

Pikelines



NUMBER 53

AUGUST 1991





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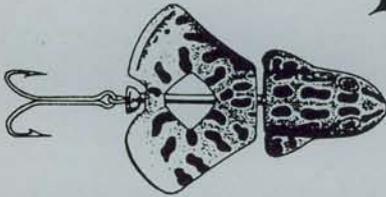


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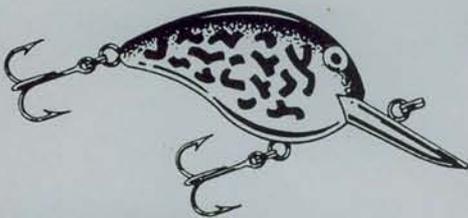
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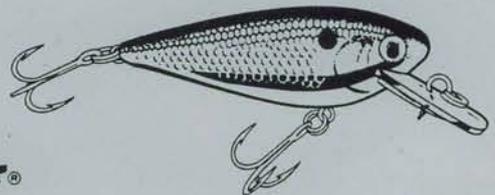
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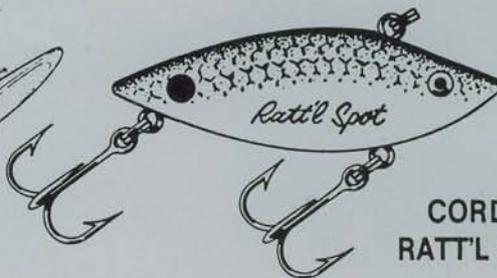
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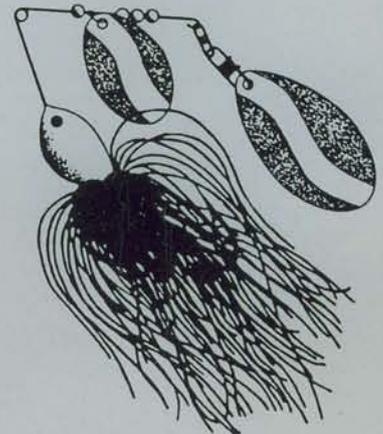


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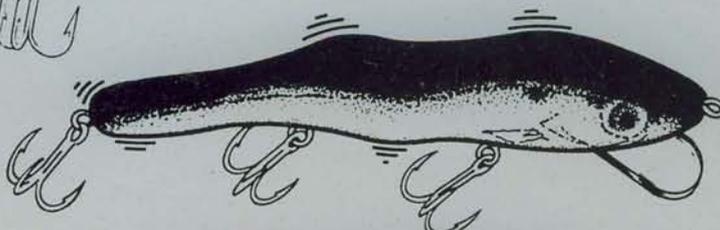
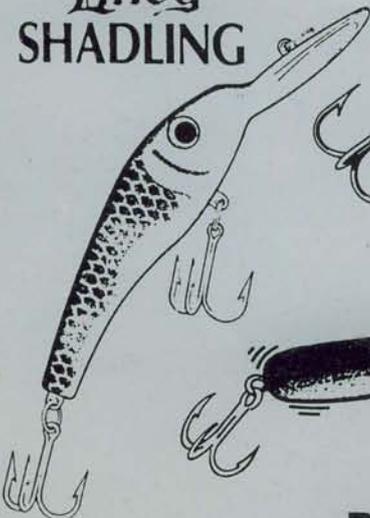
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With few exceptions, *Pikelines*, is compiled from P.A.C. members' own material. If you are thinking of writing an article these points should help you.

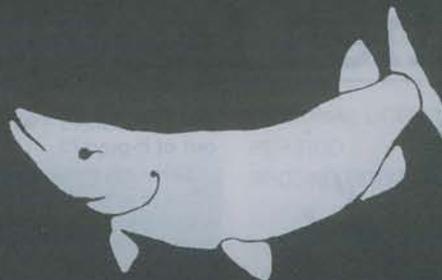
1. If possible, articles should be typed single side on A4 paper with double line spacing.
2. If you are writing your article in longhand make sure that it is all legible (if you are not sure ask somebody else to read it).
3. Articles should not exceed 2,500 words.
4. Photographs always help to enhance any article - we can accept both black and white or colour prints or slides.
5. The P.A.C. is not obliged to publish everything it is sent, although we will try. However, any unused material will be sent back.

P.A.C. Troubleshooters

As most members will remember the 'old committees' of P.A.C. are now acting as a team on behalf of P.A.C. to investigate particular problems faced by pike and pike anglers. We are prepared to conduct battles, and we are prepared to go anywhere to do it - much as we have always done with the exception that now, relieved of administrative duties by the new, highly efficient 'committee', we have more time. However, we do need back-up from the membership, so you can let us know.

1. If you see an anti-pike or anti-fishing letter or article in your local newspaper - cut it out, title and date it, and send it to us. We will also need the editor's address.
 2. If you know of a club threatening action against pike or pike anglers, let us know, preferably with the club secretary's name and address and his telephone number.
- Such problems can be sent to the Secretary who will delegate the most suitable Troubleshooters.

B. Rickards, M. Bannister



Pikelines

NUMBER 53

AUGUST 1991

Pikelines is the official journal of the Pike Anglers' Club.

The Pike Anglers' Club wishes to state that all opinions expressed herein are those of the contributors and should not be taken to represent official P.A.C. policy.

Cover picture:- *Study of a pike model by Robert Milford*

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Material for the magazine "Pikelines" should be sent to John Milford. Membership correspondence to John Synnuck. All other correspondence to the Secretary.

Photoset and Printed by Mitchell & Wright (Printers) Ltd., The Print Works, Banastre Road, Southport.

Pikelines Editorial

By John Milford



Pikelines arriving on my doormat each quarter has always been something I have looked forward to and, I must confess, taken for granted. I used to get mildly impatient whenever it was late and occasionally thought that, good though it always was, there were areas for improvement. It was, therefore, with some enthusiasm that I accepted the job of Editor. It is only now, with the experience of only this issue behind me, that I fully appreciate the scale of both the individual and collective effort which goes into each edition. Whatever criticisms I have made in the past, however constructive, I take them all back! I only have one criticism remaining to level at

previous Editors – why didn't you talk me out of it guys?!!

Seriously though, it has been enjoyable – albeit in a faintly masochistic sort of way – and enjoyment is one of the things that I hope the magazine will be able to emphasise. After all, unless we really are masochists, we go piking to enjoy ourselves and I feel it is appropriate that the magazine reflects this to the full. Sadly, in today's world, there will always be matters we cannot afford to laugh at and such issues will be dealt with with due sobriety. There will also be matters of policy and record which should not be trivialised. Take notice however, that everything else is "fair game"! It has always pleased me to note the genuine tone of fun and enthusiasm evident in many past contributions and I hope to receive many more in the same vein. To produce a balanced magazine, it is essential to have as wide a choice of material as possible. To this end, I have decided to introduce a small, but hopefully desirable, incentive to encourage contributions.

From this issue onwards, members submitting sizable articles, stories and reports, used in the magazine, will receive an exclusive "Pikelines" sew-on badge. These will not be available for sale, so the only way to get one is to write for Pikelines. Routine regional reports, short items, letters and reviews will not generally qualify, although regular contributors of such material may find that I eventually send them one out of the blue for "services otherwise becoming". I will be awarding them quite arbitrarily and at whim, so you never know! One thing is for

sure though – if you don't send anything in, you'll never find out! Admittedly this is only a small token gesture. We cannot expect to compete with the commercial magazines. There are quite a few regulars in the monthlies however, who first tried their hand in Pikelines and it would be nice to see the occasional piece from them gracing these pages again.

To everyone who sent in material for this magazine – thank you very much indeed. With just the odd exception, most of the items featured have been received since the May issue was published and some represent members' first efforts. As you will see, the standard is excellent and I hope this encourages more of you to try your hand. Don't be shy about spelling, grammar or draughtsmanship of drawings, etc. I am perfectly happy to polish the rough edges off of otherwise worthwhile material, for if you can take the trouble to write it, the least I can do is get it into print! I will try to use all material as soon as possible after receipt (unless it has particular topicality for a certain issue e.g.: close-season items in February, etc., or to avoid similar subject matter in the same issue).

Martin (who has been somewhat harassed of late, getting a new business off the ground) has just forwarded a few older contributions. I have squeezed a couple of the more readily usable ones into this issue and will try to give the rest priority in the next one – so if your article has yet to appear, don't despair. That doesn't let the rest of you off the hook though – I still need plenty of new stuff!

John Milford

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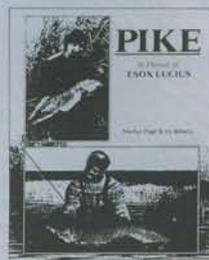
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Secretary's Report

by Chris Leibbrandt

Well it seems a long time since I was first asked about doing this job and I have eventually made it. I was hoping for a nice quiet start, reading through the material I have inherited and make some sense of it all. However ...

NRA DRAFT FISHERY STRATEGY

Section 7.7.1.iii)b) of this document has proposed a livebait ban as part of the bye-law changes that have a negative public reaction (use of gaffs is also included). This is all very unfortunate as it will be a sacrificial lamb to be thrown in order to appease the anti-angling brigade. I had hoped that this lot had become less active but have since been disappointed. I have written to all ten regions of the NRA and the Headquarters on our behalf and I am awaiting the outcome of the PAC submission that has been sent. As I write this, I have just been interrupted by a phone call from David Bird, the NFA President, who is backing us, and looking for the PAC to become party to the introduction of a national code of practice which may pre-empt the need for a ban. This is very heartening news indeed. For all the help that I know that I'll be receiving during this campaign ... thanks.

The letter I have sent is reproduced below:
(To: NRA HQ & 10 Regions) 27/6/91

Dear Sir,

It has recently come to my attention that the NRA is proposing a livebait ban as part of the harmonising of the angling bye-laws on a National basis. This appears as section 7.7.1.b)iii) of the document "THE NRA DRAFT FISHERIES STRATEGY" a copy of which I received on 25th JUNE, 1991.

Could I ask you to reconsider this move. Not only would this radically affect the sport of pike anglers who use this as their prime method of capture of that species but also anglers who fish for Perch, Chub, Eels and Trout.

In addition to directly affecting the pursuit of predatory fish it would also indirectly damage the cause of angling in general. It would show that the NRA would be prepared to sacrifice one section of the angling fraternity in order to 'save' the rest from the attentions of the Anti-Angling lobby both in the UK and Europe. To show such a weakness would be a fundamental mistake indicating that some sections of the angling world are less worthy than others, clearly a nonsense.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing a submission for your attention and interest which has been prepared from papers by Colin Dyson (former PAC President) and the present Chairman of the PAC, Dr. Barrie Rickards. I hope you will find the time to read this and I would be grateful if you could contact the Pike Anglers' Club before any further developments are formulated or ratified.

I look forward to your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

CHRIS LEIBBRANDT

I am sure that you will all want to write and object to this part of the strategy document and would advise the use of this pro forma letter:

NRA REGIONAL OFFICE

(See addresses at the end of this item)

Dear Sir,

I would like to lodge my objection to the section 7.7.1.b)iii) of the document 'The NRA Draft Fisheries Strategy' concerning the proposal to ban livebaiting.

I would like to draw your attention to the letter and submission made by the Pike Anglers' Club Secretary, Mr. Chris Leibbrandt, dated 27th JUNE 1991 and fully endorse the content and views which appear in that submission.



Would you please ensure that this correspondence is acknowledged and I look forward to receipt of your early reply.

Yours faithfully,

(If any enterprising RO or member has access to a photocopier, perhaps you could produce and run-off some copies of the above for others to use).

Please do all you can in a well mannered and non-combative way. I am sure that we will be heard and a sensible conclusion will be forthcoming.

ANGLIAN REGION

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Goldhay Way,
Orton Goldway
Peterborough PE2 0ZR
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WESSEX REGION

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NRA ROD LICENSING

At the handover at the working dinner in MAY the issue of national or regional rod licensing was brought up and the consensus of opinion amongst those present was for a two tier system to remain. There would, however, need to be changes in the present silly situation where there are over 100 different licensing charges around the country.

I therefore submitted the following pricing policy which is broadly in line with the NRA's own National option, but retains the choice for the regional angler.

REGIONAL LICENCE (ALL REGIONS)

PER ROD	£10.00
SECOND ROD 20% OF ABOVE	£2.00

TOTAL	£12.00
-------	--------

NATIONAL LICENCE 150% OF REGIONAL

PER ROD	£15.00
SECOND ROD 20% OF ABOVE	£2.50

TOTAL	£17.50
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This pricing policy would be simple to collect, and simple to understand. The "stay-at-home" angler would need only to use the regional licence, at £10 being 50p higher than the NRA proposal for a national one, therefore increasing revenue. The National licence being structured at 1½ times the regional one would benefit the more adventurous angler. In this way everyone will benefit. The NRA, by increased funds and reduced administration necessary for collection. The angler, who would know the costs in advance as all the regions would operate the same price structure. I have yet to receive a reply!

Well, what else has he been doing, I hear you ask? The new committee has spent some time just auditing the Club to find out where we are. We know how well-off we are in terms of money, members and materials such as leaflets and products. We can now go about moving forward on the very steady rock which is the foundation of the PAC. We really owe a great debt to the former committees and particularly Neville and Co. for their incredible frugality ... this may not last!

THE FUTURE POLICY

There are very few areas where the new committee will need to trailblaze due to the wealth of pioneering work that has already been done in the first 13 or so years of the PAC's existence.

What we intend to do is to concentrate our efforts on the 'opening up' of trout fisheries and reservoirs to pike angling. This will be a long term job and one that will, I believe, be fruitful ... eventually.

We also intend to make the money assist the membership and to this end are already working on the idea of PAC tickets to venues where members may not otherwise fish. If we do manage to swing this it is VITAL that the rules are strictly adhered to, there are no excuses for doing otherwise. There is news of ESTHWAITE elsewhere in this issue (thanks Malcolm!)

Products will be reviewed and new ones will be on sale for the November magazine so look out for these as Christmas presents. They are, after all, exclusive to PAC members so are therefore sought after!

The magazine is probably one of the biggest challenges that faces "one of the Johns" and I hope you are as pleased with the first one as we are. (There's confidence - he wrote this before he saw it! JM). Finally, I will leave you with the philosophy which we intend to adopt when we can and that is: 'only in exceptional circumstances will good taste get in the way of a cheap laugh'.

One last thing: I hope to see some new contributors to the magazine in the future, but also some material from some of the stalwarts, who do much but say little. I am sure that I won't be disappointed.

May I also take this opportunity to thank all those members who have sent their good wishes. (I will get round to answering those three letters shortly!)
Chris Leibbrandt

President's Viewpoint

by John Roberts

When Chris Leibbrandt asked me casually during a telephone conversation, if I would like to be new President of the P.A.C. I was totally stunned. Now Chris has at times given me the impression that he is slightly touched (I gather this is normal in gifted people) but he has finally flipped, I thought, or desperate.

The new committee, being based in Kent, needed a President who lives in Kent also. They needed a pike enthusiast older than the average piker and fool enough to accept the position. Chris said I was the only long-term P.A.C. member he knew close to getting a bus pass. I must admit I hadn't realised it showed and, seeing that I have only just said good-bye to my forties, I felt it was a bit over the top! He has also been known to say the main criterion for President was being a "silly old git" - I am sure Colin and Vic will be happy to hear this!

"Think about it", he said, "there's plenty of time". When I picked myself up, I thought; no, not me? My mate Ken Crow said he would never talk to me again if I didn't accept. I was tempted, but decided not to spoil a beautiful friendship, and said yes. The P.A.C. has always been close to my heart and I well remember, in 1970 something, sending off my membership application after reading about the forming of the Pike Society whilst on the road as travelling salesman up in Dewsbury, Yorks. As a stranger in a strange town, writing for membership gave me a warm glow. Pike Society - Pike Anglers' Club, call it what you will, I still get that "warm glow".

I feel it a great honour to be asked and when I look back at the past Presidents, I never counted myself in the same league and probably never will be. Bill Chillingworth, Vic Bellars, Martin Gay, Colin Dyson - all angling authors - men who have put down in print a pike angling legacy for future generations. Men who have fished with the greats. Colin alone fished with men like Dennis Pye, Frank Wright, Bill Giles, Reg Sandies, Edwin Vincent and Len Spencer. (Colin says he was a raw "Noddy" at the time.) An author-journalist, whose name is always in the forefront through his piking exploits and former editorship of Coarse Angler magazine, he can always be relied upon to bring his laid back reasoning to any controversy and for this he has always held my admiration.

Bill Chillingworth, Vic Bellars and Martin Gay have written pike angling books: Bill's - "Tactics for Big Pike", Martin's "Beginners Guide to Pike Fishing" (this book is good for novice and expert alike and one of my favourites). What can I say about Vic, who, in partnership with Martyn Page, is writing books on piking that are taking us into previously unknown territory - and all this from a man in his 70's!

I feel very humble to be in such good company. I am not an angling journalist and often find it difficult to put into words what I want to say. I have been involved with the conservation of our local River Stour for the last five years and often feel out of my depth at committees and meetings with various



John: "silly old git"

authorities, but it is the enthusiasm and the love of angling and the countryside that drives me into these situations. Well, as far as the P.A.C. is concerned, that's what I can offer - my enthusiasm and love for pike and pike fishing.

We older pike enthusiasts (over 50), it seems, are a rare breed. All of my old fishing chums have long since sold off their tackle and swapped the frosty winter mornings by the waterside for a warm bed and fireside. Mind you, struggling down a muddy bank on a cold, bleak winter's morning in the half-light, with a full livebait bucket and weighed down with all the usual piking paraphernalia is one of those times when I question my sanity. But, when the float audibly plops under, the "monkey" climbs the needle or the optonic sounds, whatever, it's all forgotten. The realisation of why I am doing this manifests itself with the pounding in my chest and the excitement that makes you tingle all over.

This past winter, two weekends passed with snow on the ground and with the lakes frozen solid. I went out just the same. I broke holes in the ice and fished the margins. I also fished a pool in the river. Just to be out in the fresh air was better than laying in bed any day. I didn't catch anything, it didn't matter - there's more to fishing than catching fish, they say, and I'll go along with that.

As an angler who makes his living out of designing and manufacturing little plastic items of fishing tackle, I am afraid you will notice the difference in my writing, for to follow Colin Dyson's journalistic skills is going to be a problem for me. I think John

Milford, our Editor, is going to have his work cut out looking for spelling and grammar mistakes (good luck, John). I think also, he will have to fill the pages with larger lettering that Martin Phillips had to use on Colin's pieces.

However, I am blessed with the "power of positive thinking" (this means I'll try anything but doesn't mean I'll get it right). So here goes: Thank you, it is a great honour which I humbly accept with the promise that I will do my best for the P.A.C., pike and pike angling during the next three years.

As I write Llandegfedd pike fishing is looming closer and excitement is growing. Spoons, spinners, traces and lines are all being checked over. I am lucky enough to have a boat for the first two days although I have had my name down for it, for the last 3 years.

With Llandegfedd opening its doors to pike fishing in August, comes the question do I or don't I agree with summer pike fishing? If I disagree it would be hypocritical of me to fish. I am fortunate in as much that I'm sitting on the fence on this issue for here in the deep south of the country, pike fishing has always started on October 1st. Local clubs have always enforced this rule, but in recent years this has been relaxed. Because of this rule I have always spent the summer months fishing for the more traditional species i.e. - trout, carp and barbel, so I have not had much experience to call upon regarding whether catching pike in the summer adversely affects them or not.

The summer pike I have caught have not left me concerned about their welfare, as I said I have not had much experience. I have though been immensely impressed by their fighting capabilities at this time of year - tail walking, head shaking and long high speed porpoising runs, really exciting stuff. But after all that action they have gone back O.K. without any problems at all. I have had more problems with barbel which are a predominantly summer species, and are renowned for turning up when released.

Martin Gay, as we all know, has spoken out against summer piking and a good friend of mine feels the same after taking many pike in the months of June, July and August. He now, will not allow piking on his fisheries before October 1st.

One way or another I think we will be hearing a lot more of this issue in the coming months, Llandegfedd might be the venue that brings this matter to a head. I hope not.

John Roberts



Chris: "slightly touched"

Region Reports

RETFORD (4)

I am quite pleased at how our first year as R.O.'s has gone. One of our main aims has been to encourage members to become more involved and not have things put on a plate for them. At our last meeting we decided to have our members give a review of their season's fishing to everyone else. As a new idea it has a few teething problems but everyone did say a few words. Hopefully this type of meeting will improve the already good atmosphere we have at our meetings. We also had entries for our two new trophies. The first is for what we R.O.'s consider to be the most meritorious fish of the year. With us, biggest is not always best.

Ian Cougill took this trophy with his first twenty (the fish on the cover of the last mag.). The next trophy is designed to be an item of fun more than anything else. It is a plaque with a busted Abu 55 spool mounted on it. This magnificent award goes to the person whose best pike is smaller than anyone else's that season. (Just to explain it: anglers A, B and C each catch ten pike this year. A's biggest is 20lb., B's 15lb., C's is 17lb. B is the winner.) This year's lucky winner was our only lady member, Hilary Withers. Husband Fred will have to take her to better waters this year! As a region we got involved in a water clean up in the close season, but more of that later from Barry. Our region's meetings will start again in October and all our meetings, except the March one, are on the first Sunday in the month. Once again the venue will be the Newcastle Arms, Retford. Dave Moore will be our guest speaker, his subject: Fishing in Ireland. Many thanks to Neville, Mick Cobb, Bob Hopwood and Jim France for entertaining us last season.

Ian, Barry and Ken

BRISTOL (13)

After ten years as a PAC region, due to membership having reached an all-time low, and due to work commitments of the present R.O., the Bristol region is to be considered inactive, until such time as anyone who is prepared to take over as R.O. and revive the region can be found.

