

Dropback

Issue 19 - Oct 2003

The Russ and Cec Special



Pike Anglers' Club of Great Britain

The club for ALL pike anglers since 1977



<http://www.waltonpac.org.uk>

RO's Lines

Well this is a bit like *déjà vu*, except I know I have been here before. Most of you will know by now that Tony Horwell has decided to stand down as Regional Organiser. This is for reasons, personal to him.

Tony, can I say a big thank you for all you have done over the last 12 months, if you hadn't have stepped in I might not have been writing this.

As a result of this and the fact that no one else has volunteered to take up the reins, I find my self, once again, Regional Organiser for Walton on Thames region. Fortunately the pressures that contributed to my previously having to stand down have now gone and I feel that I can once again do the Region justice and am willing to give it my best shot.

Arrangements are in hand to book various speakers (Denis Moules is already booked for October 2004). Details of which will appear in the monthly newsletter, Pike Zone.

Both P.A.C and Region subs were/are due, depending on when you are reading this, in October. The next edition of Pike Zone (November) will only go to paid up members.

I will continue my pleas for articles for, this your Region magazine, and also the web site. If you have anything, including photos for the photo board, send them to me. I am also willing to take advertisements for items for sale, to be included in the monthly newsletter.

A strange world is it not. Recently I went out on the Thames, early on a Saturday morning, before it was light. Launched the boat and off up the river to Penton Hook. Not a soul around, not even the normal array of bivies at Laleham Park, no one on the steps near the lock, or at the little weir. On round to the back weir, looks like I'll have it all to my self. I should be so lucky, as I turn to go up the weir stream, there in the middle of the river is the sister ship of the QE2. Yes anchored in the middle of the stream is a 35 foot motor yacht. Which looks a little strange due to the number of strange luminous green things floating around it on both sides. I soon realise that they are actually fishing, I think there were 3 blokes fishing with about 6 rods each. I moved right over to the side and went slowly past them, continuing up to the weir pool. It was still dark. I anchored up and proceeded to thrash the water to a foam, well the flow over the weir wasn't doing it! I had a small pike of about 3lbs on a white spinnerbait, my first pike on a lure in the dark. A new experience for me! As it got light a couple of young lads jumped over the fence beside the weir and climbed down onto the steps adjacent to the flow. I realised they were live baiting and in seconds were into a fish, a good one I thought, but turned out to be about 5lbs. They continued to catch fairly regularly, doing better than I was. I moved out of the weir pool and had another jack on a small plug, I foolishly left trailing over the back of the boat, honestly! That's twice that has happened. I then anchored up with the intention of

trotting a small deadbait adjacent to the overhanging willows. It immediately became apparent this was not going to work, there wasn't any flow. I made my way back to the small weir and, due to the fact there was no one fishing there, I cast the deadbait into the flow. The float cocked and disappeared, I thought I was over depth and it had snagged, but no it was a take. A pike of about 2lbs was unhooked at the side of the boat, none the worse or its encounter. I had a few more trots through and called it a day. An enjoyable 4 hours. On the way back to launch, I decided I would have a bash at maggot drowning the next morning.

The Sunday morning was bright and cold, with a stiff breeze. I set off for the Thames again, just a rod and reel a pocket full of bits and a large yellow bucket (to sit on).

When I arrived at about 8, there was an old man, fishing in the swim. This was grandfathers favourite swim 40 years ago. He even had a pike rod out, towards the old tree, just like my grandfather used to do. I set up and trotted the gentle flow, it rained over night. I then noticed the old boy playing a fish on his pike rod. He was getting in a bit of a mess, his landing net was out of reach. I ran up and offered to help, he smiled and accepted my offer. I netted the fish, about 6lbs and placed it on the bank. He just stood looking at it, I said 'Do you need a hand unhook it?' Again he smiled and said 'Please'. He went to his tackle box and returned with a pair of long nosed pliers. Fortunately my forceps were in my pocket. I chinned the fish and lifted, the back hook was in the throat. I said are they barbed, he said yes but there doubles. I got him to gently pull the trace and then inverted the hook, it came out first time. The fish then kicked and swivelled around on my hand, great "esox revenge" and I'm not even fishing for them! I placed the fish in the net and he lifted it and put the net in the water allowing the fish to swim away. I placed my hand in my jacket pocket, it was bleeding profusely. Didn't want him to see that! He said thanks and I walked back to where I was fishing, inspecting my hand as I went (nice gash on the little finger). As I walked back I thought, what would he have done if I hadn't been there, he was obviously very wary of the fish, if not frightened. I then realised that this is why I joined the P.A.C all those years ago, in an attempt to educate anglers in pike handling and unhooking techniques. This incident made me realise the battle is not yet over. There may be all the high profile items, the nettings in Ireland, the anti's and livebaits, but there was still a lot of work to be done in relation to the issue of pike care and unhooking.

