

The National Anguilla Club

BULLETIN

VOLUME THIRTEEN.

NUMBER FOUR.

THE NATIONAL ANGUILLA CLUB.

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EDITORIAL

Well, here we are again, on the verge of a new season's eel fishing. Once again, those of us with access to close season fishing will be about to make a start, if one has not been made already. As was the case in 1975, my season is starting with Easter, the only difference, of course, being the fact that Easter is some four weeks later this year. So, with any luck I shall not be subjected to the arctic conditions which will make Easter 1975 memorable through their prominence. Furthermore, I'm not going to risk the alpine conditions of North Wales. Let's face it, Bala can be damn cold in the summer, so going there now is asking for trouble.

Where, one may ask, can you be fairly certain of being reasonably warm at this time of year and stand a reasonable chance of landing a few genuine Anguillas? Well, the meteorologists tell us that our mild climate is attributable to the warm waters of the Gulf Stream washing our western shores. Where else than the nearest point to the Gulf Stream? The logical place to go, then, is the west country, ie Cornwall.

Yes, our intrepid band of west country warriors will wander down that way again in a few weeks time (though by the time you're reading this, we might well have been and come back!). Yes, in the company of Kev "Dinsdale" and Bob "Wino" again, I hope to get this season off to a rather more successful start than the previous - you may recall that my 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ oz Bala monster was not only the biggest eel I caught for four months, but also the only eel I caught! But our westward ventures will not be unaccompanied. We are now fortunate in having a resident in the area in the Anguilla Club, Derek Minards, and Bob and I will look forward to renewing our friendship with him, and the entire south coast contingent will also be coming along, not to mention my constant companion of many a blank, chief cook and bottle washer, tea maker supreme and the finest bloke to share an uneventful blank with - cos he never gets up tight even when I hook and land the fish he hooked and lost previously (I deliberately let it get away because its so small, he said) - young Arthur Sutton. Yes, its quite a little NAC mini trip. Poor Derek doesn't know what's going to hit him - though as you read, he may! No doubt one of the band will submit a small offering for publication in the May issue, and that will probably be full of lies and inuendos about yours' truly.

The Bulletin is having more than its fair share of controversy of late; not that that is a bad thing. Far from it. It shows that our members do in fact read what their fellows have to say and are willing to voice their own views: a sure sign of a healthy Club. The real focal point for this controversy is Kevin's ideas as proposed in his article on Twilight (13.1). It has certainly caused something of a stir with valid arguments being put forward by both camps, and the debate is far from over: many people have made no comment and I am positive that they have an idea. They too should voice their opinion. Well done, Kev, you've certainly stirred up the thoughts of many.

I am a little disappointed that no-one has risen to the challenge put forward by Alan Hawkins. I'm sure his article (13.2) is worthy of a reply and I think it should come from someone other than me. Similarly, the recent article on livebaiting for eels that appeared in "Angling" has prompted Nigel Jeyes to make a comment. Perhaps someone else has something to say on the matter. So, Over to you.

DAVID SMITH.

THE LAKE BALA PUZZLE

By Alan Hawkins.

Few convincing theories have been advanced for dire lack of eels at Bala in the superb warm weather of last summer's trip. In fact, the only plausible explanation so far advanced is that the disturbance by the anglers and tourists around the lake edge put fish off the feed, or drove them into more remote areas. However, there was plenty of activity from fish other than eels in our swims, and if we accept the disturbance theory, we have to assume that it applies to eels and nothing else.