Many thanks to the PAC for ten enjoyable years and best wishes to the retiring committee and good luck to the new.

John Hopton

The committee would like to take this opportunity of thanking John for his hard work for the Club over the last decade. In that time he has taken up the position of R.O. 13 on no less than three occasions, when interest ran out and new blood could not be found. Although the region must be considered inactive for the time being, this is no reflection on John's personal contribution which has been greatly appreciated.

J.M.

WALTON-ON-THAMES (15)

Just a quick update on our region. Regional membership, at the time of writing, stands at 30, as against 43 last year (some are a bit slow to re-join).

After a couple of months of uncertainty, we have now settled at a new venue for our monthly

meetings. These are now held at the "District Arms" public house, 180 Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middlesex, on the first Monday of every month (barring bank holidays when it will be the second Monday) from about 8 p.m. At these meetings we always try to arrange something, whether it is a guest speaker, video, slide show or discussion.

The "Christmas Do" was once again a success and a few of the members excelled themselves and suffered the next day. The wives, girlfriends and ladies enjoyed themselves, too. The raffle was also a resounding success. Thank you to all those who donated prizes.

To finish off I would like to thank everyone who has helped with the region in the last year or so. Good luck and tight lines for the new season.

David Fish and Trevor Nicholls

BLACKPOOL (17)

With the close season finished it's time to give Scotland a rest, not that we are complaining. We have had a fruitful time in the Borders since early on in the year. With some of these lochs not receiving a hammering yet, the simple techniques score heavily, like ledgered seabaits, which are usually first to be rejected after heavy fishing. Some of the little lochs which are not so well known can throw up a few surprises when it comes to size of fish. Stories heard about big fish being seen and lost should be followed up. The biggest fish for our region last close season went 281/2 lbs. and that was the result of a story being followed through, thanks to Darran Lord!

It's great fishing, the peace and tranquillity of these lochs, you don't see another angler for miles, a welcome relief after a season's piking in the Lakes. It's getting as busy as Saturday Night on Blackpool Promenade. You only have to look at Esthwaite and the blitzing that's received, goodness knows what havoc the hordes have wreaked on the pike in that particular lake. What could have been a North West "Redmire" for pike has been severely overfished and poached with the resultant loss of huge fish by North West standards. Anyway that's another story which has been well documented.

The trips up North are a feature of our region's fishing, and with a tally of 22 doubles and three 20 pounders for this close season we feel its journey's worthwhile. The plus points are good piking and peace and quiet with the possibility of a big fish turning up.

Now that June has arrived it's back to home territory for the next few months and with a 21.08 under my belt on the second day of the new season who knows it might be the start of our best season yet, time will tell!

Paul Dickson

KIRKCUDBRIGHTSHIRE (21)

I thought it was about time for a few words about Region 21, mainly Loch Ken and surrounding area.

It has now been three years since all the gill netting on Loch Ken has been stopped, and I now think we are heading towards a very large and quality pike fishery.

Ideas
Activities
News
Events

The fish are now starting to get larger with fish in the 3lb - 7lb bracket common, plus fish of 17lb - 19lb - 21lb all caught this year on Loch Ken. It was also reported that two visiting anglers caught pike from 10lb - 27lb from a nearby loch. If anybody is interested in fishing Loch Ken this year, we can arrange boats and outboard motors locally, e.g. boat and engine for four persons approximately £18 per day.

Also I can give some information on where to fish for those that need it. Remember to bring bait and tackle as there are no proper tackle shops in the area.

Joe Ross

WIGTOWNSHIRE (61)

We are pleased to pass on the news that the formerly vacant Wigtownshire region now has a new Regional Organiser in the shape of John Thomas (ooh-er Missus!). John Synnuck will be sending John a computer listing of all the members in his surrounding area, as soon as we have inputted everyone into the Club's new data base. In the meantime, if anyone wants to get in touch with John (R.O.61), he can be contacted at the following address:

John Thomas
Rowan Tree Guest House
Glenluce
Wigtownshire
South West Scotland.

We would like to take this opportunity of thanking John for volunteering, and wishing him every success with all his efforts on the Club's behalf.

J.M.

LEEDS (66)

I thought I would write in and let everybody know that the Leeds region of the PAC is still going strong. At the time of writing we have around 26 members and two R.O.'s - Brian Birdsall (who does all the work) and me (who does all the fishing!). We hold our meetings at the Daisey Inn at Bramley town end, on the first Tuesday of each month, where we talk about our fishing trips and other things which are going on within the Club.

We have six pike matches per year, plus a coarse match in July, and the winner of each gets a trophy at the end of the season. We held our presentation night in April this year, and everyone had a good time - talking about the "ones that got away" (and some that didn't!). A special thanks must go to Bob Hopwood, the R.O. from Doncaster, who came to present the trophies. I think it says a lot for Bob, or anyone else, who will take the time to come all that way and not even charge travelling expenses - so, thanks a lot Bob.

A few members had "PB's" last season, with **Stan Wright** beating everyone with a 28-02 river fish. The new pike season is not far away, and like most regions, we lose a few members and gain a few so, to everyone who leaves the region, I wish you all the best for the future. To anyone who wants to join the region, just get in touch with **Brian Birdsall** at 3 Hough Land End, Bramley, Leeds; or me at 25 Cottingley Approach, Leeds, LS11 0HQ (Tel.: 0532 776338) and we will give you all the help and advice you need.

Ralph Hedley

(Editor's note:)

Ralph kindly submitted a group photo of the Leeds region presentation night. However, I've nicked it to illustrate the viewpoint piece on regions elsewhere in this issue!

J.M.

EAST LINCS. (91)

Yes, we are still here! Both Trev and myself have been catching a few as have most of the other members. We've been concentrating on a local drain and haven't done badly, loads of doubles and a few twenties (four to Trev, one to me). What with the scourge of the piker, namely work, we haven't had many regional get-togethers, although the phone has been hot at times. We're hoping to organise some meetings/fish-ins/booze-ups (delete where appropriate) during this season, so any new members/juniors/existing members who haven't been in touch, please do so and we'll try and do something.

All the best for the new season

Trev Simpson & Neil Cash

TAYSIDE (97)

Contrary to some beliefs, the region is alive and kicking! The region now consists of nearly 30 members with a healthy junior section thanks to the tireless efforts of some members, although some of the more recent new recruits have been on the edge of the region for some time. The region has changed leadership purely for tactical reasons, as my job offshore has been rather erratic due to ever changing work schedules. Because of this, I thought it would be more beneficial if Ian McNeil and myself swapped places as he was previously acting as assistant. This swap suits everyone much better, as the region has far more momentum than before. I can now help Ian out as he helped me out when I was offshore.

Last season saw the region's largest fish caught, a super 25 pounder the lucky captor was Steve "Indiana" Walker (this man's nickname alone explains the lengths he will go to just to catch fish). In fact last year a lot of regional members banked "20's" from a lot of different venues. After the "ups" of the region, now I'll throw some light onto River Tay pike killings. As you no doubt read big fish were killed, the biggest being 24lb., plus there were other smaller doubles as well, along with a lot of jacks. In January I ventured up to the area concerned and, as it turned out, got chatting to the gillie for the section of river. After a long and interesting chat, I hopefully convinced him that needlessly destroying the fish was not the answer to their problems and that they should be returning the bigger fish and only culling the smaller fish to help balance things out. I didn't stop there, I also wrote to the controlling angling club and said the exact same thing. The reply I received said it wasn't club policy to kill pike

but that individuals acted on their own. Whether this reply was favourable because of all the publicity they had received from letters sent in by our members when it first happened I've no idea, but perhaps the future looks slightly brighter, only time will tell.

This leads me on to Bill Winship's article that highlighted only the tip of the iceberg. The presence of the region has no doubt done a lot of good but has far from solved the problem. No matter how vigilant the membership are we will never stop the killings. Regional members cannot be on the waters we fish every day of the week. We have done a lot to try and improve on the situation. I have challenged clubs on their attitude but this has had little effect. Ian has flooded tackle shops with "Go Pike Fishing" leaflets and information sheets have been posted and yet we've had no feed back from this approach. On returning to the tackle shops, all the leaflets had been taken. Attitudes are hard to change, there has been improvement but that hasn't happened over night and nor will it, I'm afraid, but as a region we haven't given up. After all, I've been up here twelve years now and I feel we are achieving something. Our rising membership is proof of that.

One last thing, my thanks to Bill for bringing it to our attention, but it's a pity we had to read from a monthly magazine first and not hear it from him over the phone. After all, had I been fishing in somebody else's region, the most courteous thing to do would be to give the nearest R.O. a buzz and let him know what I had seen. But it's all water under the bridge now, hopefully Ian or myself will be in touch with Bill regards his talk and days fishing in the near future, although the region is having a summer recess for holidays.

Steve Tapley (the Sassenach 'alf)



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River Piking: A New Experience

16 year old ADAM POWELL gets to grips with his local river and finds his growing confidence to adapt his approach is rewarded

During the months of 1990, I decided to attempt to beat my personal best pike of only a miserly 2 pounds.

After half a season (1989-90) of constantly sitting behind deadbaits, wondering what I was doing wrong, I began to think about how to approach the water.

My local water is a smallish mill pond but it is extremely deep considering its size (some areas are known to be over 25ft).

As I had seen many pikers last season catch pike (although they were mainly jacks) on spinners and livebaits, I thought this would be a good starting point.

After catching half a dozen gudgeon I decided to get my plan into action. After only about a minute of casting out my free roving bait, the float came to life and sank out of view. I reeled down, struck and instantly my rod bent over. After a very strong fight, I managed to land my second ever pike (all of 6 pounds!).

The next weekend saw me land two more pike, the biggest 8 pounds. This was extremely encouraging but soon disaster struck. Livebaits were now getting very scarce and even matchmen were failing to catch, so what hope did I have?

It was around the end of December, after blanking for about 3 months using sprats, when I decided to try my next line of attack. This was to search out new, unfished areas of the river stretch. In my second ever spinning trip, I pulled into a fish which put up a fair scrap (incidentally, even small jacks put up hard fights and I think that is probably due to the fast current). Eventually I saw it but the hooks snapped as I attempted to hand-land it (John Wilson style).

I returned to the same spot a few days later and landed a 2.5 pound pike after my first cast with a new medium 'S' plug. Although it was an extremely small fish, it was a real confidence booster and I think without it I may have given up piking for the rest of the season!

It was at least a month later before I managed my next trip. I arrived at eight o'clock in the morning and amazingly no-one else was there. I set up my tackle, cast out (using the inevitable sprats) and sat back. For some reason I felt very confident. I was watching a cormorant which was trying to eat a small pike, when my float slipped away. I couldn't believe it! I had actually got a run on a deadbait. After a few minutes a 2 pound pike was slipped gently back.

Out went the tackle again, and again I sat back now even more confident of catching. One of the locals had started fishing and had wondered round for a chat. I was exaggerating the size of the pike I had just caught when the float slipped out of sight again. I tightened down and struck, but I expected another jack as this fish seemed to come in quite easily. It was when I was about to land it that it started to come to life.



Adam with a six pounder. (The fourteen pounder he mentions was featured in last issue's Gallery).

After a few powerful runs, I managed to play the fish by using the bend of the rod only. I tried to estimate the fish but all I could really say with confidence was that it would beat my personal best of 8 pounds.

I landed it first time, unhooked it and sacked it up to give me time to think. I was shaking and overcome with excitement for I had never seen anything so big! The last thing I wanted to do was harm the creature so I reeled in my other rod and raced up to the phone box to ask my dad to bring down my scales and camera (I manage to take everything else except what I may actually need!).

Soon the whole family were on their way and once everything was set up I lifted out the pike. After weighing it (14 pounds) and photographing the perfect fish, it was gently put back.

The disastrous season was now behind me and everything now seemed to fall in my favour. A 6 pound pike followed the 14 pounder and on my next trip I took 6 pike to 9 pounds. Incidentally five of the six were taken on livebaits (I was now also managing to catch some fry as well as pike) and the biggest (9 pounds) was taken on a sprat! Also each of these pike had numerous leeches on it, which I removed, but I'm not sure why they were there. Maybe the cold weather?

The last session of the season, I caught four pike all around 1 pound. I was convinced these fish were the same one, as each time the runs were harder to hit because it seemed that the fish was just mucking about with the bait.

Although none of the pike I caught during the 1990-91 season were record breakers, each was an achievement of some new skill but mainly luck. I'll probably have different views about jacks very soon, but all of the fish I caught were special in one way or another and each of them gave me great pleasure to catch.

I've really enjoyed my first full season of serious pike fishing, and who knows maybe next time I'll manage to tempt one of the rumoured 20's out of the deeps.

Adam Powell

(Editors's note)

I hope you will not become blasé about the size of your pike too soon Adam, because results should always be viewed relative to the water fished. I think you can safely assume that you have done very well to get a good double from your water. Personally, I try to view every pike that I catch as a success - many are small successes, but success can be sweet whatever the size, as you have clearly found out too! - J.M.

PROTECT YOUR FUTURE



Angling is under threat from many quarters nowadays - the 'antis', misleading media programmes, closure of waters to angling, industrial and agricultural pollution, etc. Anglers need to come together to help protect and promote their sport, to form a strong and effective partnership which will ensure a healthy future for angling.

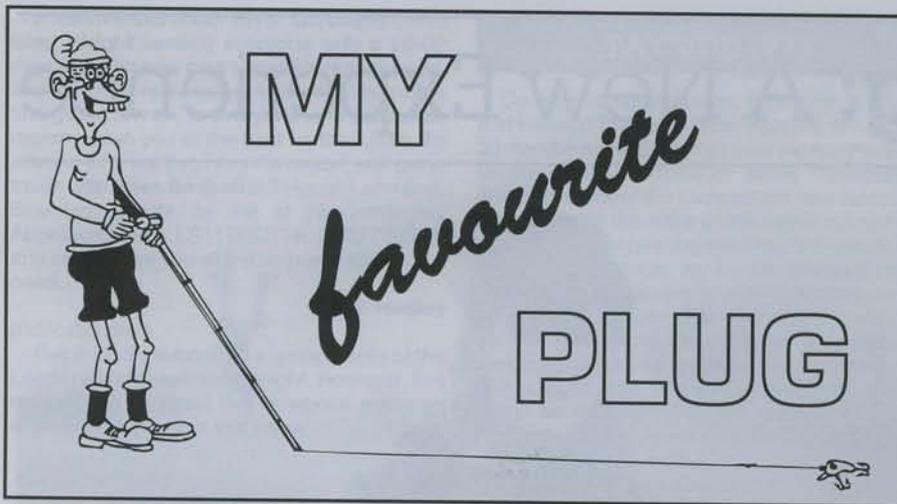
We invite you to join the National Association of Specialist Anglers because it can help you and your sport in many ways, including:

- **Protection** - the NASA is a member of the National Anglers' Council, the National Federation of Anglers, and the Anglers' Co-operative Association. We are represented on most Water Authority Consultatives, where we will fight for your rights and air your grievances.
- **Education** - as a member, you'll get two issues a year of your own colour magazine, Specialist Angler, and regular copies of the NASA Bulletin. You will also be helping to organise the British Angling Conference, the social highlight of the angling calendar.
- **Friendship** - an expanding regional set-up has been established, enabling you to attend local meetings and social gatherings, discuss local issues, or simply meet like-minded anglers in your area. You also have at your disposal a committee dedicated to help you solve your problems.
- **Value for money** - NASA members receive a generous discount (often 10-15%) from a wide range of specialist angling suppliers; you can obtain any of the full range of Leisure Sport A.C. permits at 20% discount; there are substantial savings on A.R.C. and William Boyer tickets.

ANYONE CAN JOIN

Simply send your name and address, with cheque/postal order for £11.00 (£10.00 + once-only joining fee) to Dr. K. Fickling, Kilgarth, 27 Lodge Lane, Upton, Gainsborough, Lincs. Tel.: 0427 83731. Fees for clubs wishing to affiliate to the NASA are £15 (up to 100 members), £20 (100-200 members) or £25 (over 200 members). Junior (U-16), £6 no joining fee.

YOUR FUTURE IS SAFE WITH US - JOIN TODAY



"Marvellous" Mervyn Jones has spots before his eyes, and what's more ... there're rattling!



Merv - "The Jackmaster"

Vibrators

(In particular: "Ratt'l Spots")

In common with many other contributors, I cannot tie myself to one particular plug - but have chosen a class, namely "Vibrators". Vibrators are lipless, sinking plugs, the normal size of which are roughly three inches and weighing around half an ounce. Most lure companies include at least one model in their range thus Rapala's Ratt'l'n' Rap, Bagley's Shad-a-lac, Bill Lewis'es Rat-l-trap, Rebel's Racket Shad, Bomber's Pinfish and Rattler r r, Fish World's Sugar Shad, Bill Norman's 'N' ticer and my personal favourite, Cotton Cordell's Ratt'l Spot are all basically the same, give or take minor details. (The spell-checker just blew up! Ed.)

Their main features are that they sink, have a "shad" profile, are lipless and a rattle fit to wake the dead (up to 60 db!). These characteristics make them very versatile indeed. The fact that they are lipless means

that, with practice, they can be retrieved at any depth. They do tend to rise up in the water on a fastish retrieve, but this can be used to advantage to avoid bankside ledges, debris, etc.

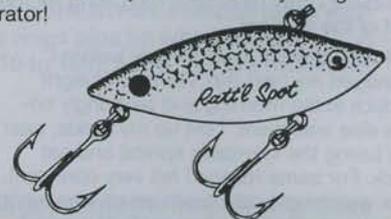
Vibrating plugs can be used with every standard retrieve pattern known to the lure angler, with the exception of surface popping (so you haven't got a Bill Lewis floating Rat-l-trap yet Merv? Tut-tut! J.M.) (although performing the same rod-tip action with the lure on the bottom is a killing method). Other particularly effective methods are variations of sink-and-draw, especially it seems, if the draws are just sharp enough to make the lure rattle; what I call the "Waltz" retrieve i.e.: slow, slow, quick-quick, slow turns of the reel handle and a sort of "walking the dog" type of rod action i.e.: twitching the rod-tip to the side, return, take up the slack and repeat.

Many other tricks present themselves with these lures such as jiggling (particularly effective with deep water under the rod-tip for converting follows into takes), exploring holes in weed beds, "burning" or "ripping" over weedy shallows and the secret method of R.A. 19 - mounting them on a jig-spinner which adds a flashing blade to their rattle and enticing profile.

Add all the above plus points to these plugs amazing castability due to their superior aerodynamics and it is enough to make them anybody's favourite lure - but I have one more reason:

At the fourth TG Lure Championship I was sharing a pontoon with Lord Gord Burton, Charlie "bitten lures" Bettel and Chris(t) Leibbrandt, result: one fish to Gord, one to Chris and two pike and three perch to me - all on a perch pattern Ratt'l' spot. Like I said, enough to make them anybody's favourite, isn't it?

So, in closing, can I just say for more "Whee Haal!" in your lure life - try using a vibrator!



A pike taken on the spot makes an impatient bid for freedom. (Note lure in foreground - and Woodbines in background!)

PUT EELS BACK



ALIVE PLEASE

Issued by THE BRITISH EEL ANGLERS CLUB

Ambitions

Chris Donovan does not believe in keeping his thoughts bottled up (or, it seems, his liquor either!). In his frank appraisal of the expectations we have of our results, it is clearly a case of "in vino veritas".

You will have to excuse me, but I get very philosophical at times. At present I am watching "GONE WITH THE WIND" on T.V. and I am desperately trying to figure out what is going on. There are a group of people who are living a life of luxury and pleasure, they go to war, lose everything, and battle for years to get back what they had in the first place. Maybe they put too much importance on the wrong things.

That's easily done, even in pike fishing you have the people who set themselves unrealistic levels of achievement, and when they find it impossible to attain, the ambition destroys them. They pack in pike fishing altogether and spend a lot of time and money setting unrealistic objectives in other pursuits. They never change. It's commonplace in life also, the ambition takes away the enjoyment and then destroys the person.

The first visible sign of this, is the angler who catches a big pike and curses because it wasn't a twenty. He replaces the enjoyment he got from catching the fish with his expectations. The end result, is that he feels his day's fishing has been a waste of time and he becomes discouraged. An over achiever? No. He has, by self-inducement turned a good day into a disappointing one, and that is wrong. Life is too short to be unhappy at not fully attaining your goals.

Maybe the people that "GONE WITH THE WIND" depicts should have sat back and evaluated what is really important in their lives and acted accordingly. It would have saved them a great deal of trouble.

The purpose of this article, is not to moralise, but to try and explain why I think that the objectives you set yourself should be put into perspective with the rest of your life. We have all met these people, the fanatics, who allow their ambitions to take control of their emotions to a point where the catching of fish is no longer enjoyable.

I usually evaluate my priorities when I am half-cut and in a semi daze. I find that the really important areas of my life become clearer. I spend a lot of time day dreaming as well, it has been that way for a while now. It's usually about pike fishing and it has intensified since the emergence of Llandegfedd on to the pike fishing scene. For many years I had lived a stone's throw from its banks and watched it grow from a mediocre trout fishery, to a top class coarse fishing venue.

I have been present whilst the Welsh Water Authority have tried in vain to remove the coarse fish by netting, I was very aware of the battle to open Llandegfedd to the coarse fishing public (a fight that is still progressing), I watched from afar the magnificent results from the open period given to the lucky (or adventurous) few. I trout fished there in March last year and was amazed at the about turn of some hardened trout fishermen who talked about "our" pike being the biggest in the country. From a Welsh trout fisherman, that's the equivalent of pulling down the Berlin Wall.

