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Presidents Message

January/February 2017

Another year done and dusted and a new one just started. It was good to hear that there were a reasonable number of members that fished the club outing on the Colo River this month. It also brings up a new regulation that was brought into play last year by the current government. One of our members was caught fishing from his yak WITHOUT wearing a life vest. A new regulation was put in place last year that says we must wear a life vest at **ALL** times now, at least that is the way I read it, and seeing our member was fined \$100.00 I would assume that I am correct.

On a happier note there were quite a few fish landed on the day but from what I have heard most were of the smaller variety. The club held a Bar B Que at Skeleton Rocks Reserve and most of the fisho's attended, big thanks to Milton for going along with the gear as he did not fish the day.

Hopefully this year will be better for all of us, looking forward to hearing about and seeing the pictures of some new PB's for club members.

Bass Catch is coming up In February, so hope to see many of you attending there.

Regards and Tight Lines

Alan Izzard

The Editors Message

Welcome to the February edition of the Bronze Battler, the first for 2017.

Well, the days' weeks and months feel like they're racing by at a phenomenal speed – the only solution, I suspect, is to go fishing.

The bass fishing this season has seen little rain until recently, but after last week's deluge, the Bass should be invigorated, and just in time as there's the near-perfectly timed **HAWKESBURY / NEPEAN BASS CATCH** happening 18th & 19th February (it's on this weekend !!!).

With camping from Friday, a BBQ Fri & Sat evening, and some options for additional fishing - carp eradication on Friday 17th, it'll be a great weekend - in previous Bass Catch's we've fished for carp removing numerous decent sized ones from the waterway, we've also caught herring, mullet and tussled with some big freshwater eels – all good fun. Looking forward to fishing with you and seeing you there.

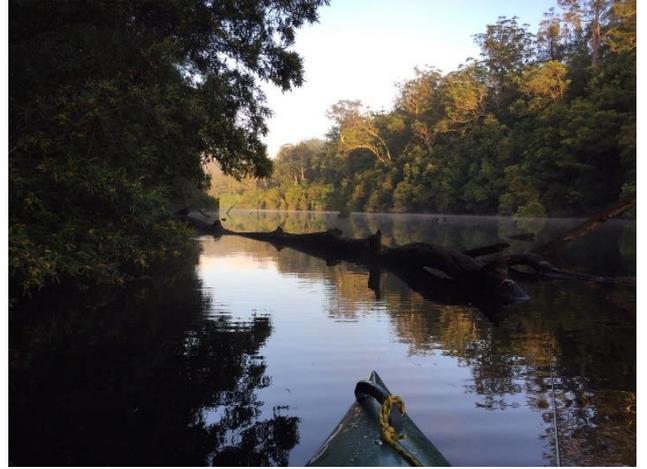


Photo: Jason McMaster

See Rico's article, up next, regarding **Bass Catch Registration**

<http://www.basssydney.com/basscatch/index.php>.

Bronze Battler submissions to bronzebattler@yahoo.com

Damian

In this edition also: boat fishing, goanna, snake, dog bites, tidal vs fresh, mental health, PFD, penalised, unexpected hot blitz – all topics included herein – tight lines and enjoy:

CLUB NEWS BASS CATCH 17-18 February 2017 - Rico van de Kerkhof

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CLUB NEWS

BASS CATCH 17-18 February 2017

Rico van de Kerkhof

Dear all,

February is the month of our Bass Catch.



The most recent updates I've got about the fishing in the Nepean are GOOD! Club member Tham very recently, managed to land 14 in an hour's time, almost every cast was a fish, well done.

Bass Catch: Don't forget to register here:

<http://www.bassydney.com/basscatch/index.php>

Fishing should be good with the recent rains we've had. Hope to see you all there for a good time, camping, BBQ and a few Ports - bring a glass and I'll supply a nice bottle; (or feel free to bring a bottle o' Port that may be hiding in the back of the cabinet ~ awaiting to be cut loose & drunken by a bunch of thirsty fisherman).

Our last Bass Catch in October 2016 was a great success, in club member turnout and the chat and banter around the campfire – some nice camaraderie. But the P.A.C. (Port Appreciation Club) had trouble finishing all the bottles that were on offer - our Scottish friend (ahem, that'll be the Editor, hiccup) did his old country proud. Not so much in the morning though!

