

The National Anguilla Club

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EDITORIAL.

It was with profound regret that I heard of the untimely death of our member Nigel Jeyes. A great shock indeed, and one which this member - and others too - will find hard to shake off. All who knew Nigel testify that he was a gentleman and a good sport. He had youth on his side and his whole adult life before him, and he possessed a sense of good humour which was highly contagious to those around him. That the Anguilla Club will miss him goes without saying, but the Club will not idly forget such a member. Wherever he is right now, in peace, I only hope that he achieves those things which were hard to achieve on earth. May his spirit live on, and long.

High summer is not exactly the best time to try to write or type out articles, as you can possibly imagine. This summer I have been putting that little extra effort into my fishing, possibly because I feel that I am entering my last few years of angling. Not that I intend packing up - far from it - but when one nears Fifty it becomes very obvious that ones pursuit of the finny species will have to be modified somewhat if it is to continue. Nowadays I even have to take that extra blanket, and use it too! I do not mind at all the thought of getting, er, not old exactly, Mature perhaps? But I do not relish the idea of losing contact with all those whose good company I have enjoyed for so long now. Remember those tablets they gave us during the war in order to take our minds off the ladies? Those I took are just beginning to work!

I have digressed a little. I was about to say that if the written word does seem a little late in arriving at your doorstep during the months of high summer, spare a thought for those who have to produce same. Your Secretary and his helpers do still forgo much of their leisure time in your interest, and things will hot up again ere the water temperatures start to fall.

We do at present have a very small stockpile of articles for your Bulletin. That is exactly as we intended, for one cannot produce a magazine without such a stock. That is not to say that we are easing off our requests for even more articles from you. They are as necessary as ever. Your performance in that respect has improved somewhat over the past couple of months or so, and having shown that you CAN do it I ask you to keep up the good work.

I do know, and note with delight, that several members are trying new tactics this year. This is highly commendable and to be encouraged at all times. I have come to learn, slowly and somewhat painfully, that the old tricks just do not work any more. Was a time when I could go to almost any eel water and fish in the same old style with the same old tackle and similar baits to those I had always used AND CATCH EELS. That no longer applies. Dave Holman taught me much more in one week on the Meres than I had learned in years. I have since taken to fishing over baited pitches, and with a variety of new baits. Some have worked, others have not, so far. But the whole exercise has given my angling a new lease of life. At the end of the summer I shall be writing at length to let you know how I have fared and of those things which have brought success. Meanwhile, I implore those of you who do not hold great faith in new ideas to try one or two yourself. You may be in for a pleasant surprise.

It becomes increasingly clear that the Angling press only publishes what it wants to publish. Even under the guise of 'Your Letter Page' or 'Controversy Spot' the thing is a farse. One just cannot batter the establishment, and the acknowledged EXPERTS can blandly turn out their sometimes ridiculous rubbish without you or I being able to say NAY. It remains to be seen whether or not the new monthly 'Coarse Angler' will give us a better hearing than we have at present. For myself, I rather doubt it, for their position in the game is to make money out of angling, and one cannot expect them to jeopardise that by publishing anything highly controversial - or can one?

Keep up the search for those eels my lads, and let us see some good ones in the second half of our altogether too short season. Good luck.

A.J. Sutton. (Editor)

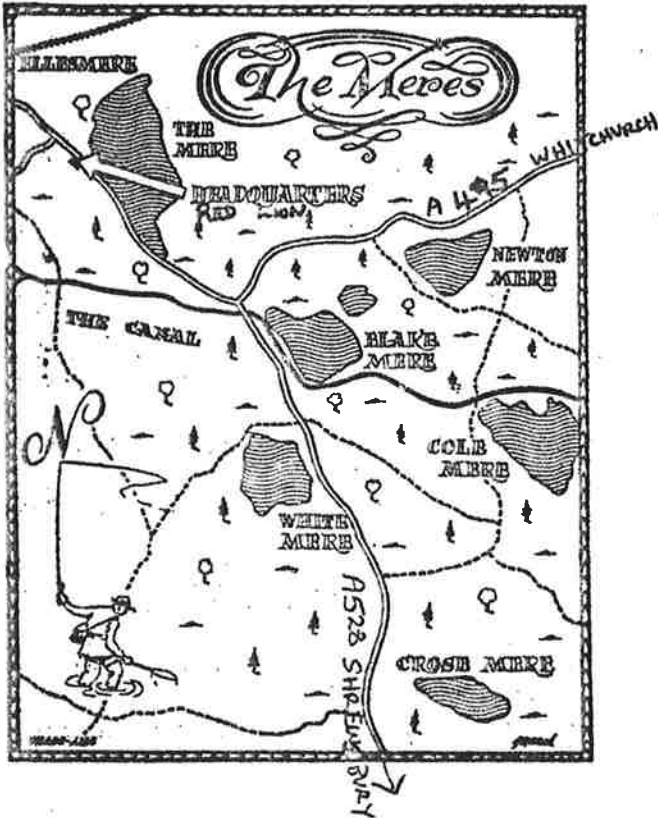
THE ELLESMERE LAKES.