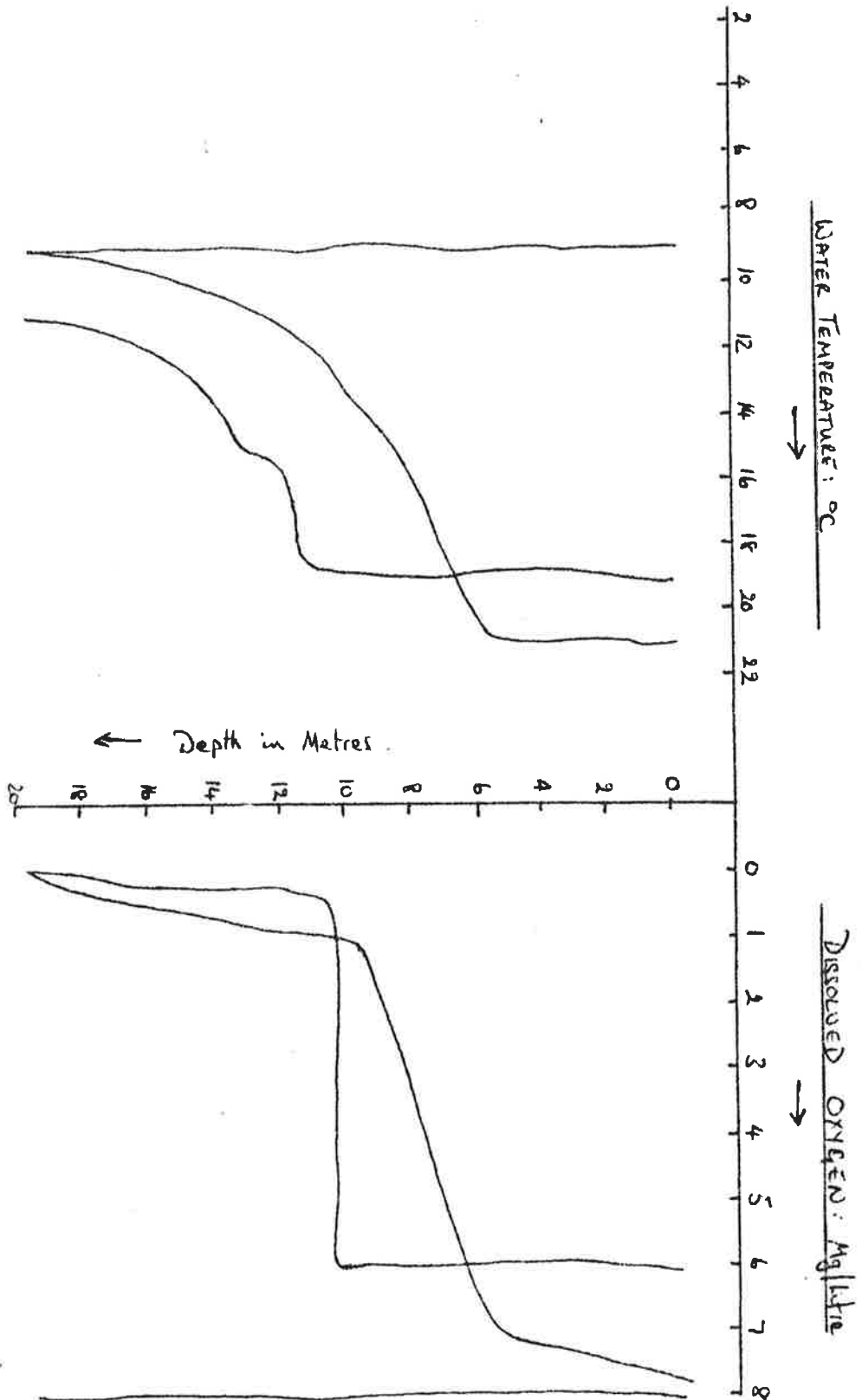
Recently another explanation has occurred to me, in terms of dissolved oxygen in the water. We are all familiar with the idea that large deep lakes tend to become stratified during the summer, with a layer of warm water overlying a layer of cold dense water underneath. The calmer the weather, and the higher the temperature, the more pronounced this effect becomes. What is less familiar is the idea that dissolved oxygen content can show a similar sort of stratification, and that, in some circumstances, oxygen can be present only in the warm upper layers.

What happens is this. During the spring and summer, the tiny algae and animals collectively forming the plankton, reach a maximum of growth. Many of us are familiar with, for example, the water bloom of algae at places like Whitemere. Such small creatures have only short life cycles, often only a few days, and when they die, they sink. And as they sink, they decay and use up the oxygen. Now, if the lake is thermally stratified, only the top layer of warm water is aerated, and only the top layer can renew its oxygen, either by wind action, or by the activities of the plant life in it. But in the deep cold layer, the decaying organisms use up oxygen with no way of replacing it until the winter comes, and the water is mixed throughout its depth. In many lakes, therefore, there is a period during the summer when the deeper part is not only colder than the top; it is also stagnant. No fish can survive there, not even eels. Only the midge larvae eke out an existence, and even they go into a period of summer starvation, since they cannot eat the "rain" of dead plankton without oxygen to help digest it.