I hope to be back in Wales when Llandegfedd is finally opened for all tax payers to enjoy, then maybe I can realise one of my ambitions, to catch a Llandegfedd monster. This ambition doesn't eat away at me, but it takes the form of a desire to attain and not a quest to achieve. To me, there is a difference.

Just lately I have changed my attitude on the importance of pike fishing in my life. It's very important to me, of course, but it's not the end of the world if I blank. I will never again get bad tempered if I lose a fish, disappointed, yes, angry, no. You see, there are so many more important things in life. Your family, your friends, your job, these should be at the centre of your

life with pike fishing a pleasurable interlude. That is why the ambitions in your life should be set at a reasonable level.

The setting of ambitions is a phenomenon in itself, they are always made when you are least able to fulfil them. You envisage battling through a tough, freezing cold winter to catch monster pike whilst you are tench fishing in July. How many times have you decided to go on a diet just after devouring a huge meal. You foolishly make New Year resolutions concerning smoking, eating and drinking, at a time when you are smoking, eating and completely rat faced. Not the best time to make a decision that will radically change your life.

I am, at present, lying in bed in a semi-drunken state planning out what I am going to do next year when I return home to Wales. The tackle I will use, the waters I will fish, the way in which I am going to fish them, and as I day dream I am setting the objectives, which at the time seem so easy to make, but will be so hard to achieve. This type of goal setting can be self destructive. Ambitions are like that, they can make or break a person. They can stretch you to peaks you never thought possible, or, they can drag you down so far that you never achieve anything near your potential.

Take me for instance, at 105kgs there is no way I am going to ride the winner of the Grand National, or climb Mount Everest. These feats are beyond my reach, I have accepted that. But not fishing, in one trip I can etch my name in pike fishing history. I can see it now, arise Sir Chris Donovan. That's the great thing about our sport, one day unknown, the next famous. After all, who had ever heard of Gareth Edwards before he caught the British Record Pike?

In my working life I have few ambitions, but the one which stands out above the rest is my eternal quest to get through the day with as little exertion as possible. I share this with many others, but in fishing my ambitions are very specific. Firstly I want to catch the British Record Pike and secondly, I want to catch a Tiger Fish. As I am unlikely to catch a pike in Botswana (where I am presently living), my second choice will have to suffice. To catch a formidable Tiger Fish. This ambition has laid dormant inside me for years, so I will try and explain how this ambition started, and how I tried to fulfil it.

It was a bitterly cold November morning in 1981 and I was fishing a local water with Pete Climo. He was in one of his happy go lucky moods when a local lad came up to us and was about to ask us what we had caught. Pete blasted him

"We have caught frigging nothing, this water is frigging useless, we are frigging freezing so why don't you frig off". (Or words to that effect.)

I was astonished, you don't always find Pete in such a good mood. That's the one thing I dislike about him, always mincing his words and never saying what he really feels. Oh well, nobody's perfect.

A short period had elapsed when Pete suddenly cried:

"Look at this beggar, his teeth are outside his mouth!"

After the previous encounter I was afraid to look, but I eventually turned around to see Pete reading the Angling Times. In it, Chris Dawn had written an article on Tiger fishing in Africa and the main photograph was the cause of his excitement. I eventually got the paper off him, (the first time I had ever fought for the Angling Times) and the sight of this creature made the hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. It was then that I decided that I wanted to catch one of these beauties, Africa's most feared predator.

I think I blanked that day but I will remember that article, which gave me what I feel to be an attainable ambition.

It is now October 1989 and I am in bed dozing (again) dreaming of catching a Tiger fish. As I drift off into a deep sleep I subconsciously re-enact how easy this is going to be.

The Kalahari Desert is dry and dusty with no rains for seven months. The wind and temperature are rising and everyone is waiting with baited breath, in the hope that the rains will come. I have decided to make the 1100km trip north to fish the Tiger Fish rich river of Chobe at a place called Kasane. The conditions for both fishing and driving should be ideal and I set off with great enthusiasm and expectation.

The kilometres roll by as I pass village after village. Kanye, Lobatse, Moropule, the larger Francistown then an overnight stop at Nata before travelling to Kasane the next day. The one thing that does strike you the more you travel around Africa, is the distances between towns and even landmarks. It's an enormous country, and you really have to take your hat off to people like Rhodes and Livingstone who overcame the conditions to explore this then uncharted continent.

I finally arrived at Kasane on the second day and was greeted by the usual snorting hippo in the distance. This part of Chobe is full of game and is a visual indication of the good work being done by the Botswana Government in conserving the wildlife in this part of Africa.

This area is also witness to the immense damage done to the bush by the elephant population. Miles of destroyed bush along the banks of the Chobe, and the enormous droppings left by the elephant remind you of their presence, even though they are far in the distance.

The best way to catch a Tiger is by using a boat, and at £10 per hour you had better catch one quickly. I set off with a guide four kilometres downstream to the rapids where the Tiger haunt the shallow water. The bait was a 4" Tiger spoon with a 30lb steel trace. The tackle consisted of an 8ft spinning rod and 20lb line.

Hour after hour we trolled the rapids entrance to no avail and just as my time was running out a mighty Tiger took the spoon. It dived and leapt from the water on many occasions as I repeatedly struck to keep the hooks in place. Yes, the rod was bending like it had never bent before (what a line). Yard by yard this monster reluctantly came nearer and nearer the boat, (I had to be quick, as five minutes more would cost me an extra tenner), yes, I thought to myself, the culmination of nine years waiting was finally being satisfied, I was to catch my first Tiger Fish.

This feeling of sheer joy was suddenly shattered by a large bang. Had the line snapped? No, I had fallen out of bed and banged my head on the floor. This had been a cruel, wicked dream, with me as its victim. There was no trip, there was no fish, but there was still this desire inside of me to fulfil my ambition. There was still the hope that one day I would walk from the river, with my head held high with pride, unlike it is now, entangled in carpet fluff.

My ambition had not destroyed me, or my love of fishing, it had just entertained me and helped me get through another sleepy Botswana afternoon. One day I will catch my Tiger, and when the time comes I will be ready. If not today, well, maybe tomorrow. I will enjoy catching fish just for the fun of it and the companionship of my friends.

So the next time you feel you want to pack in pike fishing, whether it be because of the transvestite tendencies of some P.A.C. members, or because you are driving yourself too hard and expecting a twenty every trip, try following Scarlet O'Hara's advice. After all her experiences and disappointments she coined the phrase

"Tomorrow is another day".

What she really meant was, if at first you don't succeed, lower your standards. It doesn't hurt that much. I fully agree with Jeff Hill's comments in Magazine 46, you are a long time dead. If you don't relax and enjoy the sport that is your fault, and to be really honest "Frankly, I don't give a damn".

The Trouble with Tim

Good companionship can often add to the pleasure of pike fishing. COLIN BRETT however, finds that every pleasure has its price.

Imagine if you can, someone who says he's a member of the Institute of Advanced Driving, a retired sea commander (sea cadets and bar, hict!), better at weather forecasting than the Bracknell weather centre (not difficult), a heart surgeon, the worlds greatest cook, the greatest living authority on Real Ale plus knowing more about Pike Fishing than *Gord God*, and you have a pretty good description of my Angling companion of last season.

Now I will be the first to admit that he does catch more than his fair share (usually mine) of Pike, but its the way he does it, that gets up my forceps. We recently went to Thorpe Park, to assist with the Abbey School's angling day and naturally I was pegged next to Tim, with our respective charges for the day. When I tried casting my baits out, I was told by Tim that I would have to recast to my right, because his baits were already in my swim. He than gave his pupil casting lessons over my lines, this was the cause of great amusement to Tim at least, especially after I had recast about six times. At least we ended the day even with five fish apiece and I had the best one at 13lb 6oz, which in the circumstances was pretty good.

A few weeks later, one frosty morning in November, we were fishing a small drain and I made the mistake of telling Tim, that I had several follows from a nice fish. Plop, in went his spinner and out came my fish, weighing 9lb 2oz. This happened about five more times that day, at the end of which I had actually caught four to his twelve. I have now got to the stage of telling him if I get a follow, and where it went, then leaving him to catch it. This method is now known as "Teeing them up for Tim". The best to this method so far was a 21 pounder, that I actually hooked and then lost, but it didn't stand a chance with Tim around, two minutes later it had been caught, weighed, photographed and returned. The same happened to 15lb 4oz fish that I hooked and then lost when a trace broke, Tim stepped up and said "don't worry I'll soon get that one" and before I could tie on another trace, a huge swirl engulfed his lure and after a short but hectic battle, he casually tossed my spinner at me saying "there's no charge for my services".

In an effort to overcome his swim poaching, I resorted to buying an E.T. rod bag, so that with my rods ready assembled, I knew I could get my baits out first. The look of astonishment gave me great satisfaction, but he then refused to cook the bankside bangers (which was one of his good points). The other problems concern the alarming rate that my smelts, sardines and herrings are disappearing, Tim is just like the bloke with only one fag left, and is always just running out of everything or his order hasn't turned up. He doesn't rate mackerel, so I've got plenty of them left. The lure stock is also going down rapidly, but if I complain I am told that "it's a small price to pay for angling lessons from such a brilliant angler".

On the plus side, the bankside fry ups are o.k. but guess who has to carry all the cooking gear and food? The other plus (there's not many) is that if I do happen to latch into a Pike and manage to land it, it is whipped away from me and unhooked without my hands getting smelly. I must admit to getting out of practice because of this. The only problem comes when he plops them back in without me having time to admire, photo or weight them!

The close season gives me chance to get my own back, because he wants to go Trout Fishing and guess who can't cast a fly, but with his luck and me "Teeing them up", he's bound to find himself a few big rainbows and hopefully I might catch one as well.

(Editor's Note:)

Having had the pleasure of lure fishing with Colin and Tim on one occasion, I can confirm they are quite some double-act! They both went cantering off, leapfrogging each other wildly in their efforts to be first. As their bickering and squabbling faded into the distance, they generously left me the only double of the day as I strolled after them! (Tim's sausages, by the way, are rather good!) J.M.



Colin is all fingers and thumbs! Old Tim Cole (the merry old soul) with a fine Fenland pike.

Impending Success?

A prediction in poem, by Miss S. Rogers

THE LADS ARE OFF, THEY'RE AT IT AGAIN,
THEY'VE GONE OFF TO FIND A WEE SCOTTISH
GLEN,
TO SEARCH FOR A PEG THAT HASN'T BEEN
BOOKED,
A PATIENTLY WAIT FOR A FISH TO BE HOOKED.

THE COTTAGE THEY'VE HIRED IS THE SAME AS
LAST YEAR,
WITH ALL THE MOD CONS, FROM WHAT I HEAR.
ELECTRIC AND GAS ARE NOWHERE IN SIGHT,
AND IF YOU HATE THE DARK, THEN YOU'RE IN
FOR A FRIGHT!

THE HOT AND COLD WATER ARE NOT TO BE
SEEN,
SO HOW IN THE HELL WILL THEY KEEP
THEMSELVES CLEAN?
NO W.C. GOOD GRIEF WHAT A PAIN,
SO KEEP YOUR LEGS CROSSED, AND PRAY YOU
HAVE RAIN.

A 3 A.M. START, THEY'VE GOT TO BE CRACKED,
THEN ONE WILL REMEMBER THAT HE HASN'T
PACKED
HIS ROD OR HIS REEL OR HIS MACKEREL HEADS,
NOT FORGETTING, OF COURSE, HIS NEW NASHY
BEDS.

FINALLY SET UP, THEY COLLAPSE WITH A YAWN,
TO AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF A NEW SCOTTISH
MORN.
THE SUN APPEARS, WHAT A WONDERFUL SIGHT,
NOW THEY SIT WITH EAGERNESS AND WAIT FOR
A BITE.

THE HOURS TICK BY AND CONVERSATION ENDS,
AS "H" AND CREEPY DRIVE EACH OTHER ROUND
THE BEND.

VOICES ARE RAISED AND TEMPER ARE
FRAUGHT,
AS THEY SIT AND PUZZLE OVER THE FISH
THEY'VE NOT CAUGHT.

WHAT'S THAT? MY GOD THE OPTONICS
SCREAMING!
THEY BOTH CAME AROUND FROM THEIR
DAYDREAMING,
THE LINES RUNNING WILD, OH HELL HE'S GOT
TROUBLE,
FOR AS HE GRABS HIS ROD, THE DAMN THING
BENDS DOUBLE.

"H" STANDS HIS GROUND, THEN UP COMES A
SHOUT,
"QUICK GRAB THE NET, MY ARMS GIVING OUT!"
CREEP RUNS TO HIS AID AND THEN QUICK AS
YOU LIKE,
THEY COME FACE TO FACE WITH A 30LB PIKE.

HAPPY AT LAST, THEY HEAD BACK TO THE
COTTAGE,
TO COOK A HUGE FRY UP OF BACON AND
SAUSAGE,
AND AFTER THEY'LL TALK OF WHAT BOB HAS
MISSED,
THEN ITS OFF DOWN THE LOCAL TO GO AND GET
PISSED!

ON RETURN THEY'LL BE SAD, 'COZ THEY HADN'T
SEEN NESSIE,
AND SWEAR BLIND TO US ALL THAT THEY'D NOT
LEFT THINGS MESSY.
THEY HAVE A WISTFUL SIGH FOR THE PLACE
THEY HOLD DEAR,
SO "LANG MAY YOUR LUMRIEK" AND THEY'LL
SEE YOU NEXT YEAR.

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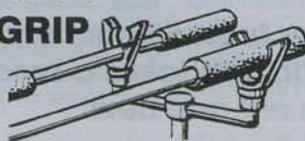
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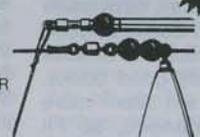


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Barrie's Bookcase

Like the gamekeeper turned poacher, author BARRIE RICKARDS turns critic and takes a broad look at angling books, both old and new:

In this series of reviews for "Pikelines" what I want to do is discuss not only books on pike fishing, but on angling as a whole. Partly this is because a majority of pikers fish for plenty of other species; and partly because, if you don't, you do need to know about what is happening in other areas of the sport. Thank Heavens the days of isolation have gone! As well as new books I'll be bringing you some old ones that are available cheaply if you look around the second hand bookshops, but when I do this I'll only deal with good books.

Just in for review is a pile of books from Crowood. Now, those of you who follow the books at all will know that Crowood, perhaps with David & Charles and Beekay, have made a really big impact with good books at good prices. Each of the books I'm about to discuss are excellent value, and really good books. Probably then my remarks will seem more critical than is actually intended, so I'll emphasize the good points collectively - all are by first class anglers, well written, with good illustrations, and very well produced by Crowood.

Let's begin with pike: "Pike. In Pursuit of *Esox lucius*" by Martyn Page and Vic Bellars. I've always disliked pretentious titles such as this (and, indeed, "The Predator becomes the Prey") but what can you do these days, with so many book about on pike, and most of them good ones? At least these guys spell it correctly throughout the book. The dust jacket blurb says "... surely the most comprehensive study of pike fishing yet published". I think I'd dispute that, in part, at least, because it's a difficult book to find your way about, and the index is far too brief and little help at all. But having said that I must also say that it is my kind of book - I'll be digging into it for ages, and, again and again. I think the drawings are Vic Bellars own, and they really are a pleasure to look at, as also is his colour painting of a leaping pike opposite p. 129. In the same breath I should also mention that all the photographs are good in an angling sense, real photographs of fish and fishing, not posed by ponses. In the text you'll find plenty to disagree with, as I did, and plenty that takes you the opposite way - a fine read on the whole from two P.A.C. stalwarts. And, let me say this too, if you enjoyed "Predator becomes the Prey", then this book is singularly better.

Two Other P.A.C. veterans making good names for themselves as authors recently are Dave Batten and Jim Holgate. I have the book "An Introduction to Stillwater Fishing" by Dave in front of me now. What a fine book this is. Many a very experienced angler would find it useful, never mind those who need an introduction to the sport! Dave Batten has to be one of the very best illustrators of books - his text figures are quite superb. Lots of good colour pictures, all highly relevant, make this a bit of a snip at £10.99, a little over half the price of the (bigger) Page/Bellars' book. Not a lot more to say about this: I'd recommend any keen angler to buy it. The only area of criticism I have is that the index is too short, and the further reading section thin.

Those of us who have represented pike angling on consultatives are under no illusions about the power of match angling, nor about the fact that the vast majority of match fishermen

are nice guys to work with. Therefore I make no apology in Pikelines for recommending Paul Dennis' "The Winner's Peg". There have been some excellent match fishing books in the last couple of years, redressing the balance somewhat after years of domination by specimen hunters - and the latter could learn so much from them if only they would read. Paul Dennis' book is a fine example, with very good illustrations of tackle, most especially in close up. I think Crowood have let him down a little in the printing of some of the photographs which are rather grey in places. The text figures are fine: clear and instructive. This book is not simply instructional but is packed with actual experience, anecdotes concerning how things fished on the day, and plenty of good advice via the experience of such as Dickie Carr, Nigel Bull, Sammy Mann and John McCarthy. If there is one message that comes across clearly in this book it is that one must learn by one's experiences - to persist with bad tactics is to fail. For me this was by a whisker the best of the bunch of Crowood books that I'm reviewing in this article.

And talking of whiskers brings me to barbel, and to the two barbel book. "Barbel. Barbel Catchers and Friends" has been around some time now, and has been joined by Andy Orme's "Barbel Mania". At £18.95 and £14.95 respectively these are both good buys in monetary terms. But what is immeasurable is their content. The first book takes you round the waters beginning, naturally, with The Royalty fishery. It then covers the Middle Avon, the Dorset Stour, the Upper Thames, Lower Thames (and tributaries), the Middle and Lower Severn and tributaries, the Yorkshire rivers, the Kennet, the Wensum, the Great Ouse, the Trent, the Lee, and even stillwater barbel. For anyone taking up barbel fishing, and many now are, what better start could you ask for than a detailed where to go and how to do it on that water. In several cases the actual swims are described in detail, just as in the old salmon books. The book ends with a generally optimistic view of the future of barbel fishing, especially the gradual spread of the species - since it was written, official attempts have been made to introduce barbel to the Little Ouse in Norfolk. I'll return to that point later. This is an almost incomparably thorough book, and if

you haven't already got a copy then you should try to do so, whatever your angling discipline.

Andy's book is a little different: one man's mania in fact, which rang bells with me, recalling the days when I was struggling with the beginning of "Fishing for Big Pike". Although a smaller - and cheaper - book than the foregoing, it is an interesting tome too. In many ways it's a more thinking book, but packed with instructional detail. And it puts Andy's barbel fishing in full perspective by dealing briefly with other species on his barbel stretches. The whole is illustrated with excellent text figures and photographs which are considerably above average, particularly the black and white ones. It's difficult to fault this book: perhaps it could have been twice as long, with more accounts of his barbel fishing and adventures.

I want to end this review article by taking up two points stemming from the barbel books. The first concerns stocking. As it happens I don't want to see barbel in all and every river. I prefer diversity. Nevertheless some further stocking with barbel ought to go ahead to give rather more opportunities to anglers to tackle the hardest fighter of all (?except catfish). But why do the stockists consider that barbel rivers have to be shallow, gravelly, and weed-filled? Surely the Yorkshire experience, of the Ouse, belies this attitude. In the deeper, slower parts of the Yorkshire Ouse are barbel to good size - my smallest is 3lb 1/2 oz. What is more, in such waters they never seem to overbreed: the Swale has stacks of little barbel; the Yorkshire Ouse near Aldward fewer but bigger barbel. So why stock the Little Ouse rather than the lower Great Ouse? To select some of the slower, deeper water would have to be to lessen the risk of the barbel domination that has happened on some waters.

Finally, why is it that in no barbel book to date can I find one of the crucial elements in their capture fully described? I'm not going to tell you what that is until I've beaten my own best fish of 12 1/4 lbs. By then, hopefully, someone else will have done. Crowood have another barbel book due out soon. Perhaps it's in that. If it's as good as their two previous barbel books we are in for another treat.

The authors are to be congratulated on these books, but the publishers themselves must be singled out for praise for maintaining an extremely high standard of presentation of good content. The battle for the angling book market, potentially considerable, is certainly hotting up, and Crowood are not likely to fall back in the field.

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Not Without Incident

John Bennett takes time out to share some of the lighter moments he has experienced while piking. Fishing partner of old, **Nick Wragg**, adds his two penn'orth for the record.

Nick Wragg and I met at the final meeting of the former Pike Society in Bourne, Lincolnshire, in August 1976. At that time we were both starting to fish for pike and subsequently fished a lot together in the late '70s and early '80s. Although I have moved to Bath while Nick still lives in South Humberside we always take the opportunity to fish together when time and the absence of other commitments allow us to do so.

We have had days of tremendously enjoyable fishing, we've toughed out some gruesome blanks, but our main objective is to "be there" and enjoy plenty of laughs, however good or bad the fishing.

Although our good piking days are etched in the memory - they don't happen that often - we have experienced several unusual and amusing incidents which stand out equally clearly. In the hope that these will provide an alternative to the "success stories" which, quite rightly, form a large part of the *Pikelines* text, maybe our descriptions of some of these will trigger memories of similar incidents for other P.A.C. members.

Moorhen

In summer 1979 we were fishing a very weedy drain in Lincolnshire in humid, thundery conditions. Things were very quiet but after some time Nick's paternostered small tench livebait was taken. Nick landed the fish - 13lb. - after a difficult fight amongst the weed. When we opened her jaws to remove the trace we could not believe what we saw - two moorhen feet protruding from her stomach. The bird was obviously partially digested, but it hadn't stopped the pike taking the offered livebait. By the time we weighed the fish the moorhen had disappeared wholly into its stomach so unfortunately we were unable to get a photo for posterity.