The fishing wasn't the best at that time, Bass were sporadic for some, but we all caught some fish and that's what it's all about. Afterwards we stared into the flames in quiet contemplation.



Rico

Editorial: Russell St, Emu Plains NSW 2750

Damian Balfour

I'd like to comment on our progress at Russell St, Emu Plains NSW 2750. This long-term project of ten years on the banks of the Nepean River has exceeded the *half way mark* with tremendous progress being made. Some of our partners with whom we have partnered with may have waned, come and gone or gotten side-tracked over the years; but credit and recognition should be acknowledged to the regular attendees: club members that turn up most months and donate around 6 hours of working time to the project. You can add travel time to those hours as well and it becomes a serious commitment.

I'd like to make special mention of '*non-club members*' Kerrith and Margaret, who are there every month, donating their time, skills and support: and also (I suspect) they are there in the weekends in between our club's monthly visits.

Both Margaret and Kerrith attend faithfully and diligently, keeping an eye on the area and providing feedback on conditions. Despite such obstacles as dry heat, pesky flies, 4WD hoons, motocross outriders and specifically the 'mad-dog-woman' (some more about that later), Kerrith and Margaret can be found digging, weeding and watering our newly planted natives. Often Kerrith and Margaret are our eyes and ears at the site when inclement weather, vandalism, off-roading vehicles, fire etc. threaten. Many a time we've noticed adverse activity at the site and through Margaret's and Kerrith's observations we've been able to narrow down the occurrences and likely culprits. There's a few friendly and helpful characters along that river stretch, but not all are so innocuous. There is the frequent presence of the newly titled 'mad-dog-woman' who regularly walks her three dogs around that area and will gladly regale you with tales of her dog's rescuing from the 'pound' and all the good that she does; but she has a darker side, neglecting to tell you that her dogs bite and Margaret has been nipped/bitten four times by these *off the lead* rescued canines (I recommend a big stick as a deterrent). The 'Mad Dog Woman' explains away her dogs' behaviours through victim blaming, accusing Margaret of "hating dogs and the dogs can sense it", (and no wonder) again I recommend a big stick and a safe distance, I waved a fishing rod at her when she approached me, but it did not good – she approached and failed to enthrall me for 20minutes about her beloved pooches, thus I recommend a stick. Margaret and Kerrith may not be signed up Bass Sydney Club members but their commitment is unwavering and their attendance is greatly appreciated. In addition, Kerrith has stepped into Al Phyllis's shoes of providing refreshment, as she's now cooking up the sausages & onions and brewing us tea (with the promise of beer on tap, I've suggested). On behalf of *Bass Sydney*, I'd like to convey our appreciation to you both.

The Riparian zone is progressing well: there's native plants thriving, there's light penetrating the area, native grasses and saplings are getting plenty of sunshine and native trees are branching out, free from balloon vine, providing much needed shade from the midday sun. Plenty of small forest and river friendly birds pervade the area and I dare say, much more native wildlife is benefitting from the improvement to that area.

Only last Saturday I saw a kingfisher darting and fishing and a Goanna drinking from the river before taking refuge high up a tree, quite a *feat* for a four footed, five-foot lizard. It had an amazingly big head that was coloured with blue.



Photo: Jason McMaster

Fishing at Russell St., before and after our Bushcare work.

If time is tight? A sneaky bankside fishing session can be got before and after our riparian recovery efforts.



Photo: HS Tham



Photo: Margaret Somerville

P.F.D. / LIFE JACKET ISSUE

Damian Balfour Editor

What lifejacket am I required to wear on my recreational vessel?

At the Colo River Bass Sydney Club outing in January this year, we rendezvous at the 1pm BBQ: a fellow member approached & disclosed, rather astonishingly, that he's just been **busted** on the water and served a **\$100 fine** by the Roads & Maritime Services (R.M.S.) for being on the water without a PFD being worn! All present were rather surprised, somewhat shocked and disappointed: and no-one present was thoroughly clear on the reasons why.

Thus, I thought it pertinent to explore the RMS website for more information. And there IS certainly MORE information: enough to get you bamboozled, cross-eyed and capsized. In fact, tonight I started mistakenly searching the DPI Fisheries website before correctly moving onto the R.M.S. website.