By Dave Holman.

Recently, a considerable amount of enthusiasm has been displayed in the changing of venue for the Summer trip. Our second choice, it would seem, are the lakes around Ellesmere and so I would like to take this opportunity of outlining details and general information usually required for such a trip to take place.

A look at the first map will reveal a number of lakes(meres), the ones in which we are interested are - Blakemere, Whitemere, Crosemere and Colemere. The others are fishable only from boats and therefore details of them are omitted.

MAP 1.



A season ticket available from the 'RED LION' or from Clays tackle shop, Ellesmere, will cost you £3. No river Authority license is required.

Please do not attempt to poach these waters or fish without a ticket. The Anguilla Club is held in high esteem by many of the local anglers and we hope this situation will continue.

Should any member be in poor financial situation I will try to loan a ticket for such member if he contacts me direct.

For bait, worms will be hard to find but there are plenty of dace, gudgeon, perch and roach in the Shropshire Union canal which runs alongside of Blakemere(Llangollen Arm) and this stretch is fishable on the Ellesmere Club ticket. Feeders and pinkie maggots are far better for bait snatching than are the larger white ones sold in the shops.

Drinking water(for those that drink the stuff) and toilets are to be found alongside Ellesmere lake itself near to the Red Lion pub and Clays tackle shop has a limited amount of tackle and sometimes maggots for sale

Please limit yourself to two rods during the hours of daylight!

Crosemere and Whitemere tend to get bad runs of weed and algae growth during the summer. Both are subject to the phenomena known as 'bottom breaking'. This occurs when the algae growth breaks from the bottom and rises to the surface to float around as great green and very slimy blotches of matter. This always puts down any feeding fish and, I suspect, lowers the dissolved oxygen in the water by virtue of decomposition. It can always be spotted easily and, should it occur while you are there, a move should be made to another lake. However, during the months September onwards it is a rare occurrence. Blakemere does not suffer this problem at all and remains clear all year round, and is, therefore, always fishable. All the meres are bait fished by what I call the hit and run principle. Give each area one night then move on. Any member who lays seige on one area for the whole week is just asking for a long string of blanks. Having said that, I will give a somewhat brief run down on each of the lakes.

WHITEMERE.

No doubt the most popular venue on a trip will be Whitemere. It offers easy access to most of the fishable spots, although there is limited parking to the Eastern bank where the lake is generally fished from.

I sincerely believe that our members should spread themselves out as it takes very little bankside disturbance to put the fish off. Witness the fact that four of us fishing this venue last year were enough to put the fish right off whereas the previous weekends had been marvellous. In my opinion the daytime eel fishing is as good if not better than night fishing in the Autumn and, in addition, the big perch are to be caught then, and would delight any angler. I have caught many to 2:12 and there must be a good chance of a 3lb plus

perch. Best bait for these is a small dead fish. Pike and bream are also to be taken but the latter of the two is rarely seen. The best bream from this water went 12lb 3drms. Any member not fishing this mere before is in for a great delight as when the water is low the banks of pure white sand are uncovered from which Whitemere must have got its name. Whitemere is a strange place inasmuch as one time it can be difficult fishing with hardly a single run and on other nights you experience run after run. Once I had four runs at the same time, which makes for interesting fishing. Best times are when a strong S/W wind is blowing towards the road side when long range legering with $1\frac{1}{2}$ ounce bombs is by far the most productive method.