Rescue

One New Year's Day in our "early period" we were enjoying consistent action on one of our favourite Lincolnshire venues when we saw a pike float, obviously still attached to some line, moving slowly through our swim. Someone had clearly hooked a pike but had broken off above the float leaving the float, line and presumably the trace still firmly attached to the pike. Nick was fishing three rods that day so we decided he should put on a spinner to try to snag the line and hopefully retrieve the pike. The fish seemed to have stopped moving and after several attempts Nick succeeded in snagging the trailing line around his spinner. He began a slow retrieve.

"All we need now is a take on the spinner," I said.

"Bloody hell. I've got one!" came the reply.

Two pike on one rod. Nick, having recovered his composure, began to retrieve his line even more gingerly. After some dodgy moments as both fish swirled at the sight of the net I landed

the one which had taken the spinner, while Nick handlined and chinned the fish with the trailing trace. Neither were big fish (4 or 5lb.) but it would have been interesting if either had been taken by a third fish. That would have really made a story.

Pike Trap

A group of us used to have access to a small pond which was full of roach and rudd. Unfortunately activity on the pond was monitored by a particularly obnoxious individual who lived nearby with his ghoulish wife. Although he had no authority to do so, he regarded our fishing of the pond (for livebaits) as an intrusion into his territory, despite the fact that we had permission from the owner. He was a tenant. In order to obviate this unpleasantness, but still preserve a supply of livebaits, we put in a fish trap which delivered quite successfully. However, on one occasion when I went to empty it one evening after work, there were no bait fish at all in the trap, just a jack pike of around 4lb.!

The Emerald Isle

Last year, this time without Nick, I went for some fishing to Galway in Ireland. Although the fishing was disappointing, I was fortunate in that I met a French pike angler, Armand, accompanied by his delicious girlfriend, Andree, in the hotel where I was staying. We fished a lot together and though he spoke no English, his girlfriend did, so my limited French is now reinforced by a host of angling related nouns -

les asticots - maggots
la canne - rod
le fil - line
l'appat mort - deadbait
... etc.

I've no doubt that these will be really useful the next time I'm lost on the Paris Metro or taking part in the Euro business onslaught in 1992.

Back to the fishing. I had only caught one double when Armand and Andree arrived at the hotel. By the end of the holiday things had not improved at all but we decided to have one more really good crack on the water I had caught the double - a nearby small lough. He was delighted when he duly re-caught the double I had returned a week earlier, but after returning it, we were both mortified to see it churning over on the surface some 50 yards out - gassed up. Fortunately the wind was blowing towards our shore so we would eventually have the opportunity to recapture and revive it.

As we were watching the fish drift in, Armand's second rod registered a take. He struck into the fish but only contacted a bite off. With one fish gassed up, and another carrying ironmongery in its mouth, we both felt very downcast. A couple of minutes later the bite indicator dropped off one of my rods. The rod then leapt off the rod rests and was slowly being towed through the reed fringes into the lough. I had forgotten to open the bail arm when setting up! What a wally.

I was in the process of stripping off to dive in and retrieve it when Armand suggested that I use another rod (with a small pike deadbait on it) to snag the disappearing rod and retrieve it. This we did successfully and I then proceeded to play out the pike on the retrieved rod. It only weighed 5lb. but when opened up for hooking it proved to be the pike which had bitten off on Armand's rod. His trace was still in its mouth.

Both traces were removed and the fish returned.

By the time all this drama had unfolded the gassed up double had reached the shore, practically lifeless. We propped it up in shallow water with bank sticks so we could keep an eye on it. This seemed to do the trick because about half-a-hour later Armand walked up to see how it was - it heard his footfall and with a swirl of the tail shot off into the lough. A great relief.

Float Attacks

Another phenomenon we have experienced on a number of occasions is pike attacks on the surface float. The last time this happened was in our last session of last season. It was a very windy day causing my line to bow and then tighten in the gusty conditions with a resultant effect on my surface float. It was alternately standing up and then falling flat in the water in concert with the wind action. This enticing movement eventually proved to be irresistible to a nearby pike. It leapt bodily out of the water and took my float as if it were a plug. I tried to land it but it had wrapped itself up in the mainline in making the "take" and I suffered a bite off, leaving my deadbait and trace on the bottom. Nick managed to retrieve the float for me, which now sports a fine set of teethmarks.

I also remember when Nick was going through a prolonged lean spell. His livebaits, deadbaits and artificials were untouched, but the pike kept on attacking his floats. Things were so serious that he was talking about selling his rods. Common sense prevailed, however, and he sold his granny instead.

John Bennett

Post Script (Nick Wragg replies)

John has very kindly forwarded this to me to exercise an (unnecessary) editorial veto, as I think I can live with the accusation of using tench livebaits and three rods, such are the frailties of youth.

The above incidents happened as chronicled, although it is probably hard for the outsider to appreciate the ensuing hilarity and abject confusion linked therein. Two points are worthy of mention: John talks of catching the same fish, a feature that has occurred regularly in certain of our venues over the years. We accessed two "tame" pike for some months on separate occasions, and could rely on them during that time as teach-in examples for newcomers in our midst, or even as the sneaky morale booster in lean times. I have achieved the capture of the same eighteen-pounder from an identical spot on a local gravel pit, but with precisely 365 days in between landings and trips. However, I defer to a man who, on a Witham tributary, can catch the same pike on consecutive Sundays, on the same livebait! John was ever frugal with the lives; if any died in the bucket in transit, he always recognised them as mine.

Secondly, now is probably the time to own up to the pike in the trap episode, although strangely enough it was only 2lb. when we put it in!

P.P.S.

As someone who appreciates the amusing side to fishing, may I say how very sad I was to hear of the tragic death of John Foster. I never met him, never even spoke to him, but as soon as I saw him in comedy corner in number 47 I liked him. I know I would have been happy to fish with him anytime.

Rig Refinements

As pike fishing becomes more sophisticated, COLIN DYSON discusses how subtle refinements can improve results.

I was interested to read Jim Alexander's rig feature in the May issue of *Pikelines*, but I fear he does me too much credit. I scarcely deserve to have a rig named after me, since all I ever did was to adapt a Vic Bellars perch rig.

I just found a way of taking the polyball and the paternoster line below it beyond the reach of the bait. Jim's drawing in May indicates how that was done.

The motive was to reduce tangles and to present livebaits with more freedom to swim around. As Jim points out, tightening or slackening the set-up varies the depth in which the bait operates, and one can also play around with the length of the paternoster link and/or move the stop knot up and down. The upper limit of the ball must be just beyond the reach of the bait.

You can present this rig way off the bottom if you have a very long paternoster link with two or three loops in it. Simply tie the loops together with PVA, but remember to re-adjust the tension after the PVA has melted. By "shortening" the link in this way you can also make it more compact for casting, and you avoid the tangles which Jim's alternative version of the rig is also designed to do.

I was rightly criticised in some quarters because my original variation of the rig appeared to offer the risk of bite-offs. My only excuse was that for a long time the bait never tangled with the line behind the trace, but eventually it did.

Jim's drawing of my rig shows an upper trace, but the way he illustrates it one of the key elements of the rig is lost. My rig allowed a pike to run with no resistance whatever. Jim's upper trace swivel would not go through the Roberts bead and after a very short free run the pike would hit a lot of resistance from the bomb and the polyball.

As we know, pike will tolerate quite a lot of weight and resistance if it is felt immediately

the pick up the bait, but they can eject a bait if they feel nothing and then something. I once traced a series of dropped runs on straight-legged deadbaits to a forgotten stop knot high on the line. When that clicked through the bomb it was enough to make them eject.

I believe it was a friend of Max Cottis who found a way to use an upper trace with this rig while retaining the free running (fig. 1). Instead of the Roberts bead at the top of the paternoster link (sorry Mr. President) you use a large plastic curtain ring. (Guess who's just brought out some nifty little black plastic rings, Colin?! J.M.)

On the hook side of the ring is a polyball (half inch or anything larger than the curtain ring diameter) with a bit of biro tube through it and sticking out of it at one side. The upper trace goes through curtain ring and polyball to a clip, onto which the hook trace is fastened. I have a piece of silicone rubber running from the biro tube to cover the swivel and clip.

Use a small swivel at the top end of the upper trace, and it will go through the curtain ring with no bother. A plus from the polyball is that it tends to lift the bait a bit when it rests, and provokes the bait to swim against the resistance when it has regained its energy.

Another big plus is that the ball and tube stand out at right angles to the line when the rig is ready for casting, reducing the risk of a casting or pre-casting tangle. If you want to be really fussy you can tie the polyball to the ring with PVA. It prevents the paternoster link working its way up the line when you cast.

Whoever thought up that polyball variation is more deserving than I am of having a rig named after him, I think! But the scope for genuine innovation is very small these days. Mostly we just improve on someone else's ideas, which brings me to Archie Braddock's piece about "The Ultimate Rig".



One of the victims of the one-hook rig

This was his variation of a rig I once used with two VB double hooks. For some reason I went back to trebles, and Archie began to lash the rear double into the tail of the bait, as he described in the May issue. I thought the drawing was a little misleading, though. The double is lashed into the bait at right angles to the flank (fig. 2) and not in line with its back, as suggested by his drawing.

We fished our separate ways while fishing together. His front hook became a single - insurance against the rear one missing, but it never did. Archie didn't say so, but he fished a whole season without missing a single run. Towards the end of that season I had a really bad spell, missing several runs on a standard treble rig.

I switched to his rig and didn't miss any more. By the next season I dispensed with the front hook altogether, and Archie did likewise as soon as his supply of the original traces ran out. The only time that front hook ever came into play for me was when a good pike was hooked in the scissors on the rear hook, as they almost always are.

Normally the fish come in with the bait and front hook (if present) hanging outside their mouths. On the one occasion when it wasn't the front hook was firmly embedded in the gill rakers. I'd hooked the fish on both hooks, but the front hook had damaged the pike. That's when I decided it had to go. It was serving no useful purpose at all.

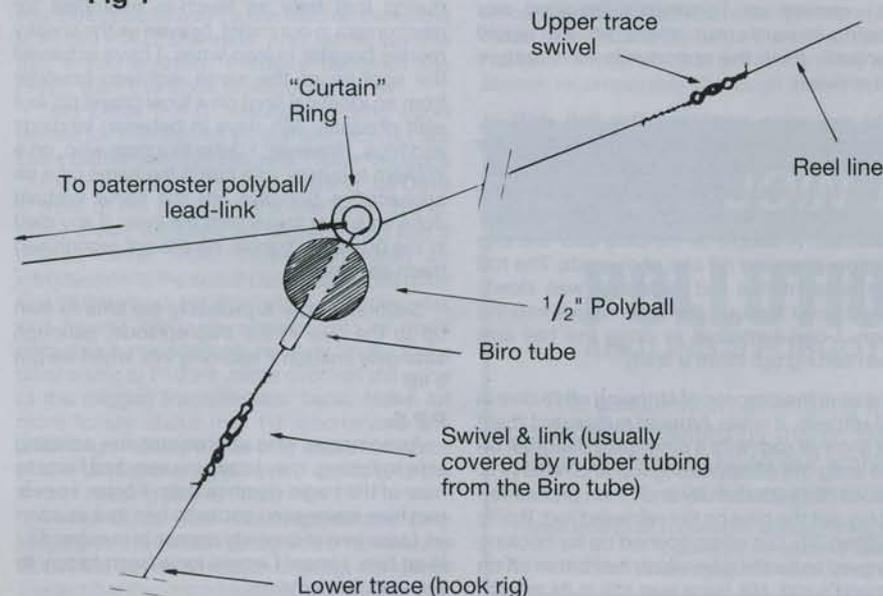
I can imagine some P.A.C. members reading Archie's piece and being rather sceptical. It seems so far removed from what most consider normal, but I wholeheartedly support what he had to say. It has out-performed any other hook rig I have used on gravel pits.

The one worry I have about it being revealed is that anglers will think that taking pike need more time before the strike. They don't, and I have spent quite a bit of time wondering why. The answer lies in something Archie said about them being able to mouth the bait without feeling anything, and something Barrie Rickards wrote for *Coarse Angler* about the way a pike deals with a deadbait.

I think they mouth the bait in the middle, and would not feel the hook standing proud in the tail. Rickards observed a bait being picked up in this way, and then saw the bait being manoeuvred into the swallowing position (usually head first, of course) without the jaws of the pike being seen to move.

He concluded that the pike must be using its tongue and, indeed, there cannot be any other way if the jaws don't move. However, such a manoeuvre with a hook in the tail would take

Fig 1



the hook away from the pike's mouth. Once the manoeuvre is complete it is still outside; nothing has been felt. Then it goes down in a flash, hook and all.

I think this usually happens before we even know we have a take, unless instant float registration methods are used. All we might get on the leger is a preliminary bleep. When an obvious run develops it is time for an instant strike. We have a virtual 100 per cent record by striking runs as soon as they have developed, pausing only to reel in all the slack.

It is worth mentioning, too, that we don't mess about with small hooks. I found VB doubles a bit fine in the wire for my liking, and now use the stronger Marvic version. Usually I

Fig 2

Double hook, bound with shirring elastic



use size 6 (on the larger of the two branches, of course) on smelts and similar baits, and 4s on half herring and mackerel baits. I have successfully used size 2s as well - prototypes Vic Bellars gave me. I don't think they are on the market yet.

When these hooks find their usual home in the scissors they do not come out until you

want them to. As instant strikers we don't mind the odd miss, which is usually due to pike moving off with the bait still crosswise. Unfortunately, we cannot time the strike on the assumption that all the runs may be like that - not without deep-hooking an awful lot of pike. In reality such takes are rarities.

Remember, our front hook was there for that eventuality, and it never came into useful play at all. That suggests that pike nearly always deal with a bait before they move with it, or very quickly afterwards. If they didn't we would have missed a lot of runs in the past couple of seasons, but I can remember only four misses in a period which, as Archie said, produced 19 fish over 20lb. and lots of other pike. Be a devil. Give it a try!

*To many anglers, the capture of a 20lb. pike is a milestone in their fishing life. To others, the pursuit of such fish can turn into a millstone around their necks. It is therefore a great pleasure to recognise the achievement of **Neville Fickling**, who, in amassing a truly remarkable tally of twenties, has kept his enthusiasm intact. Here Neville shares his feelings with us on reaching . . .*

200 UP!

In a day and age where the "numbers game" is frowned upon, I still keep a count of the fish I catch. If I am honest I will admit to suffering from the odd attack of one-upmanship. It would be nice to have caught the most of something even though in real terms it will not matter a jot to life on this planet whether I have caught 200 or 2 million twenty pound plus pike. So I wear my pike tally with pride, even though there is bound to be someone somewhere who has had more twenty pounders than me.

Even after all this time, there is still something special about a 20lb. pike. There is even more of something special about thirty pounders. However, I have to leave them to E.T., who seems to catch a few most seasons!

I think the problem with 20lb. plus pike is that sometimes they are easy, at other times they avoid me like the plague. The nicest thing is to catch them from new waters. So far I have managed this from 42 different waters, which indicates how you have to change and adapt as the years go by. While other anglers go in search of more exotic fish, I still enjoy doing what I have always done. The fascination has not worn thin, even after the 40 when I wondered "where next", the enjoyment remains.

Talking to Barrie Rickards the other day, he suggested that the next step would be to go for Denis Pye's record, which was around 270. Looking at this realistically, it will take at least another 7 years to reach this total, probably ten. I will have to avoid getting run over!

The only thing that makes 300 twenty pounders really difficult is the fact that I have lost the urge to go to any length to catch pike. I am keen, but I am not prepared to do some of the things I might have done once. So I might not make it to 300, unless I can have as long a fishing life as Bill Giles.

When the 200th "twenty" finally came along in Ireland during April, its significance was not really that great as far as it being the 200th was concerned. What really mattered was the fact that one good pike had been caught in spite of all that the weather had managed to throw at us. The real satisfaction was from the fish itself and while that continues to be the case, I think I will continue to enjoy pike fishing!

(Chris comments:)

There can be few pike anglers in the U.K. who haven't heard of Neville Fickling. He is a man who by sheer persistence and hard work has ensured that he has an overlarge "Jam Factor"

Personally, I am too lazy to ever run up a tally of big fish and as an occupation it is not something that I find interesting. Many pike anglers, however, do, and Neville's record is an example to them all.

I can remember being 'phoned at work some years ago, a mate of mine telling me a forty had been landed, a new record.

"Who do you think's had a forty?" he asked.

"Fickling", was the simple answer, no thought process was needed here (quite normal for me).

"How do you know that, have you seen the papers?"

"No need - he's the man most likely to" was my answer.

There has been a lot of silly debate, by people who should know better, about Gareth Edwards' record and whether or not it was a good thing. I think it was, it put fishing into perspective - a matter of luck and location. Equally, Neville deserved his record, because he works hard to reduce the element of luck to a minimum, as in all his fishing.

There are always those who would work to tarnish a shining example and the only problem that someone like Neville faces is the one of "sour grapes". So many people are too willing to moan. This is, unfortunately, the stark reality of the numbers game, and it is nice to see a mellowing (it must be the little Ficklings!) going on.

It gives me a deal of pleasure to write this about an achievement which one of you, will, sooner or later, come to equal. It would be nice to write it for myself but that will never be . . . but maybe one day . . . C.L.



Nev with No. 200

Midnight Excursion

Forbidden fruits are sweetest, or so thought SHAUN HOLLAND, until he learned the bitter secret of Farrimonds Estate Lake.

Around two decades ago, the "Rezzi" was a water renowned among local anglers, known for its quality fish and ability to produce specimens. The water itself was on average about two or three feet deep, going to roughly five feet at its deepest, in a few secluded spots. The bottom, which was unusually silty for the area, was enriched with bloodworm and other aquatic life.

It was an idyllic situation; reed-fringed margins, with an island to the north side, which was home to mute swans, Canada geese and various other wildfowl. The only problem being, it was situated bang in the middle of the local golf course and, as with many sports that clash, there was friction between the golfers and anglers. This came to a head when a couple of inconsiderate anglers decided to night fish, which in turn led to the making of a fire, thus scorching the grass. So, to cut a long story short, when the lease was up it was never allowed to be renewed.

I heard about the water about four years ago, and consequently could not tear myself away from the place. I found myself making endless walks around the lake with the dog, taking detours to and from work in an effort to catch a glimpse of the spectacular misty dawns it always seemed to have.

By this time I was obsessed and knew I'd have to cast my lines in the lake just once. The white-painted signs placed around the water, warned of prosecution and stated clearly NO FISHING, looming ominously across the skyline. So, after talking to a few local anglers, it was no surprise to be duly informed that to fish it

was madness, and heavy fines were expected as it was now a wild bird sanctuary. Another "small point" I was informed of was the removal of a

few large pike which had taken place just before the lease was up, and of one large pike that had been spotted basking during the summer months.

All this was too much to bear for a chap who only has to hear the word "pike", and is reaching for his waders!

A trip was planned for midnight, when the last of the pint-pullers from the old golf club hall had departed home, till six in the morning when the grass cutters came to work. It was a Wednesday night when, to my way of thinking, there would be less chance of anyone stumbling on my hidden swim which had been cleared of chick weed by constantly tossing sticks to the "mutt" whilst on my many walks around the lake.

Minimum tackle was taken in the event a hurried exit might be forthcoming; a 10ft. rod, landing net, small tackle bag and a hot flask. Live bait was the advised method from the local old timers, so a few crucians, trapped the night before, were on the menu. Two nightlights were used, one on the trace, just above the crucians head to aid the pike's binocular vision in darkness, the other on the float to aid my own vision as the night blanketed me.

After five hours and only one jack of around the two pound mark I was a little despondent and began toying with the idea that this was not the special place I had first envisaged. Might it not be the fact that it was illegal to fish that was making my imagination run riot with magical thoughts of large untouched fish? And was it not time to admit defeat and start the long trek home?

Gazing across the lake to the old hall (as I had been doing all night) through the corner of my eye I caught sight of the float slipping under its glass-like surface, and was soon into what felt like a decent fish. After a long ten minute fight which felt more like forty, the fish was landed and lying in my arms. Not a monster by big fish standards, but still around the twenty mark. Here eyes were unusually sad looking and not the usual fierce, piercing eyes associated with pike, also, its opercular bone was a curious shape, reminding me of a heart. Carefully I released the fish and watched as it swam slowly across the moonlit lake. I proceeded to tackle down and make my way up, past the old hall, which had watched over me through the darkness.

A few weeks passed with no more thought of the water, as my thirst had now been thoroughly quenched, when a friend of mine, who was as keen a golfer as I was an angler, invited me up to the old hall for an evening out.

On entering the hall my eyes were transfixed to a large cased pike, set high by the window on a

stonework fireplace.

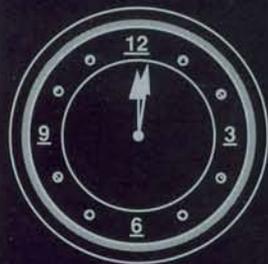
I was mortified, as I realised the pike had the same peculiar opercular bone as the one I had hooked! I stood gazing, a whirlwind of thoughts rushing through my mind, oblivious to all around. Suddenly an old gentleman, dressed in tweed, tapped me on the shoulder and thus proceeded to relate an old legend of the one-time dwellers of this magnificent old hall: the Farrimonds. On being falsely accused of infidelity, the Lady of the hall had been strangled, then hurled into the lake, leaving the legacy of a certain strain of pike, scarred with a broken heart.

"Of course," said the old man in a knowing sort of tone, "that's only an old wives' tale" and the cased pike was probably, in fact, merely deformed, a one off, and to pay no heed of this foolish talk. As his mutterings turned to other observations, and my mind became clear once more, I told myself that a deformity could easily happen twice, and wasn't life full of little coincidences?

A quick glance out of the window across the lake, saw me off to the bar for a few reassuring doubles and safe in the thought that my midnight excursion would be known to me alone.