After a time, I conclude that:

- your kayak is less than 4.8m - you need a PFD (Personal Floatation Device),
- if you're being towed – you need a PFD.
- if you're on the water between sunset and sunrise - you need a PFD
- Exception being, if you have another person on board your kayak, who is older than 12years old, you don't need to be wearing a PFD (same for boats).

Search the RMS website or use the following links:

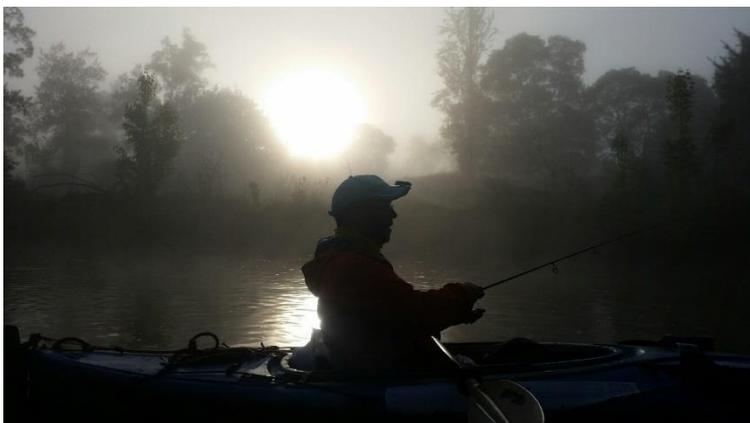
<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/> scroll down to the 'Safety and rules >' and click on 'safety equipment'

<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/safety-rules/safety-equipment/index.html> & click on 'Lifejackets'.

<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/safety-rules/safety-equipment/lifejackets.html> and prepare to be swamped/flooded/tsunami'd with information and regulation.

Now, last year I had briefly read that any vessel less than 4.8m in length required the occupant to wear a PFD – and I'd joked that we needed a 4.8m kayak. Beyond last year's fleeting moment of awareness, I hadn't paid much heed to the new legislation, I didn't see much promotion and I certainly didn't explore the RMS website for more information. It appears that I was not alone and that the level of awareness of new legislation was very low amongst kayakers.

On the Colo R., we mostly launched at Skeleton Rocks and fished upstream after passing under the high road bridge. The launch spot at Skeleton Rocks is at the end of the Colo River, a tributary into the Hawkesbury and Nepean river system. That area is busy with motorised water vessels, mostly boats and jet ski's (Personal Water Craft), whoring about at quite a speed – causing quite a wash, towing inflatables with willing participants aboard. As we mostly launched early, I would say it was safe to assume that few of us knew that the R.M.S. (Roads and Maritime Services) had a small innocuous launch-boat on the water 'policing' water activities and issuing penalties. As I returned from upstream, paddling in the hot midday sun, heading back to our launch site, anticipating the BBQ and splash of white wine, I saw the innocuous vessel with its flickering blue lights stationed and stationary on the downstream side of the bridge. It was easy to miss, and two jet skis with an inflatable in tow, that had passed me by and created quite a 'wash' with their speed, were dewily pulled over. Oh, how I chuckled.



I considered that I should pass by the 'policing' activity discreetly and hug the near bank, as far from the vessels as possible. I was aware that I didn't have a lifejacket/PFD on and 'what if it was an issue?'. I ducked low, powered alongside the bankside, sweating and puffing in the water's chop and early afternoon heat, disembarking at Skeleton Rocks. It wasn't until a little later I found out I'd dodged a \$100 fine.

Editor Sans PFD

See end of this Battler for some more information I copied from the RMS website.

The link between fishing performance and an individual's state of mind.

By Pete Hatzidimitriou

After a recent trip to Windamere I decided I'd share my thoughts on how an individual's mindset, mood or general state of well-being can affect their fishing performance.

As most of you know, I've had my fair share of injuries, busted discs in my back and neck, injuries to both shoulders, including surgery on one of them. These physical injuries do take their toll on me and at times can affect my performance, sitting in a yak for hours, twisting and casting in a less than ideal seat and position. For a physical injury to affect your performance makes complete sense! I will do another article titled 'Fishing Fitness', or 'Fit for Fishing', but for now, I want to concentrate on the mental health relationship between fishing and performance.