The question is, could such conditions occur at Bala? And if they did, at what depth would oxygen become too low to support fish? This is a difficult question, because the tendency for summer stagnation in a lake of this form depends on its productivity. In other words, the bigger the crop of plankton there is, the more dead bodies there will be to deoxygenate the depths. Now, I would not class Bala as a particularly productive lake under normal conditions. The concentrations of dissolved minerals are not, I think, high enough to bring it into the productivity class of water such as the Shropshire meres. On the other hand, it is by no means as barren as many remote mountain lakes, and my estimation is that it is now in the middle, between the very unproductive Oligotrophic lakes and the productive Eutrophic type of lake. Also, I suspect, the nutrient content is now increasing because of man's activities in the area; agricultural fertilisers, domestic sewage, etc., all increase water fertility. Thousands of tourists can only increase the productivity of a lake like Bala.

The other part of the problem is that the crop of plankton produced is not only governed by the mineral elements present in the water; it is also governed by the weather. In stormy, cool conditions, growth will be slow, and the lake may not use up all available nutrients, possibly keeping some

TEMPERATURE AND OXYGEN IN LAKE ESROM
1955
(After Jonassen)



in store for next year. Conversely, in warm, settled conditions, growth will be very fast, and last summer was ideal in this respect. Thus, if the mineral status of Bala is high enough to produce a de-oxygenating crop of plankton, last summer is when it would have occurred. As a pointer to this, everyone who swam in the lake last summer noted how cloudy the water was. I looked at this and noted a lot of planktonic algae present. I have to admit, however, that the possible significance did not occur to me then. Well, if we accept for a moment that oxygen might have become unfavourably low last summer, at what depth would the drop have occurred? The answer to this is more straightforward. Oxygen would start to fall just below the interface between the warm upper layer and the cold water beneath: somewhere between 20 and 30ft, at a guess. As an example of the sort of effect one can get, the diagram on the previous page shows temperature and oxygen for a Danish lake, Lake Esrom. You will see that temperature and oxygen content are closely related: in August, temperature and oxygen content are closely related, roughly constant down to a depth of five metres, then both fall progressively towards the bottom. In September, there was an abrupt transition at about 9 metres (30ft) for both. In December, both temperature and oxygen were constant throughout.

Hence, as a speculative thought, it could be that nearly all the fish in Bala were occupying the upper 20-30ft when we fished it last. And where did we fish? Mainly between 35 and 60ft!

OF PIKE AND EELS

By Bob Pountney & Nigel Jeyes.

On Friday 5th March 1976, whilst fishing at Cheddar Reservoir, Somerset, Bob was spinning for Pike during mid morning and noticed in the margins what appeared to be a dead eel. However, whilst trying to foul hook it out of curiosity with a large spoon, the eel swam weakly away, to be discovered some five minutes later about fifty yards away from its original position in the margins. Nigel netted the eel which had severe head injuries, which, we both felt, in view of the lacerations, to be the work of pike. In fact, most of the skin had been removed from the head which gave it the appearance of having a white head. This eel weighed 2:0 exactly, measured 37 x 5 and was red in colour with prominent red borders to the fins.

Dr. "Frankenstein" Pountney, accompanied by his able assistant Mr "Crippen" Jeyes - the erstwhile Egor - dissected the fish and, although finding the stomach and gullet devoid of all signs of prey, discovered a short length of trace wire in the gut, but no hook. There were, however, several blood clots and an internal gash which looked to be the work of a hook.

Perhaps the eel escaped a fisherman and in its injured state was attacked by a pike. The injuries were distinctly parallel gashes, probably caused by the fish pulling out of the pike's maw. It was unusual in our experience and provided an interesting high point to an otherwise blank day.

Comment: Terry Jefferson has a photograph of a pair of pike attacking an eel of a couple of pounds, and Bob Reynolds developed a 16" lure which imitated the swimming action of an eel. -Ed.

DAY OR NIGHT?

By David Smith.

I congratulate Tony Hollerbach for joining in on the debate regarding twilight, (Bull. 13.2). That he has joined in is a measure of his devotion and belief in his cause. It is, therefore, with a heavy heart that I have to launch my attack against his argument. No hard feelings, though, Tony.

