

Enjoy your fishing, stay safe and keep well, Barry Reed



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Fishery Reports

Beaver Fishery Lingfield, Surrey

GATE TIMES! We have, unfortunately, had some anglers who believe that the gate will not shut at the time stated on the four signs situated at the main entrance, the sign opposite the snack bar, our website, Facebook and on each and every ticket we write out upon your arrival. We all like that one last cast, but getting yourself locked in is not the way to finish your day with us.

Well, what can we say about the last month? The weather continued to battle us and Ben and I spent most of it working in our waders, combating ever increasing water levels whilst continuing with our slightly behind schedule Winter maintenance works. On a positive note, we have had some cracking fish banked and a few PB's caught.

SNIPES LAKE has been relatively quiet for anglers as the weather has seemed to have had an effect, but a few noteworthy catches have been witnessed. **Kieran Bracegirdle** has fished with us on four previous occasions without any success and after having a little change of tactics, on his 5th visit he banked the big mirror at 36-04. Well done Kieran. Also, **Matt Jones** and his buddy **Liam Hall** have been persisting with Snipe Lake for a while now and it seems that each blank has been a learning curve as Matt banked his first Snipe Lake carp which was a common of 27-04, just 20z shy of his **PB** and then Liam certainly found the fish and a couple of new PBs when he banked a mirror of 20-02 and then two commons weighing in at 28lb and 28-06. I managed to get my Snipe Lake season underway with a nice common of 23-12.



Andy 23-12 Snipe



Liam Hall 20-02 Snipe Stockie



Liam Hall 28-00 Snipe



Liam Hall 28-06 Snipe



Matt Jones 27-02 Snipe



Kieran Bracegirdle 36-04 Snipe

TUSCANY LAKE woke up a little early in comparison to previous years when **Shane Heffer** banked a cat at 50lb, **Stuart Pirie** banked a **PB** at 64lb, **Mark Cooke** banked a **PB** cat of 65lb and **Jeff Betts** banked five cats, a kitten, one at 24lb, 2 x 30lb and a 42lb. Lets hope the cats are waking up and the season is under way.



Mark Cooke 65-00 PB



Shane Heffer 50lb

JEFF'S LAKE has, as usual, been producing F1's, small carp and some bream. The 1st Open Match was held on 4th March and the top 3 places were: **1st - Sam Beckinsale** with 36-04, **2nd - Pawel Lesniak** with 29-12 and **3rd - Bob Beal** with 18-04.

MOAT POND has been producing some good results mainly on the feeder, pellet or corn doing better than other baits. Some days have fished better than others and an example of this is when **Adrian Fellows** fished and banked 17 carp to 7lb in one day, came back a couple of days later and only banked a few.

DAUGHTERS LAKE has woken up a bit this month which is what we would expect at this time of year and a few anglers have been getting among the fish. Some examples of that is as follows, **Luke Barbury** had two new mirrors to low doubles, **James Beach** had a 12-07 common, **James Atfield** had a mirror of 13-04 and **Mark Slade** had two commons to 12-07 and two mirrors to low doubles. This lake hasn't been fished as much as we would have liked, but that will change with more fish being caught.



James Atfield 13-04 Daughters



Mark Slade Daughters Stockie

EDEN POND has continued to produce tench and quite a few have been banked as well as small carp and some nice silvers. **Nigel Barrow** has banked plenty of tench and **Andy Packham** had a good day when he banked 8 tench to 3lb, 3 bream to and 1 F1.

MAZE LAKE is, as of writing this, is having its Winter maintenance works carried out. So far we have completed the tree work on and around the lake, cut back all marginal growth ready for the new growth and by the time you read this we will have completed all of the work that needed to be done including swim repairs where needed ready for the coming year. The anglers that have fished Maze Lake have banked F1's and carp to 5lb.

MAJORS LAKE has seen some nice pike being banked. **Callum Thomas** had one at 13lb and **Connor Charlton** had one at 15lb while **Len Humphries** had 2 jacks and a pike of 12-04 and on his feeder rod landed a **PB** bream at 7-03 and **Charlie Holding** banked a 20lb mirror.



Len Humphries 12-04 Majors

Well done to all and don't forget to send in your catch report pictures.

Gabriels Fishery

Edenbridge, Kent

We are entering the close season on the River Eden for Environment Agency controlled waters.

CORONAVIRUS - For the time being, we are taking a 'business as usual' approach to fishing and camping in the open air of our beautiful rural countryside environment whilst planning for different scenarios should they be needed. The current NHS advice is that most people can continue to go to work, school and other public places – there is nothing currently to stop people from going fishing and enjoying our outdoor environment. We offer fresh air, a natural environment and good fishing. Everyone is welcome as they always have been. We all need to behave as we would normally while still taking on board the NHS current advice. Wash your hands before putting them near your mouth. We will not ask anyone to do anything that we thought may put them at unnecessary risk. We will keep to our normal cleaning procedures at this time- perhaps more frequently. We will be paying additional attention to surfaces that come into contact with skin, such as door handles and payment key pads etc. If you have any concerns about symptoms or need medical advice dial 111 on your phone.

The carp here are always keen to be fed. The trick is to know what they want to be fed on! Generally, in the Spring they like 'fishy' flavoured boilies and natural foods that are already present around the margins. When the fishing gets slow, it is a good tactic to use a ground bait to call in the small fish. Once the smaller fish are feeding, the larger fish will come around to see what the excitement is about. Then, a well-positioned PVA bag of ground bait with a fishy boilie works.

It is worth considering when fishing with multiple rods using different tactics on at least one line. See our bait offers in our tackle shop of 'Buy two, get one free!'.

See you all soon at Gabriels Fishery!





WELCOME TO ARUN ANGLING CENTRE

Arun Angling is located just five minutes from the A27 on the outskirts of the pretty town of Angmering. The store has it's own ample car park offering FREE parking solely for it's own customers' use only.

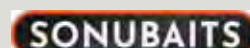
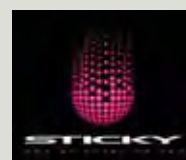
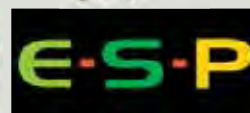
Have you visited the newly refitted Arun Angling store at Angmering?

We are now open again on Sundays!

To kick start our Spring Sunday opening, we are running a **SPECIAL OFFER OF 20% OFF BAIT!** This great offer only applies on Sundays April 5th, 19th & 26th. Visit the shop to pick up your 20% off voucher (anytime). Terms and conditions apply, see discount voucher for details. Our Sunday open hours are 8am to 2pm.

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Fishery Reports

Hawkhurst Fish Farm Hawkhurst, Kent

SPECIMEN LAKE We have to start with an incredible 60 hour session on Swim 2 for **Dave Graveling**. He landed our newly stocked common, now officially weighing in at 44lb 8oz. We are pleased it has been caught so soon after going into the lake, and pleased for Dave as well! He also managed to net a **PB** grass carp weighing 16lb, a 33lb 5oz mirror, 23lb 5oz ghostie, 25lb common, and 47lb catfish during a 60 hour session, as well as losing two. What a session! **Rob Pizzy** landed one of his target fish- the ghost common weighing in at 32lb 5oz. He also caught a 29lb common, and a 22lb mirror.



Dave Graveling



DOVE LAKE **Tom McKay** caught an impressive 61lb catfish using a cell boilie over a bed of particle. **Andy** said thanks to our bailiff for the advice he gave, as it resulted in a 31lb common!



Andy

MAIN LAKE FGS Plant hired the lake exclusively for the weekend, several anglers caught **PB**'s, including **Matt Willis** who caught carp up to 34lb 2oz and catfish to 53lb. **Darren Knight** caught a lovely looking 18lb mirror. **Carl** and **Adam** had a cracking session, ending with a mad night- landing 4 up to 27lb and losing one, well done to you both! **Chris Williams** netted a mint condition common weighing 24lb 8oz – one of three from his session. **Paul** landed four fish in 24 hours; a 29lb common, 25lb common, 23lb common and a 30lb catfish. **Casey Ham** landed a 27lb 1oz common using a rapid solid bag system filled with Sticky Baits krill dust and pellets, and a dash of hemp oil - a



new **PB**! **Harry** landed a new **PB**, a mint condition 30lb 9oz common, as well as a 16lb 8oz common. **Andy** caught a lovely looking 29lb mirror from peg 10 during a night session.



Casey Ham



Carl Pearton



Paul



Chris Williams



Matt

Hawkhurst Fish Farm

Hastings Road, Hawkhurst, Kent, TN18 4RT

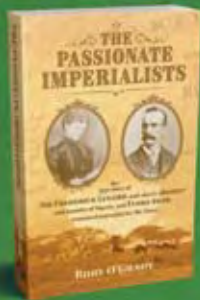
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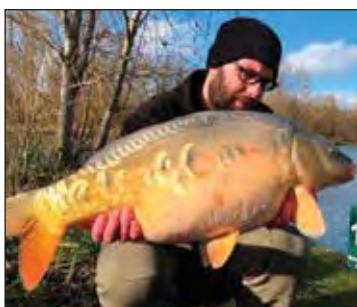
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Fishery Reports

Hartley Lands Fishery Cranbrook, Kent

A brilliant start to March this year with fish coming out in numbers all over the complex. Henniker is now open and has done 3 fish so far to 3 different anglers. We have now completed solid paths all around the specimen lakes and re-barked swims ready for spring.

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Hartley Lands Fishery

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Fishery Reports

Claygate Lakes Claygate, Marden, Kent

LAKE SOPHIE Some lovely silvers have been coming out in the past month with maggot or worm working well

LAKE EVA Carp have been up in the water and bread or 6mm pellet have been taking fish

LAKE AMY Slow to start at the beginning of the month but the commons have started coming out and in the last week a few mirrors have started showing. Small bags of pellet and smaller boillies seem to be the way at the moment. Well done to Fred, one of our guys fishing on a winter ticket, with a lovely common.

BOOKINGS If we receive notification that we have to suspend fishing, any deposits already taken for that period will be refunded in full.



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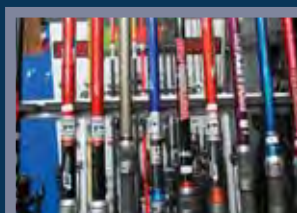
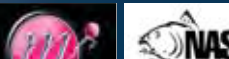
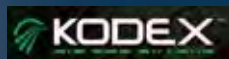
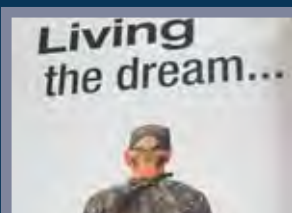
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Fishery Reports

Tonbridge & District Angling & FP Society

MATCH RESULT: PAIRS MATCH - HARTLAKE UP

In the final meet of the season, ten regulars turned out to challenge for the pairs match. Match Captain Martyn Hill had walked the river on Saturday to see if there were enough fishable swims. The river was up, coloured and swirling all over the place but definitely fishable. Martyn eyed up 3 good looking spots that he fancied catching in but it would all be down to the draw on the day. With two numbers left in the bag, those being numbers 1 and 7 and Bob Doyle and Martyn still to draw. Martyn gave the honours to Bob to choose first as Martyn always has whatever is left in the bag at the end. Bob drew number 1 and was off first to pick his swim. Martyn hoped that the other five before him would pass the spots he fancied, but, unfortunately, Peter Hole, Colin Fowler and Ditch Howard got in those fancied spots which left Martyn to drop in the mouth of the backwater which was an area Martyn had caught well in many years before. From the off, Martyn had 3 roach in 3 casts which was a promising start and after an hour his rod pulled right round and it was fish on. After a decent fight and a few nerves, a decent bream of around 3lb was in the net, this was quickly followed by another of the same sort of size. Game on and an hour later another two bream were safely in the net, followed by another in the next hour. Martyn felt he had clawed back the few pounds he trailed Championship leader Mick Smith and thought all the others were struggling so went for a quick walk to see what was happening. The other anglers were all catching, but mainly small stuff. On his return to his swim, Martyn recast beyond his original spot into some slacker water and managed to land another two decent bream. He had not told the others how he was doing apart from his match partner Roger Trask, but then made out to Roger that he was only pulling his leg, in fear of word getting around and Mick changing swims looking for bream himself.

The tactic worked and instructions were to weigh in from either end of the stretch, meaning Martyn would be the last to weigh in and keep all in suspense. After some initial splashing about, voices were heard, 'what you got in there then Mart', quickly followed by a keepnet eruption. Seven bream and some bits for an impressive 23lb 13oz wrapped up the match for Martyn and partner Roger Trask, but more importantly had wrapped up a very impressive season for Martyn as he had won his first Match Championship against some very good match anglers. Well done Martyn on your fantastic efforts this season, not just organising the regular matches and keeping a great friendly atmosphere with some great banter, but also in your brilliant fishing results throughout the season.

1st Martyn Hill / Roger Trask 24lb 5oz **2nd** Bob Doyle / Larry Howard 6lb 9oz
3rd Peter Hole / Ditch Howard 4lb 10oz **4th** Mick Smith / Colin Fowler 3lb 14oz
5th Stuart Cottingham / Bill Wicker 2lb 5oz



Because of the continuous rain, we have not had many reports coming in of any significant catches. A couple we did receive were from regular carp angler Kristy Knowlden and predator enthusiast Malcolm Holden. Following some very windy weather, Kristy had a productive short session on the Old Ballast Pit, landing 15 fish. These included two tench to 3lb and 13 carp to 17lb 2oz and his brother-in-law had 3 carp to 13lb 6oz. The carp were a good mixture of commons and mirrors and all fish were caught on Maple & Cream boilies. Malcolm Holden who had already recorded a lovely 23lb 8oz pike from the river recently, almost matched it on the last day of the season with another cracker of 21lb 3oz. Another regular that likes to fish the river is Nick Dann who went upstream of Hartlake Bridge and although he didn't find the bream shoals that won the previous week's match, he did manage to build a nice weight of pristine roach to nearly a pound. The Society has recently had a survey done on the Old Ballast Pit and New Lagoon and the results were very good regarding fish numbers, fish health and water quality. It was noted that the Old Ballast Pit was lacking in marginal aquatic plants and the bank sides were in poor condition due to erosion and tree roots. As the Society has recently been successful with a grant application from the Environment Agency, it has been decided that this funding will go towards improving these areas for the long term future of this lake. With the work that has already started on the railway side of the pit, members should start to see some really good improvements later this year. The Society was commended by the Environment Agency and AE fisheries for the work that had already been started. Pictured are a few samples of fish netted during our survey carried out by AE Fisheries. *Austin Battell*



Large Bream



Malcolm Holden - 21lb 3oz Pike



Nice Common



Nice Mirror



Plump Pike



Smalltail

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Fishery Reports

Wylands International AC Battle, East Sussex

It has been a wet miserable past few weeks, but, it looks like the weather is changing for the better. Carp have been caught across the complex and we have had some good catch reports from anglers namely: **Darren Killick** 30lb/32lb/9lb Kell lake, **Derick** 18lb/8lb/10lb/12lb **ROSIE'S LAKE**, **Dave Harland** 18lb/22lb/ 10lb/ 4lb **KELL** and **MIDDLE LAKE**, **Alfie** 19lb/22lb/15lb **MIDDLE** and **ROSIE'S LAKE**, **Craig** 16lb/7lb **NEW SPECI LAKE**, **Alex** 8 carp up to 28lb **NEW SPECI**, **Lee** 22lb **New Spec**. We continue to hold club matches across the complex. To book a club match or for more info please call 01424 893394.