I'm man enough to admit, that I've struggled off and on with depression and anxiety for years, and I'm not alone! According to Beyond Blue:

*In Australia, it's estimated that **45 percent** of people will experience a mental health condition in their lifetime.*

*In any one year, around **1 million** Australian adults have depression, and over **2 million** have anxiety.*

Those are some concerning figures, and anyone who has themselves or known someone close to them that have suffered can attest to the struggle individuals and families go through (if you do need help, please contact <https://www.beyondblue.org.au> or call 1300 22 4636 (24 hours / 7 days a week), they even have a 24/7 online chat facility you can use.

So! Now that's out of the way, how does this actually affect my fishing?

Many of us find fishing as a release of stress, an escape from our troubles, and an avenue to clear our minds whilst being out in nature. Often the water and serenity of the surrounds can have a very calming and therapeutic effect on us, but there are days where no matter what you do, you just can't seem to relax and enjoy yourself. Now, ask yourself this question? How many cracking fishing sessions have you had when your mind was not on task, or you just couldn't shake that feeling of despair, anger, sadness, tension, anxiety? I think you **might** find that those mind sets or state of being often coincide with our **worst** sessions. The more I think about it, the more it rings true, and my recent trip to Windamere highlighted just that.

Total of *5 sessions*, and approximately *18 hours* on the water for not a **single** fish! Now, you could just say, "hey...the fish were shut down", that explains it. Well, the fish were somewhat shut down (most other people there we spoke to had struggled to boat one fish a session), but here's where things get interesting! My Dad, who was fishing with me, was at the back of the boat, I was up on the casting deck, meaning that I had to work the electric motor but this position also grants you casting into untouched territory, the person at the back has less work to do, but the trade-off is that they get second hand water, as you've likely already put at least one cast in roughly the same spot. In a dam, this means working an entire section of bank, not individual snags like you would in a river for instance.

My father managed 3 nice Golden Perch, fishing second hand water, with the exact same lures as I had on.

Let's ponder that for a minute...

What reaction did you have to my statement above? Was it one of these?

- Pete can't fish anyway
- Luck
- The first lure stirred them up, the second one hooked the fish
- Coincidence
- Casting placement
- Retrieval technique

- All of the above or other

All of these are very plausible reasons, and nearly all of them will have almost certainly come into play, BUT, why, when after 8 years of doing multiple trips with my dad in these exact same circumstances and never having been out fished, did it happen this particular time? The only variable, was that I was so far removed from being there, in a happy and enthusiastic mood that my fishing mojo suffered badly. Not only that, but I was extremely sleep deprived, and after catching nothing in the first session, my confidence suffered majorly!

There are professional athletes who go through similar phases, and often consult sports psychologists to help them break their bad runs. Now I'm **not** a professional athlete, nor do I get paid to fish, but that's beside the point. What seems to be clear to me, is that for whatever reason, your mindset plays a role in your fishing performance.

I've had 24 hours since writing this to ponder where I went wrong compared to Dad, and here are my conclusions.

- Lack of focus (mind not entirely on task, agitated, unhappy and sleep deprived)
- Lack of confidence (the dam was full of weed and my usual styles weren't working, so it threw me off)

It wasn't just about using the same lure as Dad, it was about adopting the same mindset. My father was so relaxed and happy to be out there spending time with his son, just catching fish was a bonus to him. My purpose was to enjoy being out there, but it was also to catch fish!

Two of the same setups (lures and gear), casting into the same water (me first), but *Two very different mind sets!*

Let's break it down further, my solution to fishing around the copious amounts of weed was to cast a couple of meters short of the bank, this meant less chance of fouling up and more time of the lure swimming properly. Dad's technique was to cast closer to the bank and as soon as his lure hit the water he would pull back real hard and start a retrieve from there...70% of the time this would still result with him fouling up the lure with weed, but the 30% that it didn't allowed him to fish the prime area where we usually find Goldens sitting in late Spring (right up in the shallows on the banks). Dad didn't seem to complain about having to constantly pull weed off his trebles, he just did it, and kept casting. Myself, being in an already agitated state, became easily frustrated with fouling up and decided to avoid it altogether, casting short of the bank and hoping the fish would follow me out or that there'd be some sitting in deeper water.

Not only did my father land 3 fish, he also dropped 2 others due to line failure! (braid does eventually wear and go off). The process of ripping that lure through the weed may very well have excited the Perch lying in wake, mimicking a panicked baitfish retreating out of cover, the perfect scenario to get a response from a Yellow Belly in Spring.