Editor's note:

In case you're still wondering, yes, this is a fictional piece! The P.A.C. does not approve of poaching - but we do approve of entertaining stories like Shaun's! J.M.



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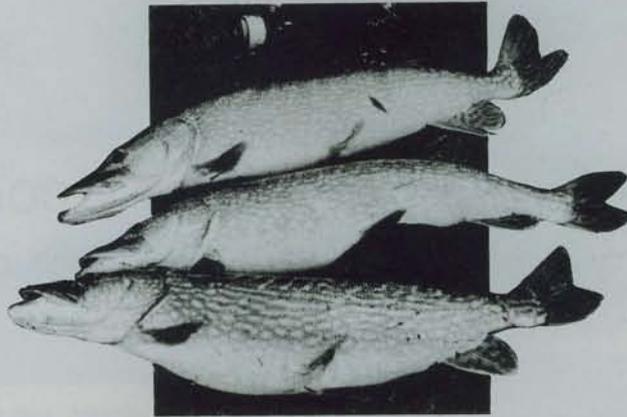
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Tayside R.O. Ian McNeil with a nice double of 16-02



Brian Calver looks soaked but suitably delighted with his first double at 18-00, taken on float-legered smelt from the Little Ouse

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Dave Cook sent in this snap of son, Mike, who took this 21 pounder on a smelt from a Perthshire loch



Mark Jubb returned from exile in Belgium to beat his "P.B." on seven occasions last season. Here he displays the best two at 19-04 and 24-02



Bill Allen with a 20-04 taken on a Big 'S' a couple of seasons ago (better late than never, Bill!)



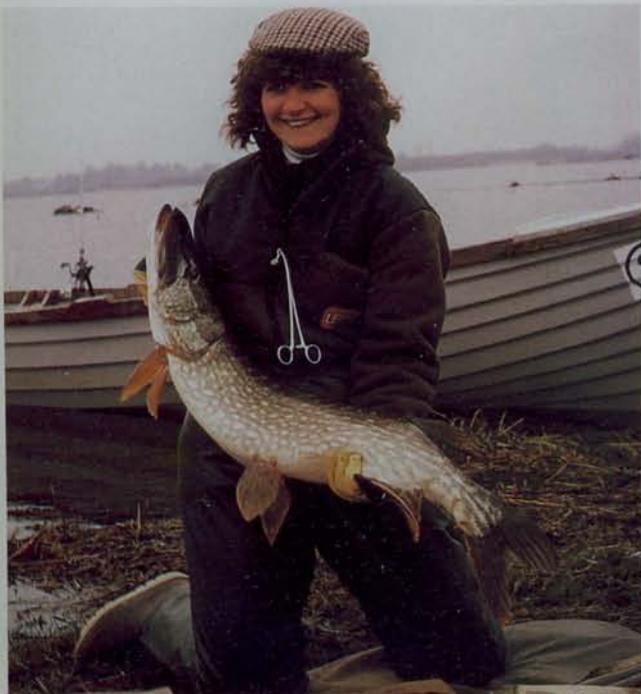
Brian Birdsall (Joint R.O. 66) with a splendid 22-04 Yorkshire river pike



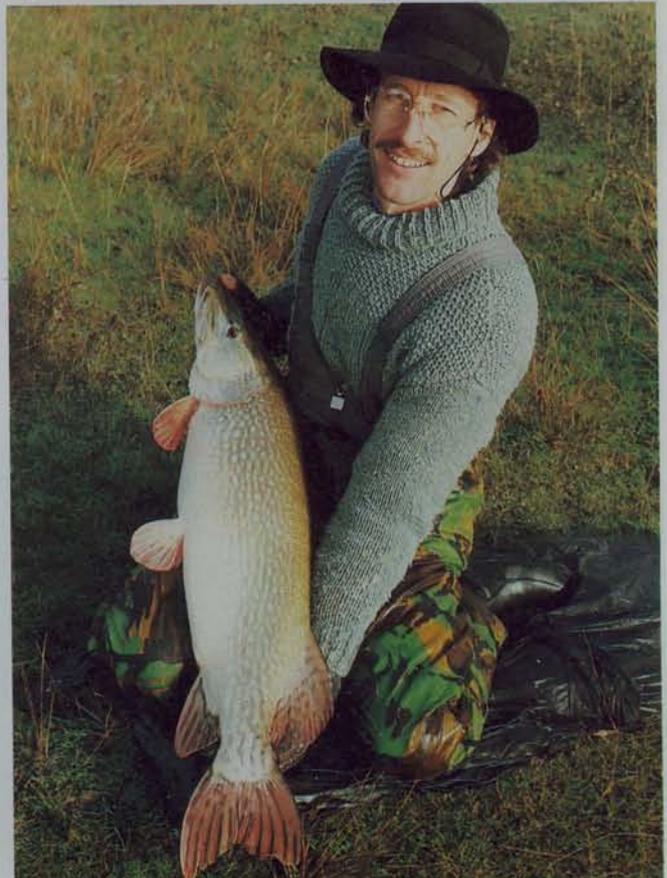
Dennis Moules believes this 20-04 fish, caught by new member Peter Humphreys, is the best recorded from the River Cam for over 20 years (what about it, Barrie?)



Spreading the Gospel in Ireland (Photo: Pete Rodgers)



Jane Stanyer with an Irish eighteen pounder (Read about her trip with husband Ian in the next issue!)



Chris Leibbrandt with a typically pale and perfect 22-06 Weir Wood fish



George Higgins with a magnificent Irish pike of 24-12



"Piker's Dawn" – sun-up at a venue near Boston (Photo: Neil Cash)

THE THOUGHTS OF CHAIRMAN BARRIE:

Well, welcome to the new P.A.C. organisers and to the editor in particular. May I comment on one or two items in mag. no. 52. Firstly its good to see Dilip Sarkar back. Dilip was one of the stalwarts when I was P.A.C. Secretary/Editor, and one always got a response from him. Reading his article in no. 52 reminded me of one of our ongoing problems, namely that of attracting youngsters in the first place, and then holding them as members. It seems to me that Dilip may have joined P.A.C. for the wrong reasons in the first place - though he had boundless enthusiasm I recall - which is only another way of saying that P.A.C. didn't do its job too well in explaining what it was all about.

In his present article, I take issue with him on one or two counts. In the first place, if you look objectively back at early issues, one can only conclude that my successors were better at producing a good mag. than I was, and so on to the present time. The best mag. we have had was when Martin Phillips was editor. I'm sure it will continue to improve. Dilip is confused! The point is that the early mags. inspired him because he was inexperienced. Now he is more experienced he feels he finds less in it for him. I will tell him that he will go through at least one more phase, namely that of reading it from cover to cover with increasing enjoyment. (I'm in that phase now, and I doubt if any member would term me inexperienced - a lot of other things maybe, but not that!)

I'm sorry too that Dilip found "Fishing for Big Pike" only half decent. He has it wrong anyway: it did not deal largely with Fenland rivers. In fact it hardly dealt with them at all. We happened to be fishing Fenland when the book was published, but many of the fundamental ideas, if not most of them, were worked out in a much harder piking county, namely Yorkshire. Perhaps that is the very reason why they were worked out, because cushy piking rarely causes one to think much, whereas difficult piking certainly does.

Whilst I sympathise with his last paragraph it does make me wonder whether he has actually read Bill Winship's book. It certainly isn't a "go there, do that" kind of book, but a reliving of tremendous memories on tremendous waters, with a hint or two as to how to enjoy them.

Dilip and I used to have lively discussions, and I'm sure we'll continue to do for he is as mixed up as ever! But welcome back Dilip. It's good to see you.

Barrie Rickards
Editors Comment

Barrie obviously subscribes to the W. C. Fields motto: "Never give a Sarkar an even break! (Sorry Dilip - I just couldn't resist the pun). J.M.

ABORTED TAKE-OFF

Reference to my request for new members in Pikelines 51 (Feb. '91) SOMERSET REGION, I am sorry to say that some people seem a little shy in picking up a pen, writing a letter or even telephoning. It would seem as though a new "Somerset Region" is unlikely to get off the ground as only seven people responded to my request. I would therefore like to repeat it in this issue:

Is there anybody out there? I believe to try and form a new region with less than twenty members on the books would be a waste of time and money, not to count effort! I would however like to thank two people for their time and trouble in helping me try to form a new Somerset region - all be it a seemingly lost cause at this time!

Ian Payne - Bournemouth, with whom I've spent many "minutes" on the 'phone (going

over lost fish etc. ...) If everyone was as interested as Ian, we would have a great region!

John Hopton - Bristol, who is very dedicated to the PAC, but, as we all are, feeling the pressure of keeping a job "screwed down" (I believe he's a milkman...)

Thanks to you both for your help and support. John and I were even considering a joint Bristol (Avon and Somerset) region to keep the figures up and share a little of the work. Well, there you go - but don't forget, if anyone out there is interested you can write, fax or 'phone (fax during the day, 'phone evenings).

On a brighter note, I'm over the moon to say I've got two days of fishing at ... yes ... Llandegfedd '91 in October! If a friend of mine pulls out, Ian and John can have a share of the fun (one day each and **only if!**), OK chaps?

Anyway, I won't go on, other than to wish all PAC members a good season ('91/'92) and if **there's anyone in or around Bristol/Avon/Somerset/Dorset who would like a large PAC region ... please do get in touch!**

Dave Skingsley, "Little Acre", Chantry, Nr. Frome, Somerset BA11 3LN Tel./Fax: 0373 836719

Editors Note:

The Committee would like to thank Dave for his continuing efforts to get things moving and to wish him all the best. We would like to point out however, that there is an active region centred on Bridgwater, Somerset (RA 12) which is in Dave's proposed catchment area. There is no reason at all why there should not be more than one region in any area, depending on the level of interest, and this is one of the reasons why it is recommended that regions are based on a town rather than a county or wider area. The whole question of regions is covered in this issue's "Viewpoint". J.M.

CARE, NOT VANITY

Being fairly new to pike fishing, the first thing I learnt was how to handle fish. I read many articles and watched several more experienced anglers before I even contemplated going it alone. I became a member of P.A.C. straight away to, hopefully, improve my knowledge of the species. I am now confident when handling pike and, as the experts say, deal with my fish quickly, efficiently, returning them to the water as soon as possible.

I am therefore dismayed to see some of these so called "experts" photographed with two, sometimes even three fish. Until the experts starting practising what they preach newcomers to the sport will be less likely to follow their advice. The angling press must also take some responsibility for this as they continue to publish these photographs.

I am the first to admit that the sight of two huge pike is breathtaking but our responsibility must be to the fish and not our vanity.

So please less stress to the fish and more concern to the conservation of a magnificent species.

Tight lines, A. M. Hill

Editors Note:

Your concern does you credit Mr. Hill. This is one of those cases of "Don't do as I do - do as I say!" Having said this, I think Pikelines is as guilty as any of the angling publications in printing pictures of multiple catches. There are a few instances where multiple catch shots have not resulted in undue stress: Pike can at times "switch on" and it is possible to get a run on a second rod while an earlier catch is temporarily sacked while the camera gear is prepared. (This has never happened to me worse luck!) However, your point is well made - we should not condone anything which puts pike at unnecessary risk. I would be interested to hear more views on this. J.M.

"SNAPPY" REPLY

Just a comment about a comment! Dilip Sakar's comments about the three twenties in the gallery require a short reply:

While I agree that photographs for the gallery piece are not always easy to come by, these ones were not submitted because the then editor was short of material. All three pics were previously unpublished in colour and were submitted by a P.A.C. member, me! I did this because I felt I should support the magazine. All P.A.C. members can do this and as far as I know, these pictures did not prevent any other member getting his 'mug' in the gallery. Members will note that during my 3 year term I did not appear on the front cover once! The reason? I didn't send anything suitable in! This is true of 95% of P.A.C. members. So support the magazine with anything which might be of interest to other members. This is exactly what I did for the gallery piece.

Neville Fickling

NEW FACES

At the R.O.'s Working Dinner this year I was disappointed to find that a few known faces were missing and later found out that some of the Regional organisers had handed over the job to someone else. I know that it is the policy of the P.A.C. to change the Committee every 3 years but it would seem that some regions are following suit and changing R.O.'s every so often. I looked at the February 1988, issue 39 of Pikelines to check the list of R.O.'s and saw there were 98 listed regions, each credited with the name of a regional organiser, but 3 years later in the February 1991, issue 51, there was a drastic change. In the later issue there was 97 regions listed with 11 marked vacant and more than two thirds of the R.O.'s had changed. Obviously there are many reasons for a region to acquire a new R.O. but I would be interested to know who is the longest serving Regional Organiser and perhaps some tips from him (or them) on how he runs his region.

Roger Stratton

P.S. This is the first "Dear John" letter I have written!

But not the last I hope. You pose an interesting question there Roger, and one which I am sure many of us would be interested to find out. If any R.O.'s would like to send in short pieces, introducing themselves, their ideas and a "mug shot", I could start a feature: (RO)GUES GALLERY - what about it? J.M.

MAKING A POINT

I was a bit puzzled by Bill Stephens piece on whether or not to point the rod at the lure. I wasn't puzzled by his conclusions, but by his statement that the only books he'd come across which mention how to hold the rod and strike were Fox's book and one by Rosko & Strung. There's plenty a lot nearer home Bill! I put a bit in "Spinners, Spoons and Wobbled Baits" for a start, and have written about it in articles on odd occasions over the years. Basically it seems to me that when using short rods - and I often do - you more or less have to point them at the lure to impart action sometimes and to pick up enough line on the strike to effect hooking. And you can strike upwards. With a long rods you can't strike upwards at more than a few yards because you introduce a bow in the line very quickly. And with a longer rod you do exactly as Bill says and side-swipe having got an angle between retrieve and rod in the first place.

Barrie Rickards

MORE RELEVANT POINTS

I read with much interest Bill Stephens article "To Point or not to point" in Pikelines 52 and I would like to take his discussion a little further if I may. I am not a lure nut, just an ordinary nut as any carp angler will tell you, but I have done a little lure fishing and I regard Bills' points to have just as much relevance to bait fishing as lure fishing.

I agree with Bill that in many cases a sideways strike is actually more efficient than an upward strike but to a point it does depend upon circumstances. If you are casting along the bank, in either direction, and subject to bankside vegetation the natural stance of the angler is about 45 degrees to the water with the rod something like the same angle to the water. If you are fishing at some range especially, the strike must overcome a lot of water drag on the line. The strike needs to be the most efficient to overcome this drag and that is the one which picks up the line the quickest. If you strike upwards whilst standing at an angle to the water then the line must be pulled through two planes - vertically and horizontally. This is both slow and inefficient.

If you are fishing straight out from the bank, that is at 90 degrees, then the natural stance of the angler is more in keeping with the angle of the line, and, making the assumption that the rod is approximately at the same 90 degrees, then an upward strike is the more efficient in that it needs to move the line through only one plane.

The essence of striking to a lure take, after all, is one of speed. You do not get the chance to wind up to the fish and thereby take out most of the 'slack' before striking. Unless you are fishing a very heavy lure, or winding back against a current flow there is inevitably a certain amount of slack line between the rod tip and the lure. A sharp and positive strike is necessary to quickly overcome this slack, on top of which the lure angler only infrequently has any warning of the take to follow. Striking tends to be an automatic response so it is proper to take this into account by taking up ones position and angling the rod correctly towards the lure, before a cast is made.

This question might be further aggravated depending upon whether you are left or right handed, and which direction you cast along the bank. I am left handed, and personally speaking I find it easier to strike sideways if I have cast along the bank to the right. If circumstances dictate that I cast to the left then I have to admit that my strike tends to be upwards and sideways. I tend to adopt this attitude when I am bait fishing also, but if I am fishing straight out then my strike is ALWAYS upwards.

In closing may I offer my best wishes to the new committee (they have my deepest sympathies) and my kindest regards to the retired committee for everything they did for P.A.C.

Martin Gay

JOHN FOSTER

I first met John Foster at the Southport R.O.'s Working Dinner in 1983. From that meeting we struck up a friendship which was to last until John's untimely death in February 1991. I fished many times with John, usually in the Fens, but once also in his home county of Yorkshire.

John was a great influence in my development as a zander angler. He taught me so much about the Fens from the smallest drains to the biggest rivers in the area. Many other visiting pike and zander anglers owe just as big a debt to John. He was always free with his information about where the fish were to be located, and many anglers from far and wide

benefited from his advice over the years. However, John did not suffer fools gladly and had no time for anyone who betrayed the trust he placed in them.

For me, as I am sure many other anglers, the Fens will not be the same without him. I will miss our nights on some remote Fenland drain; no more will I see the light from a box of Swan Vestas as he smoked his pipe on the dark Fenland bank. No more will I hear his sharp orders as I attempt to net another zander for him.

As I fish a Fenland drain this June my thoughts will be about him. I will miss you old mate.

John Foster the Fenman from Barnsley.

Brian Birdsall
Leeds P.A.C.

Editors Comment:

It is no small measure of the respect and affection in which John Foster was held, that tributes to him now span three issues of the magazine. I think even the vast majority of members who did not know him personally will by now have an idea of what a rare character he was. I can remember my own first meeting with him when I was a tenderfoot R.O. at my first working dinner, and the time spent chatting pleasantly with both John and Brian that evening. I will never have the opportunity to tell him how much that simple friendly act of inviting me to join them over a few pints meant to me at that early stage of my involvement with the Club. But I have now at last told all of you.

The memory of John striding across the room, beaming away through the pipe clenched firmly between his teeth and the genuine warmth of his hearty handshake whenever we met at conferences and subsequent working dinners, is fondly recalled. He may not have been perfect, was certainly no saint, but he took the bother to be nice to people (unless they gave him good cause not to) and put a very great deal back into the sport he loved. I had the pleasure of being present when he was given the accolade of "Pike Angler of the Year" in 1988 and there can be few instances when such an award was more richly deserved.

John Milford

HOLIDAY HORRORS

Having just returned from holiday at Center Parks on the Norfolk/Suffolk border, and finding my Pikelines awaiting me on the doormat, I felt I had to write.

On enquiring at the local tackle shop in Thetford where the best place locally to do some piking would be, the owner informed me to try Swan Lake at Snetterton Pits. Having a week to choose which Day I would fish (I was only allowed one day - family commitments - like that's all she would let me do!) I decided to go on the Monday (17/6/91)

On the first day of the season, my brother and our kids went to find the pits and have a look around for an hour or so. On arrival at the pits, I asked quite a few people how the fishing was and was informed that quite a few pike were showing and taking peoples fish as they were bringing them in (much to their annoyance). That prompted some of them to have a try for the pike. Great I have no complaints about that, but the point being, and my reason for writing this is, the particular people I was watching turned out not to have any equipment for the safe handling and unhooking of the pike. The only equipment they had was a snap tackle and that, to them, was all they needed.

One of the guys caught a small jack of about 5lb. He and his two friends were quite obviously frightened of it and didn't have a clue how to land it (in a small pan net I hasten to add). After watching him struggle for five minutes I could stand no more, so I stepped up and offered my assistance which was readily accepted. After

hand landing the fish I discovered it was deep hooked. When I asked for some forceps, they didn't have any! All they had was an old "V" or snake tongue disgorging. After a fairly lengthy struggle to release the hooks I succeeded and thankfully the fish, after holding for a while seemed to swim away quite happily.

Not for one minute do I expect those guys to read Pikelines. The main objective of my letter is to appeal to all P.A.C. members to keep an eye out, especially during the summer, for these ill equipped anglers who seem to see the pike as no different from any other fish and the equipment they use for these as suitable for pike as well. I just wonder how many pike are killed each year by anglers who are totally ill equipped. So, please keep an eye out for them and give them a hand.

Tom Fowler

P.S. If there are any members in my local area who need a fishing companion, I would be most interested in hearing from them, as it gets lonely going on my own all the time! (Why not get in touch with your nearest regional association, Tom? J.M.)

PHOTO CALL

Congratulations (Martin) on issue 52, it was worth the wait. Regarding John Bingham's article on bad photos: I have been trying for quite some time (unsuccessfully) to take a picture of a tailwalking pike, and am sending in one of my efforts. (The photo shows a crucian, having just been spat out of a good pike, flying through mid-air!) Also, Dilip Sarkar's article regarding Mr. Ficklings "Boat Race" in the gallery: I'm sure I speak for many angling publication readers when I say that it's not photos of Neville Fickling with a good pike we are looking at, but a photo of good pike with some bloke kneeling behind them.

Shaun Holland, Wigan.

A very sensible way of looking at it Shaun, (Especially in the case of a "boat race" like Nev's!) However, I guess some blokes just get to kneel behind more good pike than others! J.M.



BLOXHAM BLOCKS 'EM

It was in October 1990, and the pike at Cofton-Hackett Reservoir in Birmingham were feeding well, only for them to end with an untimely death. To my knowledge pike of 21lb, 17lb, 15lb and 33 jacks had been caught and taken home for tea, or more often just despatched and left to rot on the bank.

The Reservoir is owned by West Midland Travel, whose elected Fishing Committee introduced a "kill all pike" rule for the 1990 season. Previously it had been all pike under 10lbs, although I suspect any pike caught ended up dead pike. I canvassed many anglers but found the only friends the pike had were old Jack the bailiff, and myself.

Letters Letters Letters

I intensified my own pike fishing exploits which had up until now been limited to the odd hour plugging, (usually at a time when I couldn't catch anything else). I started using small livebaits and found that indeed there is a large number of jacks present of between 2 and 3lb. This little foray into pike fishing has now turned into me spending most of my time on the bank in search of Esox.

The Committee remained intent on removing the pike population and, as someone who can't bear any sizable fish to be killed, I decided that something had to be done. It was then that I contacted the P.A.C.