I didn't catch anything, went home with a sore hand and to top it all 100 meters from my home a girl drove straight into the front of my car, too busy waving goodbye to her mum!!!

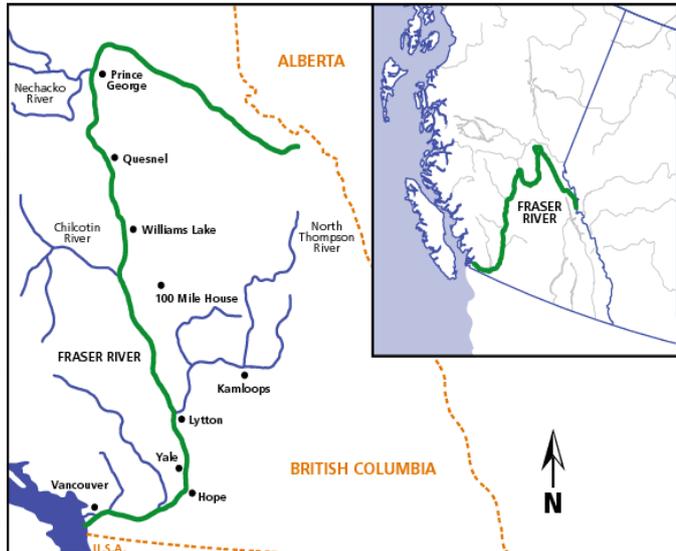
Tight lines,

Dave



THE BEAST

This past October saw me and my good fishing buddy Clive Fisher jetting off to Vancouver in British Columbia, Canada for 8 days on the Fraser River to try and catch a great white sturgeon. My interest in Sturgeon stemmed back a couple of years when I bought a book from Harris called "Great White Sturgeon Angling". Within this excellent publication stills of this most prehistoric beast to huge proportions are seen leaping from the massive rivers within BC. I searched libraries, the web and weeklys but could find very little else written on this fabulous sporting fish. Eventually I contacted Anglers World who, by luck, used a guide in Chilliwack, BC known as Cascade Fishing Charters. I promptly booked up 3 days fishing in June last year, tagging it onto the end of a St. Lawrence carping trip. Despite all my efforts and travelling half way across



the world, the fish didn't want to play ball. The weather was foul, the fish dozy and all I came back with was a couple of twenties for the photo album. That small flying visit and the hugely impressive list of fish caught (up to 750lb) and the friendly guides, Marc and Alexis, fuelled the desire to return and catch a wacker.

And so to this year. After spending a couple of days sightseeing in Vancouver, Clive and I made our way to Chilliwack. A small town nestled about 90km east of Vancouver. We checked in the 4* Rhombus Hotel and despite the nasty weather prayed to the fishy gods for some action.

The Fraser River is very long, fast and powerful. At approximately 630 miles long, it is free of any dams and enters the Pacific Ocean about 12 miles south of Vancouver. It was very majestic, especially as we were now in mid autumn when all the trees had turned magical gold and browns. The largest recorded white sturgeon was captured here and weighed over 1600lb! You can imagine hooking that on your 31b TC pike gear! The fish was around 18 feet in length, bigger than your average piker's boat!

During the late 1800's the Fraser River sturgeon were slaughtered by commercial net fisherman, Marc told us of horrific stories where they were used as fuel in the burners of the great steam trains. Now, however, before total decimation of the population the governing forces wised up and active conservation was implemented and is strictly enforced. (Catch and release, barbless hooks etc.)