CROSEMERE.

Situated some three miles from Ellesmere ($1\frac{1}{2}$ from Whitemere) on the Shrewsbury road A528, this is, perhaps, the most remote of the waters. The water has been especially kind to me over the past few seasons and I always enjoy fishing it. It holds some very large fish of the species roach, perch and tench and we have not seen the best of the eel population yet by any means.

This is not a water for those who like their fishing easy. (Shame! Ed) For a start the walk from the road is enough to cripple our strongest member and many of the best swims are on the far side although if you were to hire a punt, of which there are two, from the Red Lion at 50p per day and row your equipment over it would be a little easier. The banks are rough and the open spots are few except around areas 8 - 12 - see map of water. Some of the stages are covered after heavy rain and it is often a case of putting one rod in a small gap in the trees and another rod in a gap some twenty yards away!

As you will see from reading the map, the water has a variety of both depth and bottom. This means that any special features you care to seek can be found. I usually fish the margins with worms either freelined or using slow sinking legers over the soft mud areas.

Many of the big eels I have caught from this lake have gorged up small perch in the 2"-3" range when left overnight in a keepnet, but although I have often tried fish baits all my eels have been taken on lobworms - either single or in bunches.

Note that car parking is limited to three or at the most four cars on the Shrewsbury roadside but PLEASE LEAVE THE GATEWAYS CLEAR FOR THE PASSAGE OF FARM TRAFFIC.

Editors note. For the naturalists among us the banks around this lake are mostly composed of some of the finest black sedge peat you will find anywhere and wild life is in abundance although myxomatosis is evident among the rabbits. As for that crippling walk, I am afraid that OLD SUTTON will never be the same again!

BLAKEMERE.

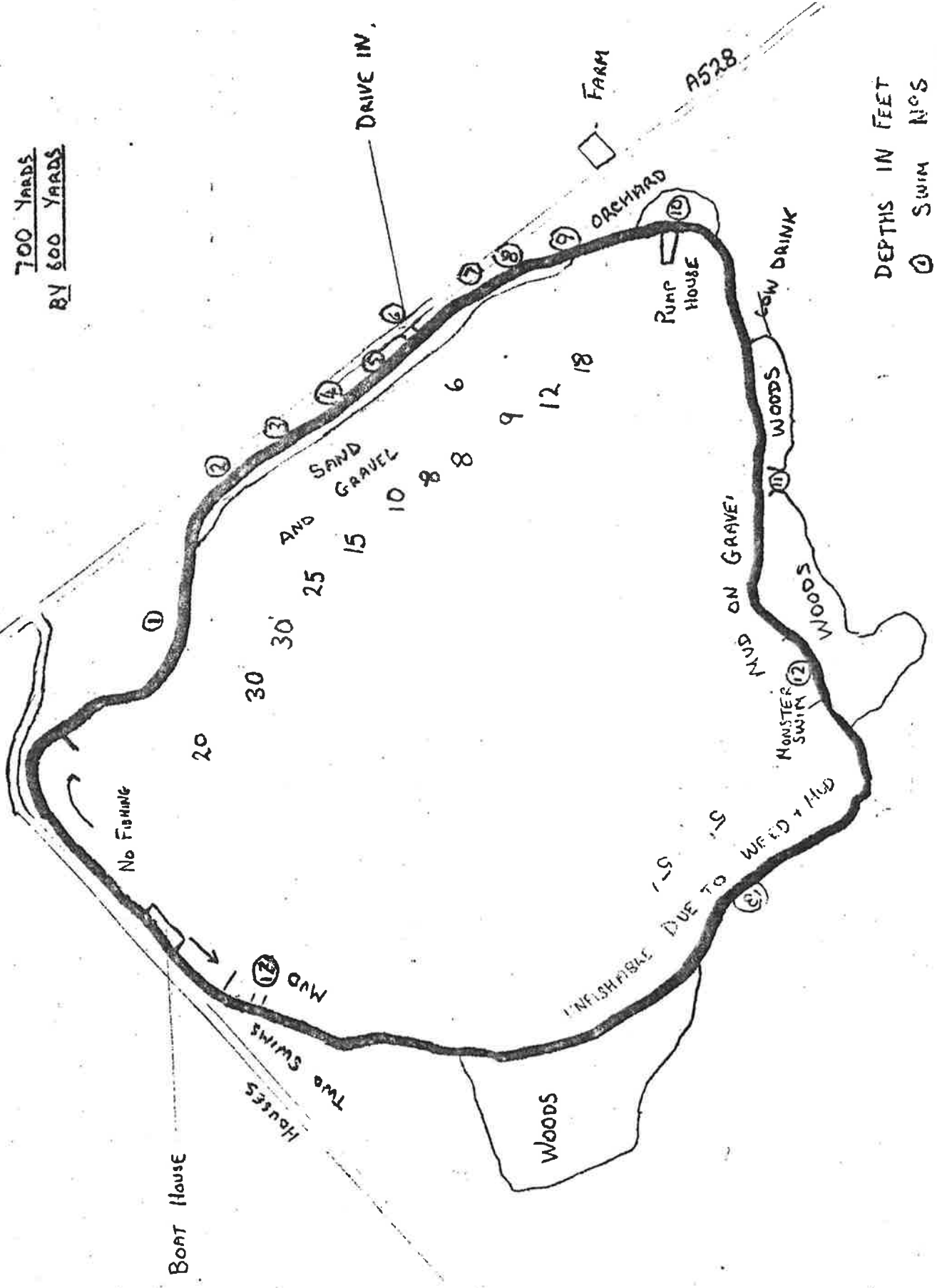
This really is a most beautiful water, delightfully picturesque, but any member fishing here must be prepared for blanks in plenty. In over sixteen sessions I can record only two eels but, having said that, I would not continue to fish the water if I did not believe there was the chance of a very big eel. In the past several have been caught on or near to the six pound mark and it is noticeable that these have come from the tree lined margins.