I wrote to Pete Haywood informing him of the current happenings, and included a brief history of the Reservoir, which had depths of up to 20 feet. It also has a natural channel running through the middle, which would probably explain why netting has been such a failure.

In the mid-seventies, when it was realised that a fair head of pike were present, the top end of the Reservoir was dammed by the Severn-Trent Water Authority, raising the water level considerably. The fishing was never the same again, and over the years more and more of the blame has been attributed to the pike population. However, low rain levels over the past two summers have seen the Severn-Trent lower the water by about 8 feet to top up local canals, and the Reservoir has once again fished well. This suggests that the problem with the fishing is one of location.

Pete passed my letter on to Barrie Rickards, who replied to me offering several points of good advice. He suggested that I contact Chris Leibbrandt who supplied me with a copy of the P.A.C. guidance sheets (being updated - C.L.) for the case against pike culls. The information

on the sheets seemed to tie in perfectly with the chain of events at the Reservoir, i.e. that if you remove five 10 pounders they will be replaced by fifty 1 pounders. I had 12 sets of the sheets photocopied and handed them to the rule-making Sub-Committee in December. As these meetings are held every 3 months it gave them plenty of time to read the information and make their own enquiries.

They invited me back to the next meeting in March. When the pike came up for discussion they said that taking everything into account it could be that they had been going about things in the wrong way, and that the large number of small pike could be the result of removing the bigger pike over the years. They proposed to remove only those pike under 6lb, but I managed to argue this down to under 4lb (on previous advice offered to me by Chris). This would ensure that a high proportion of the males are removed. The motion was passed.

They also agreed to allow me to arrange pike matches, beginning in the Autumn of 1992, with all peg fees donated to the A.C.A. Partly on the result of these matches they will judge future policy. So, hopefully, before too long jacks will not be so much in evidence and all culling will cease.

I would like to thank the West Midlands Travel Fishing Committee for listening and acting so positively and, finally, say a big thank you to the P.A.C. I was so impressed with the help and friendliness that they conveyed that my good friend John Shervington and myself will be joining up for the new Season.

Roy Bloxham,
Selly Oak

Chris comments:

This has been an interesting episode and one which has had a welcome outcome. I think

that the lesson to be learned is one of tactics. In order to change attitudes it is important to respect the other point of view. The combative style, whilst making you feel better by letting off steam often spirals downwards into acrimonious bickering. Far better to persuade and change attitudes basing your arguments on sound evidence and common sense. Here we have a case in point. I have personally thanked Roy for his efforts. All this achieved in a non-adversarial way and just to make us all ashamed ... Roy wasn't a member of P.A.C. at the time. C.L.



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A season on a secluded Welsh lake provides some memorable piking, but for NEIL SARKAR it is time to move on.

This is not to be an article of huge pike coming to the bank in large numbers but its subject matter is a lake found by myself and constant fishing companion, nestling in the Welsh Borderlands. It was no Llandegfedd, but it certainly provided us with an awful lot of fish.

It all started one Sunday in November 1988. My fishing partner, 'Pud' Shellam, and I had planned to fish a stretch of the River Wye near Hereford which had produced a couple of good fish to us. However, upon arriving at the river it was found to be unfishable, having around 12 feet of very coloured flood water on it. My first reaction was to up tools and call it a day, but Pud remembered a lake not far from the river that was rumoured to hold a few pike. I say rumoured, as to our knowledge no one had ever seriously fished it. So, still having my doubts we set off.

On arriving at the lake I was instantly overwhelmed by its beauty. It was set in a typical barren Welsh valley, wooded on one side, completely open and windswept on the other three.

A quick cast around with a plumbing rod soon established that the majority of the 14 acre water was only about three feet deep. One bank, however, had a trench of around six feet running its entire length. Obviously our first point of attack would have to be this trench, which must surely hold some fish.

One rod was rigged with a free-roving live bait set four feet deep, the other was set with a sunk float paternostered bait next to some submerged bankside trees.

Rods out, Pud and I began the pike angler's ritual of cup of tea - wait - cup of tea - wait . . .

Lunchtime came and passed and no action was forthcoming. Around 3 p.m. Pud decided to go to the other end of the lake and drift a bait around. I opted to stay put and hope that if there were any patrolling pike in the lake one would come into the deeper water.

At 3.15 p.m. my free-roved bait was taken with such speed that I thought a submarine had grabbed it! A very long and arm-aching fight later, I found myself gazing at our first pike from the venue, an 18lb. scale perfect specimen.

Half-an-hour later the float disappeared again and a second fish of 18.02 graced my landing net. Almost like two peas in a pod.

Throughout the course of that winter we fished the lake as often as we could, usually two or three times a month, catching a great many fish between 11lb. and 16lb. but noticeably no jacks. The 18.02 looked to be the biggest fish in the lake, it was as if Lady Luck had certainly shone on us on that first trip.

Pud was certain that the water held a 'twenty', I was not so sure, reasoning that if it did, surely the law of averages said that we would have caught it, as we had begun to get repeat captures.

Suddenly, the pike went right off livebaits and our catches suffered accordingly. I would point out that up to this point, all of our piking

First and Last



The author (right) and Pud Shellam cradle fish of 12.04 and 12.12 respectively from the water

had been carried out on the Rivers Severn and Wye, predominantly livebait waters and therefore we had very little confidence in deadbaits. Due to the crash in our results we decided that perhaps a deadbait would do the trick.

The next trip saw us arrive at the lake, after much discussion, with just a bag of deadbaits. A gamble, but one we had to take.

With no thought, enthusiasm, or confidence, we chucked out four smelly half herrings and decided that if no runs came we would adjourn to the local beverage house for a spot of lubrication, such was our confidence! Imagine my surprise when the indicator on my right-hand rod flew off.

"My God," I thought, "it must be a run!" after all, half herrings don't swim very far do they? This first fish was, as I remember, 14.04. That morning we landed four more fish, all doubles, and all on smelly herrings. Certainly a boost to our confidence.

For the next couple of months we took many fish on herrings and mackerel, in fact our results were better than when we were using livebaits.

December 26th saw us at the lake for our annual Boxing Day bash. Pud was still certain that the lake held a 'twenty'. Again only deadbaits were fished but no fish were

forthcoming until, at 3 p.m., I noticed that the line on my left-hand rod was tightening up and then slackening off. Picking the rod up and pulling the line out of the clip, I was pleasantly surprised to watch the line being pulled through my fingers at a steady rate. I wound down straight away and felt the stubborn weight of a large fish. This fish did not charge away as had all the other doubles, but just plodded around using its weight, seemingly unperturbed by my actions at the other end of 12 feet of carbon. Five minutes later Pud lifted a 'new' fish skyward and laid it carefully in the grass. On folding back the net I thought that it was, in fact, not a new fish, but the eighteen pounder that I had caught on our first trip. Closer inspection revealed that it was not, and indeed was a lot broader across the back. On the scales she went 20.09, after deducting the sling. Pud's first publishable words were the inevitable "told you so!"

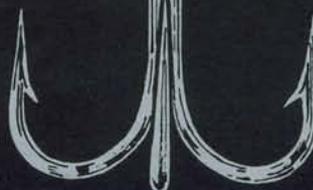
The strange thing is, that since the capture of that fish, neither of us have had a run at the lake, even though we have fished it many times. I believe that the lake, in its own majestic way, is telling us to move on. We have caught our last fish.

Neil Sarkar



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Using Your Loaf

Thinking for yourself and looking at what is going on around you while fishing is preached about a lot in fishing magazines and the angling press, but I wonder how many anglers use their loaf and eyes? - it's all too easy to fall into the trap of fishing the first comfortable swim that you come to with no thought of whether the swim contains pike or if there are any natural features to fish to or against. Pike anglers, like other anglers, are a mixed bunch: some are quite content to just sit behind a pair of rods, some fish lures and others roam around the water fishing here and there. Each enjoys what he is doing and that is great, but a bit of extra thought can really pay dividends so here are a few instances that have helped me to raise my catch rate.

Last Christmas I had a few weeks holiday and thought it would be a good idea to concentrate my efforts on one gravel pit, having decided earlier in the season to fish lures more often. I thought the best way to find out more about the pit was to cover the water looking at likely swims and to cover them with a lure. This way I began to discover fish-holding areas and the topography of the gravel pit using the countdown method with the lure. If fishing blind on new waters in this way there is always the chance of losing a few lures but I think it is worth it. Early on in my angling career losing a lure or two dented my confidence but nowadays my thinking has changed. I believe that confidence in what I am fishing and the area I am covering really helps me to catch more. If you do not like the idea of losing lures, why not try wobbling deadbait; the loss of a few sprats and trebles is not a major expense and you will be surprised to find you are fishing snaggy swims you would never dream of casting a lure at.

Early on in the day I fished a long narrow bay formed by a short thin gravel spit covered in trees and by small islands all but separating it from the main pit. I fished a landa pikko silver dace spoon and hooked a few jack pike. On the subject of confidence, if I am fishing clear water the silver dace is the first lure that I try as I have great faith in its fish catching ability. You can feel the action through the rod and watching the spoon in the water, it does seem to have a realistic fish appearance. Anyway, during the afternoon I returned to the bay for no particular reason, just a feeling that the area could produce more fish. For a change I put a 4' floating plastic yellow/black pike-like plug and on my first cast had a small jack pike of about 4lb. After a few more casts I had another small jack which was taken by a very large pike while I was playing it. It fought up and down the bay and I hung on for grim death. After 5 minutes, which seemed like 25, I was left with a well tooth marked jack pike which when returned to the water swam away strongly. After a short rest, I started to look around the bay for a likely spot to bait fish from. You may well ask why not try the swim where the big fish had struck? Well, the top of the bank was about 4 feet above the water, covered with large bushes of bramble drooping into the water and with a large sunken weed bed and it would not have been the ideal area to land a big fish. On the far bank of the bay, at the end of the gravel spit, there seemed to be a bit of clear space between two trees. To get round to the swim I had to edge around the shallows overgrown with willows. Once at the new swim I found I could cover all the narrow bay. The next day I arrived at my chosen swim armed with various baits.

Keeping your eyes open, and making the right deductions, can really improve your pike fishing says EDDIE BEDDING.

On the way round to the shallows I noticed some movement in the water and a closer inspection revealed a large shoal of roach in about 18" of water, so that could be the clue - roach = pike. That day I had pike of 18 1/4 lb and four of about 6lb. The next day my wife Chris fished with me in the same swim and we had pike of 18 3/4, 13lb and a few smaller pike. If I had not bothered to wander around the pit fishing here and there and trying places like the narrow shallow bay with a lure, I honestly think that I would not have given the bay a second glance.

Another thing that I noticed while I fished the bay was that the large shoal of roach and the pike stayed there for the 2 weeks that we fished. I also noticed that the pike did not feed while the roach kept tight to the bank in the shallows but when they drifted away, say 10 yards out into the bay, the pike activity started. The movement of the pike in the bay interested me as well as seeing them feeding, there were no swirls as such and the pike seemed to porpoise rather like trout head and tailing. The bigger pike were taken on smelt hard on the bottom and the small fish on sprats drifted

around the swim about 2 feet under a pencil float which suggests that the smaller fish might have been smashing into the roach shoal and the bigger ones mopping up dead or dying fish on the bottom. I think that being quiet on the bank helped because most of the fish were caught about 2 rod lengths out and both roach and pike seemed quite oblivious to us.

Although most of what I have written is obvious and there is nothing new, I think that learning to read the water and improving my fishing can be fun and I get real enjoyment out of trying to improve my pike angling skills and in continuing to learn something on each outing. (Editors Note:)

Eddie's theory that the larger pike capitalise by mopping up prey fish, injured or killed as a result of the strikes from smaller more active pike feeding above them, is an interesting one. American bass fishermen have noted similar tendencies, where the big fish suspend beneath school-sized bass attacking shad shoals near the surface for exactly the same reason.

I would suggest a lure with weed-guarded hooks rather than a wobbling deadbait for searching potentially snaggy areas. If you think of lures as bait rather than hardware, the occasional loss is small compared to the cost of deadbaits which we all use up quite cheerfully! The thought of losing baited rigs however, is not one I would personally be comfortable with - even when wobbling soft baits such as sprats.

Thanks for a thought-provoking article Eddie, if anyone else has comments or observations to add, I would be pleased to receive them. J.M.

Comedy Corner



ALAN WHEATER sent in this photo with the following comment:

"I only said 'smile' ... and it gave a full salute!"

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Reviews



SIGLON LINE

There can't be many of us who haven't changed our lines from time to time in order to get our hands on the best one available. I am no different from the rest of you and have tried several but have used good old Sylcast for a long time. However I have spent the last 6 months assessing RYOBI MASTERLINE'S 'SIGLON, high tech mono line.

I liked the colour straight away, it looks like a decent cup of tea! It also has a strange sort of coating to it (now I'm no chemist but this may be due to the chemical strengthening). I suspect that this is what gives it such water resistant powers. It also helps casting distance. I'm not one for long range fishing myself but it certainly put a few yards on my modest efforts.

Quite a lot of my fishing is done with lures and this is an area where the line has excelled. The constant 'Cast & Retrieve' that is necessary really shows up any weakness in a line and this one has done extremely well. Because it has a low reel 'memory' it is very well behaved, a must when lure fishing.

It is not as abrasion resistant as the copolymer lines (Berkeley Big Game for example, which I use for towing big baits around behind boats), but I have found much more manageable for active types of pike fishing.

I have to say that I was sceptical when I first started using it but I am glad that I persevered. The extensive trial has only proved it's worth and at around £13.50 for 600m of 12lb it is a premium price for a premium product.

Chris Leibbrandt

THE AMBASSADEUR 2000 ROD FROM ABU

Graham Easton of TG Lures asked me to test a pair of rods back in September 1990 and these are my conclusions, after a season's use:

I have been using the Ambassador 5000 series reels now for some years and have become a total convert to the delights of them in favour of the trusty Mitchells that have given me nearly twenty years of service. As a pike angler it has always been a mystery why so few anglers use multipliers. The reason is perhaps, the lack of adequate rods that are designed to be fished within the multiplier reels. I am glad to report that ABU have addressed this situation and brought out a comprehensive range of rods specifically built for the job. They have invested time and effort into getting these rods right, something that has not always been the case, particularly for the UK market. There are rods in 100% IM-6 carbon, Carbon blanks with a spiral IM-6 wrap and composite carbon/glass rods all of which are very good value for money. At last, long rods to use with the 5001C!

The rods that I have been using are the top of the range Ambassador 2000 which are indeed lovely rods. They have full cork handles, something I like and a trigger grip Fuji winch fitting to take the multiplier reels. Finished in a burgundy colour with gold tipped whippings they really look the part. But what of the action? Because these rods are built on 11ft blanks that are of 100% IM-6 carbon, not only are they incredibly light but they are awesomely powerful as well. Rated in the Tightlines as code 3 fishing I would say that these are around the 3lb+ test curve mark. They have a through action which will easily cast mackerel a considerable distance, however I would be wary of using them at close range, simply because of their robustness. An ideal boat rod for trout reservoirs and the Scottish and Irish lochs/loughs I can see them as being a good seller in the still limited UK market.

Considering the quality of the workmanship for an 'off the peg' rod they are very nicely priced at £89.99, in my opinion a bargain for such a long awaited item.

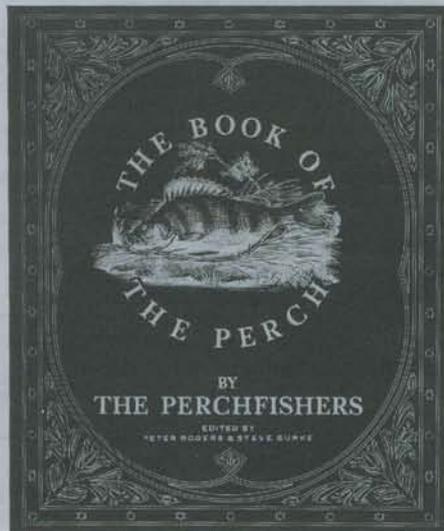
I have been lucky and the rods have been well tested at Weir Wood. I now wouldn't use anything else, even though they are as 'stubborn' as a mule when it comes to fighting big fish.

I have been so impressed with these rods that I have obtained a pair of the Ambassador 1000, Carbon with IM-6 wrap for more general fishing for pike. They too have a fairly hefty test curve in the 3lb bracket but have more tip action, what ABU class 'parabolic', better for close work.

Priced at £79.99 for a finished rod they are very good value indeed.

Contact your local ABU stockist for more details.

Chris Leibbrandt



THE BOOK OF THE PERCH BY: "THE PERCHFISHERS", OXFORD ILLUSTRATED PRESS

This book has already been hailed, by many eminently more qualified to judge than me, as being the definitive work on the "phoenix" of species - the perch. Having read it from cover to cover, I can gladly add the modest weight of my own opinion in total agreement. It seems ironic that the perch, the most highly evolved of our native fish, should be so susceptible to disease, compounded by the stresses imposed by our institutional disregard for the ecology. It

would not have been surprising then, to find that the contributors to this book over-indulged in sentiment and nostalgia. It please me greatly to say that they do not. This is not to say that the contributors shy from describing the occasional heartbreaking loss of prime perch fishing, in fact Drew Young's treatise on the disease itself is a scientific work of the greatest merit. Above all however, the book is a richly varied and practical guide on locating, understanding and catching big perch today.

Under the editorship of Pete Rogers and Steve Burke, the book presents individual essays covering every aspect of perch fishing, assembling the cumulative insights of many of the country's foremost anglers in a highly readable and compelling format. Perhaps reflecting the nature of the Perchfishers themselves, I was left with the impression that this is not merely another "ultra-cult" single species book. It struck me as a volume that embodies a special attitude to angling itself, containing a wealth of information which could be applied to many other species. As a group, the Perchfishers seem to represent a particular type of angler; specialist without being inflexible, dedicated without being dour or obsessive. This undercurrent running through the book is most refreshing and makes it stand up as an excellent angling book in its own right, irrespective of any particular affinity with the species. Having said this, if you could possibly remain unmoved by the sight of a big bristling perch, then you must have sold your angling soul!

Within its handsome bottle-green and gold covers, the book achieves a good balance between monochrome and colour photographs, crowned by a full page colour plate of John Shayler's stupendous 5lb 9oz record specimen. The rig drawings and charts are clear and informative and each of the book's twelve sections are preceded by one of Luke Bedson's masterfully evocative ink drawings. All in all, the £20 cover price is wholly justified, even more so when you consider that the royalties from the book are being donated to the A.C.A. In closing, I can assure you that the cost of the book will seem like a paltry sum, when set against the thrill and sense of achievement you would deservedly experience from fulfilling such an elusive and worthy goal as the capture of a specimen perch.

John Milford

PIKE: IN PURSUIT OF ESOX LUCIUS

Vic Bellars & Martyn Page

Published by the Crowood Press Limited
£19.95

I purchased this book shortly after its publication, in the Autumn of last year, and read it on two or three occasions, enjoying the writing skills of these two very well known and respected Pike anglers, and found not a few of their ideas, as expressed in the book, thought provoking.

I have more recently been asked to provide, for Pikelines, a review of the book and therefore set about reading it once more but this time in a more detached, critical manner, seeking to examine whether the book matched the aims and ambitions of the writers as expressed in the jacket of the book.

The short answer is the book, to me, is still one of the most authoritative, easy to read works on modern pike angling available and is likely to be, for many of us, the text book of the 1990's.

Many modern angling books are either extremely dry and technical, boring the reader who subsequently learns little, or are excessively narrative, which often means they are not treated seriously. This book is neither but is a nice balance of the two.

PIKE: IN PURSUIT OF ESOX LUCIOSUS is split into the following parts, each giving a full account of the subject matter:

- In pursuit of *Esox Lucius*;
- The versatility of deadbaiting;
- Livebaiting - The Pike Anglers natural craft;
- Artificial deception and suspended animation;
- Wilder horizons;
- Overseas and far away.

As well as these principal parts to the book, which I will describe in a little detail shortly, there is a very glowing (and accurate) foreword from Colin Dyson - the immediate former P.A.C. President and respected angling journalist. To quote Colin: "It is interesting, instructive, thought provoking and maybe even a bit controversial in some areas - a welcome and valuable addition to pike angling literature". Praise indeed, particularly from a man well noted for his own skills in writing for anglers.

There are also two very entertaining and sensitive chapters by each of the two authors which effectively start and finish the book. These are, in their way, the story of the way they have, over the years, come to love pike angling. A little bit of their inner self is exposed within these writings, which makes fascinating reading.

Turning back to the principal parts of the book, I indicate below a brief description of the goodies that are on offer within each:

In Pursuit of *Esox Lucius*

Broadly, this part of the book spends the majority of its pages describing, in detail, the behavioural aspects of Pike, their location, and the need for constant self examination in one's techniques, and attitudes. Whilst this part of the book will more than satisfy the reader in all these issues, the chapter that stands out, for me, is on location and particularly the categorisation of Pike anglers as either hunters or trappers, in terms of the way they fish. When you read this you will automatically re-examine, and subsequently learn to continuously examine, the way you fish.

The Versatility of Deadbaiting

As the description of this part of the book suggests, there is a great wealth of knowledge, experience and thought committed to these pages which will help many Pike anglers understand deadbaiting. Modern day issues, such as colouring and the use of attractions are also tackled but my particular favourite is the section on wobbling, which gives advice on how and where to use this now almost extinct form of Pike fishing.

Livebaiting, The Anglers Natural Craft

I must be honest in saying that before reading the book I had not used livebait, seriously, for a few seasons. The authors assisted me in both accepting that livebaiting is a very effective form of pike angling and understanding its application.