The Great White Sturgeon is the largest of the Western world. They are a fabulous

fish to look at. A shovel nosed head houses two small black beady eyes, a huge "funnel" mouth and four sensory barbules for scurrying around on the bottom for potential grub. The long body is white/fawn in colour and is solid muscle, no flab hanging around here. Massive pectoral fins help the fish glide in the strong currents and a classic "V" tail powers the fish around, boy they are soooo strong! But the sturgy's most distinguishing feature is the five rows of boney "scutes". These triangular "spurs" are sometimes razor sharp and during the course of our week we had some nasty cuts for souvenirs! They are made of dentine and enamel and are probably present to protect the fish from everything that ate them all those millions of years ago.

And so what of our trip? We began fishing on the Saturday morning. 95% of the fishing is done from the boat. Marc and Lex own 2, one a jet boat which houses a 350HP Chevy V-8 inboard; the other, slightly smaller, has a 200HP Yamaha outboard! Either of these two makes travelling up and down the 100km or so stretch of river they fish a doddle. I preferred the jet boat; you can't beat the roar of a V-8!

Our tactics were to moor up in a potential fishy looking haunt and try for an hour or so, if nothing was biting we upped anchor and shot off elsewhere. The tactics were very simple, 50lb class "LAMI GLASS" uptide rods were coupled to ABU multipliers, loaded with 100lb Berkely Whiplash braid, 60lb Big Game Hooklinks and 6/0 MUSTAD BIG GUN hooks ! Sound familiar? I think not! This set up is simply legered on the bottom. Nothing complicated here. Our baits were a selection of ditch eels, lamprey and salmon roe sacks. The lamprey and eels are "whipped" onto the hooklink with cotton while the salmon roe is placed into "bags" (old cut up ladies tights) to stop nuisance "squaw" fish nicking the bait. The trick to the fishing is hooking these feisty beats.

That first day saw Clive and I watching the rod tops like vultures in eager anticipation. Some bites were mistaken for Squaw fish, they like the salmon roe too. After a while we began to understand what was what. The Sturgie gives a good long solid pull on the rod tip. Sometimes, as we were to find out, this is a very gentle tug, other times an almighty rod wrencher! After a couple of steady pulls, the rod is removed from the holster, held at waist height and pointed at the fish. Then the waiting game begins. What you want is a good consistent pull upon which you wind down EL PRONTO and then WHAM set that hook. Marc gave me a roasting over the week for "Doing the Bass Pro" You know those strikes you see on American videos where it starts at the floor and ends up past your lower back! This is totally unnecessary. Marc reckons he has hooked fish by simply winding down super quick.

We hooked four sturgie on the first day, up to 351b, minnows compared to the big guys, but a start. Our second day saw me hook into a 100Ib and after landing that fish we really began to appreciate the power of these fish. It is astonishing the force they can exert, they simply don't give up. Everything is normally quite subdued until they get closer to the boat when they realise they are hooked.

Bearing in mind the strength of the tackle, just when you thought you were making headway, the fish would sear off. At times the rod would be bent double, multiplier squealing under the strain of the singing braid. Hold on hard or you'll lose that gear! It took over 20 minutes to land the first 100lb, I was over the moon. I have been lucky enough in the past to catch Nile Perch over the ton but pound per pound the sturgie fights 3 times as hard, no doubt at all.

Day 3 saw Clive bank his first biggie. It was 125lb and was utterly bionic like a huge barbel on steroids! Clive was panting under the strain like an old cart horse and turned beet root red. Marc and Lex instinctively disconnect the anchor when you hook a big guy. A marker buoy is clipped onto it while you play the fish as you literally chase the fish down stream. We ended up about 1.5 miles downstream with that 125lb fish!

Our fourth and fifth days saw us bank some more cracking fish, Clive with another 100lb and some smaller brothers around 90lb. We also saw a bald-eagle take a duck from the river, another real bonus of the trip.