I have always used worm or dead baits before but, on a recent trip, Arthur Sutton suggested that I try a live bait, and this produced a run straight away. Unfortunately, the bait was dropped soon afterwards. There are plenty of bream to be caught to the 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb mark, good tench especially around spot 6 as well as pike and perch but the lake does tend to go dead with the coming of first light. Many times I have fished my eel rods scattered around the bank hooked up to bite alarms while I am tench and bream fishing the same area. This way I have enjoyed some good bags of fish and when you have the fish feeding well there is always the chance of something else moving in. A friend of mine had an eel of 5lb 11oz fishing just like that in 1975.

One problem here is that long boats tend to moor in the Shropshire Union canal along this stretch overnight (alongside of the lake) but very rarely are there any people about after dark although sleeping in the daytime for the tired eel angler can be difficult. A tackle trolley is useful at this venue as one can reach almost all of the swims from the canal towpath. The car park (layby) can take 8-10 cars so there is little problem in that respect. A great venue this, for those members who really like a challenge or who want to

MAP REF 335415

700 YARDS
BY 600 YARDS



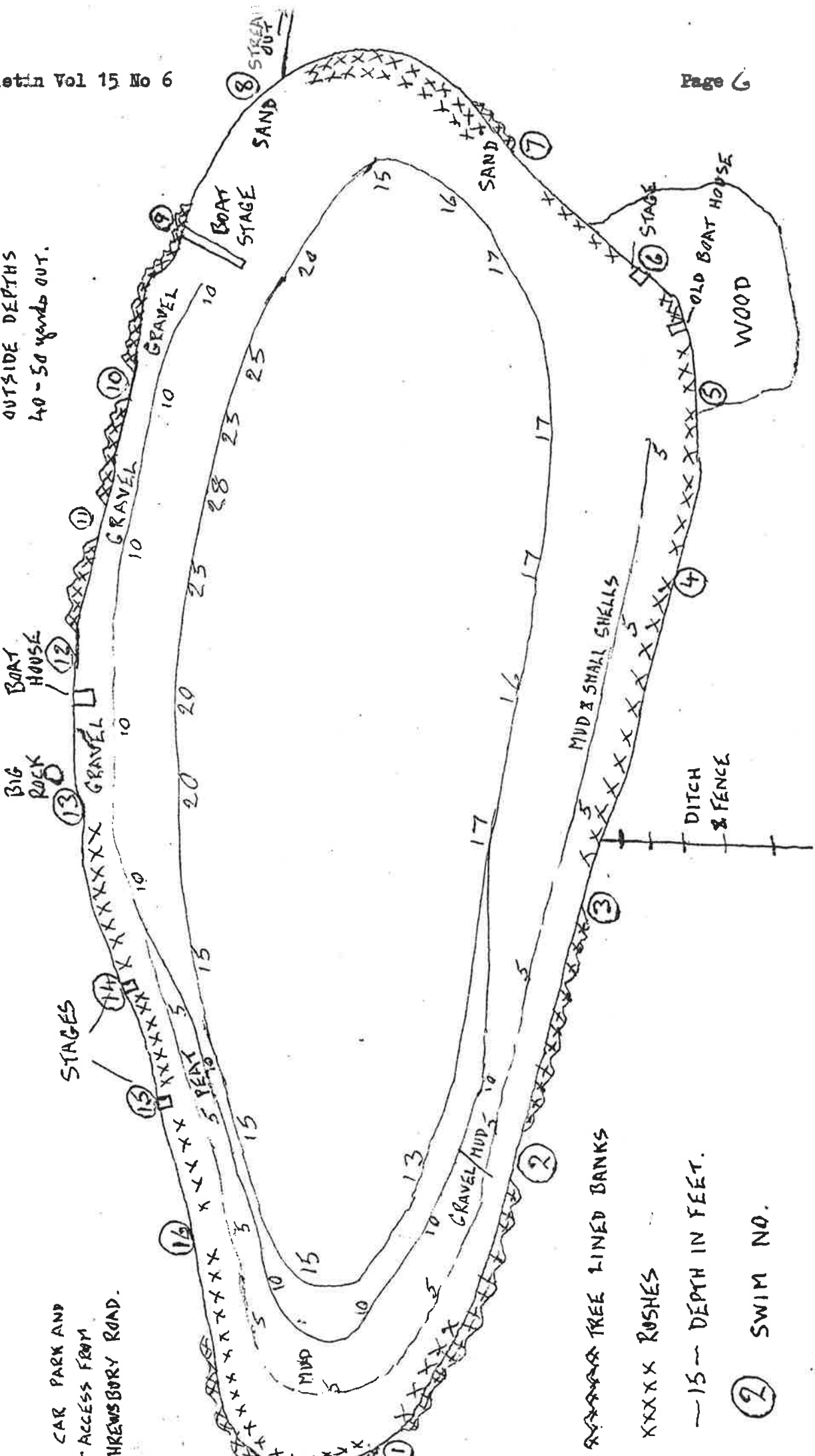
DEPTHS IN FEET
① SWIM NO'S

WHITEMERE

ROSE MERE

APPROX; 800 X 400 yards.

INSIDE DEPTHS APPROX
14-15 yards OUT.
OUTSIDE DEPTHS
40-50 yards OUT.