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Matt



Matt



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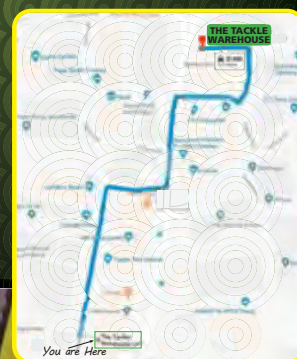


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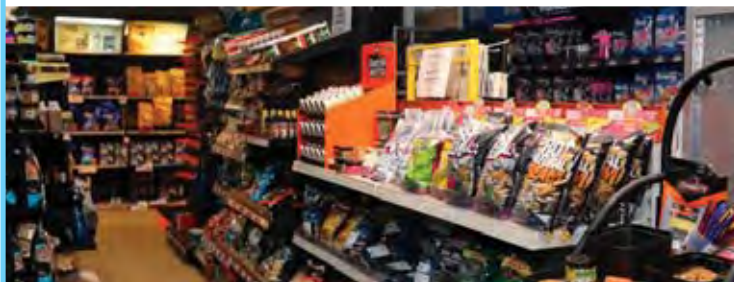
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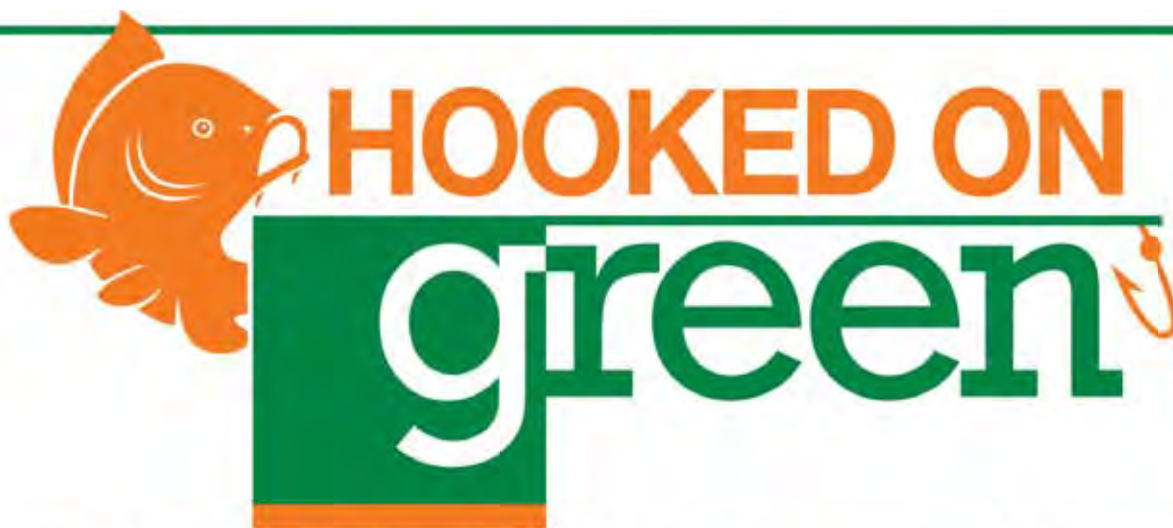
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Magical session for David!

David Graveling sent in this great report from an incredible session at Hawkhurst Fish Farm:

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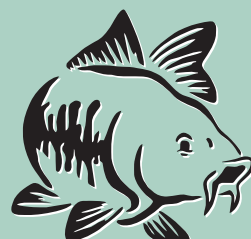


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Fishery Reports

Mousehole Lakes Paddock Wood, Kent



Shirkoak Fishery and B&B

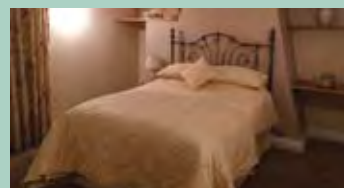
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POM'S PEG



I FEEL THE NEED, THE NEED FOR SEED!

Over the next couple of features, I will be concentrating on the important topic of bait, a huge and varied subject that over the past couple of decades has certainly moved on from historical approaches. In the first instance, I would say that, although we have seen certain advances, there has been a tendency to forget some of the tried and tested, over centuries, baits when in reality they never 'broke'! We are a society of searching for the quick fix with everything only a few clicks away from the press of a button and that can have the effect of making us a tad lazy – it certainly has that on me!



Spomb, Spod and scoop

There is so much to discuss within this subject, from hook baits through to loose feed, but to kick off I'd like to highlight particles which have been a huge influence within my coarse fishing and focus on two of the main ones that I have used now for the better part of 35 years; Hemp and Red Band.

I'm not talking about the particles you can get in a can or container, but freshly cooked and exactly prepared particles in which I can have total confidence. With a bit of simple preparation and knowledge, it is easy for you to be able to produce a cheap and effective supplementary bait addition which is effective in all seasons.

So, what is a particle in angling? My interpretation is that it is a seed which is high in protein and has a proven track record for both attracting fish and instigating feeding over a prolonged period.



Before and after Hemp

Seeds that have an oil content to attract and a profile that the fish can benefit from – hence why they are so keen to feed on such. Just do a bit of research online on hemp and you will see it has a huge oil content and is of a high nutritional profile, amongst other benefits.

Before we go any further, I would always highlight that you should only be using the best particles available and that you ensure they are prepared properly. Poor quality and poorly prepared is a negative on all fronts, including fish safety. There is a plethora of good suppliers out there including your High Street retailer – pop into your local shop and they will probably stock particles and also advise you on a few tricks that they may use on how they prepare their own.

You will find various ways to prepare particles and, to be honest, none are too difficult with the right preparation. Firstly, you will need a heat source, either your kitchen stove or for smaller batches you can use your fishing stove.

For hemp, take the required amount of hemp, and to one-part hemp add two parts of water and place in a saucepan big enough for the job in hand. Leave the hemp soaking for 24 hours and then bring to the boil, once boiling bring the temperature down so the water is simmering and leave as such for 30 minutes. After this time, turn off the heat and leave your mix to cool down. Once cooled, strain off the hemp and you're good to go. The best way to ensure that things have gone to plan is that you will see the shell of the hemp has now split and you can see the white inner. A top tip for the hemp water you have left is to use it to make up a Method Mix – a genuine edge!

Red Band is even easier to prepare. I take one-part Red Band to three parts water. You need extra water as throughout the process the seeds really do take on the water and expand. I then bring to the boil and leave to simmer for 10 minutes. Then take off the boil and leave to soak for a further 24 hours. By this time the seeds will be soft and ready to use. I always take a few seeds and squash them between finger and thumb to ensure they are properly prepared.

Obviously, please be careful when using boiling water and do ask permission if necessary!

I'm a great fan of seeking that extra attraction to my baits and when I'm preparing my particles, I will always add some flavour to the water. Ensure the flavour you use is water soluble so it can soak through and into the seeds. The combination of the seeds' natural attractors plus the boost of a proven flavour has caught me those extra fish, time and time again.

You've now ended up with, in my humble opinion, a couple of the best bait formats going and ones that can be used in so many situations, from general loose feed through to adding to ground baits and method mixes. These versatile baits are high in attraction,

especially with the addition of proven flavours, and if you look at the amount of finished bait you end up from just prepping a kilo at a time, it is incredible value for money.

Easy to prepare once you get the hang of it, but if you're unsure there are loads of YouTube films showing you the best ways to cook up. The other good thing is that you can make up a load and then freeze down in batches. Just ensure you drain as much water off as possible, then put into a resealable bag and put in the freezer for future use.

Trust me, fresh particles are a huge edge – get prepping!



Before and after Red Band



Flavours

If you ever want to touch base about this or any other subject always feel free to do so via: simon@pallatrax.co.uk.

Until next time, stay safe and catch more.

Simon Pom' Pomeroy
E-mail: simon@pallatrax.co.uk



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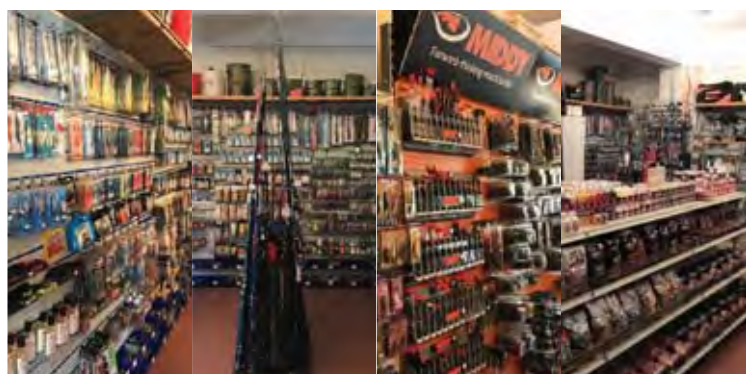
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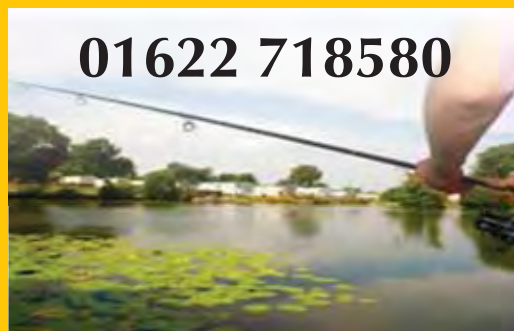
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Fishery Reports

Orchard Place Farm Lakes Paddock Wood, Kent

It's all happening here at Orchard Place Farm. To name just a few **Damian Bo** had his first time at the fishery when he caught two stunning commons on Lake 12 after doing a 36 h rand the weights were 21lb and 23lb. On Lake 7, on the Two Man Point **Callum Golding** had 6 fish during a 48hr session the biggest being 25lb. **Chris Goodband** on a 48hr session with three friends had 6 fish out of lake 4. The biggest being a 22lb common and a cat of 35lb. On Lake 8, a 42lb cat came out at the crack of dawn on the bank by the driveway leading up to the car park. Lake 1 on a 24hr session saw 3 carp out at 16lb, 18lb and 21lb and 2 cats around the 20lb mark.



Lake 7 - Callum Golding - 25lb



Damian Bo - Lake 12 - 23lb



Craig Saunders - Lake 4



Match - Lake 6 - March 2020



Ollie Sugden - 26lb 8oz - Lake 7



Victor Mihailk - Lake 7

Ollie Sugden had 2 carp out at 22.3lb and 26.8lb on Lake 7. The match lakes as usual are producing really well. Lake 6 during one match of 23 anglers had the top weights of 178lb, 145lb, 120lb, 115lb, 110lb 108lb and the lowest only being 43lb. We look forward to seeing you all on the bank now that the weather is starting to improve.....!

Framfield Park Fishery Uckfield, East Sussex

SPRING LAKE Weights are now increasing with the arrival of better weather with over 100 lbs needed to win most club/open matches. Best areas are pegs in the 40's and 60's with most anglers preferring the bomb/feeder just off the islands coming closer in later on. Best baits are corn, pellet and maggot with worm accounting for some quality perch up to 3lbs.

BURYWOOD LAKE Pegs on the far bank in the 30's fishing best with similar tactics needed, although feed should be kept to a minimum. Corn and pellet best baits although a lot of carp falling to pinched bread on the bomb when cast close to the islands. Corn fed down the inside accounting for good quality carp on the pole/float. Pegs on the car park side fishing very well with carp to 20lbs falling to sweet flavoured boilies, especially when fished close in to features. Again feed should be kept to a minimum.

Wednesday Open Match - Spring Lake

- 1 - John Oliver (Framfield) 102-10-0
- 2 - Mike Head (Faulkners) 75-9-0
- 3 - Nigel Greenwood (Isfield) 57-6-0
- 4 - Mick Hart (Seaford) 40-10-0
- 5 - Keith Harper (Warlingham) 37-15-0



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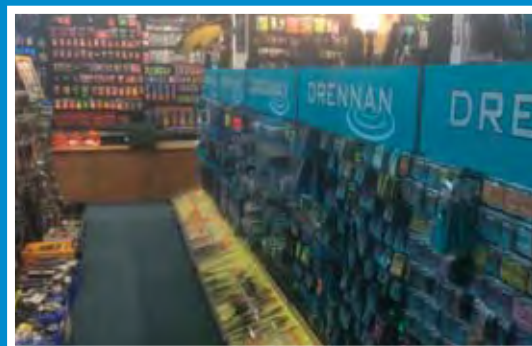
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Great session at Elphicks for Scott Cook!

Scott Cook sent in this report following a session on Kent's Elphicks Fishery:
"I went to Elphicks Fisheries North Lake and had a good session. I had 4 fish in total including a 22lb mirror, 33lb ghost, 38lb mirror and an new PB of 39lb common. All caught on DNA SLK baits."



Effort = Reward for Reagan!

Reagan Bradley sent in this great report demonstrating how his efforts were rewarded:
"Hi Barry, I've been fishing a tricky little park lake in Canterbury this Winter. I have been pre-baiting several small spots where I've seen fish and I finally managed to get out the other day for a few hours which resulted in some beautiful commons. Nothing massive, but definitely worth the pre bait and the time I put into the lake over the last few weeks." Well done Reagan, top angling!



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- No pre-bookings taken for swims
- Concessionary Tickets for Junior, Disabled and OAPs
- Win a FREE SESSION with our Fish of the Month Competition

Barry finds the fish at Loggies!

Barry Sedgwick sent in this report of some great sessions at Loggies Lake:

"Hello Barry! Here are a few of the fish I've had from Loggies lake over the last two weeks. A mirror of 26.6lb also a new PB for me and a lovely common of 46lb plus another common of 21.2lb. The lakes are fishing really well with the fish getting their heads down and having a good feed. I have added another one this morning of 25.4lb!"



Good day for Ryan at Framfield!

Ryan Venus sent in this report to our Facebook page following a great session at Framfield Park Fishery near Uckfield:

"Hi Barry, I was back out yesterday at Framfield Park Fishery and had a good session landing six fish, biggest being 15lb. They all fell to the same trap of Sticky Baits manilla boilies with small pva sticks with pellets covered in spod syrup and activ mix. I had a double take as well which was good! The carp are waking back up!"



Coombewood comes up trumps for Marc!

Marc Harris sent in this report after a great first visit to Coombewood Fishery near High Helden:

This was my first visit to Coombewood Fishery. It was a great first ever session at this great fishery owned by Alex Moulang. He is a great bloke and I look forward to seeing him again very soon. The fishery has great lakes and this venue is definitely one to watch out for in time to come. I had six fish which all fell to my maggot rigs in the margins from 15lb to 19.4lb."



HARTLEY LANDS FARM FISHERY

Bailiffs number: 07703825064

Email: info@hartleylandsfishery.co.uk

HARTLEY LANDS FISHERY UPDATE

The last couple of years have seen drastic changes at Hartley Lands, we have put a lot of hard work and investment into making this into a premier fishery.

The site is comprised of 6 day ticket lakes and 1 pond.



BRAND NEW TOILET, SHOWER BLOCK

This building has two male toilets, a shower room and a separate disabled/female toilet. We also have an outside tap for drinking water.

Bramley - Specimen Carp lake with 12 swims, 8 anglers max. This lake has large Carp to 41lb+, ideal for both short and long session anglers.

Nick's - Carp lake with 17 swims, 10 anglers max. This lake has large Carp to 36lb+, ideal for both short and long session anglers.

Henniker - A idyllic, low stock pond with 2 swims. Contains 10 pristine carp from 20lb to 30lb+. Tree lined making it ideal for stalking.

Reservoir - A heavily stocked Carp/Coarse lake with 25 swims and selected night fishing swims. This runs water contains lots of double figure Carp to 30lb+, Bream to 7lb, Perch to 5lb, Tench to 9lb, Roach to 2lb and Rudd.

Pear Tree - A Coarse/Match lake with 30 swims. Stocked with carp to 20lb+, Perch to 5lb, Bream, Tench, Barbel, Rudd and Roach.

Finches - A 11 swim Coarse/Silverfish lake, A mature hidden gem. Contains specimen Tench to 10lb+, Big Bream, Perch, Rudd, Roach, Crucian Carp, Orfe and Koi Carp.

Samson - A 20 swim Match/Coarse lake. This lake is heavily stocked with Carp to 10lb, Bream, Perch, Rudd and Roach.