Friday 27th October was the red-letter day. Little did we know as scoffed down our morning porridge that we were in for a spectacular days fishing. The morning was pretty grim, the fog had failed to lift and as we ripped up the river I had doubts whether we would catch at all. We were fishing a spot known as Peters Island, a very pretty area where the river splits around a gravel bar island. Our baits were in the slack water where the two currents met. I had the first fish of 4lb, Clive the second at 35lb, and then the BEAST. The bite was a gentle affair, probably the smallest "tug" of the week. I got ready for the strike, waited for the tip to pull down steadily and then BOOM, set the BIG GUN home. What happened next was mental! An enormous bulk of fish erupted skywards out of the water like a cruise missile. "Big Fish" Mark shouted. For 45 minutes we played cat and mouse, I would gain a few yards then the fish would sear off with the hump. For possibly 10 minutes of those the fish sat on the bottom directly below the boat, not moving while I sweated like a pig trying to move the damn thing. My wrists ached, my back was singing with effort and I strained so hard at one stage I even thought my haemorrhoids popped out to say HELLO.

After a really excellent scrap and four out-of-water handshakes he was mine. At 6 feet 10 inches Marc reckoned he was about 225lb and around 40 years old. I was past caring, I was knackered. It was a real angling treasure to be in the water with such a beast as we rattled off the pictures, something I won't forget in a long time! We not only had that big 'un but also a 130, 2 x 90, 1 x 60, all in all 8 fish totalling 650lb. There can't be many places in the world that you get an average like that!

A good few beers were consumed in the bar that night. Our final day was again spent at Peters Island and although not as hectic we still managed a 120lb and 50lb. Our final total for the week was 53 for 1903lb. 1 x 200, 5x100 and 3 x 90, not bad fishing eh?

Russ Hillman

Reality

Ron Blake stared down at his latest acquisitions as they lay across his workbench. A pristine jet-black seven foot jerkbait rod fitted with a top of the range multiplier loaded to the gunwales with shiny fifty pound braid, he ran his thumb across it's lay then contemplated the twelve large jerkbaits (six bulldawgs and six suicks) all brand new each carrying it's own solid wire trace.

Carried away he imagined that by the following evening he would be the current holder of the biggest lure caught pike in the British Isles, with all this wonderful gear how could he miss? Breaking from his reverie he reverently packed the gear and stowed it in his small back pack then went to bed sleeping soundly till his five o'clock alarm call.

The following evening found him dejectedly standing on a rapidly darkening riverbank shoulders bowed thoroughly worn out rapidly realising that the most frequent malfunction in modern lure fishing is the angler himself not helped by an overactive imagination, and that this form of fishing is not just chuck it and chance it.

CWJ White



Cheeky Minky

It was late September on the Mackinaw River, in the air a hint of the winter to come. I had just spent a while leaning against a silver birch watching an angler fish out a Beatis hatch and take some nice trout.

Not being a trout merchant I proceeded to walk upstream to the Blue-Spruce section where I had been told a few nice size Northern Pike could be found. On arriving I instantly centred my interest on the narrow dark line of the undercut far bank, forty yards further on this line widened to look like an underwater cave. I moved quietly into position.

Setting up a 9 weight (forward taper) floating line and six feet of Hard Mason with six inches of eighteen pound b/s single strand wire, to this I attached a yellow Dahlberg diver, not a Mega-diver.

The cold grip of the water moved up my wader clad calf to my thigh as I carefully waded deeper my staff probing before me. Finding a secure spot I dropped the lines head on the fast centre channel and paid some out then made two false casts and fired off.

My target area was only forty feet away but the lure fell on the edge of fast water and was swept away, so paying out a bit more line I started again. This time the lure plopped down right on the banks edge and sank to an eight count

Raising the rod high to clear the fast centre I gave it a twitch and had the satisfaction of seeing an explosion of gold and green in the clear water, the fish then took off down stream spray flying from the running tine.

Wading carefully to a shallow bank where after a couple of minutes the contest was over and a nice ten pounder was netted and released. It was time for some victuals so I headed for one of the large flat rocks that line this riverbank.

As I reached the rock the black snarling head of a dog-mink came over the opposite side knowing full well that you do not play games with a mustelid, I swallowed and backed off moving to another rock farther along, where I had an uneasy snack.

Re-entering the water I proceeded to cast. After some minutes there was a terrific take on the BACK cast. As you have no doubt guessed it was the mink now sporting a yellow Dahlberg the 1/0 barbless firmly in its lip.