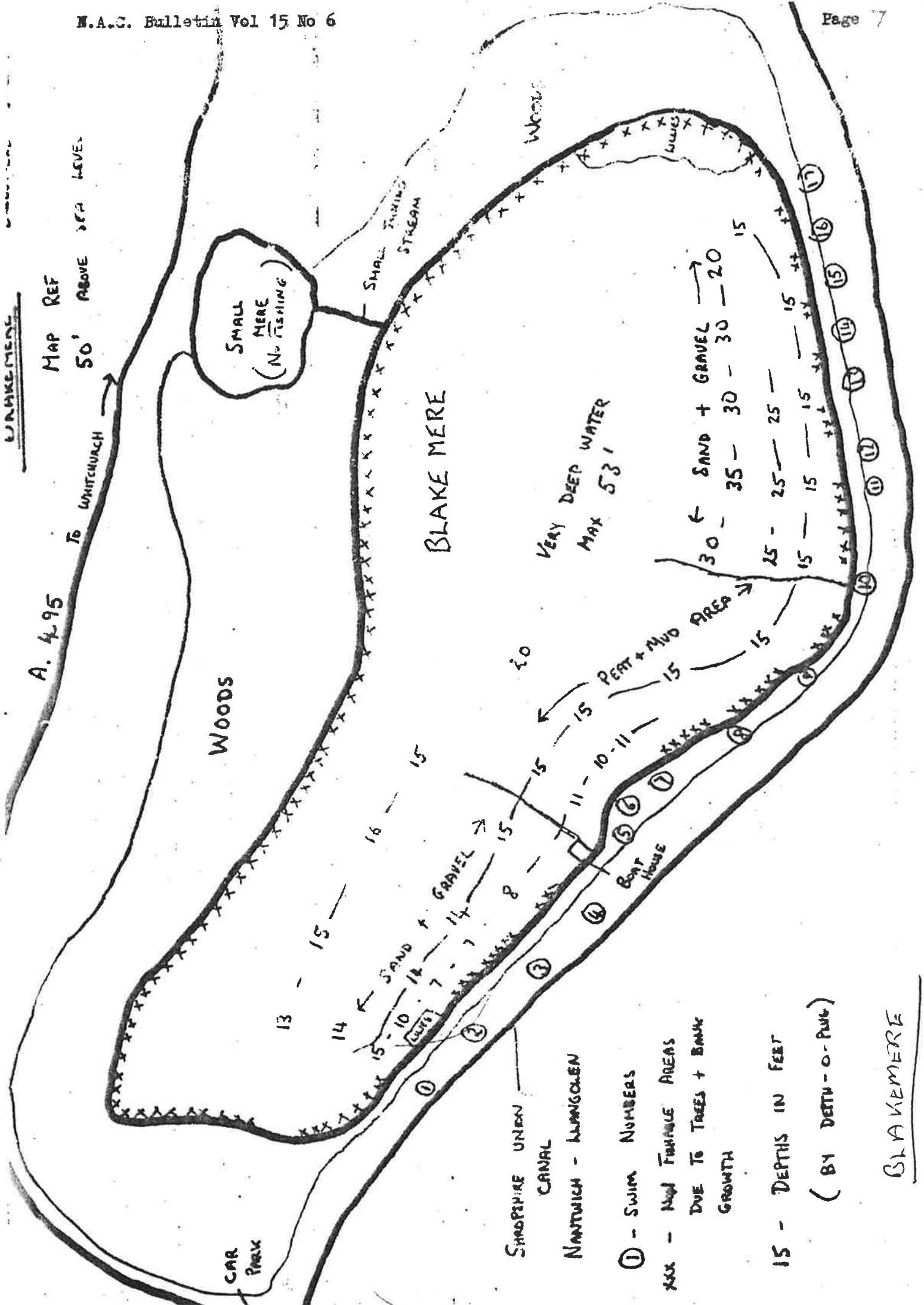
CAR PARK AND
ACCESS FROM
SHREWSBURY ROAD.

TREE LINED BANKS

RUSHES

—15— DEPTH IN FEET.

(2) SWIM NO.



A. 4.95

MAP REF

50' ABOVE SEA LEVEL

TO WHITCHURCH

WOODS

SMALL MERE (No Fishing)

SMALL FISHING STREAM

BLAKE MERE

VERY DEEP WATER
MAX 53'

BOAT HOUSE

SHROPSHIRE UNION
CANAL
NANTWICH - MANGOLEN

CAR PARK

① - SWIM NUMBERS

xxx - Mud Fungible AREAS
DUE TO TREES + BANK
GROWTH

15 - DEPTHS IN FEET
(BY DEPTH - 0 - PUG)

BLAKEMERE



ARTHUR SUTTON. Not postpraying it perhaps, but delighted with this fine eel taken during his week spent on the Meres with Dave Holman. Arthur says 'Had it not been for the sound advice from Dave, this one would still have been in the murky depths'.

OH WHAT A SEASON

By Bob Coxall

It all started at a place called Lapworth, in the first pound by the locks on the Stratford-on-Avon to Birmingham Canal. That was the first session of 1975 and that was a blank. I did a further four sessions at this venue, changing swim nearly every time. The fellow anglers with me were catching eels, the biggest going to 3lb 5oz, I was using the same tackle and methods as they were, and they were using my frozen bait, so why did I blank? I thought it must be a phase I'm going through.

The next three sessions were at a place called Pickmere, on the Whitsun Trip. This was organised by Ernie Orme, that popular Northern angler often depicted with a rod in one hand and a mug in the other. (Sorry Ernie). Well, I thought Ernie will have found a water with eels sticking their heads out of, waiting for food like well trained dolphins. I just can't blank there, surely? Well, I did catch two bream.