Make sure you check out our new and improved

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STOCKING 2019/2020

New stock added:

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TOTAL SPECIMEN LAKE STOCK AFTER STOCKING

Nick's: 220 total including 6x 30lb+ average size 16lb+

PRICES

Nick's/Bramley/Henniker:

Day ticket £15/ 24hr £30

Reservoir:

Day ticket 1 Rod £12 / 2 Rods £14

Day ticket concession 1 Rod £9 / 2 Rods £11
24hr - £25

Pear Tree/Samson/Finches:

Day ticket 1 Rod £10 / 2 Rods £13

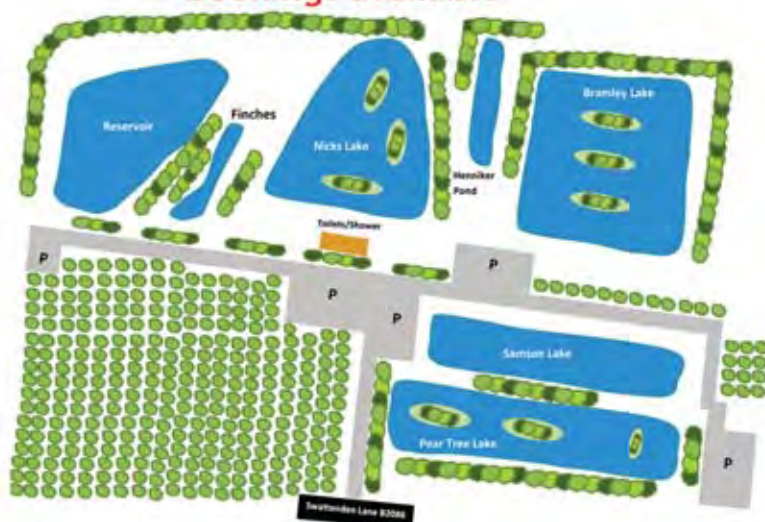
Day ticket concession 1 Rod £8 / 2 Rods £10

Longer sessions, lake exclusive and match bookings available

HENNIKER

Henniker is now open! We have decided to do something a bit different with it and only stocked 10 hand selected carp, all above 20lb with a 30lb being the cream of the crop.

THE FIRST ANGLER TO CATCH ALL 10 IN THE 2020 SEASON WITH PROOF WILL RECEIVE A £500 TACKLE VOUCHER!



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I am absolutely delighted to welcome Pallatrax as the new sponsors of our Catch Reports Section. This section is where you display your catch to other Freshwater Informer readers. Each month, Pallatrax will choose from the published photos and pick their winner. **The winner will receive EIGHT packs from the innovative new GRIPZ hook range.** The lucky angler will have a packet of sizes 2,4,6,8,10, 12,14 and 16, so will be equipped for all eventualities. This fantastic prize is worth over £40 RRP!

To be in with a chance to win this fantastic set of GRIPZ hooks, all you have to do is send us your catch photo via our Facebook message page or email barnic@btinternet.com Entry is FREE and all coarse fish photos are welcome! From a carp to a roach, send us your pictures! Please make sure you tell us where it was caught and it's weight.



Gripz Fishing Hooks

After extensive research, where the limitations of both barbed and barbless were scrutinised, there has been an obvious need for improvement thus resulting in this radical design that crosses the boundaries between what we have had and what we now have. Made from high grade Japanese wire, the key improvement has been the introduction of a series of minute horizontal grooves on the inside of the specially designed arrow shaped hook point, where historically the barb would have been. These grooves allow the hook to hold securely in the fish's mouth when pressure is applied, as the flesh presses into the grooves resulting in a firm hook hold with no slippage.

What are you waiting for? Grab your rods and head down to your favourite water and remember to take your phone or camera!



The winner of the
PALLATRAX GRIPZ Hooks
Set for MARCH is...
Paul Willis
well done!



AARON CHAMBERS 23LBS MOUSEHOLE



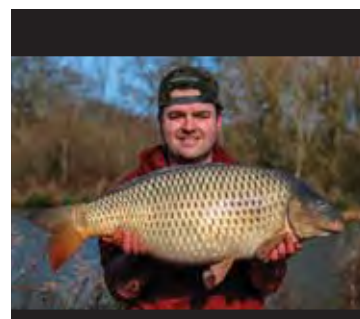
ANDREW STANLEY 20LBS MOUSEHOLE LAKES



BARRY SEDGWICK 46LBS LOGGIES



BEN WRIGHT PRIVATE WATER



BOWIE DUFFIELD 26LBS HARTLEY LANDS



CHRISTOPHER RYAN 15LBS SANDWICH LAKES



DANIEL TAYLOR 42LBS MORE HOUSE FARM



DANNY MEARES COTTINGTON LAKES



GARY MERTOL CASE CLUB WATER



GEORGE MARTIN 24LBS ELPHICKS



HARRY SANDERCOCK



JACK WOOD 27LBS



JAKE TRAPP 29LBS CHEQUERTREE



JANE BEST 21LBS 14OZS HARTLEY LANDS



KELLY INGLIS-CRUSH 21LBS MONK LAKES



MICHAEL WHITNEY 32LBS ROOKFIELD POND



OWEN ORPIN 20LBS LOGGIES



OWEN ORPIN 24LBS 3OZS LOGGIES



RYAN VENUS 25LBS SWANBOROUGH



SHAUN PATRICK 36LBS MOUSEHOLE



STEPHAN HARVEY 27LBS SANDWICH LAKES



STEVE JAMES



TERRY DONOVAN 18LBS LOGGIES



TERRY DONOVAN 26LBS LOGGIES



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Junior Informer



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Thank you to our Junior Informer Sponsors

Hello and welcome to the April edition of Junior Informer!

The past few weeks have seen little in the way of change in the weather! Every weekend seems to have been wet and windy. However, for those anglers brave enough to go fishing, there have been some lovely fish caught. Normally during the Winter, the carp especially, go in to semi hibernation and feed very little. However, this Winter has seen the temperature stay relatively mild, but very wet. This has meant low pressure dominating and the fish have continued to feed well. The specimen carp that have been caught have been in excellent condition and look superb! The Closed Season on the rivers is now in place until June so you will need to visit a lake to get your fishing session! **Don't forget to send us your catch photos, but please remember we will need permission from your parents or guardians in order to publish in the magazine! This month sees the Easter holidays, so let's hope the weather improves and you are able to go fishing and catch plenty of fish!**

A message to business owners – I am always looking for sponsors for the Junior pages as it is the valued sponsorship that helps us provide these pages dedicated to young anglers. If you would like to get involved and show the angling community that you care about getting young people fishing please get in touch with us by phone, email or Facebook message. All our contact details are at the front of the magazine.

Well done Gemma!

Proud dad Mark Baker sent in this report of daughter Gemma who managed these two fine fish from their local Kent club water.



Owen's on fire!

Keith Brett sent in this great catch report for his son Owen: "Hi Barry, please find a catch report for my son Owen Brett. He set himself the goal of catching a UK 20 this year and achieved it twice on our first session



of the year! I think you can see from the pictures how happy he was! He had a 21lb 4oz with another of 20lb 5oz and two other mid doubles caught on a two day trip to a Kent Club water. All were caught on Baitworks Pineapple pop ups fished over a scattering of Atlantic heat boilies fished a rod length off the island."



Joshua is back on the bank!

Joshua King's mum Lorna sent in this report of one very happy young angler who is glad to see the Spring! Our Facebook readers might remember Joshua's plight last year when he had all his fishing tackle stolen and kind hearted Freshwater Informer readers rallied round and donated him some of their own fishing tackle. Lorna told us: "After a long winter and very few opportunities to get on the bank with the rods, we made the most of the glorious weather on Sunday and went to a private lake in West Sussex. Joshua caught roach, minnows and carp on the float with maggots, the biggest being this 8lb carp. We had a lovely day!"




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Pallatrax have kindly offered to support our region's Junior anglers by offering two fantastic Day Session Carp Packs to two lucky entrants picked from the Junior Catch Photos sent to the Freshwater Informer each month!

Each 'Ready, Steady, Fish' pack contains:

- 400g of shelf life Squabs • 3 x medium swivel Stonze weights of 2 – 2.5 ozs • 3 x Gripz hair rigs (for 14mm baits use size 8 Gripz, 18mm baits use size 6 Gripz) • 500g of Carp Crush groundbait/method mix • Anti-tangle foam • Boilie stops
- Packet of Gammarus shrimp • Packet of 15 x 10mm pop ups

The fantastic pack is worth over £20! All you have to do to be in with a chance of winning one of the 'Ready, Steady, Fish' packs is to send your Catch Photo to the Freshwater Informer by email or by message on the Facebook page!



WINNERS

well done!

The winners of the
**JUNIOR PHOTO
ALBUM THIS
MONTH ARE**



**Milo Hooper - 9lbs
Wylands**



**Skye Stanley and Dad
Andrew at Hartley Lands**



ALFIE CHANDLER 3LBS 4OZS



ARCHIE LOVELAND 16LBS AT HAWKHURST



GEMMA BAKER KENT CLUB WATER



JOSHUA KING



FREDDIE PRITCHETT



OWEN BRETT 21LBS 4OZS



REUBEN DRAKE 11LBS STONES FISHERY



Fishing 4 Schools – April Tip of the Month

from instructor Rob Goble



As I put pen to paper and write this column, the wind and endless rain still persists. It is late February / March and what an extraordinary year so far we have had; with storm Dennis, then Ciara and more reported on the way. There is flooding up and down the country, trees are down, buildings risk collapse - and as for the people affected, not only once, but several times by the floods, the whole thing is devastating, to say the least.

Here by the coast where I live, the conditions have been no less boisterous and with "cabin fever" setting in" and desperate to fish again, it's been difficult to be outside for any length of time, and that is not just from the rain: it's even difficult to stand, let alone walk!

On a few occasions, I did manage to have a fish, but they have been very short sessions - you try casting a fly line in this - it must have been very difficult for fishery owners, whether this is coarse or fly fishing, with reduced customer visits.... but what about you sea anglers?

Hopefully, with Spring properly here, things will start to settle down. So please, the weather "gods" let us just get fishing; then the "jitters" might stop!

On the brighter side, with all this fresh water replenishing our lakes, the fishing should be good, whatever your discipline. But unfortunately for rivers, they have taken a bashing. All species of fish and their food have been displaced, some ending up in flooded fields, and with the rivers fining down there is no way back for them. The fish will have been predated on or just marooned and perished - let's hope it is not as bad as I paint this picture.

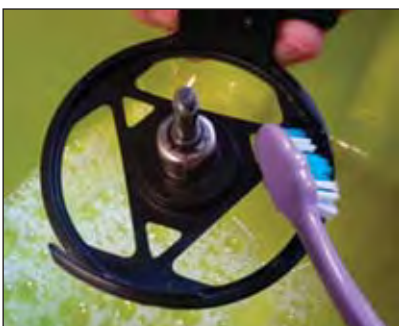
But on a brighter note, lets get back with some jobs to do: whatever your discipline - be it coarse, fly or sea, it is a good time to clean kit and prepare for the coming season.

Rods should be inspected / checked for damage, especially grooving in the guides. It will be a good idea to replace broken or cracked rings, tip rings are especially prone to grooving. It is quite easy to replace them if this is the case and takes no time at all. But if you are not confident then your local tackle store should be able to help.

Also Youtube is a very useful "tool" and you will find a number of videos that will guide you through the process.

Reels need a "spring" clean! There is nothing worse than a failing reel, especially when you have that fish of a lifetime on! Simply prepare some hand-warm soapy water in a small bowl, and with a small toothbrush (this will help to get into those hard to clean places) carefully clean the reel; allow the reel to dry completely and once completed, replace any old grease with fresh Vaseline - a very small amount will suffice. This applies to all reels be they fixed spool, 'Pins', fly reels or sea reels.

Check fly lines for cracks; again, cool/warm soapy water is required, run the line through a wet cloth, dry off and replace with a fly line dressing to bring back its slickness and float-ability; look after your lines! After all, they are not cheap to buy, nowadays. And it is always a good idea to frequently clean them in order to dislodge all that dirt and grit that gathers on the line during a session. This can seriously damage the surface, this is quite important and if the line is badly damaged just replace it with a



new one. How to replace, please look up the February edition of the Freshwater informer, find my "tip of the month", and all will be explained!

The same for both coarse and sea reels: It is important to replace old monofilament / braid from line from reels. This extends especially to game anglers' leaders and tippets for fly fishing - and repack with new material. But please be responsible and recycle old line: this includes fly lines. Your local tackle store should be able to



help with this as they now have a special bin for recycling and helping our environment: more and more tackle stores are taking this onboard. After all, we are only too aware of plastic in the environment, and doing something "positive" to alleviate this problem is within everyone's grasp - and responsibility. Have a look at this web site: www.anglers-nlrs.co.uk you will

find all the information needed to recycle, you might be surprised at what is manufactured from all this nylon!

Fishing wise, trout will be eager to feed- as mentioned in last month's March edition - and there is no finer way than to fish with the midge imitation depicted, takes will be positive so be ready to have your string pulled! But of course, many other fly patterns will also work.



Don't forget to support your local fisheries and as the saying goes: "use it or loose it".

All the fisheries should be on form now and to name a few:

Bewl Water: email - info@behlwater.co.uk

Tenterden Trout Waters: www.tenterden-trout-trout-waters.co.uk

Springhill: www.springhilltroutwaters.co.uk

Chequertree: email - alison@chequertreefishery.com

Brick Farm: www.brickfarmlakes.co.uk

Chalk Springs: Tel - 01903 883742.

Lakedown: e-mail - lakedowntroutfishery@gmail.com

These are just some of the trout waters in the South East.

Bob at Brick Farm Lakes



Do not forget hats and glasses!"

Be safe - have fun! Bob G.



River Informer

Welcome to the April River Informer!

The Closed Season is now in force and dedicated river anglers will now have an enforced break until June. Prior to the Closed Season coming in to force, the weather seemed unrelenting with grey days and never ending rain. This caused many rivers to flood and become unfishable. However, there were occasional breaks in the weather and some anglers found a few fish, but generally it has been a tough few weeks. I have been very encouraged by anglers' support for the this section and I am grateful to everyone for sending in their catch reports. I look forward to receiving lots more once glorious June arrives!

Sponsors required for the River Informer! I am keen to hear from shops, clubs, tackle companies or bait firms who would like to be associated with the River Informer and become a sponsor. This means your business would be featured in the title image every month at a very small cost. Please get in touch if you are interested and would like to discuss this opportunity. Thank you, Barry.

YOUR CATCH REPORTS

Last pike of season for Mark?



Mark Day has had a very good season's piking as you would have seen in last month's magazine. Mark sent in this report in early March and reckons it will be his last river session of the season. Not a bad way to sign off!

"I went back on the river again. It is as high as I have seen it in many a year and very coloured. I didn't expect to catch, but managed this little beauty at 13 lb. I think with the state of the river this will be my last session of the season, unless the levels drop but I can't complain as this was my 33rd pike of the season! I have caught a lot of mid doubles, which can only be good for the seasons to come, hopefully and all were caught on single hooks which I have now been using for the last 8 years."

Just one last cast ...!



Mark Day couldn't resist getting in one last session before the Closed Season commenced:

"Hi Barry, this IS the last report of my pike season on the Stour! The river was still in flood and coloured this morning and I had to do a walk to find a safe swim.

The conditions coupled with some rain didn't make things look too promising but I managed to get this one to save a blank and finish the season on 34 pike.

I am very happy with that number especially only fishing for short sessions. It is looking good for seasons to come if these numbers are anything to go by!"

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Medway Man

Bob Morris

"I imagine that by the time this issue comes out half of the country will be in 'lock down' or suffering the effects of the Corona Virus (Covid 19) pandemic in one way or another. Having spent most of this past Winter suffering from flu-type viruses, I am being extremely careful to take every precaution to avoid this 'potentially serious' current threat. It does occur to me however, that as far as self isolation goes, I guess that fishing, particularly on your own, is about as good as it gets!"