The animal snarled and spat then jumped in and swam purposefully towards me, my only recourse was to trap him in the net then half drown him. I then removed the hook and dumped the sodden bundle behind a rock and took off at a rate of knots, from sixty feet I heard the scream of rage.

Roughly two months later a chap I did not know overheard me talking about the Blue Spruce section at work and decided to give it a go. Doug Taylor came in hysterical and rushed out again as this fellow came through the door on sticks.

For the next hour he regaled us with the sad tale of how he was attacked by a baby black panther that bit a lump out of his arse as he ate his sandwiches.

"You know, it's nearly impossible to stop yourself laughing, isn't it"

CWJ White



RODRAGE

Ed lounged in the deckchair recovering from his short stay in the Missoula City Hospital. His thoughts rolled back to some six months previous while on a fortnights holiday in England he had attended a Pike Anglers Club seminar.

One pugnacious looking speaker held the view that he could fish wherever he chose and if challenged would deck the offender, no matter who they were. Being a product of the New York Queens district this tough approach appealed to Ed and on his return to the States resolved to give it a try, and so it was that he pulled his 4+4 Jeep off the road and parked under a tree.

Taking his baitcaster he climbed a four bar fence and surveyed a two acre lake that just screamed "Smallmouth Bass", walked to the waters edge and commenced casting.

"Hey, who said you could fish this hear ya lake, boy?" Ed stiffened and turned. The question came from a short grey-haired thickset guy (who looked a tad familiar) slitting his eyes and thrusting out his chin.

Ed rasped in true Clint Eastwood style "Nuts to you asshole".

This obviously had the required affect the guy stood speechless as Ed smirked, then two left jabs and a hard right uppercut dropped Ed in his tracks-

"OK, you are gonna be just fine but could you speak just a bit louder" it was the voice of a paramedic

Out of the mess of broken teeth and torn gums a querulous answer, "I thought that Rocky Marciano was dead?"

CWJ White



Worms

The heat of the day was becoming evident as he entered the Rathead Diner on Main Street. His oppressive bulk (26 stone) combined with his tack of height (4ft 5in) gave him an unforgettable tank like quality of aggression. He bellowed "Gimmee a cold beer and a bowl of chillidawg, pronto"

His meal served, he hunched over and spooned the red mixture into his mouth, eyes masked by the peak of his soiled Dr Juice cap. Zeb Puncas was the Roper County channel-cat champion and had been for quite a few years. Thirty-eight and was still single and everyone of Roper Counties five thousand inhabitants knew why, Catfish!

A tall thin shadow fell across the table as Elk Larson shrugged into the opposite bench -seat making Zeb look up.

"I hear yer a courting, who is she?" Elk was surprised by a reply.

"Lily Aimes of Ripple Creek"

"A looker?" Elk craned forward encouraged.

"Nope, old Gabe's coon hound looks better"

"Must have money, then?"

"Nope. Poor as a church mouse and while yer interested she's seventy-six years old". At this Elk blanched, his prominent adam's apple bobbed.

"Holy horntoads! What's she got then?"

Zeb considered his reply, then said. "She's got twelve acres of the finest night-crawler terrain in Roper County" Elks jaw sagged in disbelief but he did not laugh.

Well, true love ran out four months later when Lily sold her night-crawler terrain to a local developer, and Zeb, well the last I heard he was suing her for vandalism.

CWJ White



BUNGSAM LAN - THE WORLDS BEST DAY TICKET WATER!

As I opened my van door at Heathrow Terminal 4, the biting cold wind took my breath away. It was a bleak February morning and I was so glad to be jetting off to foreign shores. My latest fishing adventure was taking angling buddy Clive Fisher to Bangkok, Thailand to fish the staggering Bungsam Lan, a 30 acre "Day Ticket" water situated in Bang-Kapi, a suburb of Bangkok. Our host was Stu Brewster, owner and guide of this company "Exotic Oriental". Stu formed his company 3 years ago when he realised anglers would love the thrill of fishing Bungsam-Lan. A painter/decorator by trade, he is married to the energetic Tun and is fluent in Thai language, absolutely essential as no one we met spoke a word of English unless they were trying to sell you something.