Now, back to address my claims of how a mindset affects fishing performance! As you can see, there are multiple factors at play here, but often good performance with any sport, begins with a good mind set, and poor performance can almost certainly be linked with a bad mind set or state of mind, certainly for me personally anyway. I believe that when your mind is not on task, it affects your technique, which in turn can result in poor fishing performance. I've often joked around and said that fish can sense negativity and someone who is off through your rod, but this is the first time I've seriously sat there and contemplated exactly why in my own head!

Please feel free to email me on peter.hatzidimitriou@gmail.com to share your thoughts.

I'm not making excuses here, but for the sake of the article, let's say I am! My dad believes this was just a case of his fishing prowess! One thing for certain, I'll never live down the time he towed me up at Windamere!

I'd like to close by saying that, if any of you are suffering from a mental illness, or going through a tough time, that there are plenty of support networks available for you out there. You definitely don't have to feel that way, so please use the information provided in this article or contact me directly if you ever need support.

On another note, I'd like to personally thank Damian, our Editor, on behalf of the club, for his efforts this and last year with the Bronze Battler. It is not an easy task and more time consuming than you'd think. I truly believe it's a very important tradition of the club that should continue indefinitely. Seeing those early printed versions at one of the general meetings really inspired me and I want to keep the prestige of this newsletter going. I thoroughly enjoy the other

contributors' articles and I hope it continues and continues to provide each and every one of you with something enjoyable to read, related to this fishing hobby we all love!

P.s Below are links to 2 excellent blog posts on related topics, please check them out!

<https://www.fix.com/blog/fishing-for-wellness/>

<https://www.freewatersalaska.org/blog/mental-health-benefits-of-fishing-and-being-outdoors>





Cheers,

Pete Hatzi.

Sunshine Coast Bass

Jason McMaster

On our family road trip, late last year, we made time to visit family on the Sunshine coast for 3 days. Having had some great sessions on a few Sunshine Coast systems on previous visits, I made sure that I had at least one window open for a decent bass mission. I was intent on hitting some new water and had always been keen to have a look around the upper reaches of the Maroochy River. I had fished the middle reaches from the boat several times but had never ventured into the fresh. Google Earth images and the few reports available suggested skinny water in thick tropical vegetation which sounded great to me.

I arrived at my chosen launch point and was pleasantly surprised at the ease of access with the yak. This was definitely not virgin water but the lack of photos and reports online and on social media indicated that it probably received little pressure. After a quick look at the water - anticipation was high. The water was quite turbid but the thick overhanging rainforest vegetation was alive with bird calls and provided plenty of shade. The water was flowing nicely under the little wooden road bridge just upstream and past a few visible rock bars but it was flowing upstream!! Looking at the maps when I had decided on this point I'd thought it would definitely be above the tidal limit, however, clearly it wasn't. While not ideal I wasn't too discouraged as given the terrain, the tidal limit surely couldn't be too far upstream and this also bought into play the possibility of a mangrove jack or two hopefully. With this in mind I beefed up my leader slightly, tied on a 4inch Z-man shad and set off upstream.



I was conscious of not lingering too long in the salt as I was very keen on finding some bass in the rainforest setting, so I stopped only to cast at prime looking spots. After at least an hour's paddle the Z-man had received no interest whatsoever, and seeing the tide still flowing in, another problem occurred to me. I had already crossed countless rock bars and several huge fallen trees that lay just below the surface which would obviously become exposed and present a decent challenge to pass when the tide dropped. I'm not one to give up easily, especially given that this would likely be my only chance on this system for at least the next year, so I decided to press on in the hope that the fresh would be around the next bend.



Thankfully, and after a few struggles carrying my yak over huge log piles, I soon came to a small rapid which was clearly where the fresh started. It was a stunning pool with dark tannin-stained water, steep undercut banks and a closed

rainforest canopy completely covering it. The air was thick with insects and the cicadas were also in action. I left the yak downstream at the foot of the rapid and crept into casting position not wanting spook the fish. The only visible snag in the pool was a small fallen tree mid-way down the pool on the left side. The first cast was on the money and to my surprise the lure was hit hard the split second it hit the water. The bass had obviously been sitting in prime position looking skyward waiting for one of the many insects to crash land and had clearly eyeballed my plastic flying towards it. Although not a big fish it gave a good account of itself briefly pulling some drag. I soon gently slid a fit looking 31cm bass on to the leaf litter at my feet. It was a solid, olive coloured fish and not as dark as I was expecting it to be given the pool it came from. I was both excited and relieved to watch this fish swim off after the effort it had taken to reach this pool.