Always something to see

Large gatherings including club AGM's are being cancelled or postponed as I write and other get togethers/ parties - including birthday do's are almost certainly at risk. All we can do is to follow the advice given and keep our heads down as much as possible and hope for the best. At least we had not booked any foreign holidays this year and my sympathies go out to all those who have had to pull out and possibly 'lose out' financially.



22lb but not Bob's best pike season

Having now finished the river season and the pike fishing for the next few months, I am now just starting to put in a few sessions with my feeder and float rods. I did get a few more pike to the end of the season including a twenty two pounder, but, as mentioned last time, I did not feel that it was one of my better Winter's efforts. The last few attempts at river fishing during the past couple of weeks of the season were all blank and a quick look at my records shows that I had not really done well since mid November!

Back on the tench trail, I have managed a few short trips and results are looking promising so-far, although the fish have been of small to medium size. This does show that my methods are working ok though



Tench fishing starting well

and I am looking forward to bumping into some larger specimens shortly. I have decided that this Summer, as I am pretty confident that my tactics work, I will not persist on waters that are not responding - in other words I won't bang my head against it - if it is not working for me. I have done this in the past and it has often meant that I end the year having not fished quite a few of the waters that I have access to because I have become obsessed with 'cracking' a particular 'problem' water that is not really giving up the goodies for me. This rule will apply to lakes and river sections alike and should hopefully ensure an interesting time on the piscatorial front.



Spring at last...

The Spring is a great time to be out on the bank and I always chart its progress by watching and listening for the arrival of all the Summer visiting birds, with some this Spring actually showing up during early March - no doubt aided by the mild weather. Warblers and Chiff Chaffs are often showing in numbers at this time of the year - in good time for nesting. I have yet to hear the first Cuckoo, which is something that I await with interest, especially as their numbers have been in severe decline in recent years - with some areas seemingly now being totally bereft of them. Overall, I have been doing well on the bird spotting front recently with good views of birds of prey, Barn and Tawny Owls, Buzzards, Red Kites, Peregrin Falcons and Sparrow Hawks etc. Not all

creatures have done well during this mild wet weather however, and although you might think it has been good conditions for frogs, my observations suggest that the floods and boggy conditions have actually hindered the spawning process this season and there appears to be a lot less spawn around than at this time last year - at least locally! Every year is different, of course, but with the experts predicting that these sort of extreme weather patterns are likely to become more common, due to global warming, it certainly is a matter for concern, I feel.



Joys of Spring



Frogspawn - seems scarce this year

To return to the theme of the current world crisis, it really is difficult to predict how much and how long the effects of this virus will last. It is certainly going to cause a huge disruption on many fronts and probably go down in history as the most serious crisis

(both in public health and to the financial situation) to hit Europe and the Western world since the last war. With everything starting to shut down, I can only end by wishing all our readers the minimum and the very best of health until the next issue."

Best Fishes and Health
Bob Morris



WANTSUM ANGLING ASSOCIATION

Our folio of delightful waters include:
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Night Fishing (24h): Adult - £25 with loyalty card £20
Juniors - (as for Day Tickets)
Night fishing: Only by prior booking.

Note: Juniors up to 13 years to be with an adult - FOC

Please call 07766 623673 to book



For further details contact the Secretary:
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The Golden Years of Coarse Fishing by Bob Rolph

The Wagstaff and Reynolds Story: Part 1 - From Triumph to Tragedy

There can be few English anglers who can claim such universal acclaim in the 'History of Pike Fishing' and the 'History of Carp Fishing' as this legendary duo. Fred Wagstaff from Leicester and Bob Reynolds from Northampton dominated the big fish scene in the 60s and 70s with their epic catches and adventures. On their own, they were inspirational pike and carp anglers, going right back to August 1957, but together, fishing as a pair, they revolutionised lure fishing for big water pike and trolling for monster brown trout, both here in England and in Ireland.



Bob Reynolds 3 eel catch at Redmire, March 1967



Bob with a 4lbs 8ozs eel from the GUC in the mid 60s

I was privileged to have known and fished with them both, many times, not only

for pike and carp, but for eels, tench and trout. It was their prowess with the eels of the Grand Union Canal that I first got to fish with them, fishing many long weekends on the banks of this productive water during the coarse fish close season of 1966 and 67 when fishing was

allowed in the Spring, with dead baits, worms and meats. The annual expeditions of the old National Anguilla Club at Easter and Whitsun, provided an outlet for us all, before we all got hooked on Reservoir Trout fishing in the 1970s. We all had regular trips to the canal at Weedon and I enjoyed many a close season weekend there fishing with these master anglers. Many dozens of good eels up to 5 lb 5 ozs were caught those Spring nights before Grafham



My best eel from the canal at 5lbs 5ozs

opened and we all turned to trout. I also fished just once for pike with Fred and once for carp with Bob, at lakes where they made their names; Sywell and Billing in Northamptonshire.

They were both characters, more than 10 years older than myself. Bob, the quiet sensible one and Fred the brash, loud, rough diamond from Leicester, but both with hearts of gold, and a steely determination to succeed and be the best at anything they did. Big fish fishing, was their chosen sport and they sure hit the highs and the lows during their near 50 year reign. They became the first truly professional coarse fishermen, being paid a retainer by Angling Times to go out and catch big fish, then write about it in the weekly newspaper. After a spell in the RAF, Fred became obsessed with fishing, mainly for pike, roving with a spoon at the old reservoirs north of Northampton. At Sywell, it was not the legendary tench that Fred pursued, but pike up to 28 lbs in 1962, at a time when such large catches were rare. Bob Reynolds drifted from one unskilled job to another in his home town, working in a shoe shop and digging graves, before his love of carp fishing propelled him to untold heights in the August of 1957. Eventually, the pair were destined to meet on the "river bank", probably at Billing Aquadrome in the early 1960s, where their fishing skills were to be honed to a high degree on many an expedition both here and in Ireland.

I could easily have also been sucked into their world of fishing excess, I was invited! But, I also had a good job and had responsibilities at home, where I preferred my home comforts and a more sedate form of specimen hunting, rather than lengthy fishing expeditions away from my home county of Kent. I was not prepared, or able, to give it all up to become a full time fisherman, as they did! Jim Gibbison tried it for a summer at Billing in 1967, during his teacher's holiday, but failed with the carp (he wanted the record) and became exasperated with the slimy bream, which always got to his baits first, he told me, in several letters from the lake in the summer of 1967! Letters used to



The front pages of Angling Times. The story of Bob Reynolds' amazing catches also appeared in the national newspapers creating a tremendous amount of interest in Billing. This publicity seriously backfired, so much so that Bob eventually gave up carp fishing at the lake for several years.

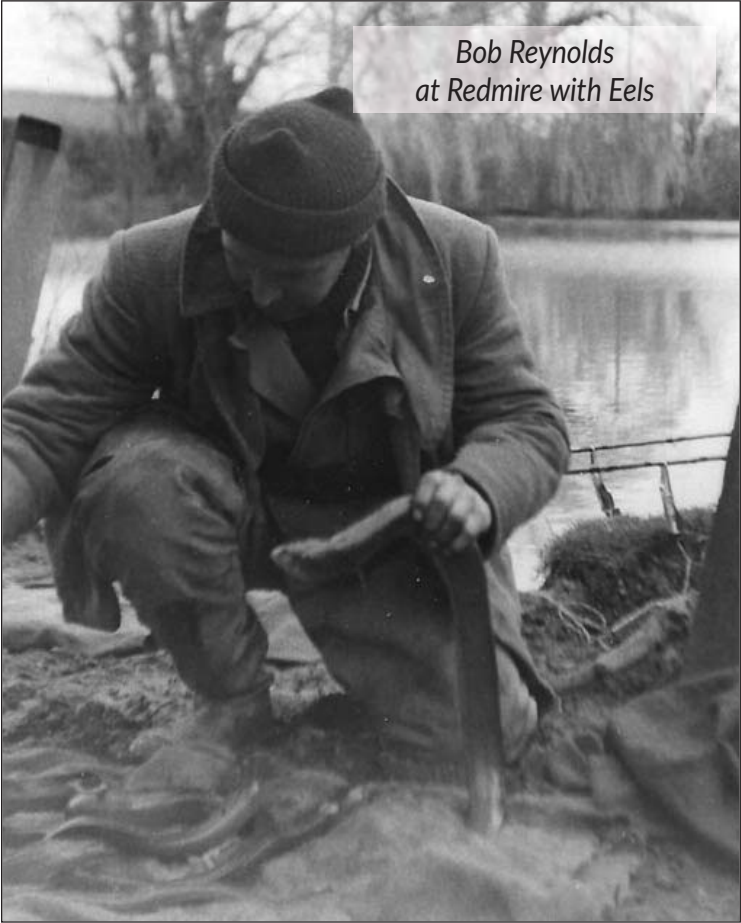
arrive each month from Wessex Way, Leicester and Balmoral Road, Northampton, telling me of their captures the previous month.

Billing, on the outskirts of Northampton, was a lake with untold monsters in its depths, rivalled only by Redmire Pool in the late 1950s. Bob Reynolds hit the headlines there in August 1957, when on one Saturday night he captured three carp of 24-12, 27-9 and 28-4, from his pitch on a small island, on bread flake. The young 24 year old angler had front page news in the Angling Times that week, then went on to repeat the feat the following Saturday, with fish of 26-10 and 27-9. The headline read “ Bob Does It Again” and it was the very first Angling Times that I ever bought! All quite unheard of in those days, an achievement that made him a 'fishing legend' overnight! Four years later, on Saturday 6th August 1961, Bob again hit the headlines with a huge mirror of 33 lb 2 ozs, from the same isolated island swim, supposedly caught on banana flavoured bread paste, it wasn't, that was just to fool the locals who flocked to his swim. He was hardly able to fish it again!

I fished a night with him on this cramped island, but of course failed to even have a run! The following day it was back to his mothers place at Balmoral Road for lunch and a look through his album of impressive photographs. Bob really was the Jack Hilton of his era. Fred also wanted some of this action and fished several seasons at Billing with Phil Shatford, Jim and Bob, but could only manage one fish of 16 lbs. Bob Reynolds was eventually invited into the prestigious Carp Catchers Club, which only had 12 members, a decision which Dick Walker was not happy with. A 42 lb common was eventually caught at Billing by Ray Clay and remains to this day, the largest fish from this holiday camp venue.

In January 1966, the call of Winter carp saw us all descend on the “Electricity Cut” at Peterborough in the driving snow! We met up with local experts Dave Goodrum and Stan Hill, who showed us the ropes. Wagstaff, Gibbinson, Goodrum and my mate, young Graham Igglesden, all had glorious 20 lb + carp in the most atrocious of conditions. I, as per the norm, caught nothing to write home about, except a severe bout of the flu! We must all have been mad! We took Ken Rowley and Steve Edwards up there one week end, they were not impressed!

The Northampton specimen scene had four famous anglers living within streets of each other, Wessex Way, Balmoral Avenue, Perry Street and Derby Road.



Bob Reynolds
at Redmire with Eels

These streets housed Bob Church, Fred Wagstaff, Bob Reynolds and Phil Shatford and Jim Gibbinson was a visitor in 1967.

Next month, in Part 2, I will continue the story of this infamous angling duo!"

Bob Rolph

Match results

courtesy of Fred Brown

Silvers open Puma lake, Monk lakes, Kent 15 fished

The final silvers open of the season on Puma fished really well in mild windy weather. Venue expert Charlie Lovell (Preston Innovations Delcac) drew hot peg 31 and won with 48-10-0 of bream and tench on method feeder and pellet. In second place was Garbolino veteran Paul Hoffman who had 42-7-0 of bream on peg 18 on the same method.

Result:

- 1 Charlie Lovell (Preston Innovations Delcac) 48-10-0
- 2 Paul Hoffman (Garbolino) 42-7-0
- 3 Graham Mitchell (Maidstone Victory) 37-15-0
- 4 Paul Hamlyn (Preston Innovations Delcac) 35-6-0
- 5 Fred Brown (South East MG) 34-11-0
- 6 Brett Potter (Maidstone Victory) 26-13-0

Medway Tackle/Daiwa Silvers league, all lakes Frant, Kent 53 fished

This was the final round of this popular league well run by Richard Taylor and was fished in mild, windy conditions. Jamie Grainger (Preston Innovations Delcac) won off peg 19 on car park lake with a fine 39-0-0 of bream on the pole on casters. At the next peg, Paul Wiltshire (Maver SE) had 28-3-0 of bream on the same method.

- 1 Jamie Gringer (Preston Innovations Delcac) 39-0-0
- 2 Paul Wiltshire (Maver SE) 28-3-0
- 3 Graham Ault (Bordon Angling) 24-8-0
- 4 Phil Speakman (Medway Tackle)23-2-0
- 5 John Gore(Maver SE) 22-12-0
- 6 Fred Brown(South East MG) 22-11-0

Final League:

Jamie Grainger 5 points; Richard James (Preston)7; Ian Corke (Medway Tackle) 7; Adam Lee (Bordon Angling) 7; Ian Germaney (Preston) 8 and Fred Brown 9.



The Need for Weed *by Dave Charley*

Fishery improvement specialist, Dave Charley, has written articles on bio diversity for us previously and has sent us this interesting piece on weed in the water and it's importance to both fishing and lake health:

Submerged plants, or macrophytes, have several important functions in the ecology of still waters, and it's critical to understand how they affect the aquatic ecosystem, which in turn influences the carp's behaviour. The more we understand about the carp's environment and become aware of what's potentially happening below the surface, the better our chances of catching our prized fish.



Macrophytes

Wind will push tiny food particles into certain areas of a venue, which will be fed upon by bacteria, that is then consumed by aquatic insects, which in turn will attract carp. The same can be said of patches of aquatic plants, which act as mechanical filters, similar to that in a Koi pond filtration system, by collecting the suspended particles in the water. Phytoplankton (microscopic aquatic plants) and

organic material that are relocated amongst the submerged plants create a rich environment for a diverse array of species to thrive on. Snails and invertebrates love these habitats, as not only do they provide shelter from predation, but they eat the vegetation and graze on the algae. Where there are snails and shrimp, there will be carp close by.

Just like terrestrial plants, macrophytes produce oxygen during daylight hours, emitting tiny bubbles that upon contact with the water dissolves oxygen (DO) into the aquatic environment. These aquatic plants normally produce more oxygen than they consume during daylight hours, providing oxygen for the fish and other organisms. Any leaf that is below the surface is acting in this manner, whereas floating leaved plants like lilies, the majority of the leaves are already exposed to the air and are therefore emitting oxygen into the terrestrial world, rather than the aquatic.

Dissolved oxygen levels in water are constantly fluctuating, the highest levels during daylight hours and declining throughout the night. Throughout the night macrophytes consume oxygen, so although weedy patches may be great fishing spots in the day, it is far less likely the carp will be around these areas in the darkness. The early hours of the morning will show the lowest DO readings of all, but as the sun starts to rise and shine, photosynthesis starts again. That's why 'bite time' is often in the first few hours of the day, as the rise in DO stimulates an increase in the carp's metabolism and the need to feed.

During the hotter months of the year any weedy areas will be a 'hot spot' (excuse the pun) for finding carp. Why? Because they are providing oxygen during the day light hours, whilst also being a food larder. Whilst the rest of the lake maybe experiencing low DO levels, around the weed beds there will be a constant supply of oxygen being dissolved into the water, which is a favoured environment for the carp to be in.

As water temperature rises, so the water's capacity to hold dissolved oxygen decreases. This is important to remember, as although carp's metabolism and its desire for food are significantly related to temperature (above 15C enables the fish to experience rapid growth rates), the warmer the water, the less oxygen it can hold. Low DO levels will reduce the carp's appetite, as it needs oxygen to digest its food. That's why sometimes during the summer months they seem only to feed on naturals, which are easy for them to digest, rather than heavy boilies or nuts. When was the last time you tried something like a worm popped up off the lake bed when experiencing such a blank? Albert Einstein said the definition of insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting a different result . . . !