Moving to the part of the book entitled **Artificial Deception and Suspended Animation** the authors, quite rightly, decided to ask a knowledgeable dedicated lure angler to write this for them. As they could not find anybody they asked Chris Leibbrandt! Seriously, whilst Chris is a good friend of mine, which makes it somewhat difficult to be truly objective, his writings in this book on lure angling are exceptional and will give each reader a better understanding of how and why lures work, which colours/types work and when they work and, lastly the type of tackle needed to present the lures. The book's authors, in introducing this part, make glowing references to Chris, which I could not better. "After reading Chris's contribution just once we both felt we were far better lure anglers than we had been a few minutes earlier".

Wider Horizons covers a number of related issues such as Boatcraft, man-made Pike fisheries, trout water pike and the future, and will undoubtedly trigger thoughts in every reader.

Lastly, **Overseas and Far Away** is a relatively short part, describing experiences on Dutch waters, fly fishing in peat bogs and fishing in the States. Whilst these may sound to be a little out of context with the rest of the book, I would say that, when reading, they blend well and give the reader an idea of the context of our Pike angling in an international sense.

This review has necessarily been long, in order to describe in detail the contents of the book. If asked to sum up my views I would simply say, buy it and you will have a book which you will enjoy reading and re-reading many times in the future.

John Synnuck

"THE TEN GREATEST PIKE ANGLERS"

By **Barrie Rickards & Malcolm Bannister**
The **Boydell Press**, £16.95

"If I have been able to see thus far, it is has been by standing on the shoulders of giants" (to mis-quote Sir Isaac Newton), is a statement which many of today's "instant" specimen hunters would do well to take to heart. This well-conceived book from Barrie and Malcolm deals with ten such giants from the fascinating history of specialist pike angling. Their ten "greats" are clearly the authors personal choice, and to argue over those included or omitted would, I think, be to miss the point of the book. Regardless of whether or not you agree they are the ten greatest, there is little doubt that they are ten of the greatest, and each was responsible for planting his own milestone along the rod to "modern" pike angling.

The chapters are arranged in the chronological order of the writers principal publication, and cover the works of Nobbes (1682), Pennell (1865), Bickerdyke (1888), Jardine (1896), Senior (1900), Martin (1907), Spence (1928), Spencer (1936), Hill (1944) and finally, Thurlow-Craig (1951). They were all chosen as being innovators, as distinct from noted practitioners - who may have popularised piking and caught more fish, but not contributed so much to its development. Other writers, and editors of the listed works, also receive appropriate mentions throughout the text. It is perhaps indicative of the difficulties posed by the authors living so far apart, that we are given similar detailed definitions of the precise practice of trolling in two separate chapters (Nobbes and Martin), but this is only a quibble. The book is well researched and entertainingly written and I particularly had to smile at the delightfully pedantic counter (I suspect from BR!), to A. C. Williams claim that plaited flax line is "stronger" than silk. I can thoroughly recommend this volume as an antidote to all the "how to catch 'em"/"look what I've caught" books available today and it certainly serves to put them all into proper context. The only problem is that it could cost you a small fortune tracking down the original works covered, once your appetite has been whetted!

In addition to eight superb pencil portraits by Douglas Palmer, the book includes sixteen black and white plates, including eleven photographs by John Stephenson of antique pike tackle from his private collection. Considering that the book is only 103 pages long, excluding seven introductory pages, it would have been nice to see some of these in colour, given the publisher's cover price of just under £17. It is nevertheless, a book of quality, if not quantity, and one which I am sure I will be reading over and over again.

John Milford

Bill Winship has also submitted a review of this book. It may be interesting to compare what Bill has to say with my conclusions. J.M.

"THE TEN GREATEST PIKE ANGLERS"

By **Barrie Rickards & Malcolm Bannister**
The **Boydell Press**, £16.95

In almost every book ever printed on the subject of pike we find references are made to the great pike anglers of the past. Names like Jardine, Bickerdyke and Spence crop up quite regularly for the very good reason that they laid the very foundations of our modern angling culture. Many of the old references tempt one to make a study of the old masters to find out more about these important people, but the task of wading through old archives is offputting in the extreme as it would take years of research to make a real impact on the subject.

Now the good news is that Malcolm Bannister and Barrie Rickards have actually done the job for us. Indeed, over the past eight years these two authors have been carefully sifting through old books and journals to compile a book which traces the beginnings of our pike angling history. The early works have been checked for authenticity and placed in a chronology of events which effectively records the development of our sport for the first time ever.

The ten main chapters are based on biographical studies of some of the most talented anglers in history. Their tackles, techniques and general philosophy to pike fishing are discussed at length in a highly informative and entertaining style.

My favourite chapter is the one which deals with Alfred Jardine, a character who has stirred the imagination of pike anglers throughout the biggest part of the century; not least because he was one of the most successful pike hunters of all time. I laughed with joy when I read that Jardine was dogged by jealous critics and was in effect a victim of his own success. (Some things never change!)

There has been an enormous amount of scholarship invested in the production of this book, and I am certain that there are no other people alive today who could have done such a good job. (You will see what I mean when you read it).

My only criticism of the book is that the title fails to convey the true importance of the work. Here we have a detailed history of our sport up to the 1950's, the first ever which took eight years to compile, and yet the title does not seem to get this point across. Also, I feel a little uneasy about the "est" letters on the word 'Greatest'. Of course the characters portrayed were great anglers in every sense of the word, but no greater than my old friend Norris Sturdy who never wrote a word on angling in his life. I feel the term 'Greatest' is a bit unfair to the numerous 'unsung heroes' who were too modest, even too English to claim any sort of fame, and hence have been lost in the mists of time. These criticisms are all minor points, and in all fairness, the two authors did not succumb to the temptation of putting their own names amongst the greats. (Unlike one character who did recently, an unspeakable act). Though it would have been easy to justify this in their case.

Each chapter is haunted by a portrait of the 'ten greats' who peer out from the page as if to keep watch over their legacy. This is good because it helps one to relate to the characters involved and imagine what they are really like.

Finally, I would just like to say that the pike angler who denies himself a copy of this book denies a rich and colourful pike heritage. I now consider this book the most important one in my private collection; it does after all put all the others in perspective!

Bill Winship

BOOKS



FOR THE PIKE SPECIALIST

BIG WATER PIKE FISHING

Book One: Bank Fishing
By James Holgate

This new book examines the author's highly individual approach to pike fishing on larger venues. This is very much a practical book, intended for those anglers who really want to get to grips with the pike on big lakes, lochs, reservoirs and gravel pits.

PRICE £6.95

BIG WATER PIKE FISHING

Book Two: Boat Fishing
By James Holgate

This 140 page book examines all aspects of boat fishing larger venues. Covering both trolling and static boat fishing, there are also chapters on boat equipment, safety afloat, lure fishing and downriggers. The author also devotes a great deal of space to modern fishing finders. Examining not only the equipment itself but also their uses and limitations. Even those anglers who don't intend to boat-fish will derive much useful information about tactics and pike behaviour from this book.

PRICE £7.95



CATCHING PIKE ON LURES

A Practical Guide
By James Holgate

Without doubt lure fishing must be the most under-used method of catching pike today. This is largely due to a general lack of knowledge, not only about the vast range of modern lures but also the different ways they can be used to catch more pike. The book includes extensive chapters on plugs, spinners, spoons, spinnerbaits, surface lures, jigs, as well as all other important aspects of successful lure fishing. Invaluable though this book is, it actually costs less than many modern plugs, yet in the long run will probably help you to catch far more pike.

PRICE £6.95



UNDERSTANDING MODERN PIKE RIGS

By David Lumb

Here for the first time everything you wanted to know about the confusing world of modern pike rigs. With clear easy-to-follow text backed up with literally hundreds of diagrams the author traces all the major developments in modern pike fishing.

Available August '91

REFLECTIONS UPON LAKELAND ANGLING

By James Holgate

A must for any angler thinking of visiting the Lake District for the first time. This 104 page book gives details of all the main species which inhabits these beautiful waters. Species covered include pike, perch, eels, trout, charr.

PRICE £3.95

AN INTRODUCTION TO ZANDER FISHING

By Mark White

A practical no-nonsense introduction to the country's newest predatory fish. The book includes details of tackle, rigs, methods, baits and location. And will be of enormous value to those pike anglers thinking of trying zander fishing for the first time.

PRICE £5.95



LURE FISHING FOR PIKE

Volume One

This 80 page book describes the best ways to fish lure on waters as diverse as fen drains, gravel pits, large lakes, canals, small lakes and large loughs.

PRICE £3.20

LURE FISHING FOR PIKE

Volume Two

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Lancaster, LA1 5BH.**



BIG WATER PIKE FISHING, Book Two: Boat Fishing

James Holgate, Cast Publications 1990. £7.95

James Holgate, the author of this, his second volume covering the specifics of pike fishing on big waters, is a no-nonsense pike angler who does not suffer fools and has a style in this book which some may find just a little abrasive. That is not a criticism. James writes from his own experiences and where his findings differ from other anglers he says so, and backs it up with evidence. This is an anglers book and I doubt if there is any angler, whether a specialist on big waters, boat fishing, or has never done either who will not pick up something useful from within these pages.

Throughout the 139 pages the author gets straight down to the matter of catching pike. There is almost no discussion on fancy tackle, but there is a great deal of advice on HOW to catch pike, and I especially liked the chapter on trolling which really covers the subject in as much detail as I have seen anywhere. This book is a good read, full of sound practical advice and lots of tips to set the reader straight. I would not question anything that James says because I know that he writes from his own experiences, but having said that the book is not without it's faults.

I really do not want to criticise, because it is such a good one and I do not want for one moment to detract from all the good stuff within it. The problems all come from poor proof reading and slightly scruffy presentation.

James has used three different forms of caption: hand-written, type-set and the third which is like an eight pin daisy wheel - it is very faint and the caption to the top diagram on page 130 is almost impossible to read. The diagrams themselves are all perfectly clear, though a little scruffy here and there, but they could all be improved by the use of one caption type.

On page 112 James refers twice to "diagrams" which do not appear. On page 63 reference is made to graphs which do not appear, and on page 86 the last sentence is not carried forward to page 88, the next page of text. The word 'arlesey' is spelled incorrectly on page 98 (arlesely) and on page 38 reference is made to two diagrams, but only one is reproduced. Figure A is also missing from page 15. Elsewhere throughout the book there are a number of small errors which I am sure are nothing more than proof reading mishaps. Photographic reproduction is acceptable in almost every case.

I have a great deal of respect for James Holgate, and I do hope that this, his latest book sells well. I hope it sells so well that he runs to a second edition in which he can correct the mistakes. They do slightly spoil an otherwise very good book. Don't let anything I have said put you off buying it - there is a great deal of useful information within it, and it is very good value for money.

Martin Gay

CATCHING PIKE ON LURES

James Holgate.

Price £6.95 from Cast Publications, 18 Haverbreaks Place, Lancaster, LA1 5BH.

The list of books from James Holgate's Cast stable continues to grow. Their chief merit is their cheapness and the detail that he goes into on any subject. In this book every lure I've ever heard of seems to be described and James goes on to provide valuable information on what those lures are best used for and what they are capable of. My only reservation was that he did not really provide us with much in the way of examples of fish caught lures. Lure fishing is about confidence and the one thing I like about Barrie Rickards writing, is he tells us what he has caught on lures. My attitude then is "If he can do it" ... This is what is lacking in the Holgate book. Still, its so cheap its not worth *not* having a copy. Available from the author or selected shops.

Neville Fickling

Wild Pike, Tame Pike

In considering his options, **Bill Winship** explains why he prefers to "take a walk on the wild side".

and Known Pike

I read with interest Dilip Sarkars comments about the new book "Pike Waters" in *Pikelines* No. 52, page 22. In Dilip's article he says he is surprised at seeing a book called "Pike Waters" advertised in *Pikelines*. Dilip suggests such a book takes all the enjoyment out of exploring for new waters, and he states: "I would not consider looking at one of those books"

Now if Dilip had taken the trouble to read "Pike Waters" he would realise it actually encourages the angler to go out and fish those frontier, unfished waters in the very way that Dilip obviously enjoys. It bears no relation to the Carp book referred to, in fact "Pike Waters" could easily have been called "Wild Water Piking". Indeed it is the total anti-thesis to catching stock fish in artificial surroundings. Many of the big pike holding lochs and rivers mentioned in "Pike Waters" never get any attention from pike anglers and one could spend a whole lifetime exploring these waters. I am always surprised when people complain about the lack of good pike waters. The fact is that there are more underfished unknown waters around than anyone seems to realise, one of the main aims of "Pike Waters" was to make this fact better understood; but even with a guide like "Pike Waters" you still have to put a lot of rod work in to make the dream into reality.

Anglers who are not prepared or are not able to fish wild waters are best off fishing for stocked fish. I know Neville Fickling runs a stocked pike lake near Doncaster which is full of big pike obtained from other waters. This takes a lot of the "risk" out of pike fishing - at least you know the fish are there - even if they have been caught and returned several times. For me such waters are just too artificial, too contrived, a bit like going big game hunting at London Zoo! Yet artificial waters full of stock fish do have a role to play - especially for professional people who simply do not have the time required to "hunt" real wild fish; or for the physically handicapped.



A wild highland loch pike (Photo: Bill Winship)

Time is the real enemy of the pike angler, it prevents us from fishing all the waters we would like to fish, and tempts people to take short cuts. I once made the grave error of disclosing the exact whereabouts of a 20lb. pike which had lived in exactly the same place for over five years. The person I took into my confidence was a newcomer to our club and he was desperate to catch a twenty. Within a few days of him joining our club he had taken his much sought after fish but then he took the same fish again and again. Then he told his friends about the fish and they caught the poor thing again and again. In the end the poor thing died - we found it belly up in the weeds and I vowed never again to disclose such information to newcomers.

This sad incident occurred mainly because the individual involved simply lacked the

confidence to go out and hunt and explore new waters. This is sad because to me finding new pike waters is one of the most exciting parts of our sport. Indeed, I take more pride in catching a 5lb. pike from an unknown "virgin" water than a twenty from a known spot, or from one of Neville's stocked ponds!

I find it difficult to describe the triumphant joy I feel when I "crack" a new water - especially when that water is unknown or unheard of. However, I enclose with this article a photograph of a pike taken on a wild windswept Scottish Highland loch. This particular loch is about 8 miles long and presents a challenge not only to one's skill, but also to one's fortitude and energy. It's not easy fishing these wild waters, but there are plenty of truly wild fish to be caught, and they fight like demons!

Tactical Tips: *deadbaits*

In this occasional feature, we hear from members who have kindly passed on some of their tried and tested ideas for improving their pike fishing. In this issue **Dave Skingsley** shares his ideas on fishing deadbaits:

I would like to pass on the following tips on the subject of "deadbaiting" (as I very rarely use livebaits - A.L.F. and all that!):

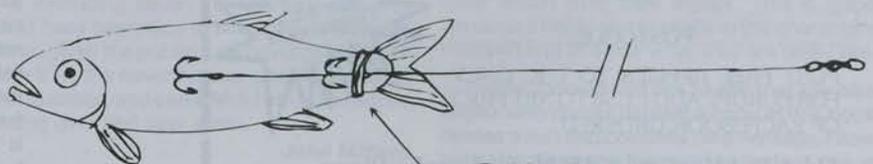
Firstly, how to avoid loss of baits when casting/re-casting! I have found that a small rubber band on the tail hook and around the fish, can save bait after bait. The best are those sold in "horse" type shops - very cheap, successful and don't seem to worry the pike. They are about half an inch in diameter, are usually white in colour, and, when double wound, hold baits from sprats

to 8oz. roach solid! You can slide them up the trace for re-use at the end of a session and they will stay in good condition, provided your rigs are stored out of the light. **Secondly, a simple and effective attractor.**

As I found out last season, and I had a good one, use some concentrated "pilchard"

oil on your deadbaits. Put it on using a brush, finger or just soak - it really does work well. (You could try two rods, one bait with - the other without, to see for yourself).

Editor's note: If you don't have any "horse" type shops in your area, you could always try W. H. Smiths! J.M.



Rubber band, double wound around tail

1991 R.O.'s Working Dinner

This year's R.O.'s working dinner was held at the Sherwood Business and Conference Centre in Nottingham, and was organised by Pete Haywood.

The meeting started at 11.30 a.m. sharp with a short run down on attendance. I sent out 66 mail shots to the regions. I had 16 apologies, 17 regions were represented and there were no replies from 33 regions. However, 42 members attended.

I opened the committee reports with the Treasurers accounts for the year ending 30th November 1990. It was contained in four pages and audited by Higson and Co., Chartered Accountants in Nottingham. The highlights are as follows: The income for the year ending 30 November 1990 was £38,808, as against £32,659 for 1989. Expenditure for 1990 was £30,101, as against £27,048 for 1989, with an excess of income over expenditure of £8,615, as against £5,352 for 1989. Our balance sheet with the general reserve bought forward, and taking into account the fixed and current assets and less our current liabilities, was £29,569 as against £20,954 - which is excellent.

The gross profit on products was £760 which is a drop on 1989 of £1,778. This is because we have purchased a considerable amount of stock over the year, before the inevitable price rises, to enable the P.A.C. to pass these benefits on to members.

Our raffle profit was £2,789 as against £272 for 1989 and this was boosted by the "Pike Aid" raffle and the excellent raffle held at the 1990 conference.

The conference made £398 as against £175 in 1989. Magazine production cost £17,826 against £16,001 for 1989 but with advertising revenue and magazine sales, the net cost was £13,843.

In conclusion, in the three years of my administration of the P.A.C. accounts, I have increased the P.A.C.'s balance from £8,627 to £29,569, which gives the new committee a very sound financial footing for the future.

I closed the membership for 1990 at 2100 and at the time of handing over the membership, renewals for this year stood at 1735, with many more in the pipe line.

Neville gave the Secretary's Report, first on a sad note with a tribute to our deceased friend John Foster, a regular attender at our R.O.'s meetings. Neville then highlighted some of the high profile involvement that the P.A.C. had undertaken over the last year, for example, our contribution to the sports council inquiry into angling. The report is still awaited, but with so many branches of the sport with an "axe to grind" it will take some time.

We made our representation to the N.R.A. regarding the national rod licence and there was much discussion on the merits of a national rod licence for the travelling angler, who would profit by it, and the local angler who would not.

The Euro legislation on live baiting fortunately never came to anything.

Neville has been representing the P.A.C. at the meetings held under N.A.S.A.'s co-ordinating banner with the Carp Society on the political scene. Poaching in Northern Ireland has been causing concern, especially after the recent articles about the lack of quality pike in the province. We have written to the Tourist Board to see what they are going to do about it.

The top 50 of All Record Fish (a list being put together by N.A.S.A.) was welcomed for posterity. Weirwood has been lost to the P.A.C. and has gone to a syndicate but it still continues as a mixed fishery and has produced some excellent pike this season. Llandegfed has shown that a great deal of money is to be made from trout water pike fishing, but it can be prohibitive to some anglers because of the cost.

Neville has approached the management of Ladybower Reservoir for pike fishing and we are hopeful for the future. P.A.C. fact sheets will be available in the near future - the first one is "Pike - The Facts" and the second one will be on live baiting.

The pike angler of the year was awarded to Eddie Turner for his excellent pike fishing record over the last few years and his products for pike catching and pike preservation. A suggestion was put forward to establish a second award in future years in the memory of John Foster and it was unanimously agreed that the new committee would look into this.

Dave Lumb gave us a rundown on our 1990 Conference which was one of the best that we have ever had. It was well attended and enjoyed by all. A big thank you goes out to all the companies and individuals who donated prizes and to the generosity of members who bought tickets. Dave and Geoff are already working on the 1991 Conference which will be staged at Loughborough on September 28th.

by Pete Haywood

Colin Dyson thanked the outgoing committee for their work over the last three years and hoped the new committee would continue to build on our experiences. Although it has been said that presidents are a figure head and do not "have to do much", this was not true of Colin. His work with the computerisation of the membership list and the large print for the magazine helped me tremendously and he also negotiated the advertising for us, which brought in an important income for the P.A.C.

Phil Kirk gave us a rundown of the products that we have sold over the last year, with the new lines that had been added to our range. We never aim to make a large profit on our products and pass on the benefit of our bulk buying discount to our members.

After an excellent buffet lunch the new committee took the stand. John Roberts, your new president, thanked the outgoing committee for all their work and presented us all with an engraved hip flask and life membership which was gratefully received. Chris Leibbrandt, the new secretary, outlined the executive committee which appears at the front of your magazine and detailed a new advisory committee which will consist of chairman/troubleshooter, Barrie Rickards; fisheries advocate, Neville Fickling; legal adviser, Michael Ball; scientific adviser, Bruno Broughton; Financial Advisor, Phil Kirk; conference organisers, Dave Lumb and Geoff Parkinson and troubleshooter Malcolm Bannister. It was decided that the honorarium awarded to committee members would stay, with an increase to match inflation.

The magazine was discussed, unfortunately due to work commitments Martin Phillips could

not attend the meeting, but we were pleased to welcome Keith Mitchell from Mitchell and Wright (Printers), who had joined us for the day. Keith has printed and distributed your magazine for the last six years. He indicated that he was impressed with the democratic way that the meeting was held and thanked us for our business. We in turn thanked him for attending our meeting and for his efforts over the years. The magazine is one of the main benefits of being a member and is a platform which binds the members together. It gives individual members an arena to air their views and to gain feedback from other members. The new committee, under the guidance of John Milford, has many new ideas for your magazine to stimulate incentives for writers and prize competitions and an in-depth look at features. Any article is welcome - you do not have to catch big fish or be a "born" writer - the Editor can sort out the grammar, etc. (Not to mention the spelling, eh, Pete? J.M.)