By this time the Season had started back at home and now I turned my attentions to my local waters. Up to the end of July I did two sessions at Earlswood, (I was here before Kitroy Sidley). Four sessions at Lifford Reservoir and nine sessions at Cannon Hill Park. The year before I had caught from Earlswood, eels of 4lb; 4lb; 3lb 11oz; 3lb 8oz; 3lb 8oz; 3lb 6oz; 3lb 2oz; and 3lb 1oz. Any way, I blanked at Earlswood. Cannon Hill the year before had produced eels of 5lb 11oz; 5lb 10oz; 4lb 11oz; 4lb 9oz; 4lb 3oz; 4lb 2oz; 4lb 1oz; 3lb 10oz; 3lb 2oz (Unfortunately not to me). Any way I still blanked. While I did my four sessions at Lifford a bloke named K. Hardman landed an eel of 5lb 1oz; any way I still blanked.

So unperturbed on the 31st of July, 1975 - kissed the cat and patted the wife on the head and set off for Lifford Reservoir, set up my three rods and got settled in for the night. At the unearthly time of 23.25 the silver paper moved and I'd got a run. Immediately I reached for my National Anguilla Code of Conduct and turned to the chapter on 'when you get a run' and followed it to the letter and landed an eel of 3lb 10½oz. Then the relief flooded all over me. At least I was not going to blank all Season!! Any way three days later I was back at Lifford full of enthusiasm, but to no avail. I blanked. Two days later I was back at Lifford and had an eel of 2lb 9½oz. Then for no apparent reason I did not fish for twenty one days. I just lost interest, I think it was delayed shock or something.

On the 26th of August, 1975 I blew the dust off my tackle and set off to Earlswood, set up my rods and waited. At 03.15 I had a run and landed an eel of 5lb 6oz (my best to date). Well, I was over the moon. Four days later I was back at Earlswood and had an eel of 4lb 9½oz. Two days later I was back at Earlswood and had an eel of 2lb 8oz, and that was my last session of the Season, as I went on holiday for three weeks and started Piking when I returned.

In conclusion I had done twenty eight sessions for six hundred and ten rod hours for five eels and the moral of this little saga is, if at first you don't succeed try, try again or every dog has it's day. So keep trying because those eels are still there. It's up to us, even when the going looks tough.

TRACE WIRE OR NOT TRACE WIRE? THAT IS THE QUESTION

Quote: L. BREAKSPEARE (Sorry) .
W. SHAKESPEARE.

Well it seems that Kelvin and Dave have stirred up the mud again concerning traces, so I might as well throw in my spoon and keep it stirred. When I first started eel fishing I used Nylon Monofilament Traces, then I progressed to using Single Strand Alasticum for dead baits and Braided Dacron 20lb breaking strain for wormbaits. Then, all change again to Multistrand Alasticum for both dead baits and worms. I then gained access to the Premier Eel Group (NAC). I then started using Multistrand wire nylon covered (Black Seal) as used by other members. Then a light entered my darkness in the shape of Mr. Kelvin Hardman and Marlin Steel Trace Wire. This is as thin as my main line and in my case fits the bill exactly.

By now you may be saying "What's he trying to tell us?" Well in my opinion always use a trace, we have a large selection to choose from but I think Marlin Steel stands head and shoulders above the rest. Why I say use a trace is that on the rare occasions that I have caught eels on nylon I noticed that when the hook has been removed the section of nylon near the eels lips has been badly serrated due to the side to side movement of the eels head when it is being landed and it does not seem to matter if the eel has big teeth or little teeth or a set of National Health choppers. I have also lost two eels using nylon, one on Mono and the other on Braided Dacron, both were severely serrated on the break.

As regards eels and traces, I feel that if the eel accepts the bait with a size two or four hook inside it, it will accept the trace as long as it is a thin one. When an eel picks up a bunch of three or four lobworms or swan mussel it must feel the hook inside before the Angler receives any indication of a run, but it still takes it regardless of the presence of a trace or of nylon. So it seems it is the hook that we have got to mask to get more runs.

By Bob Coxall.