The first point raised by Tony is that twilight cannot be clearly defined. Fair comment: but can day or night be even more clearly defined? I think not. Let us take a practical example. You are fishing a long weekend. The month is July, the date Friday 30th, and you are going to fish three nights, ie until the morning of Monday August 2nd. According to the times shown on the session report forms for 1975 (the times shown there are more in keeping with actual sr and ss times than those for the coming season) will show the night periods as follows:

July 30 - 31	21.40 - 04.30	(6.50)
July 31 - Aug 1	21.40 - 05.20	(7.40)
Aug. 1 - 2	20.50 - 05.20	(8.30)

Thus, in three nights our night period has been extended by as much as 1.40 according to our paper work. But honestly, is there really that much difference? The answer, of course, is no. However, an eel caught at 05.00 on the first night is considered to be caught in day-time, whilst one caught at the same time on any of the other nights (or, rather, mornings) is considered to be taken at night! Rather ridiculous, eh? Especially when one considers that sr on July 31 1976 is 05.22!!

For a moment, then, let's forget all about twilight and consider only day and night. Let's define them first of all. Night, of course, is when its dark - an hour after sun-set to an hour before sunrise, if you like - and day is when its light (sunrise to sunset). (There are, of course, exceptions to this basic rule: heavy cloud or the odd total eclipse alters, somewhat the premise that its light during the day, and a harvest moon or John Sidley's quartz-iodine spotlight can make night somewhat lighter than one would normally expect! But, let us concentrate purely and simply on the general rules.) Because our session report forms run monthly, we cannot issue times of sr and ss for every day - that would make life complicated: thus, there is only one time to separate the periods.

What Kevin and I are suggesting, in reality, is a rationalisation of day and night times. We can say with some certainty that during August 1976 it will probably be dark between the hours of 21.40 - 04.30 (July's night) and that it will probably be light between the hours of 06.05 and 19.45 (Sept. day). This bit of speculation is borne out by sr and ss times for the whole of August. We are, then, left with a "never-never" period between each period - 1.55 in the evening and 1.35 in the morning.

Converting this spot of speculation into actual figures, we get the following. Throughout August, the days becoming progressively shorter, thus the shortest night in August is the night of Aug 1 - 2: conversely, the shortest period of daylight is to be expected on Aug 31. For 1976, the night of Aug 1/2 will be from one hour after ss (20.50) until one hour before sr (05.22), ie 21.50 - 04.22. On any August night in 1975 it will be dark between those hours. The day period for Aug 31 is sr to ss, ie. 06.11 - 19.42. On any August day in 1976 it will be light between those hours.

The remaining "never-never" period is neither light nor dark throughout the

whole of the month: at 21.00 on August 1 it will be light whilst at the same time on the 31, it will be dark. Now, whether we like it or not, we have a period of time that, for want of a better term, can be called "Twilight".

As mentioned above, there are other factors that can effect the quality of the time of day. Heavy cloud and bright moons can be notated under section 9 of the session report form, and anything qualitative rightly is included under "Comments". Data relating to the time of day is based on fact, not opinion, is, therefore, quantitative, and has no place in the "Comments" column alongside such gems of scientific data as "Bloody cold!" and "Tony's tea gave me the runs again.": no, no, no! This is technical data of value. Our present stock of figures show that night is better than day for catching eels. If we were to show, as a result of recording twilight, that clear waters have a higher rate of catch during the never-never period than at night, isn't that a help? Won't it inspire more evening sessions at the right water?

This, I feel, is the right time to introduce Brian Crawford's point about work on this aspect having been done. It is true that there are references to twilight in the 1970 Report. To say that because data and results have already been published is, in my view, very narrow minded indeed. In fact, I will go as far as to say that it is out and out hypocrisy! To extrapolate that argument to its logical conclusion, the whole of the current reporting scheme is valueless, because it is all covered in the 1970 Report: if you negate one proposal on a line of enquiry on the grounds of it having been done before, you negate the whole lot. But this is another argument altogether and can be left for another occasion.

The other point raised by Brian is the work load put on to the Club Analyst. This is only valid in as much that it is a sad reflection on the organisation of the Club - i.e. it could be interpreted as meaning we, as a Club, cannot cope with "active" members. This is no criticism of Brian, and I would be very sad if it was interpreted as such. But it is a fact that last season every member, with only one exception (and his absence was compensated for by the inclusion of two non members), contributed in full to the session reporting scheme. Even with the valuable assistance rendered by our team of reporting officers, there is still one heck of a lot of work for Brian to do. But this is an administrative problem upon which we must all ponder and discuss at the AGM this autumn.