Two casts later I had another aggressive take which resulted in second fit bass in the mid-20cm range. It was shaping up to be a nice session however I was already wondering what kind of struggle it was going to be getting back to the launch point with a now falling tide.

After a few more casts and no interest in this pool I slid the yak in and paddled the short distance to the next pool before replacing the 2inch Atomic grub with a black Jitterbug to see if the locals would provide any surface action. I took the same stealthy approach from the bottom of this pool and was again rewarded with a nice surface take within seconds of the lure touching down. This fish managed to make it home briefly on the adjacent undercut bank but I was able to work it free. This fish went right on 30cm and was the first of 4 to smash the jitterbug in that pool.



The top of this pool was going to be too difficult to get the yak over so I left it there and walked upstream casting at a few more pools along the way. There was some fantastic structure with deep shaded holes under huge root balls and bouldered sections, just below inflow points, at the head of pools. These all held fish, but after not missing a fish in the first few pools, I was now attracting lots of hits on the Jitterbug and Arbogast Locust but missing quite a few of them, failing to hook up. In a fun session, the tally quickly reached ten Bass with the best fish being the first one at 31cm before I called 'time', and headed back, before the tide dropped too far.



The paddle back turned out to be more of a drag/carry/climb/scramble and was one of the best workouts I've had in a while. I now realised why there wasn't many reports on this system!! However, in my mind the effort had definitely been worth it after getting some fit bass in such a beautiful rainforest setting in a new system. I made it back to the family by 10.30am in time for a trip to the beach so it was a great way to start the day.

Cheers,

Jason

The COLO outing:

Rico van de Kerkhof

I've got invited by Matt Hanh to come and fish with him one day. As things have changed at work I struggled to find the time. I wasn't even going to make the Colo outing at first as it was 'TET', Vietnamese New Year. This is celebrated in a big way at my in-law's place and we can't miss it. As we were going away for a week's camping on New Year itself, mum-in-law organised it on the Sunday of the Colo outing. Damn!

Somehow, she heard that this was my fishing day and she changed it to Saturday!

A quick SMS to Matt to see if he still had a spot free on his yacht. Yep, I was in.

I got there on time and waited for Matt to show up. We got on the water and soon we saw some familiar yaks. Damian, Tham and Craig.

They already had a fair few fish on board and it was looking good. Further up the river we met Matt McHugh in his boat and Jason and his mate were around the next bend. They all had a dozen or so fish each.

We got almost all the way up to Putty Road and started fishing.

Matt got the first fish almost on his first cast. Looked like he knows what he was doing!



Matt with his 325mm FL Bass

As I haven't got that much experience with casting from a tinnie, Matt had to get in regularly so I could retrieve my lures. After a while I got the hang of it on how to cast and started catching fish regularly.

By the end of the day Matt got 27 and I got 25. Not a bad effort. I got 2 over 300 and lost a really nice one that would've beaten my PB, but as earlier in the year it decided that it didn't want to go on a picture with me and spat the hooks.

It was a great day out with a lot of fish caught.

Thanks Matt for turning your boat constantly so you could fish the 'fresh water' ;-P!



Forgot to mention the surprising highlight of the Colo outing. This big Diamond Python in a tree when trying to get a lure out.

Glenbawn Dam – 03/01/2017

Pete Hatzidimetreou

My Dad and I decided it was time to pay Glenbawn another visit this year, it has been just over 12 months since we were last there. Unfortunately, the weather was not looking particularly favourable but we thought we'd head up anyway and try and find somewhere out of the wind to put in a few casts. What I always remembered about Glenbawn was that the main basin gets quite a decent swell on windy days and this time was no exception! White caps and slop everywhere had the little Quintrex Hornet Trophy getting airborne on waves and crashing hard, but taking it like a little trooper!