Our ten-hour flight was boring. The excitement of fishing a new destination keeps spirits up, I really buzz whenever I cast a line on foreign shores, and you never know if you might get that continental whacker. I had read in old copies of *Carp World* that this venue held some real kippers, the king of the lake being Arapima, a South American catfish rumoured to be in excess of 400lb! Surely not true? We were about to find out.



Upon reaching Bangkok I couldn't help but chuckle as the taxi took us to the hotel. The sights, sounds and smells as you are whisked through hot, humid jam-packed

streets is eye opening. The whole city moves with breath taking pace. Psychotic drivers change lane at will, mad scooters with helmet-less riders and assorted cargo zig-zag between us, mental tut-tuts belched neat two stroke fumes as foreign passengers are zipped about at such frenetic pace you think there lives depended on it. There were stalls on the roadside selling any and everything. Items, which particularly caught the eye, were the mouth-watering selection of deep fried bugs and insects for that finger licking taste!

Our first day was spent recovering from the inevitable jet lag and tiredness you suffer from 10 hours in crap seating. The hotel was comfortable and clean, an adequate base to get some much needed kip. Now you may have heard about the reputation of Bangkok nightlife. Our first taste of it came on the Saturday night with a visit to "Nana" Plaza, the centre of all "Entertainment"! I would love to tell you about some of the things that we saw that evening but being a family paper I don't think the editor will allow! Let's just say pretty much anything goes!

The following morning an air-conditioned mini bus ferried us with sore, jaded heads to our fishing destination. At last! Pulling into the car park a spectacular sight greeted us, a real tropical oasis. We crossed a small, rickety old wooden bridge lined with huge pot plants and water lilies of gorgeous colours dotted the "moat" below us. After passing through the reception/tackle shop the true splendour stood before us. The lake is probably 25 acres in size, roughly rectangular in shape with a small 2-acre "lagoon" located in the top right hand corner. A general walkway bisects, this area being where the locals normally fish because it's the cheapest. The right hand side of the lake has 20 or so fishing huts jutting into the water, these special bamboo houses had all the creature comforts, sun loungers, running water and electricity for those home from home comforts. Talk about slumming it! As it was a Sunday there were literally hundreds of locals fishing, even whole families enjoying their day out. Masses of fluorescent bungs were being cast out from every angle, all laden with huge balls of bait. It sure was a sight! The most amazing thing that struck us was the fish! There were seething masses of silvery olive backs breaking everywhere we set our eyes, and good sizes too! I just couldn't possibly see us blanking. Apparently, there are over 30 species of fish present, from minnow to goliath.

Stu told us of the legendary Arapima, of which there are now six (2 unfortunately died days after capture by European Anglers last year) that were introduced four years ago at 20-30 pounds in weight. The biggest is now a whopping 450lb plus. How's that for rich water? Couple that with the Mekong catfish to over 220lb, giant Siamese carp (kahor) to over 200lb, snake headed catfish, mud carp, suckers, small headed river carp and you get a sort of idea of the density and variety.

We settled into our luxury home while Stu tooted off with a trolley (!) to get some bait. I had been prior warned of the ferocious power these cats had and brought suitable gear. Nine and a half-foot Conoflex six-pound test rods and Penn uptiders were coupled with Shimano big baitrunners, 75lb whiplash braid and 80lb fireline

leaders.

Sound over the top? I think not! Stu returned with a hernia inducing size bag of bread crusts, his knees buckling under the weight and strain! (about 40 kg of bait!)

The method of catching our quarry was simplicity itself. A small pike bung was set about 6 feet deep below which a coil feeder and a very short 2-3 inch hook length tied. The cunning part was getting the bait texture correct; about 201b of chopped bread crust is put in a mixing bowl to which was added a fishmeal mix and a liberal dose of coconut milk! This is sloshed about until a good sticky consistency is achieved. A huge handful is moulded hard around the coil feeder while 3 or 4 strips of crust squeezed together to form a "block". This is threaded twice up the hookshank and then put in the method ball. The whole ball probably weighed 10oz! I took my time in casting on the first chuck, not wanting to look a wally in front of the locals! The carbon creaked under the strain as it flew out 40-50 yards. Rods out, Clive and I grinned as we settled back for some fishy action. It was only 10 seconds or so before the floats started bobbing about as fish plucked the nosh. Sure enough, after 10 eventful minutes, Clives bait runner screamed into life, at such pace I was sure it would blow up!