So if you are lucky enough to have found some patches of weed in front of your swim, there are a few keys steps to follow for successful weed fishing.



The author with a fine common carp caught from a baited area next to a weed bed

Finding the right spot We already know the carp will be feeling safe lazing amongst the weed beds, so it's vital you can present a bait as close as possible to this 'comfort zone' for the carp to feel confident enough to feed on. Spend time casting a lead around these areas looking for a clearing, or a 'donk' as the lead reaches the lake floor. Dragging the lead along the bed will enable you to feel what type of bottom you've discovered. If the lead comes in smoothly, then you've found firm substrate, if it's getting stuck, then it's likely to be thick silt or weed. Gravel will have a 'jumper' feel as the lead bounces over the stones. This information is critical when deciding what rig you're going to present.

Once you've discovered a clean area, use a grappling lead, or a sea fishing lead, to reveal exactly what's on the bottom. These leads are an essential piece of equipment to have in your tackle box, as you'll be able to discover more specifically what's down there. Cast in exactly the same spot, drag for the first few metres, then lift and retrieve so you get an accurate result of the make-up of the bottom. If it comes back clean, then you know you've got a great spot to fish to.

Keep a note of the length of any weed you retrieve so you can get an idea of the average length of the weed in or around that spot. This information will be critical when making adjustments to your rigs if you're planning to fish over any low lying weed. Also, if you discover old and decaying weed around your lead, this can be an indication that there might be low DO levels on this area of the lake bed, as bacteria and animals will be consuming oxygen whilst decomposing the dead organic matter that sinks to the bottom. This is certainly not an environment the carp will feel comfortable spending time in and feed heavily. However, if it's light, fresh weed and full of life, then this is definitely a spot to aim for!

Baiting and waiting When it comes to baiting up, try including light baits like sweetcorn or particles, as these feed items can often get caught into the surrounding weed, whereas heavy food items are far more likely to sink straight through the weeds. The carp will still be able to discover these heavier baits on the lake's bed, but the visual impact of baits spread on top of the weed will no doubt draw fish down for an inspection and hopefully a feed.



Baited area

Accurate baiting is very important, as although carp will feed amongst the scattered offerings in the weed, if you can put out a good bed of bait in a small area, then the feeding will be heavier as the carp have to expend less energy to satisfy their hunger, rather than rummaging around for the same amount of feed over a larger area.

Make sure you come prepared with suitably strong tackle for these

situations. Opt for a strong line to cope with these situations, with a minimum of 18lb main line and large, strong hooks. Whatever rig set up you choose, it's imperative that it is a safe set up, and that if you're unlucky and lose a fish, you'll know that the carp will have safely got rid of the lead. To help raise the carp up through the water column, rather than diving deep into dense weed beds and likely getting snagged, a good tactic to use is to play the fish with the rod tip low towards the water, as the line angle will also assist in bringing the carp towards the surface and away from the deeper weed beds.

Another different approach is that once 'bite time' has passed in the morning, is to reel in your rods so there are no lines in the swim that can easily spook off any fish. During the warmer months, the carp will generally be wanting to feed, so don't be afraid to put out good quantities of bait. Observing the fish's undisturbed movements throughout the day, especially paying attention to where they might be feeding or which direction they move in and out of the weed beds. Not only does this build up the carp's confidence of feeding on your bait in this area, but they will also reveal where they might be when they move out of the weedy areas in the darkness.

If a suitable tree is around, the elevated viewing point is extremely beneficial for such sightings, including any bubbling from feeding carp. If the fish move out of the area, use this time to lead around to other areas you've noticed fish from your observations, perhaps you'll find a new hot spot! Armed with this knowledge, bait the areas you wish to fish throughout the night and the early hours of the morning, and recast before the light fades.

Tight lines & good luck!

DAVE CHARLEY Fishery Improvement Specialist
specimenfisheries@gmail.com



This cracking mirror was caught just metres away from the weed



Brick Farm Lakes Herstmonceux, East Sussex

Brick Farm Lakes has been fishing well in February/March with several more good sized fish coming out including a lovely sizeable brown at over 8lb! February saw a rod average of 2.3 fish. March, not only marks 6 months since we took over at Brick Farm, but also the arrival of daffodils and primrose and some lovely bright sunny mornings. All four lakes have been producing well and the buzzer hatches have already started coming off the lakes as is reflected on successful flies reported in the log book. Hoglouse and Corixa have been seen to be active in the water as well. We have recently upgraded our hire and tuition equipment which we are pleased to say is now all Snowbee. We stock some basic tackle as well as complete rod set-ups and are always happy to put an order in on your behalf if there is anything specific you would like. The nicer weather has brought out plenty of beginners who are enjoying using the new equipment and drawing on the expertise of both Caroline Cutmore & Rob Barden during lessons. There are still some places left for Ladies Day, which is being held on 26 April. Fishing will be in the morning followed by "Ladies only afternoon tea" from 1pm in the Lodge with a selection of homemade sandwiches, quiches, scones and cakes. Give us a call or pop in to book your place!" **Tight Lines, The Axells**



Frank Humphrey with a 6lb 5oz fish
part of a 3 fish bag totalling 10lb 8oz



John Micklam with a lovely 5lb 12
which was the heaviest of his 3 fish bag



Rob Barden with a pair of sizeable fish
part of a 3 fish bag totalling 13lb



Ron Harding with his 2 fish bag totalling 11lb 2oz,
the biggest was 6lb 12oz



Woody with the heaviest brown
since we took over at 8lb 6oz

Chalk Springs Arundel, West Sussex

Over the past month we have continued to see many fish coming out at the fishery. We will be staying open as long as we have continued support from our anglers. We have had some nice fish produced, the best being a rainbow of 10lb 2 oz and a brown of 8lb 5oz with some blues around the 4lb mark. Angler numbers have been down, but I think it's the weather as we continued to have had considerable rain fall again over the last few weeks. Hope you all stay clear of the dreaded virus, see you soon!

Nick and Ally



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Tenterden Trout Waters Tenterden, Kent

Spring is here and it is very welcome! The bulbs are up, daffodils in full bloom and the lambs are running around in the fields which is so uplifting for everyone. Fishing is good at Tenterden and our anglers are enjoying stalking and catching varying weights of trout, it all adds to the excitement. Chad Goymer caught a superb Blue on Lake 3 weighing 8lbs as you can see from the photo, he was chuffed with it. Derek Topley was delighted with his 6lbs 4oz Rainbow caught on a Viva and you can see water levels are high after all the rain. We have had many fish being caught over 4lbs and the popular patterns are Bloodworm, Montana and Black Rubber Legged Daddy.

For an up-to-date fishing report please go to our website and click on News/Fishing Report.

www.tenterden-trout-waters.co.uk



Chad Goymer
8lb Blue Trout

It has been a very difficult time for everyone readjusting to the Coronavirus restrictions, but don't let it stop you from getting out into our beautiful Kent countryside to enjoy your fishing in the fresh air during Springtime – it's a great time to be fishing! We are set in an area of outstanding natural beauty, a place to decompress and enjoy a few hours downtime away from World troubles.

We have an exciting event unfolding at our Fishery on the 14 June 2020. Our dear friend, Charles Jardine, many of you will know of him as a multi-disciplined Fly Fisherman who has represented his country in this Sport and through reading his articles and books. Charles will be holding a Skill Set Day which will start at 10am and finish at 5pm. We are fund raising together for Fishing for Schools which is an initiative that Charles started some 12 years ago, to help young people get into Angling and back into education. It is now a national operation under the Countryside Alliance Foundation and enjoys charitable status. Please visit the News on our website for further information and make contact to register your interest – we will book you in nearer the time when we know the protocol surrounding the virus. We would hope to run it because it's being held outside and we have limited spaces to 25.

Our Lakeside Fishing Lodge is being well used as a cosy, social hub for our anglers with

complimentary tea/coffee and WC facilities are provided. It's also a great place to share with family and friends. The Lodge is available to hire for a private function - please contact us for further details. We have an Aerial Tour on our Home Page so you can view our picturesque Wealden setting. Please follow us on Instagram and visit our Gallery. We are one of the Top 50 Stillwater Trout Fisheries in the British Isles 2019 and a Trout Master Water. You will find us in the Stillwater Guide which is out soon and published by Trout & Salmon. We shall be holding our Trout Master Fish Off on the 17 May and look forward to hosting those who are competing. It is always good to try new skills in life so if you are looking to try out a new Sport and you are seeking some Fishing Tuition then click on the Tuition Page of our website and book a lesson with Richard Stokes or email richard@coombe-farm.com and he will get you started properly in your first lesson.



Derek Topley
6lbs 4ozs

We also offer Gift Vouchers for that special present please call Gaynor on 01580 763201 or email gaynor@coombe-farm.com to make your purchase. The Farm/Fishery is now available as a Wedding Venue whilst the Fishery is closed in the Summer and we are taking bookings for 2020/21/22 and we are very busy with enquiries and bookings. Click on 'Wedding Venue' for further info on our website. We look forward to welcoming you to our friendly Fishery in the beautiful Weald of Kent.

Tight Lines – Gaynor, Richard & Audrey

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Hastings Fly Fishers

Here at Hastings Flyfishers' Club, we took the decision this year to stock earlier and start the fishing in mid February. Despite the spells of bad weather, which has affected us all, 50 trout were caught during the 2 weeks with catches of 3lb and over and 6 fish limits have been taken, mostly on damselfly. The water level is high and the lake is now fully stocked, including fish of 4lb plus and some blue trout.

In the newly renovated Club house, we can now offer bacon rolls and we also have a range of flies and good quality pre-owned tackle.

All the signs are that Spring is not far off and we are hoping for warmer weather soon, but, whatever the weather, you are assured of a warm welcome if you come for a visit!



GUIDED LURE & FLY FISHING DAYS WITH ANDY LUSH

Lure Fishing

Fish a variety of reservoirs for Pike, Perch and Zander. These days are suitable for beginners and improvers who wish to 'fast track' their way to success.

Learn more about lure fishing, the use of boats and fish finders, or just have a FUN day with an experienced Predator angler.

Fly Fishing

One of Andy's favourite methods, Trout, Carp or Pike can be targeted.

Trout

Reservoirs or smaller stillwaters in the South East. These days are suitable for beginners or improvers who wish to learn 'how to catch more fish', or just have a FUN day with an experienced fly fisherman.

Carp & Pike

More anglers are looking to find exciting ways of catching their favourite fish. Carp off the top during the summer takes a lot of beating. Pike in the spring and autumn, whatever their size they are a lot of FUN on the fly!

For details contact Andy Lush on 01892 528677



Important news for magazine subscribers!

Postage rates in the UK rose again last month. It is with regret that I have no choice but to increase the annual cost of magazine subscriptions to readers who receive their copies through the post. We have held the cost of £15 for many years and 'absorbed' the postal increases during that time. Unfortunately, I am unable to absorb this latest increase and will need to increase the cost of subscriptions to £20 per year from April 2020 onwards.

I am aware it seems quite a large increase from the present rate, but the current £15 has been held for a very long time. The new rate will apply from April 2020 to all new subscribers and those readers who renew when their current subscription comes to an end. I apologise for the increase, but I am sure you will understand.

Barry Reed

Cinder Hill Fly Fishing



With many commercial waters now lost to us, one of Mid-Sussex's best kept secrets, Cinder Hill Fly Fishing is thriving & able to offer some of the regions most natural, unspoilt, top quality & affordable trout fishing. Limited new membership is now available for the 2020 season.

We have 2 separate complexes each with 3 stream fed lakes which are regularly stocked throughout the season with hard fighting top condition rainbows and browns.

- Annual membership £285 (March-November)
- 25 visits – 3 fish limits
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• For details contact:

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Memberships are currently available. If you are interested in becoming a member please contact the secretary.

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teisesecretary@gmail.com

Telephone: 07960 518738

Brick Farm Lakes Trout Fishery

Prices start from £28 for 2 fish
Vouchers, coaching & tackle hire available
Corporate & group bookings welcome
with food options available

Set within the stunning East Sussex countryside, Brick Farm Lakes is a friendly family run Trout fishery comprising 3 lakes stocked with Rainbow, Blue, Golden and Brown trout, from 2lb upwards, including some double-figure sizes to challenge our anglers. Set back from the road, almost in a secret valley of it's own, we have a superb oak-framed lodge overlooking Brick Lake. The lodge provides a warm and welcome space offering complimentary tea & coffee for anglers, along with homemade cakes and other refreshments.



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Day and evening visitors welcome and limited season ticket membership also available on application

Fishing will start from 8am every day.

Day tickets - 6 fish limit, evening tickets - 4 fish limit.

Prices for 2020: February, March - 6 fish ticket	£35.00
April, May and June	£40.00
July - end of season	£35.00

Evening Tickets - from 2pm

February and March	£25.00
April, May, June	£30.00
July - end of season	£25.00

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www.hastingsflyfishers.co.uk
Email: mail@hastingsflyfishers.co.uk



A NEW FLY SEASON

Having parked my zander kit to one side in my fishing room, it was now time to sort through my fly tackle. The last few weeks' storms have kept me indoors for far too long and I was definitely suffering from "cabin fever", I needed to go fishing!



It hasn't been this calm at Arlington recently

Arlington - BN26 6TF

I couldn't resist popping down to Arlington reservoir for my first session. The weather was gorgeous with hardly any wind and the sun was shining brightly, if anything it was too bright, but I wasn't going to complain. I decided not to fish "home bay" which is always the hot spot at the beginning of the season. I wanted to explore the possibility of finding fish elsewhere. I started at the "willows", which proved to be a fruitless exercise; I worked my way along the bank towards "duffers" and the dam wall. With no takes and nothing to hold my attention, I continued searching. I was surprised to see an algae bloom this early in the year, it got thicker the further I went towards the "gabions". In fact, it was so thick in the corner of the dam that I continued walking. I finally reached the far end of "home bay" where I took a well earned rest to cool down and to grab a bite to eat. Talking to the regulars, the successful method was fishing with a fast sinking line while using a fairly short leader and a buoyant booby fly. This combination allows you to creep your fly along the bottom, sometimes leaving it static, without getting caught up. Another advantage with this method is that it reduces the need to cast as often when facing an onshore wind, never an easy situation. My combination of a "midge tip", a floating line with a 6ft intermediate sink tip, with a black Diawl Bach on a dropper and a FAB blob on the point had failed to produce anything. I'd noticed that most of the anglers were now lounging on the bank or were just going through the motions; the fish had obviously gone off the feed. Refreshed by my break, I decided it was time for "Plan B". I tackled up with an indicator, a method I learnt how to fish effectively last Winter. It was fortunate timing as a bank of cloud obscured the sun at the same time as a light breeze from the West ruffled the surface, game on! I cast my "indicator" directly into the breeze, as the flies sunk, a Pseudo Black Diawl Bach set at 2ft below the surface with a Lime Cruncher set another 2ft deeper, I watched the indicator intently for any signs of action. From "zero to hero", in less than an hour five rainbows fell to this tactic, what a difference! I couldn't catch my last fish, but that didn't matter as I'd had a full days fishing what was what I wanted and I'd had to work hard to catch my fish, I left satisfied with my effort.

Return to Arlington

After even more torrential rain and gale force winds, a gap in the weather saw me pop back down to Arlington, more in hope than expectation. However, the water hadn't coloured up that much which was a surprise, so I quickly signed in and grabbed my gear. No time to waste, there were fish to catch and looking at the bending rods in "home bay" the fish



Andy's first Rutland double!

were feeding! What was pleasing was the first two anglers I spoke to were catching on floating lines, rather than the "down and dirty" sunk line tactic that is so successful at Arlington. The bay was busy so I walked past the picket line of anglers and positioned myself at the far end of the bay again. I saw no reason not to use the same flies and indicator set up that "got me out of jail" on my previous visit. With barely any breeze, I decided to slowly inch retrieve my flies back towards the

bank. It pays occasionally to make a couple of long strips to lift your flies up towards the surface before pausing and allowing them to "free fall" back to their pre-set depth. In this manner, you're searching a much wider depth band of water, remember it's important to position your flies above the fish. When casting into open water I believe the fish are roaming around or suspended very near the surface, your indicator prevents your flies sinking below the fish.