Trying to find anywhere out of the wind was proving quite difficult as it was just blowing over every mountain and swirling around. We managed to find some fish with the first on the board being my very first Silver Perch



Pete's Perch caught on a Jackall TN60.

We peppered what edges we had access to but it seemed that the Bass had retreated to the depths so I switched over to my trusty Glenbawn special and wacked on a 3/8oz jig-head with a pumpkinseed Slider grub and Betts spin. It wasn't long before I banged a couple of decent Bass in about 20ft of water.

The following morning the wind was still no better but we managed to find a bank where the wind would push us down and I had the Minkotta on autopilot with a slight thrust to try and counteract the fast drift.

We approached a sunken big tree about 4 metres off the bank but another larger tree that had fallen into the water...it looked like "Bass paradise" after I placed my first cast in, I was talking to my old man when my lure was hammered as it rolled over the underwater snag...instant hard peeling of the drag! This was one serious fish with some serious grunt! She continued to pull powerfully until my 10lb leader broke along with my heart! I was accused of fishing too "light" using 10lb, who knows why the leader broke, maybe it was slightly frayed, maybe the line strength couldn't accommodate the weight of the fish, either way on a tough bite it was a shame to have what would had to of been a new PB ending up in a missed opportunity, but hey that's fishing!

Later that afternoon we meandered into another small bay which had a big tree in the middle, after getting closer I saw something emerge from the snag, I had to rub my eyes because what I saw then had me yelling at dad to drop his lure in the water... It was a massive Murray Cod, clear as day, sitting about a foot or 2 under the surface, its markings perfectly visible in the gin clear water coming out to see what all the ruckus was in his territory. My dad was off with the fairies so I grabbed the closest rod to me which happened to be my 1-4kg stick with 10lb leader and an Ecogear zx40....after 3 casts around the snag, I was on...the rod buckled over and instantly the big cod went straight into his lair peeling line off the reel like it was no-ones business, I could soon feel the leader rubbing on trees until it broke. I was gob smacked, and so was my dad! Glenbawn was stocked a few times in the past with Murray Cod however they never really took off there, those that survived have grown to be quite large! Given the rarity of their existence in this system, that was a pretty special catch, it's just a shame I never got to land it. I went back the next morning with a heavier setup, but couldn't convince the big girl to have another crack...but one things for sure...I know where she lives now and Cod rarely stray from their home, so there's every chance she will still be there next time I head up to Glenbawn!

Day 3 saw the weather finally improve, which allowed us to fish banks we previously had no access to. The fish were still sitting deep, every fished we picked up was from allowing the lures to fall to the bottom periodically before starting a retrieve again. I also managed to catch my very first Carp too, and on a lure! So there were 2 new species for me in one trip!

Here's just a few pictures of some of the fish we caught. All in all, a tough bite but a fun few days away...hopefully next time the weather is kinder!

Cheers,

Pete

Post - Bushcare Mania!

HS Tham

I fished the Nepean for the first time this season(!) yesterday after our bushcare/planting day in the 38 degree heat at Russel St and I took my yak to have a fish in the arvo launching from our site. I couldn't get anyone else to join me but I was determined to have a bass fish. It was pretty hot planting, but the friendly banter and fishing stories help the time go by. We knocked off for a really nice BBQ cooked by Kerith around midday. Most people left around 1.30pm leaving me with the key along with Damian who was carp fishing. No carp landed but he got a few mullet including a hefty 44cm model on his carp rod.



I also had a swim to cool off as I did not want to launch too early. I dropped Damo at the gate around 3pm and got a frozen coke before I got it together to launch around 3:30. The cicadas were noisy at our bushcare site all day and I found an empty cicada shell, a good sign I thought.

I wanted to get to 2 pools downstream of our site and it wasn't long before I got to the first pool. Sun was still fairly high so I intended to just paddle through the first pool. I threw out a jigspin to troll behind as I slowly paddled and I got a good hit almost straight away. A racy 30cm bass. After releasing it, I threw out the jigspin to continue trolling again and within 3 paddle strokes, I was hit again and I landed another bass in the high 20's. This is out in the middle in full sun opposite the houses at the top end of that first pool. I then started to cast the

jigspin and got hit after hit, landing 8 bass before I decided to keep going. I had either got on to a school of bass or they were going crazy. I then headed to the banks to give the small pockets of shade that weren't completely weeded up a go. Yep! They were biting their heads off there too. For that first hour, almost every cast was hit. Not every hit resulted in a hookup or landed fish of course, but they ranged from micro bass to 30cm FL. I racked up 14 bass landed in that hour with a few dropped fish as well.