The whiplash braid skating across the pea green water. The ferociousness of the take was met with a strike that thudded the rod over in a lovely parabola, setting the continental penetrator hook home. The fish went berserk, changing directions frequently and pulling the rod over in savage curves, and I mean SAVAGE. It was like putting coals on a bull terriers backside! For 10 minutes the fish darted and weaved while Clive strained and heaved! Just when we thought it was beat, off it would charge again! I am sure the warm water contributed to the bionic metabolism. To our left we had a huge bank of bridge pilings, underneath us was the huts wooden structure and on our right a big bank of cabbages and boy did they know it! We slipped the net finally under our first prize, a Mekong cat of around 201b.

It was unbelievable such a small fish could battle so hard. You can hardly describe these fish as pretty. They have a huge rubbery mouth, silvery olive coloured, scaleless, diamond shaped body - almost tench like. The powerful huge forked tail gives the fish its massive power. We were chuffed at our first Thai fish, at least we weren't going to blank, in fact, far from it. Over the following days the fish came thick and fast, all scrapping like tigers, testing man and tackle to the limit. On many occasion during the humid days the bait was engulfed by a hungry Mekong cat or its smaller brother, the Sawai. Utmost attention had to be paid as the bung touched down as failing to engage the bait runner lever forward would result in the whole lot being towed in as yours truly found out! I literally cast out, turned for a second and "plop"! £400.00 of rod and reel sunk into the depths! Luckily a quick Tarzan impression saved what would have been a costly mistake!

We really were hauling, I was lucky enough on the evening of the second day to catch the biggest cat a guest of Stu had landed. At 33kg (741b) it was a superb fight and at

times had to 6lb T.C. rod tip bent parallel to the butt! We landed all manner of fish including pirania, giant suckerfish, mud carp, small headed-chowprior rover carp and sawai. After 3 days of constant action I decided to try for the real kippers, the legendary Arapima. We had a specimen of about 10 feet in



A Mekong Catfish

length (!) porpoise in roughly the same spot on the same time on the previous days. It was massive in proportions, almost nessie like, a real beast of the murk. Its long silvery body was tipped in red around the scales and it would probably need a harpoon to stop it rather than a hook! I tried with one rod for the last 3 days of our trip with a roach like live bait but alas I can't report any epic battles!

If the arapima is the king of Bungsum Lan then the kahor carp is the prince. They are the most sort after fish in the lake with 200 odd fish up to over 200lb in weight. A very, short, stocky, heavily bronzed scaled member of the cyprinids, they are very elusive and don't give themselves up easily. Stu has landed 3 of 5 in all the time he has fished there. A local caught a stunning specimen of 45-50lb during our visit and what a privilege it was to witness such a special fish.

And so what of our final tally? We fished for 6 days between 9am-6pm and landed 161 fish, myself 98 and Clive 61 for a total weight of 3747lb. This was an average of 23lb per fish. The 74lb was the biggest, however I'm sure in some of those storming unstoppable runs we didn't land there was some real kippers!

There can't be many places world wide that give you that kind of action, I'm real glad that I have experienced it! GO FOR IT

Cheers, tatty bye - Russ Manning

Exotic Oriental is on : Mobile 07970 979290

or on the web at www.exoticoriental.co.uk

Russ Hillman



Dates for your diary

Meeting Dates 2003/04

13th October - Adrian from Arpino Rods on 'Rods of the Future'

10th November - Bill Rushmer on the 'Tidal Thames'.

8th December - Quiz Night.

12th January - Speaker (TBC)

9th February - Ordinary meeting

8th March - Speaker (TBC)

5th April (1st Monday as 2nd is bank holiday) - Ordinary meeting.

10th May - Speaker (TBC)

September 13th - Ordinary meeting

October 11th - Dennis Moules

November 8th - Ordinary meeting

December 13th - Ordinary meeting

This winter Walton PAC have exclusive access to Thorpe Park on the following dates, fishing is from both bank and boats.

November 16th

December 14th

January 11th

February 29th

Contact Dave Fish for full details

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