Gaps started to appear in the bay as anglers left for home with bulging fish bags. I took the opportunity to move onto the fish. I'd noticed that most of the successful anglers were using floating lines with weighted point flies which they were retrieving quite quickly. I imagined the fast retrieve was necessary to keep their flies shallow enough to catch fish. I was undecided what to do, my indicator tactic had failed so far but I was unsure if I'd been on fish? I opted for a "cast and retrieve" approach using my "midge tip" line with a couple of buoyant flies, a FAB on the point and a foam arsed Cormorant on the dropper. This allowed me to vary the retrieve speed in an effort to search the mid-water, bearing in mind the bay is only around 6-8ft deep. My first fish fell to this presentation, as it took the FAB on the point I noticed it swirl just sub-surface which confirmed my thoughts that the fish were quite shallow after all! I alternated between these two methods and by mid-afternoon it became obvious the fish were no longer prepared to chase a horizontal "cast and retrieve" presentation. Casting the indicator and leaving it static for long periods or retrieving it painfully slow became the best tactic. I added another four fish to my stringer. I couldn't catch my last fish, but as the sun dipped in the sky and the temperature dropped, I was happy to call it a day.

Powdermill Reservoir - TN33 0PJ

This scenic water is a bit off the "beaten track" which for many is part of its attraction. Having more time to mooch around since retiring, I decided I should take a look and see what the water looked like prior to its opening day. Imagine my surprise when I entered the lodge and saw the major refurbishment that had taken place. I was very impressed with the new reception area where Mary Stacey was on hand to talk me through their exciting plans for the forthcoming season. There is now a refreshment area in reception where you can get hot drinks and bacon butties in the morning. They've even installed a computer, so we can expect more regular fishing reports on their website and Facebook pages. Another new facility is a card payment machine, which was long overdue. Finally, the club are planning to increase their stocking levels which will also include larger specimens up to 10lbs! They are also planning to stock throughout the Autumn when the water temperatures are cooler and are more conducive to trout fishing. Finally, there's a "holiday lodge" available to rent at Powdermill, so you might be able to convince your family that a quiet weekend near the coast would be a good idea! For details contact Mary Stacey on 01424 439633 or email marystacey205@btinternet.com



You can now hire this fishing lodge overlooking Powdermill

Powdermill – the fishing

I took advantage of another gap in the perpetual storms to visit Powdermill which was now open. I wasn't the only angler keen to escape confinement. I arrived at 9am only to find several empty cars in the car park, their occupants already fishing! These brave souls were casting directly into a strong cold wind. Fishing into the wind is where the fish should be but you needed to be a good caster to cope with the blustery westerly that was getting stronger by the minute. I opted to hedge my bets a little, I decided to fish half way along the dam. The ripple started here, this meant I was partially sheltered. I could cast across the wind from here letting my flies swing on the breeze; this can be a very successful tactic when fishing buzzers and other small nymphs. After a couple of hours the "tough guys" decided that hot drinks were required to revive their enthusiasm so they all headed for the warmth of the lodge. Only one of the intrepid anglers had caught two fish, he also informed me he'd missed a few finicky takes which were hard to register in the difficult conditions. I had tackled up two rods by now, one with the "midge tip" and the other with the "indicator", this time with three flies, each set at 2ft intervals as I had deeper water to play with here than at Arlington. As this was my first visit of the season, I was unaware where the fish were being caught. I also needed to keep an open mind on depth and speed of retrieve. I had nothing from my first casting platform so I gradually moved downwind towards the natural "green" bank. I was pleased to meet one of my former fly fishing customers who was intrigued to see my indicator set up. I quickly stripped my line in to show him my leader when a good rainbow launched itself at my Apps Bloodworm point fly which could only have been inches under the surface! After this, I kept trimming my leader down, little by little to reduce my fly's depth in an effort to locate the right depth. I occasionally stripped the line in creating enough "lift" to bring my flies towards the surface before allowing them to slowly fall down through the surface layers; this ensured I covered all depths. It started to rain heavily at the same time and the wind strengthened too, suddenly the rain turned to hail and increased in intensity. It now became impossible to see my fly line on the water's surface as the droplets were so heavy! It was time to retreat to the clubhouse for lunch and shelter.

Warmed and refreshed, I returned to the task in hand. I became a little more impatient and moved around far more. I started getting a few more takes, all on the indicator.



My friend 'Ping' enjoying the spring conditions

Unfortunately, I lost two fish, but I did add another two to my stringer. Interestingly, I had fish try and take the indicator itself, one in fact did take it but didn't get hooked, another rolled over it while another boiled beneath it! So what did I learn? Well like Arlington, there were far more fish out in open water than I'd expected, near the surface which is still a puzzle to me. As the light diminished I saw a few of the larger stock fish that are a feature of this year's stocking policy, another trip would have to happen as soon as the weather allows.

Back to Arlington

Another break in the storms was too good an opportunity to miss out on so I headed to Arlington. The breeze was blowing across "home bay" towards the nature reserve. I wasn't the only one who fancied getting outside and enjoying, rather than enduring the weather. The bay was lined with anglers, but there was a space by the reed bed, at the top end. I jumped at the opportunity of fishing next to Guy Bowden another of my fly fishing customers. Guy had already caught two fish when I arrived and quickly added another two while I struggled to attract any interest. A few fish were being caught further along the bank towards the bottom end of the wind and eventually we both moved, as even Guy's takes had dried up. Guy dropped in next to another Bewl regular Hugh Frew, while I bit the bullet and elected to fish directly into the wind. This proved to be a mistake as I failed to get any takes. An angler however, using the fast sink line and Booby combination, along the bank from me, was catching so if I was going to catch I needed to return to more sheltered water. As I strolled back along the bank, Guy invited me to fish his spot as he'd just caught his last fish to complete his "limit". He informed me there were more fish there, but you needed to cast as far as possible, as they were holding at range. I eagerly accepted his invitation and quickly hooked my first fish on a weighted Damsel nymph. I was fishing with a full floating line as my previous trips had shown the fish were in mid-water or even shallower. A fairly quick retrieve was required to keep my flies up in the water; I added another two fish to my tally, which was very satisfying after the first two hours of nothing. The action slowed so I took a short break and after a cuppa I started again, but the fish had stopped feeding completely. I still thought there were fish holding station at the extent of my cast, about 25 yards out. It took a little imagination to catch now, but by changing flies periodically, I was able to get takes, it was important that the flies were of a similar weight. After casting out, I allowed my marabou tailed flies to sink to the bottom before starting a rapid strip retrieve. This was followed by a dead stop which saw my fly slowly fall back through the depths. All the takes now came "on the drop" and this was how I caught my last three fish to complete my bag. It just goes to show what we all know, that location is all important, a few minutes in the right place will always beat hours in the wrong one!



A stringer of Arlington's finest

Finally

I gave a talk to the Sussex Flydressers Guild in Brighton the other evening, on fly fishing for Spanish Barbel. During the interval I was comparing my results with some of the members I'd met at Arlington earlier in the week. Talking about trout fishing gave me the urge to go again. I now had an "itch that needed scratching". I was uncertain whether Powdermill would be fishable or not after yet more torrential rain, but there was only one way of finding out so I headed down the A21 to Sedlescombe. What a difference a day makes! It was warm, dry and sunny with a fairly strong westerly breeze, but again I wasn't the only optimist chancing my arm. The ground around the reservoir was so saturated that the previous day's rain had run straight off into the lake giving it the appearance of milky tea. The end

result was we all blanked. In fact, I don't think anyone even managed a take! Sometimes you have to accept that you can't beat the weather, no matter how hard you try! Although I was disappointed with the result, it was an enjoyable day spent in the company of other keen anglers. I'd do it all over again if faced with the same conditions; you just never know when it's impossible!

Tight lines. Andy Lush

Andy offers a guiding service for those who want to learn more about "Lure Fishing" & "Fly Fishing". To book email info@thefriendlyfisherman.co.uk with your contact phone number and Andy will return your call.

Angling Societies



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Carp to 52lb 4oz, Tench to 12lb 8oz, Bream to 18lb+, Barbel to 15lb 2oz, Chub to 5lb+, Perch to 3lb 6oz, Pike to 31lb 6oz, Crucians to 4lb 6oz and Grass Carp to 29lb 6oz. Also large Roach and Rudd to 3lbs and large eels.

MEMBERSHIP FEE 2019/20 SEASON

Senior Membership – £60 + £10 Joining fee

Ladies Membership – £20 + £10 Joining fee

OAP 65 years + £30 + £10 Joining fee

Junior Members £10 + NO JOINING FEE

FAMILY TICKETS ARE ALSO AVAILABLE

View the waters on the web www.tonbridge-angling.co.uk

PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB Contact Donna on 07947 557140

The Linton Angling Society - Membership Vacancies

We are a small but friendly club with beautiful lake, 2 ponds, 5 reservoirs and over 8 miles of fishing on the River Medway, Beult and Tiese. Our waters contain Carp to 32lb, Pike 30lb+, Tench 8lb+, Chub 7lb, Perch 4lb and Roach to 3lb, including some good Bream and Eels. All year fishing, member's guest permits, night fishing allowed. We run over 30 matches a year and have a large junior section. Concessionary rates available for OAPs, Disabled and Juniors.

For further details contact: **Hon. Secretary: Chris Knowler on 07712 622858**

e-mail: chris@lintonangling.co.uk

www.lintonangling.co.uk



Hastings Bexhill & District Freshwater Angling Association

Season runs from 1st April to 31st March.

Established in 1895 the association provides its members and day ticket anglers with various lakes and rivers to fish throughout Hastings, Bexhill and the surrounding area.

We currently have seven waters that provide a mixture of species at specimen weights to suit all anglers' preferences. As well as the lakes run by the association we also offer members the ability to fish various stretches of river in the surrounding area.

The association provides waters to suit all ages, abilities and interests so there's something for everyone.

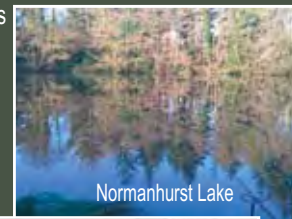
To apply to become a member please download and print the application form from our website. Complete and return to the Membership officer on the application, alternatively it is possible to purchase your membership from any of the tackle shops listed on our website.

For further information please contact:

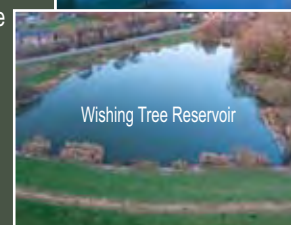
Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174

Postal enquiries: **S Corke, 2 The Siding, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1RF**

hastingsandbexhillangling.co.uk



Normanhurst Lake



Wishing Tree Reservoir



River Rother



Sea Informer

Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group



Sea Reports are proudly sponsored by - Medway and Kent Sea Fishing Group

The weather continues to play a major factor in the fishing around the coast. It seems that every recent weekend has been plagued by strong winds and rain preventing many anglers from getting on the beaches. However, during the quieter periods of weather some excellent catches have been made, in particular the thornbacks have been showing in large numbers right around the region. Noted marks have been Sheppey, North Kent, Deal and Eastbourne. The Spring equinox produced some huge tides which gave rise to a number of flood warnings to low lying coastal areas and tidal estuaries and rivers. The weather has to improve as we push further in to Spring (!) so we can look forward to some good plaice showing and see the smoothhounds come in closer. A number of hounds have already been caught and the crabs are starting to moult. Sea temperatures are pretty consistent right around the region at around 8 degrees.



Thames report courtesy of Wayne May

"Bass are showing early this year at Greenhithe, Swanscombe and Gravesend, taking fish and worm cocktail baits, Asda Greenhithe showed a couple of nice size fish promptly returned by local angler William Holland. Along with the bass, flounders and dabs are on the increase, although we have been left scratching our heads a few times, blanking on more than one occasion then other tides, sunset to dusk producing more bites and catches. Thames estuary both shore and boat anglers, have had some reasonable catches of thornback rays, flounders and dabs with a few lingering whiting still being caught. Herring and mackerel wrapped baits are an excellent choice from the beaches, along with long flowing traces from the boats working well." **For all your tackle and bait call NJ Tackle on 01474 353998.**



Sheppey report courtesy of Sheppey Angling

If you want to catch a thornback, come to the island! Loads being caught from all the marks around the Isle of Sheppey. Aside from the rays, there are flounders and dabs for those wanting to fish with worm baits. The rays are mostly coming to fish baits.

For all your tackle and bait, pop in to Sheppey Angling or call Mick on 01795 661089.

North Kent

The beaches from Herne Bay eastwards have been producing lots of thornback rays. Multiple catches have been made and all favourite marks are producing. Dabs and flounders are also being caught along with the odd early smoothhound. Numbers of hounds and bass will increase over the coming weeks will increase. The crabs are beginning to moult but please ensure you only take what you need and replace and rocks and stones to protect the crabs environment.

Absolute Tackle at Herne Common always stock a great range of tackle, fresh and frozen baits so give them a call on 01227 636724.



Thanet report courtesy of Fisherman's Corner

"Fishing at Ramsgate has been steady with the dogfish appearing in better numbers and rays being landed from the East pier and main Sands. With the water temperature staying above average for the time of year, it won't be long before the bass make a return and we've found in previous years lugworm and ragworm have been effective early season.



For any information or up to date reports, contact Fisherman's Corner tackle shop on 01843 582174.



Deal report courtesy of Channel Angling Deal

Spring is here but you wouldn't think so! However, the thornbacks have been plentiful in between the storms and should be around for a good while yet on both pier and the beach, plenty of dogfish as usual, also a few smoothhound showing up on the pier so that looks promising for the Summer. There have been some nice sized pouting and the odd conger eel on the pier, on the beach plenty dogs up Walmer end with the odd ray, less dogs but more rays down along the Sandwich end. So all in all not looking bad. Keep safe, wash your hands all the time, don't want any nasties and good luck to you all, Fred Leach.

Call Channel Angling Deal on 01304 373104 for all your tackle and bait requirements and top advice and tips.



Hythe report

Plenty of thornback rays have been caught on fish baits with bluey being very successful. Fish to 9lbs have been reported on day and night tides. Dogfish are present in greater numbers and the whiting shoals have definitely thinned out. Some nice dabs and flounders being caught along with the odd plaice when conditions have been clearer.





plaice in the calmer seas. Next week looks excellent with black lug the number 1 bait. Normally one of the quietest months, this has turned into a fish fest. I would advise people to grab a rod and make the most of some of the best fishing Eastbourne has ever seen! A one hook pulley rig with a bit of fish bait and easy fishing makes a great chance of a personal best fish! **Please send all reports to www.tonystackleshop or 01323 731388. Tight lines, Tony Kirrage."**



Local tackle shops are Dens Tackle 01303 267053 and Best Buddies on 01303 487144.