Finally, and returning to Tony's views once again, I find the statement: "Far better to confine our activities to eels and the conservation of same" rather confusing. Surely our primary aim is the capture of eels in the most economical manner, and data that will assist in the fulfillment of that aim can only be valuable.

WOODS LAKE

By Ken Goward.

Woods Lake was the scene of a great deal of the 1975 Anguilla hunting effort for Chris Davy, Terry Jefferson and myself. Mention was made of it by Terry in a previous issue of the Bulletin (A bit of premeditated rule bending, Bull. 12.6) and by reading same you may gather that we were up against it

from the start! Still, although only four eels were caught, they included the 1975 Club best, a fish of 5:14 to Chris, and another 4lb+ fish to Terry. The other two fish weighed in at 3:3 and 3:13. I, naturally, failed to land even a bootlace.

The water is an old gravel pit (exact age not yet established) of approx. five acres. It is situated in the village of Corringham in South Essex. Corringham is built on the edge of the Thames estuary marshland of Tilbury, Fobbing and Pitsea. The Thames (saltwater) is only one mile away from the water, although an oil refinery is situated between the river and the lake. The most likely access is via a saltwater creek which runs within 100 yards of the lake.

The lake itself is approximately eight feet below the level of the surrounding land, sheer cliffs on three sides and a gradual slope on the other. The lake's maximum depth is around six feet, although the average is about four. The bottom is obviously hard and there is little or no weed, except for a patch of lily pads covering one small corner. The only other feature is a small island which just happens to be inhabited by the most nasty, obnoxious ducks one is ever likely to meet. Being a match angler dominated water, most of the swims are basket sized cut-outs in the slopes. Thankfully, with carp mania rife in our area, some of the pitches have been enlarged in darkness to make room for easy night fishing. Bankside cover is limited to a few bushes and sapling willows, although trees are planted further back. A footpath runs right round the lake and is more heavily used than the M.1. To adopt a stealthy approach on this water is rather like trying to block up the Blackwall Tunnel with a sausage!

Fish stocks consist mainly of goer roach and crucians. There are also "King" carp to a maximum of 30lb (this particular fish is caught every year and usually weighs 29:12) but with an average weight of around 8lb; and bream - 'orrible slimy things wot average 1lb and destroy carp baits with gay abandon, and just won't leave worms alone.

The big black cloud over Woods is the rule book: rules drawn up by a bigot of an owner. One only has to speak to the man (?) for a few minutes and you see what I mean. He told us off in no uncertain terms for possessing plastic dustbins. He would not believe what we had them for and insisted that we were out to pinch his perishing carp and bream! Only one rod is allowed, although, if you bribe the baliff with 30p for a guest ticket, a second rod can be used: if a guest is with you, it's back to one rod apiece. However, we have become experts in the "spare rod hidden in the bushes".

Finally, there is the floatfishing by torchlight set, except that these idiots use car headlights, hurricane and Tilley lamps, World War 2 searchlights you name it! In fact, there's little difference between day and night, it gets so bad sometimes!

The three of us have had most of our runs on either very small dead-baits or tail half DB's. The ratio of runs to hooked fish is very poor - especially in my case! We have evidence that at least some of the runs are carp. Chris had one of about six pounds which, unfortunately, shed the hook.

Anyway, that's about it. As always, any member who may wish to join us at Woods this season is cordially invited to do so. It's not such a bad place, as the boozier is but a few yards away, there's a chip shop a hundred yards or so further on, dead-baits virtually on tap, and home is but a fifteen minute drive away. What more could one want?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Editor,

Having had time to read and digest the Special Report issue of the Bulletin, 13.3, complete with the list of notable eels for 1975, I feel I must put the record straight. The list and the report credits me with having caught an eel of 4:12 from Bala Lake. That is not so. I have never caught an eel over four pounds in my life. I am sorry, Brian, if my session report indicated an eel of that size; I guess I must have got my metrics mixed up.

I would, however, like to add that Terry Jefferson holds the official rod caught eel record for Bala Lake, with a magnificent eel of 4:10.

Congratulations, Terry.

Yours truly,

Ernie Orme,
101, Grangemoor,
Runcorn, Cheshire.

Dear Editor,

Just a few lines to argue further on Kevin Richmond's excellent article, The Day-Night-Twilight Controversy (Bul. 13.1). Yes, Kevin, the way you put your point over certainly made me feel inclined to agree with you 100%.