The first fish, 30cm FL -



This is a pic of a nice looking pocket surrounded by weed. If you look closely, you can see a few bubbles where my SSC was crashed by a decent fish, but failed to hook up. I could not get it to bite again.



The SSC was very useful to fish the pockets -



After about an hour/hour & half, it quietened right down. So it remained right through prime time! I fished until dark and the final tally was 20 landed in a session that lasted 5hrs. Obviously the last 3.5hrs was tough!

Fish No. 20 after sunset on a purple Dreamfish buzzbait -



This was in the same spot where I got the first 8 fish. I also tried a Jitterbug, but I got nothing else. I got back to the car after dark, had a Maccas then got home around 10:45pm.

When I checked the barometer and other meteorological conditions of my day, I saw that there was supposed to be a late thunderstorm which didn't happen when I was on the water, but I could hear thunder a long way away. You can see in the following sunset pic a front approaching. The barometer was around 1009 when I started, dropping slowly in that magic hour or so and continuing to drop until about 7pm when it started rising. Wind was very gentle all arvo, mainly from the NE. It got a little stronger about 6pm, but no problems and it soon calmed right down in the hour or so before sunset. Why did that crazy bite happen then and why did it stop? Conventional bass wisdom is that it should have been slow up until around 7pm, but the opposite happened! After bass fishing for over 20 years, and keeping a log of my bass fishing over the last 3yrs, I am no closer to working out what makes them bite or not bite!



HS Tham



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**Next Meeting is on
Tuesday 14th February 2017
7:30pm
@
Northmead Bowling Club**

Fishing Cartoon



"Oh, well done, dear. I'll just go and clear a space in the freezer for it."

IT WAS AT THIS POINT I SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED 'CATCH & RELEASE'!

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<http://www.rms.nsw.gov.au/maritime/safety-rules/safety-equipment/lifejackets.html> and read I highlighted in red the parts relevant. Any further understanding or interpretation can be brought to the next general meeting for discussion.

Regards Damian.

Boating activity/vessel type	Enclosed waters lifejacket requirements	Open waters lifejacket requirements
Children under 12 years of age	Level 50S or greater: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At all times on a vessel less than 4.8m • When in an open area of a vessel less than 8m that is underway. 	Level 100 or greater: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At all times on a vessel less than 4.8m • When in an open area of a vessel less than 8m that is underway.
On all boats less than 4.8m (unless specified)	Level 50S or greater at all times when: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boating between sunset and sunrise • Boating on alpine waters • Boating alone (without an accompanying person 12 years of age or more on the same vessel). 	Level 100 or greater at all times.

Boating activity/vessel type	Enclosed waters lifejacket requirements	Open waters lifejacket requirements
Anyone being towed, eg water-skiing, wakeboarding, wakesurfing	Level 50S or greater at all times.	Level 50S or greater at all times.
<p>Canoes and kayaks</p> <hr/> <p>Sailboarding and kiteboarding (more than 400 metres from shore)</p> <hr/> <p>Off the beach sailing vessel</p>	<p>Level 50S or greater at all times when:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Boating between sunset and sunrise • Boating on alpine waters • Boating alone (without an accompanying person 12 years of age or more on the same vessel). 	Level 50S or greater at all times.
When directed by the master of the vessel [#]	As per enclosed waters requirement for boating activity/vessel type.	As per open waters requirement for boating activity/vessel type.

You must wear a lifejacket when directed by the master of the vessel, for example when the master considers there is a heightened risk of an incident occurring or if an incident was to occur, it might be difficult to help yourself. Examples of heightened risk include (but are not limited to):

- Boating in bad weather such as in a gale warning, storm warning, severe thunderstorm warning or other severe weather warnings issued by the Bureau of Meteorology
- When a yacht does not have safety barriers, lifelines, rails, safety harnesses or jack lines in use
- Boating by the elderly, non-swimmers and people with serious medical conditions
- When the vessel has broken down
- When there is a significant likelihood that the vessel may be capsized or swamped by waves, or the occupants of the vessel may fall overboard or be forced to enter the water
- Other similar circumstances.