Eastbourne report courtesy of Tony's Tackle

"Crazy angling at Eastbourne beaches this month! In 46 years of owning Tony's Tackle shop, nothing can match this month's fishing! There has been countless thornback rays up to 10 lb being landed from Langney Point Splash Point and Pevensy beaches on blueys, squid and fish baits. The appearance of conger eels from the shore has been amazing to say the least. Julian French caught one estimated at over 23 lb at Langney in the over 50s match only to see it bite through the trace and slide through his feet back in to the sea! They say about lightning striking twice but two weeks later, Julian returned to the over 50 s match at White Horses and won the match with this conger of 19 lb (pictured) and won the match. Needless to say, Mr French is the man of the moment in match angling closely followed by Eastbourne's Trevor 'ROOSTER' Rooney who has had some great results this month. Ricky Diamond has caught some great fish this month including a 17 lb plus conger from the rocks. He landed another of 6 lb and one went over the groyne and snapped. Angling tales are coming true with reports of huge fish smashing people up along with huge amounts of dogfish which are being caught everywhere with some really good



KENT BOAT REPORT courtesy of Jason Parrott

It's good to get back to the grind from sunny Thailand. We were straight back in to the skate off Ramsgate aboard Lady Ann with skate to 15 lb being landed on various baits, but the faithful is fresh herring chunk and bluey. However, now the peeler crab have started, we have been doing peeler / herring cocktail and it's working! The skate seem to be in the shallower water in close off the sand banks at Ramsgate with shore anglers seeing some good sessions at night. The smoothounds are here early! The males come first, but we have had a couple of better fish up to 7 lb and they will just carry on getting better week by week, especially when the peeler crab start properly! I find to start with the chalky ledges are better for the hounds then they will come in to the shallows later on in April. I like to use a short bolt rig when smoothound fishing so they hook themselves, no fancy tackle just basic uptiding. A pulley rig can be good with 4/0 varivas wide mouth hooks on 25 lb line and my preferred weapon is a Zziplex GT light uptider with a Penn slammer 111 fixed spool reel, a perfect balanced outfit. I have gone over to the Tubertini rods and you must give a go with a quiver tip, good, good fun but very powerful when needed! The herrings and sprats are still here in numbers, but the pin whiting have gone which is good news as the bait was being destroyed instantly. Unfortunately, the dog fish are still here, but even these seem so much bigger and keeps a bend in the rod whilst waiting for that proper fish. We haven't had any bass yet, but the water has been very coloured after all the storms so maybe when, or if, we get a break in the weather, the water will clear and with the Equinox coming up, it always makes the Spring fish jump into action. I do love April as it's a gateway for the rest of the year so let's hope for a very good session and remember we can now land two bass per day if you do fancy them for a feed.

Tight lines & hope to see some of you afloat onboard Lady Ann of Ramsgate, Jason



If you fancy a great day afloat with Jason, give him a call on 07966 273650.



LOOK OUT FISH, TONY'S BACK ON THE BEACH!

After his enforced lay off, Tony Kirrage of Tony's Tackle at Eastbourne, is back with a vengeance!

"My comeback is complete! I had four casts and three rays with the biggest being 8lbs. It would have been four rays but I lost one on a snag. Not bad for three hours fishing!"



EASTBOURNE MATCH NEWS

On Sunday 1st March 2020, the Eastbourne Nomads held their Annual Officers Cup Competition. This competition was fished alongside the 3rd part of the Slater Cup, the 1st part of the ALL NEW Snowy's Sunday League, and to top it off Tony Kirrage had a Tony's Tackle Mini Open in with it.

Anglers had a choice, they could either enter the Nomads Competitions or Tony's Competition, or both, most entered both. Because Langney Point is getting a bit messy with snags and a stranded net, we decided to have two zones, Zone A was Langney Point from peg 3 to peg 15, and Zone B was Splash Point from peg 7 (the high side of splash point) to peg 19.

The weather for a change was nice, a little bit of wind and the odd shower. There were 26 anglers all together, 18 entered both, 2 entered only the Nomads and 6 entered only Tony's.

The prize money was paid out in zones, with 4 prizes in each zone, this was the same from the Nomads and Tony's. There were some great fish caught during the day including 23 thornback Rays.

Congratulations to Joe Wales on winning the day and congratulations to Arran Aghilli on winning the Officers Cup.

TONY'S TACKLE MINI OPEN RESULTS

One of the best matches ever with 23 rays landed in four hours match. Top angler was Joe Wales landing four from peg 9 on Langley Point, Mick Webb also caught four.

Results:

A ZONE

- 1st - JOE WALES. 782 pts
- 2nd - MICK WEBB 539 pts
- 3rd - BRETT GREEN 413 pts
- 4th - KEITH ERRIDGE 355 pts

B ZONE

- 1st - T ROONEY 311 pts
- 2nd - I HOPPER 215 pts
- 3rd - DAN WOOD 214 pts
- 4th - JOINT A. AGILLI + COLIN CAREY

A great match and a good day had by all! We have plenty of bluey in the shop if you fancy a crack at the rays. Call the shop on 01323 731388.



Mick Webb



A. Agilli



MORE RAYS FOR RICHARD!

Richard Smith sent in this report after a recent trip to Hythe. He has had a good tally of rays so far and this session didn't disappoint:

"I fished Fisherman's Beach at Hythe recently. There were big swells with a 17mph westerly wind blowing. I had one doggie up to high water and then when the tide started dropping the rays came on the feed. I only managed to get two out and they were both quite small and both were caught on pulley droppers loaded with bluey wraps at long range."



SAM'S FISHING JOURNAL

courtesy of Sam Cox

GREAT EXPECTATIONS!

As I sit writing this article, the birds are singing in my garden, many of the plants are showing signs of life and the shops are running out of toilet rolls! I take solace in the fact that being out in the fresh air, miles away from anywhere and anyone, fishing is probably one of the safest places to be at the moment.

I don't know about you, but I have just about had a gut full of this wet and windy winter. I do fear that this will now be the shape of our Winters to come and that we anglers will just have to accept it and adapt. We have been fishing the Royal Military Canal as the local rivers have been mostly un-fishable due to flood water. Sometimes being forced to think 'outside the box' and trying other locations can pay dividends. We found a drainage ditch that empties into the main canal, from what we could see it had not been fished. So far we have caught lots of 'jacks' and several double figure pike up to nineteen pounds fourteen ounces from this small and shallow ditch, proving that trying different methods and locations often works. This all adds to our experience and builds knowledge, making us more successful all round anglers.



One good consequence is that due to the mild winters, a large percentage of last year's O group bass (fish in their first year of life) should have survived into their second year. Couple this with the restrictions on the commercial and recreational take of bass and we should be in for some decent sport in future years. Another positive is that during mild Winters, the bass has a faster growth rate, there have been two successive mild winters so therefore the bass that spawned in these years should be more in number and bigger in size. With the exception of 2017's 'The Beast from the East' all Winters that have coincided with the new rules on bass have been mild, this Spring and early Summer should see anglers catching more 35cm -45cm bass. Ok, these fish are not going to break any records, but on the right tackle they can be great fun. I feel we have a good opportunity here to get our young and up and coming anglers into light tackle bass fishing. This opportunity should be used to teach good angling ethics such as fish handling, when bass can be taken for the table, when bass should be released and even catch and cook practices. There is nothing wrong with anglers taking the odd fish home to eat, as long as we are not greedy. It is far better to catch a bass one's self than to buy flavourless farmed bass from a supermarket. The benefits for youngsters are multiple; getting out fishing is healthier than sitting at home on your iPad. Catching and eating your own bass leaves a smaller carbon foot print than eating farmed fish, wild caught bass taste far better, and there is a certain amount of pride to be taken from catching and cooking your own fish.

From reports on the internet, I see that bass have been caught on the Medway and Thames all through the Winter by some hardened, tough anglers, again not big fish but encouraging to see all the same. Although not from our coast line, history was made last month by an angler landing and releasing a potential new British record bass of 22 pounds. From the photos I have seen on-line, this fish was obviously full of spawn, so kudos to the angler for releasing this fish. This is a very special fish indeed, not just because it smashes the current British record, but because of how old she is and what she has endured to get to such a ripe old age. This fish probably hatched at some point between 1996 and 1997 and is around 22-23 years old. She has not only managed to avoid natural predation but has dodged the pair trawling teams, navigated the thousands of miles of monofilament gill nets and up until now, avoided anglers' hooks, she truly is an amazing creature. The genetic make-up must be very strong and thanks to the guy who put her back she will get to spawn again this year adding her very strong genes to the bass population.

I am looking forward to this year's sea angling more than I have for a long time. For many years I have concentrated on live bait fishing for bass, probably to the detriment of my overall angling enjoyment.



Warren 'the rays' Hayes with one of the dozens of thornbacks he has caught from Heme Bay this year.

Don't get me wrong, I thoroughly enjoy this type of fishing and have caught some good bass using the method, but there is so much more out there to enjoy. For health reasons, I need to be more active in life, so shall be adopting a very much more mobile approach to a lot of my bass fishing. I will probably keep most of my live bait fishing for when I fish with groups of friends at marks like Samphire Hoe. Our coast is littered with interesting areas to be explored, a few casts in an area then move on to the next spot. A method very similar to small stream chub fishing. Using basic water craft, I hope that over the next few seasons I can build up a picture of fish movements, and at the same time lose some weight. Some of my angling pals have already put their pike gear away and dusted off the beach casters, Warren 'the rays' Hayes has been slaying the thornback rays at Heme Bay. Warren has had a few good night sessions

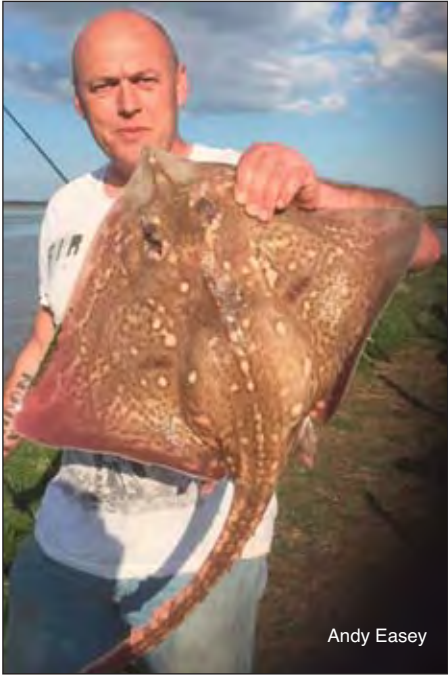
distance casting with fish baits. Another angling friend, Andy Easy, has been putting a dent in the thornback population on the upper reaches of the River Crouch. Andy 'wings' and skins these fish before giving them to the old folk that live near his dear old Mum in Burnham-on-Crouch. There will be a special corner in heaven just for Andy! I find it hard to get excited by thornbacks having caught hundreds of the damned things, but I might drag myself down to Walden Bay where I can fish from my van for a few hours.

The charter boats are already catching some very early smoothounds. These fish are mainly small and are only one or two fish a day in number, but it's only March! It will not be long before the numbers build and they can be targeted from the shore at marks such as Reculver and Minnis Bay. I shall be having a crack at these hard fighting fish this year from the shore. Most years from about mid-May, some real quality hounds are caught from our coast line. The biggest issue for me is that this coincides with the dreaded May weed. This stuff is horrid as it is present right through the water column, so even keeping your rods low cannot avoid it clogging up your leader knot.

Smoothounds seem to be making a comeback, with fish being caught from Kent's Admiralty Pier as early as mid-April last year. After speaking on the phone to the guy at Bills Tackle in Dover, they are hoping for the pier to be re-opening quite soon. This is good news as anglers are losing too many fishing locations and marks around the country. We have to use these places or face losing them forever, which to my mind would be a huge loss to the angling community.

One place often overlooked by anglers is Southend Pier. I spent hundreds of hours here as a kid. This place really warrants a whole article of its own, but what caught my eye was that last year I saw a few reports of decent smoothounds and thornback rays being caught from the pier. I saw lots of different species of fish caught from Southend Pier when I was a lad, but never smoothounds or thornbacks. Maybe this year the lads and I will pay this oldest and longest of piers a visit or three? I do not think we are heading for a return to the good old 'golden days' of sea angling that I saw as a child, but I'm not hanging my rods up just yet. I fear we have seen the last of our cod fishing, but I do have a faint spark of hope regarding the future of UK bass angling. For now, we do have some excellent thornback ray fishing available for those who like that sort of thing, and there seems to be a lot of hope regarding the smoothounds fishing, so for myself, I am finding my expectations moderately high for this coming Spring and Summer.

Before I sign off, I would like you to take a moment, and spare a thought for my good friend Matthew Lee and his motley crew of anglers who are, as I write, stuck in Norway catching halibut and 50lb plus cod! They are not allowed to leave due to this Corona Virus. It must be a living hell for them !!!



Andy Easy



Matt Lee confined to halibut and cod fishing



Matt Lee with a 50lb plus Norway cod

Thank you to everyone who took the time to tell me how much they enjoyed Andy's first article in the March issue. This month, Andy recounts a session at Herne Bay on a ray hunt:

OUT AND ABOUT WITH ANDY by Andrew Cook

Hello everyone.

Three good weeks in a row? If I wasn't there I wouldn't have believed it myself! I had a few choices for today's adventure, either back over to the island to Barton's or Leysdown, Kings Hall or Deal. In the end, I decided on Kings Hall, there had been rays coming out on the day tides that are currently in the rising phase and it's an easy fish, so off we went!

Up at 6 am for the hour or so drive via the usual stops for caffeine and food. The reliable Greggs cheese ploughman's roll today, can't go wrong really. I was in Herne Bay by 7 am so I had a quick read of the paper while I was waiting for Ron Edwards Tackle shop to open so I could get some bluey, cheers Roly Cannon, top bait as usual.

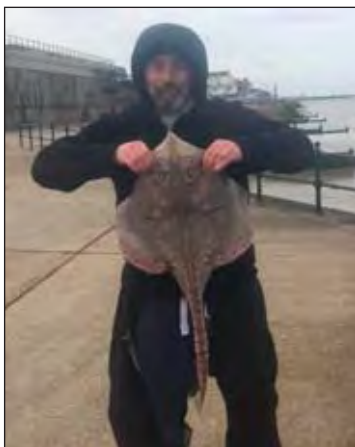


By 7:45 I was on the mark, fishing the sailing club turning circle today, just East of Kings Hall. It is a nice easy fish and a two minute walk from the car. The South Westerly breeze is coming over my left shoulder and I'm pleased to see a pretty flat and very coloured flooding tide, (HW 11:10).

Baits went out, bluey all the way today, but I'm varying my rigs. The trusty pulley pennel on one rod and I 'hashed up' a dropper arrangement on the other with a view to getting one bait hard on the sea bed after getting some good advice from a couple of lads. Nothing for the first hour, then the old Sonik tip with the dropper on nodded a couple of times and the line went slack. I picked the rod up and it was fish on. As I brought it in, it felt like a reasonable fish but the line was vibrating and coming in really low. With 20 yards to go and with not a lot of force being applied my main line went 'ping'. I retrieved the slack line and it was pretty frayed in places. I must have been bringing it in under something on the sea bed, hence the vibrations. Frayed line removed, new leader and rig on and back out again. Ten minutes later and the Zippy had a couple of nods followed by the line moving West. We were off again, not a big fish but I had to move to my right to keep it off the boulders and onto the shingle, a nice start with a small thorney of about 4lb.

Half an hour later and the Zippy went again, this one definitely felt better, just how big I would never know because after about twenty yards of retrieve it went light and the fish had escaped, that was now two and I was a little perplexed! The bluey had been pulled right around the hook. After a few 'F bombs', I calmed down and got the bait back out.

Just before HW, I had the same tell tale two rod dips and then we were off again. I was thinking it's another small one but as I was taking it easy the fish must have realised it was getting shallower and all hell broke loose. It was trying to turn one way, then another and the rod was continuously bucking, ending up right against the boulders that I had tried to steer away from. Some gentle manoeuvring and I steered it up the beach. On the scales - 10lb exactly! Two weeks and two doubles, that had made up for the two lost fish. Pictures courtesy of some passers by and it was back in the water.