However, there's been this nagging doubt in my mind which has caused me to think long and hard - thinking is always painful for me! If one were to read an article in Angling magazine entitled "Pike Hotspots" by Martin Gay (October 1975), some further light could be shed on the matter (excuse the horrible pun!) In this article, Martin makes reference to dawn/dusk feeding in pike, but I feel this may be useful to apply to eel fishing. I'll just quote this passage:

"At some angle of between 18 and 26 degrees (I am not sure which) of the sun's rays striking the water, the light rays no longer penetrate the surface, which presumably presumably means that it gets darker a lot quicker beneath the surface than it seems to us anglers, so the time must come when we think we are fishing for dusk feeders but in fact any fish caught are actually feeding in all but pitch darkness - depth and water clarity considered, of course."

Therefore, it seems to me that there are just too many variables - such as cloud cover, depth water clarity, etc. - to include Twilight on the session reports. Perhaps we should have "twilight" caught eels as an optional part of session reports - still recording all eels as either day or night caught on the compulsory part.

One further point. Many thanks to AJS for making me feel guilty in his article - My Eel Fishing for 1976 (Bul.13.2). I too tend to fish in Arthur's 1975 style, so, perhaps I will take notice of his new plans. Anyway, it's a good excuse not to make any more nocturnal tea for messrs. Smith and Jefferson!

Cheers all,

Ken Goward,

11, Oak Green,
Billericay, Essex.

Dear Editor,

I hope all of our members have had the opportunity of reading the article in "Angling" - Big Eel and Livebaits, by John Nolan, March 1976.

I personally think that it was a very worthwhile article formulating a perhaps not new concept on eel baits. It certainly requires consideration John Nolan presents some interesting experiences to strengthen his theory; a theory the NAC should really have originated. This tendency of eels to take livebaits has not really been brought into the open before in one article, and captures over the past few years certainly bear out his case.

People in general are always slow to adapt and adopt new ideas and I think Nolan is clearly throwing down the gauntlet: one that we must pick up and develop. Think about it. What have we done in this field? I know of nothing. I can't ever remember it being referred to in either correspondence or conversation.

I remember a few years ago, passing through a phase of ledgering live minnows, liphooked with small singles. The baits were successful. Eels around the pound mark regularly took them. The problem I found was that when an eel ran with the bait, it often chomped it in half, leaving the head, which was always returned for later, and the offending fish (not necessarily the same one) hooked. Actually, this turned my mind towards small half baits and the concept of livebaiting was subsequently neglected.

In any event, this may inject a new topic of conversation into discussions. I, for one, am going to attempt it, and I'm sure the idea will interest other members

Cheers,

Nigel Jeyes,

9A Southwoods,
Yecovil, Soms.

ALL THINGS EQUINE

By Alan Hawkins.

I am, as you all know, a kindly and well natured soul, not given to violent hatred of the animal world. Indeed, I have two cats, to say nothing of a wife and two kids, none of whom bear any lasting marks of ill-treatment. But for every rule there must be an exception, and in my case there is a large (often very large) exception. It walks on four iron clad legs, stands up to six feet tall, and has a face full of nasty yellow teeth. No, I am not referring to Dave Ball or Ernie Orme. My absolute and undying hatred is directed at horses. And they know it and react accordingly.

It all started when I was 14, when Nigel Frostwick's Uncle Nick, with a peculiar gleam in his eye, said he had just bought a pony for his daughter, and would we like to ride it. We should have known better - Nick, old Nick as he was known, was a sadistic eccentric who, for example, had been known to rope up his maiden aunt and drag her round the midden attached to the back of his landrover. But undaunted we set off armed with saddle, bridle and all sorts of bits and pieces of vague and imponderable utility. We

arrived at the stable, opened the top door to have a look, and out came a wicked looking head with long yellow teeth gnashing up and down. The details of how we eventually roped and saddled this evil creature are lost in the mists of time, all I know is that it was very long and painful.

Then came the fateful moment when Nigel and I spun a coin for the privilege of first ride. I lost, and so it was me. I ascended this beast, which immediately trotted purposefully across the field to a barbed wire fence and proceeded to rub my right leg up and down its length. In vain did I pull its head round through 180 degrees, it stared me full in the face with bloodshot eyes and continued. Only when my trousers were in shreds, and my leg bleeding in several places did it stop. Suddenly, and without warning, it careered off across the paddock in leaps and bounds, finally stopping so abruptly that I described an ungainly parabola over its head and into a bramble bush.