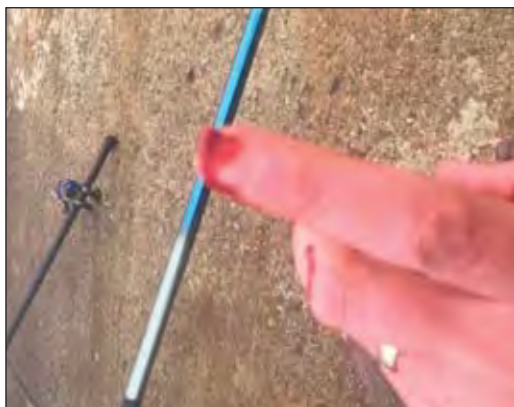


The tide started to ebb fast and the wind had increased and shifted Westerly, just enough to put a bit of chop on the water, but not much. The current was taking one rod with a 6 ozs lead East but the other was holding with a 5 ozs straight out. I



then realised why the line kept going slack then tightening. Lifting up I had got another fish on. I got it about half way in but everything seized up, it had managed to stick itself to the sea bed. I tried giving it line and walking along the shore but it was not budging so I kept a lot of pressure on for a couple of minutes and eventually it moved but fought all the way in. 5lb and it gave a really good account of itself. It was unhooked but the hook point was just caught on its bottom jaw so I put my finger under the shank to scoop it out. Bad move - It made a lunge for my finger and crushed down on the very end of it drawing blood and scraped the skin off. I know they have strong biting power but I didn't know it was that strong!

1pm and I was running out of water. The Zippy end gear had gone East again but the rod tip was nodding once more. A quick pull and I could feel something but it was quickly gone. Half an hour later I called it a day, 3 landed 10lb, 5lb and about 4lb along with 2 maybe 3 dropped.



Another good session, that was three weeks running, either my skill (or luck!) was improving, probably the latter! The bites were very subtle today, it seemed like the fish were picking the bait up gently and just moving off with the action only starting once they realised they were attached to something.

For those who haven't fished here before, this is a well known ray mark with hounds showing in the Summer months as well. Parking is free just behind the beach in Beacon Hill. It's very easy fishing and good when it's rough down along the South Coast but you are only going to get about 5 hours angling as it's a shallow venue. Best times seem to be an hour before to two hours after HW.

For my next session, I'm watching that weather as I'm itching to get back to Seaford for that 50 cms plaice with my name on it, but we'll see.

Tight lines all, Andy Cook

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The sea is warming up nicely, if the weather holds good and assuming coronavirus has not decimated the angling fraternity. The fishing has been good for those few, very few that have gone fishing. With warm seas all Winter, this has had the effect of attracting and keeping many different species close to the beach. Yes, it has been stormy, buckets of wind and rain, but hey it has been wintertime!

BEACH REPORT

The month of the dogfish and the reports have been amazing with the sheer number being caught. Fewer whiting than you would expect, plenty of flatties about and as I write this the first reports of early plaice coming through.

The dogfish are getting bigger...

I had this report in from Neil Rodwell...

"Hi Tony. Fished between the Point and the Station today. Used frozen lug, squid and bluey. Mainly dogfish today with one unusual one that was huge with dark colouration (not shown). Also had dabs and a rockling that tried to swallow a 4/0 hook and a bait the same size as it. Only 1 pin whiting all day so it looks like they're thinning out a bit. The right distance seemed to be around 30-50 yards out with not much at range or in close. Thanks for the bait today and will speak soon. Regards. Neil."



Is it a big dogfish...or is it a...?

I had this further report in from Neil Rodwell...

"Hi Tony. Following on from my last email. This is the underside of that large dogfish I had. I don't think it's a bull huss but I'm not totally sure as the spots were small. Many thanks. Neil" Tony replied: "Spots and blotches can vary. I usually go by the 'nasal flaps', do they go down to the mouth or make a 'w' shape as on a bull huss? Looking at the photo I'm not sure. We did have a some huss reported a few years ago and it would be nice to see them back."



Nice to see more anglers about...

I had this report in from Mike Shine last night...

"Hi Tony. Thanks for the bait today. Dungeness was the busiest I have seen it in a long time and the weather was very kind. We fished west of the boats from high tide down till we ran out of bait and from the first cast to the least we were into fish as were all the other anglers I could see. Mainly big dog fish, a few puppies but we had over 20 good size fish, as well as 10 small whiting and a dozen dabs. So all in all a great days fishing on a combination of frozen lug, Blueys, Squid and frozen sprats. See you soon. Mike"

A sizeable bass Neil...is it summer?

Well done Neil Collison, at last a report from Dungeness tonight:

"Hi Tony went behind the boats today with my brother, we caught 6 doggies all good size 2 dabs a few pin whiting and a lovely bass. All fish returned. Neil"



Big tides...and big doggies...

I had this report in yesterday from Kevin Harris...

"Hi Tony. I opted for a trip to Fisherman's beach at Hythe because it was a bit too tough for Dungie with the strong wind and big tide on Tuesday. Hythe was very windy but I still managed a lot of fish including a nice doggie on most casts, all returned (I just find doggies too tough to skin!) Not the dabs I was after but a great escape from work and other crises! Kevin."



Don't forget the change in bass regulations!

From the 1st of March the bass regulations changed and yes you can take two sizeable fish a day. This from the Kent & Essex IFCA (Inshore Fisheries Conservation Authority) website:

"Recreational bass regulations for ICES areas in the KEIFCA district (IVc and VIId): 1 January 2020- 29 February 2020 and 1 – 31 December 2020, only catch-and-release fishing with a rod or a handline for European seabass shall be allowed. During those periods, it shall be prohibited to retain, relocate, tranship or land European seabass(a) 1 March 2020 – 30 November 2020, not more than two specimens of European seabass may be caught and retained per fisherman per day; the minimum size of European seabass retained shall be 42 cm."

BEACH OUTLOOK FOR APRIL

This is the month for plaice if we get some calm weather and the sea goes clear and watch the plaice rigs (beads) work, and of course more bass moving in.

BEST BAITS

Lugworm has been in short supply but it is the best bait for plaice.

BOAT REPORTS

It has been one of the toughest months in my memory with so much wind.

Here are a couple of boat reports coming onto my site...

He just loves to get afloat...

I saw this photo Ant (skipper of Peganina) posted on line a couple of weeks ago of a nice blonde ray. He was out 'freelancing' in his commercial rod and line boat when he had no 'Charters' due to bad weather, he just loves fishing!



The quiet before the storm...

I had this report in from Anthony tonight out on Peganina (07989778361) from Rye. Marvellous conditions, flat calm, and guess what... "Tough day today but we still found a few fish!"

...and yes that is a codling, there are more out there than most people realise!



BOAT OUTLOOK FOR APRIL

It can only get better. If we get some decent weather with the warm seas we should see a 'bumper' start to the Spring fishing.

BEST BAITS

It all works! Lugworm for the plaice, squid strips over the wrecks. On the bottom fresh fish baits mackerel, bluey or herring.

HASTINGS

report courtesy of Hastings Angling Centre

Very little to report this month, the awful weather has kept the boats onshore (tied down!) and none launched for six weeks. All the weekend beach matches were postponed or cancelled as it was simply not safe to be near the water's edge. After the storms there were huge quantities of shellfish and worms washed out and the fish must have had a feeding bonanza. For a while catching anything was difficult but then on calmer days lots of thornback rays and dogfish appeared in the more sheltered Pevensey Bay/Eastbourne area along with some conger eels.

Bait digging has also been badly affected with many tides lost to the weather and disturbance to the lug beds. All in all, one of the worst sea fishing Februarys for a long time. Now just when the weather is getting better and days are longer along comes the 'lurgy' which may well put the mockers on it all for months. There is every possibility that all the tackle shops along with other non-essential shops will have to close, possibly for months (as in Italy, Spain and France at date of writing). Deep joy!

As a tackle shop owner, I will do what I can to keep things moving using the internet and delivery, but fresh bait supply will be curtailed. The next quarter will be very testing for everyone. Keep calm and keep fishing. Isolate yourself on a beach somewhere!

If you can get out, calmer weather should see plenty of plaice coming inshore well fed up. With the sea still relatively warm after such a mild winter, things are moving forward rapidly with peeler crabs available several weeks early. The smoothounds should be in early after them along with some big bass looking to feed up after spawning.

In the boats, the rays and plaice should be about in large numbers along with the first hounds and tope. *Martyn*

ASSO TEAM QUALIFYING MATCH - 1ST ROUND

After two postponements due to the stormy weather, the first round of this year's Asso Team Qualifying was fished on Sunday 15/3/20. The top qualifying teams of five go onto the National team finals in the Autumn. Seven teams and quite a few individuals fished in tricky conditions of a stiff and very bracing SW wind with big surf and lots of colour in the water. Luckily, the fish were feeding and some very good bags were had. Very good to see plenty of anglers fishing again after a long lay off.

Winner today was Joe Wales fishing the beach in front of the Hastings & St Leonards Angling Club catching 17 dogfish and a whiting for an excellent total weight of 21lb 4oz!! All the dogfish are recorded and returned alive and credited with 20oz.

Runner up was Jacob Gainey fishing next to him with a total of 15 fish for 12lb 2oz

There were 3 anglers tied for heaviest fish: Ralph Crosby, Mick Tapsell and Saul Page all catching bass of 2lb 4ozs.

Teams on the day: **1st** Hastings A/C. 15 pts

2nd Folkestone Angling Club. 17 pts **3rd** Saul & Co. 18 pts

4th Eddie and the Hot Rods. 20 pts **5th** Channel Angling. 21 pts

6th Century Match Team. 24 pts **7th** Maidstone A/C. 25pts

The next round is on Saturday 28th March. It is also open to individual anglers, details from Hastings Angling Centre 01424 432178.



Winner - Joe Wales



Mark Tapsall



Mick Snelling

COARSE FISHERIES

Beaver Farm Fishery	01342 324006 07710 656041
Eastbourne Road, Newchapel, Lingfield RH7 6HL	
Charlies Lakes	07857 539785
Steeds Lane, Kingsnorth, Ashford TN26 1NH	
Chequertree Trout & Coarse Fishery	01233 820078
Bethersden, Nr Ashford TN26 3JR	
Claygate Lakes	07770 513448
Collier Street, Claygate, Marden TN12 9PL	
Coombewood Fishery	07895 679569
Redbrook Street, High Halden, Nr Ashford TN26 3JH	
Elphicks Fisheries	01580 212512
Spelmonden Road, Horsmonden TN12 8EL	
Furnace Brook Fishery & Fish Farm	01435 830835
Trolliloes, Cowbeech, Nr Hailsham BN27 4QR	
Gabriels Fishery	07730 066088
Marsh Green Road, Edenbridge TN8 5PP	
Greenacres Farm Fishery	07933 934942
Sissinghurst Road, Biddenden TN27 8EH	
Hartley Lands Fishery	07703 825064
Swattenden Lane, Cranbrook TN17 3PS	
Hawkhurst Fish Farm	01580 753813
Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	
Horam Manor Fishery	01323 840889 07707 759364
Horam Manor Farm, Horam TN21 0JB	
Iden Wood Fishery	01797 280180 07906 232225
Coldharbour Lane, Iden, Rye TN31 7UT	
Knightingales Fishery	07941 176205
Stone-in-Oxney, Nr Tenterden TN30 7HA	
Mousehole Lakes	07725 783405
Maidstone Road, Nettlestead, Nr Paddock Wood ME18 5HR	
Orchard Place Farm Fishing Lakes	01892 838576 07860 608218
Pearsons Green Road, Paddock Wood TN12 6NY	
Sandwich Lakes Coarse Fishery	07936 409912
Sandwich Ash Road (A257), Near Canterbury CT3 2DA	
Tricklebrook Fishery	07743 955812
Colts Hill, Five Oak Green TN12 6SH	
Wylands International AC	01424 893394
Wylands Farm, Powdermill Lane, Battle TN33 0SU	

TROUT FISHERIES

Brick Farm Lakes	01323 832615
Windmill Hill, Herstmonceux BN27 4RS	
Chalk Springs	01903 883742
Park Bottom, Arundel, West Sussex BN18 0AA	
Cinder Hill Fly Fishing	01892 770903
Membership available from r.nathan@btinternet.com	
Hastings Fly Fishers Club	01424 870498
Powdermill Reservoir, Reservoir Lane, Sedlescombe TN33 0PJ	
Hazel Copse Trout Fishery	01403 822878
Baynards, Rudgwick, West Sussex RH12 3AF	
Spring Hill Trout Waters	07951 304515
Albans Farm, Romford Road, Pembury TN2 4BB	
Tenterden Trout Waters	01580 763201
Coombe Farm, Chennell Park Road, Tenterden TN30 6XA	

ANGLING CLUBS / SOCIETIES

Bromley (Kent) & District AS	bdas-kent-enquiry@bdaskent.co.uk
PO Box 895, East Grinstead RH19 9ND	
Hastings, Bexhill & District	Chris Pagan 07429 655237 Steve Potter 07935 268174
Postal enquiries: S.Corke, 2 The Siding, Bexhill-on-Sea TN40 1RF	
Linton Angling Society	Chris Knowler 07712 622858
chris@lintonangling.co.uk	
Teise Anglers & Conservation Society	07960 518738
Membership enquiries to email: teisesecretary@gmail.com	
Further information at www.teiseanglers.org.uk	
Tonbridge & District A & FPS	Donna 07947 557140
PO Box 131, Tonbridge TN11 8WB	
Wantsum Angling Association	robtuckbrown@hotmail.com
Rob Tuck-Brown (secretary) 07484 144561	

TACKLE & BAIT SUPPLIES

Absolute Tackle	01227 636724 07809 330854
12 Wealden Forest Park, Herne Common CT6 7LQ	
Bodle Angling	01444 247757
Southdown Store, Cuckfield Road, Burgess Hill RH15 8RE	
Bankside Baits 'Customised hook bait specialists'	07874 347703
email: steve@banksidebaits.co.uk www.banksidebaits.co.uk	
Camos Carp Cabin	01843 581784
11 Turner Street, Ramsgate CT11 8NJ www.camoscarpclinic.net	
Carpers Den	01233 850644
Ashford Road, High Halden, Ashford TN26 3LJ	
Channel Angling	01304 203742
158-160 Snargate Street, Dover CT17 9BZ	
Crowborough Tackle	01892 667671
Shop 2, Lexden Lodge, Crowborough Hill, Crowborough TN6 2EG	
Dens Tackle	01303 267053
73 Dymchurch Road, Hythe CT21 6JN	
Fishing Tackle & Bait	07724 776031
Ralph's Farm Shop & Nursery, Wierton Road, Boughton Monchelsea ME17 4JW	
Henfold Bait & Tackle	07956 043922
Henfold Lakes, Henfold Lane, Newdigate, Dorking RH5 4RW	
Hooked on Green	01825 760139
Unit 2, Bellbrook Industrial Estate, Uckfield TN22 1QL	
Jack Frost	01293 521186
Reynolds Place, West Green, Crawley RH11 7HB	
Kent Tackle	01580 754422
Hawkhurst Fish Farm, Hastings Road, Hawkhurst TN18 4RT	
Medway Tackle Supplies	01634 475260
11 Twydall Green, Gillingham ME8 6JY	
NJ Tackle	Tel: 01474 353998
150 Milton Road, Gravesend DA12 2RG	
Orchard Tackle	Tel: 07494 670328
58 High Brooms Road, Tunbridge Wells TN4 9DB	
Pinions	Tel: 01622 718580
431 London Rd, Ditton, Aylesford, Maidstone ME20 6DB	
Sheppey Angling	Tel: 01795 661089
Unit 5, Regis Business Park, New Road, Sheerness ME12 1HA	
South London Angling Centre	Tel: 0208 852 4451
286 Lee High Road, London SE13 5PJ	
Sues Tackle Cabin	Tel: 01797 225015 07980 290247
The Spice Warehouse, Rye Harbour Road, Rye TN31 7TE	
The Tackle Warehouse	Tel: 01293 550907
Unit 24, Gatwick International Distribution Centre, Cobham Way, Manor Royal, Crawley RH10 9RX	
Tony's Tackle Shop	Tel: 01323 731388
211 Seaside Road, Eastbourne BN22 7NP	
Trade in Tackle	Tel: 01622 814296 07941 085011
Maidstone Road, Watlington ME18 5EH	

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