Never, since then, have I been on a horse, not even a donkey on the beach. But will they respect my preference for keeping my distance? Will they heck! There only has to be an equine within four miles and it thunders up, head tossing and hooves flailing, to eat my sandwiches, trample my gear and, if it can, give me an early bath. Inevitably, horses are arrogant beasts. A judicious swipe with the landing net pole is enough for the normal run of cattle. Not horses. One, I remember with horror, seized my old cane pole and chewed it steadily and meaningfully into small pieces. What would have happened next I don't know; I was busy trotting the stream to the far bank.

But the climax came one Saturday night early in the year. Dave Ball and I were quietly fishing the Kennet on a pitch black night for chub and barbel. I was perched on my chair on the top of a steep bank above a deep and interesting hole. I had already pricked and lost one fish, and was concentrating hard on the chance of another. Suddenly, that scalp-crawling sensation of being watched at close range by a malevolent force. The next moment an enormous black, hairy head thrust over my right shoulder and went HRRRUUMPHHH at five-million decibels in my right lug. Cape Kennedy would have been proud of my vertical takeoff, though the brown stain on the seat of my chair isn't typical of the average rocket exhaust. When I came back down to earth, back into the chair (for I had risen and fallen in an absolute vertical plane) a set of powerful teeth sank into the back of my jacket and pulled me firmly over backwards. Looking up, framed against the moon, was the head of a horrible black horse, jaws working and saliva drooling. Big metal hooves were stamping up and down

Fortunately there was a distraction. A sort of strangulated gargling noise down the bank sent the beast trotting off to have a look. It was, inevitably, Dave Ball. Had he rushed to my aid? Not at all. He was collapsed, and in some pain, from uncontrollable mirth.

CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

It was really something to attend the Spring General Meeting. It was one to remember for some time. The support of members for the Club is very gratifying to the Committee. I certainly look forward to seeing most of you again during the year.

I know quite a few members will be travelling over to the South West for a get together at Easter in Cornwall. I am unable to make it there but certainly wish the lads the very best of sport. I will be spending Easter in Southampton so will miss out.

The Spring outing is definitely on. Tony Hellerbach and I had an eeling session with the bailiff of Bra Lake and there will be no problems. I will be having more information printed to be sent out to those members intending attending. I will be present at the water at about 6pm on the Friday 28th May to receive members, but I hope the instructions given with the water description will be of use. There will be no cost except buying a red licence. If requested I can obtain these for members at either £1 per red, yearly, or 40p per red weekly. For members not having one, they can also be bought in Peterborough on the Saturday.

There are a couple of small waters nearby where baits can be caught at a cost of 30p per red per day. Maggots can be obtained in Peterborough, or I can get them if requested at about 45p per pint.

Bra Lake now normally carries a day ticket fee of 50p, but the Bailiff assures me this does not apply to the NAC.

This letter is being written before the NASG British Conference at Nottingham. I am looking forward to the weekend and meeting all the lads again as I found the time passed too quickly at the SGM and would liked to have had a much longer chat to everyone. As they say, time passes quickly when you are enjoying yourself.

I guess all members are raring to get stuck into big eels once more. Remember to think of the lads who live in areas where close season eel angling is not allowed. They have much travelling to do. Please remembers also to have a careful read of the 1970 Report, reissued last year at great expense of time and stationary. I would also ask you to read the Report for 1975 and these of other previous seasons. All information is useful, and we find by continually modifying our approach, eeling continues to be as absorbing as always.

I have received notification from the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food that they have had my letter of objection to the Anglian Water Authority proposals for the region, i.e., that all close season eeling will be banned except where no hook or metal appliance is used. I would like to see someone from the AWA trying to land a 3lb eel on normal babbling gear....

I am thankful to say that there are intelligent life forms at some Water Authorities, the North West Authority for instance, do propose allowing close season eel angling with no restriction as to bait or tackle. The Severn/Trent Authority have invited me to a short consultative meeting on eel angling as it is allowed in the R. Severn area but not the Trent. Again, they like documentation to come in neat parcels, all eel angling or none. Surprisingly though, they are considering scrapping the close season altogether. That would be a turn up for the records, and assist our other fights to come.

Brian Crawford