Lee Kemp has taken over the products and he will be looking at our existing range, introducing some new products and seeing what may be dropped. It is also intended to look at the possible endorsement by the club of tried and tested products which contribute to pike welfare, by licencing manufacturers to use a P.A.C. "Pikesafe" logo on approved items.

John Synnuck, the treasurer and membership secretary, will be using his considerable administrative skills to streamline the membership procedure and build on my system. Under "any other business" it was hoped that a pool of speakers could be developed, who will be willing to travel around the regions. A question was raised whether regions would be considered for financial aid to promote the membership, if finance cannot be found at a local level. Also a protect to enable members to fish syndicate waters, bought into by the P.A.C., will be looked into.

The problem of non-active regions was discussed. The very fact that 33 out of the 66 R.O.'s I wrote to did not reply is worrying and the new committee will address this problem in the near future.

Finally, it was raffle time and Bob (Elvis) Hopwood helped by Brian (Cuddly) Birdsall sold £70 plus worth of tickets. The prizes were as follows: £25 tackle voucher from Derrick Amies; £20 worth of luce baits from Neville; a year's subscription to Coarse Angler from Colin; one year's P.A.C. subscription or a sweatshirt, various lures from T.G.; 3 bottles of wine from the Sherwood Business and Conference Centre; a couple of T-shirts from the Glasgow P.A.C. and a few other assorted goodies. Most of the prizes were won at the table I was sitting at and I won again this year with the year's subscription to Coarse Angler!

With the formal business over, we enjoyed the evening meal and then had a few pints. My thanks to all the R.O.'s and members who turned up to make it a very enjoyable meeting. It was good to see so many old friends and I could listen to Dennis Heatley's stories of Alaska all night! I definitely would not like to be chased by a brown bear, Dennis, even if it was a female!

Your old committee went out in style and with the enthusiasm, sense of humour and new ideas of the new committee it looks as though the P.A.C. is in safe hands. The new lads have given the job a good deal of thought and are all looking forward to the challenge.

Pete Haywood

The Bonnie, Bonnie, 'Blanks' of Loch Lomond

My conscience was being sorely pricked. At the Working Dinner I had rashly promised a contribution for *Pikelines* to the new Magazine Editor, John "Jock Mildew" Milford. At a previous Working Dinner, John had stated that his mother (or something) had hailed from Edinburgh, perhaps explaining John's partiality for potato scones ("tattie scones"! Mc Ed.).

Things were brought to a head with the arrival of issue 52 of *Pikelines*, which carried a request for an "influx of material" for the forthcoming issue. Bloody hell, I'll have to do something - but what? Then it struck me (by the time you've finished reading this garbage, you'll wish something had). I'll do a screed on blanking, well, as good as, with a little on how the face of Lomond is changing - unfortunately, not for the better!

Let me explain. Over the years I have met many disappointed anglers who have read of Lomond's fame in the angling press, made the long haul north in search of these "legendary" pike, only to find that the loch can be a dour mistress when it comes to producing the goods. In truth, some of the write-ups relative to Lomond do tend to give the very much mistaken impression that one only has to cast a bait and wait for the 20's to start crawling up the line. Not so. The following is an attempt to illustrate that fact.

After an exploratory trip afloat on Loch Ken the previous weekend (that's another story), Thursday, 30th May, saw the start of my planned weekend campaign on the big pond. On pulling into the boatyard at Balmaha, it was apparent that the water level was still very low, forcing me to scrub the planned evening session in Crom Mhin Bay. Whilst in the process of launching the boat, George, the boatyard manager, mentioned that a 30+ had come off the drop off the previous weekend, but other than that, things had been pretty slow. Mark Wilson from Staffordshire, a "southron" who is a long standing visitor to the loch all the year round and a P.A.C. member, was the recipient of this cracking fish.

It was a lovely afternoon with a light southeasterly breeze so I decided to do some flat line trolling along the drop off into Net Bay and on to Portnellen before heading over to the west bank. As I approached Aber Isle I came across Pete Hudspeth who was also trolling. Pete is a bit of a lure fanatic and spends all his time on the loch lure fishing in one way or another. The week had produced a twenty and a couple of doubles for his brother Bryan who was also on the loch. Again Pete had found sport very patchy. Unless you have actually spent a day or two constantly trolling/downrigging, it is difficult to appreciate that you can cover so much water without a touch.

However, things can change very quickly in this sport of ours, and still feeling reasonably confident, 6 p.m. saw me dropping the picks off the point in Slate Bay in brilliant sunshine, with an almost flat calm. Slate Bay has been of special significance for me as it produced my first Lomond twenty. Three rods out, and I settled down for a peaceful and relaxing evening session, God was in His heaven and all was well in my world. Unfortunately, that state of affairs was short-lived - Lomond's very own

plague visited itself on my sea of tranquility, the water-borne Philistines made their appearance - water skiers! Those of you familiar with Lomond will be aware that when fishing off the point in Slate Bay, correct name, Camasstraddan Bay, you are well away from the main channel between Inchtavannach and the west bank. Of all the water available to water skiers, why, oh why do they insist in making life difficult for us anglers! Right in they came, the wash from their growling infernal machines tossing my boat about as if I had been sitting on the drop-off at Balmaha in a force 6 northerly. Unfortunately, said brain donors were still at play when I turned in for the night and it was not until long after dark that they gave it a rest. Bill Little, an R.A. member and someone who has fished Lomond since the early 70's, has often been of the opinion that boat anglers on the loch should be issued with a 3in. mortar and a light machine gun as a matter of course.

The mortar to blow the offending craft out of the water and the machine gun to take care of any survivors, thus negating any re-occurrence from that particular source!

Personally, I can envisage only one problem with such a course of action - the temptation to hunt speed boats, etc., may well take precedence over the hunting of pike! But then again, every plan does tend to have a down side.

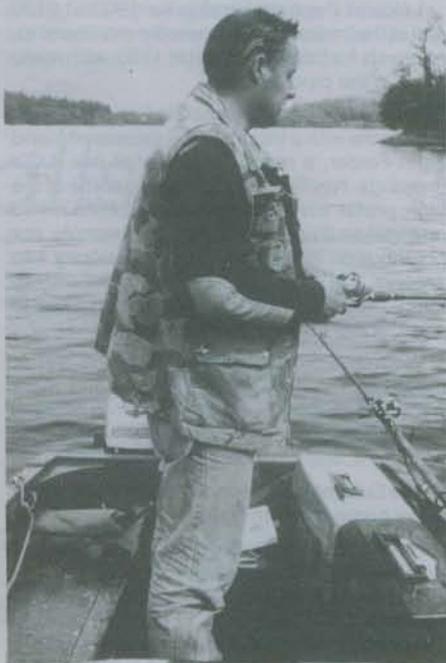
Up and about 4.30 a.m. the following morning (Friday) saw the baits back in the water, with the new day, a new found feeling of confidence. I intended to move to Rossdhu Bay around 8 a.m., before the lochs despoilers tumbled from their pits and resumed their antics. As to pike activity the previous evening, not a nibble was experienced, no interest being shown at all. A couple of hours plugging also failed to induce a take, none the less, a very pleasant morning's fishing, perfect peace, only the traffic on the nearby A82 to break the silence. However, as expected, the speedboats reappeared around 9.30 a.m. and the move to Rossdhu was made, one of the few areas on the loch at this time of year where the scenic beauty, birdlife and perfect peace can be fully enjoyed (I thought, read on) the catching of pike being a welcome bonus (do I really mean that!). Rossdhu can be very dour, I know of some anglers who have never so much as had a run whilst fishing it. Back in April 1987 I spent six days solid here for a total of one run which resulted in a 6lb. jack. A number of the lads were also fishing the loch at that time with similar results - that, at least, made me feel better about my abysmal lack of success. I often go through the throws of examining in detail my approach to these apparently negative feeding spells, however, I have arrived at the conclusion that there are times, for reasons we may never fully understand, as to why it just won't fish for long periods.

Ten in the morning saw me anchored in my chosen spot and at 11 a.m. I was joined by R.A. member Mike Maule who anchored up a short distance away. Mike stayed until 3.30 p.m. and had a low double and a couple of jacks. I was still awaiting my first run! And so the day progressed, the lack of activity affording me ample opportunity to study the resident wildlife. Grey herons, shelduck, oyster catchers, mallards, merganser and a multitude of small

birdlife providing a welcome diversion during this unproductive afternoon.

Five in the afternoon came and went, P.A.C. member Pete Hudspeth motoring into the bay to try his luck with the lures. The next thing on my agenda was supper, desperately hoping that sods law would prevail and produce a run during its preparation. So with one eye on the floats, the other on the stove, I waited in expectation. And nothing! Not a bloody touch! I could have prepared a meal for the P.A.C. membership without interruption. Once refuelling was complete I began casting an assortment of floating and shallow diving plugs into the edge of the weed bed behind the island, as was Pete, which produced three jacks for me on a Mr 13. As the old saying goes, "ten bob's a lot when you ain't got now!" Pete also picked up a couple of small jacks before leaving for his camp site in the narrows at about 9.30 p.m. And so to bed. Things can only get better - or can they?

A start made at 5.30 a.m., a little later than planned, "morphias" being reluctant in releasing this mortal coil. A chilly morning and a little overcast. Bingo, a run at 6.40 a.m. on float legered trout. What a fish, it must have been all of 11lb! I was really setting about them now, "bring on yer Grannie!" I cried (cried being the operative word), much more of this and there would be a distinct danger I would end up emulating Roger Hatcher, once observed holding a conversation with that well-known fir tree on the island! I had to abandon fishing baits in the shallows, seagulls taking a great interest in them, on more than one occasion some pretty quick retrieves being required. Rossdhu's pair of resident grey herons can also be a problem in this respect. Desperate as I was, that type of run was not what I had in mind! Around 8.40 a.m. a J.C.B. broke the



The classical profile ... the cunningly concealed paunch! ... Ralston afloat on the "Big Pond".

silence, work resuming on the new golf course on the south side of the bay. The work has been in progress for some time now, many of the trees bordering the bay having been felled in the process. For a time the place has been in a bit of a mess, however, it's slowly but surely coming along with the grassing of the course.

This seemed an ideal time to move. I had to call in at Balmaha to pick up some bits and pieces at the shop and I wanted to fish the drop off Sunday morning, the only day free of salmon trollers. There were a couple of places I had discovered whilst trolling the east bank south of Portnellen, so a decision was made to spend the rest of the morning and early afternoon in that area.

A scorching hot afternoon saw me covering under the cover to avoid being fried. Needless to say, no pike activity whatsoever! Having moved into the back of Portnellen below the farm I was comparatively immune from water skiers. And so on to Balmaha late afternoon, and off the drop off I had a natter with Andy Trim and Francis Lynch-Smith, two of R.A. 53's "Southtron" members who had been on the loch for the past week. It had been a bit of a grueller for them, also, a few jacks being the sum total for their efforts. Shortly after arriving at Balmaha, Bob Cummings and his mate arrived back at the boatyard, having been on the loch since the previous day, announcing they had gone into Rossdhu Bay about 9 a.m. that morning (about an hour after I left) and at around 4.30 p.m. had an 18.00 and a 22.00! How's that for a kick in the nuptials! Such is the way the cookie crumbles when piking - oh for the benefit of hindsight. By this time Andy and Francis had come in an were contemplating an evening in the West Highland Way Hostelry - just for a couple of pints. I swithered, how I swithered, however, I decided to get out onto the drop off for a few hours before dark, in position for an early morning session.

Around 2 a.m. I was awoken by the rain stoating off the cabin roof and awning! Eyeing the awning under which I lay, with trepidation, detecting more than the odd leak, I decided that as there was sod all I could do about it, I returned to the arms of Morphas, ignoring the alarm going off at 4 a.m. - it was still throwing it down and my sleeping bag seemed the most sensible place to stay. so much for dedication!

Despite the rain and an easterly wind which was slowly but surely increasing in strength, I dragged my athletic frame into action and cast my baits into the water at around 6 a.m. Rain - it never bloody stopped, the original "40 days and 40 nights" material. I was joined on the drop off by Bob Cummings and his mate at around 10 a.m., their "quiet pint" with Andy and Francis having turned into a heavy duty session. Serves them right if I had bagged up. As it was neither Bob nor myself had a touch. That really surprised you, didn't it!

By 4 p.m. I threw in the towel. a very soggy towel, and headed home, having had a natter with Bob back in the boatyard before he headed

back down to Preston. At times like this I count my blessings that I am but 50 minutes' drive from the big pond. The following Wednesday, the last day of my spring holiday period, saw an early start for a day on the loch, however, it was not to be, compliments of the boat trailers spring steel axle snapping in two en route. Not a pretty sight! Fortunately, this disaster occurred immediately after turning from a main road onto a side road and I was only doing 10 to 15 m.p.h. I dread to think of the consequences of this having happened a week or so previously whilst sitting at my normal 50 m.p.h. on the Ayr by-pass en route or returning from Loch Ken! A timely reminder for you to check that much neglected aspect of boat fishing prior to your next long haul. A phone call to the A.A. (thankfully, I had renewed my Relay membership) saw me returning home to a day's work replacing the aged axle assembly with new Indespension units - I still feel the pain of writing that cheque!

Boat trailer once more hale and hearty, Friday, 14th of June saw another weekend on the loch, suffice to say that from Friday afternoon until 4 p.m. on the Sunday saw me sticking it out once more in Rossdhu Bay. Again the results were disappointing. Nothing at all on Friday and Saturday, a couple of jacks on Sunday morning avoiding a complete blank.

Over that weekend I had to acknowledge the fact that fishing the loch over weekends during the summer months is a "no, no" due to the demands made on one's sanity by the hassle caused by water skiers and ski-bikes! Saturday was not too bad, however, Sunday afternoon saw two large boats and their accompanying water skiers coming into Rossdhu and turning at around the 40ft. mark, well into the bay as those familiar with it will know. Then at 4 p.m. on the Sunday, just as I had brought in the last rod prior to heading back to Balmaha, five of those infernal jet-skies, otherwise known as jet-bikes, came tearing into the bay, right into the shallows at the back of the bay. There they spent some five minutes or so tearing up and down in less than 3ft. of water! After containing myself long enough to calm down, out came the camera with telephoto lens and I shot off about 10 exposures of their antics. Hopefully, one day they will be of some evidential value if the Parks Authority ever gets its act together and actually does something constructive. That, too, is another story. It did not end there. Having made my way over to Balmaha, I decided to spend a couple of hours on the drop off, that is, until I saw more of those accursed jet-bikes screaming about at the Endrick mouth! A move to a little bay off Clairiach resulted in a severe buffeting from power boats tearing up and down the channel between Clairiach and Inch Cailloch and a visitation from two more "bikers" who screamed into my little bay not 50 feet from my boat! That was it, my tolerance had reached saturation point. It's enough to make a Bishop burn his Bibles and bag off! Back to the boatyard and home.

Which brings me to Bill Winship's article which appeared in a recent issue of Coarse Fishing Today, in which he stated that the reason he had forsaken Loch Lomond was the problems I have outlined above. In the April/May issue of the magazine Gord Burton expressed disappointment at Bill's negative attitude regarding Lomond, claiming that there was a "vast amount of peaceful water in which to catch big pike". May I be so bold as to suggest that perhaps Gordon has spent little time on the big pond over the last few years, particularly since the increased popularity of the jet-bike, where even the most secluded areas of the loch are fair game. The case may have been otherwise in '86, however, the present situation is very different! Lomond regulars can attest to being "buzzed" by these infernal machines one mile up the Endrick, and having seen them enter the River Fruin!

Angling pressure has also increased in the past few years, the popularity of boat fishing drawing more and more anglers to the loch at all times of the year, the more popular areas, particularly on the west bank, being fished more and more frequently. Gordon's "acres of unfished waters" are vanishing fast. Even areas I have discovered over the years and was confident would never see much in the way of pike anglers, have in turn been found by pikers looking to get away from the more popular, and to some degree, overcrowded areas.

At one time, the backend of the year, say around late September, ensured a return to tranquility, however, with new technology in the design of wet suits, water skiing and jet-biking takes place during the winter months as well - not to the same degree as the warmer months, but enough to be a bloody nuisance! Gordon's letter was replied to by a Lomond angler of long standing, Roger Hatcher, however, the Editor, chose not to publish it.

Sadly, there is very little of the old peace and quiet that was synonymous with Lomond left these days, and I find myself wishing my life away, yearning for the back end of the year when it is at least tolerable. I'm afraid Bill Winship's point of view gets my vote.

To end on a more positive note, I spent Tuesday, 25th June in Slate Bay, a day when it rained continually until late afternoon and thankfully, it being a weekday combined with foul weather, some of Lomond's old tranquility returned. It looked like another blank was on the cards, when at 5 p.m., my one and only run of the day produced a most welcome 21-10.

Blanks. Yes, they can be many, but I will still fish the loch. Given the right environmental setting, it's a privilege just to be out there - and always the chance of a really good fish. Today's the 2nd of July and I plan to spend the next two days out on the loch and pray that the recent spell of inclement weather will continue until the weekend, then the more moronic of Lomond's part-time, fair weather parasites can have the place to themselves.

Ralston McPherson

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Viewpoint

As a past Regional Organiser, Pikelines Editor John Milford shares his thoughts on the subject of Regional Associations:

One of the things that soon becomes apparent when you visit a number of Regional Associations (R.A.'s), or talk to different Regional Organisers (R.O.'s), is how unlike they all are! On the face of it they all serve the same basic function - to provide a local focus for P.A.C. members in a particular area, and in turn reflect the local scene back to the main body of the Club. To a very great extent however, everything else about an R.A. depends on the motivation, enthusiasm and often personality of the (R.O.'s). The approach varies from the laid-back guy who gets together with a few other members for a sociable evening in a local pub, to the budding entrepreneur who regularly hires a hall and arranges for guest speakers to address a hundred or more pikers. Each approach has its merits and each can be equally valid if it caters for the needs of the members involved. It is, perhaps, appropriate to consider the pros and cons of R.A. styles, both for the benefit of existing R.O.'s and for anyone who is considering taking up the challenge of forming or re-establishing an R.A. in their area.

Good things can come in small packages:

Small groups have the advantage that the members soon get to know one another and so feel they "belong", which can be especially beneficial to newcomers. Regions with up to say, a dozen or so members, are easy to cater for in a local pub which does not entail any expense other than that dictated by each member's thirst. If the venue is "free", the need for regional subs is then optional - no minor consideration when you consider that it already costs a tenner to be in the P.A.C. in the first place. The atmosphere of pub meetings tends to be informal and relaxed, and the proceedings are unencumbered by matters of administration, which can be particularly tedious if you are not directly involved. Many people, who would feel daunted by speaking up in large meetings, will find it easier to contribute and share their ideas, not least of all the R.O.! Regional events are also simple to organise if you can fit your entire membership in three cars or a mini-bus! It has been said in this magazine that "social" regions are a waste of time and that the Club needs active, committed regions if they are to do it any good. I could not disagree more strongly. Small, essentially social groups are a valuable starting point from which commitment and enthusiasm can easily develop, given time and encouragement. You might be surprised to hear that 20% of the Dartford Region's current membership are now serving on the P.A.C. Committee!

Just because an R.A. may be small, this in itself does not mean they have to be inactive. We have all seen the impact of vociferous minorities! Similarly, if an R.A.'s numbers or venue makes slide shows and guest speakers impractical, there is no reason why they cannot attend a neighbouring region's events and thereby support their efforts. The Dartford R.A. have in the past swelled the ranks at Medway, S.E. Essex, E. London, Lea Valley and even Cambridge. This not only helps make the host R.O.'s efforts more viable, but also forges worthwhile links with other members to each R.A.'s mutual benefit. The major drawback with small groups is that they are often held together by the R.O. alone, or maybe a very small nucleus of members. If these then lose interest or become discouraged, then the R.A. can easily fold. It has to be stressed, however, that a small R.A. is infinitely better than no R.A. and



How's this for an active region? Leeds (66) RA's presentation night. (See 'Region Reports' for full details)

the Committee will do all it can to encourage even a handful of members if they want to get started or keep soldiering on against the odds.

Big is beautiful

The P.A.C. is fortunate to include some very successful and well run R.A.'s in its list. Some of these, located in areas where pike angling is the major specialist interest, are so large that they have R.A. committees, building society accounts, local newsletters and a few even control their own fisheries. Others, probably the most difficult for the R.O., cover wide areas of the U.K. such as Northern Ireland (N.I.P.S.) and Glasgow/West of Scotland. The fact that the Club has such active R.A.'s in areas where the membership can be spread so thinly, is a credit to both to the hard work and commitment of the R.O.'s and the support they receive from their members.

Many of the medium to large R.A.'s hold regular meetings where guest speakers are invited and a charge is made to each member to defray the costs involved. Payment of speakers' expenses, the cost of hiring meeting rooms/halls, and even help with the cost of their R.O.'s attendance at the annual Working Dinner, can result in the need to have regional funds and some R.A.'s have local subs accordingly. In some cases these are charged annually, in others a charge is made "on the door". In all cases the R.A. is then in the harsh economic world of having to offer value for money. Once an R.A. reaches a certain level of activity the administration involved can become quite demanding. I don't doubt that some R.O.'s have found themselves the victims of their own success, particularly when they finally try to hand over the reins to someone else! Having said this, running a thriving region has its own rewards (if you are the philanthropic sort) but the Committee would nevertheless like to state its genuine appreciation for the record.

Apart from the obvious amount of work involved, a large region can have a few drawbacks. New members can find it difficult to feel involved, due to the lack of the personal touch. For this reason it is a good idea for the R.O., or another keen member, to make a point of welcoming newcomers and introducing them to the group. (Not, I hasten to add, by putting them through the ordeal of dragging them out front and yelling: "Hey, everyone, this is Fred!") As with any large group of people, there will always be those who don't get on, or form little

exclusive cliques. On the plus side, a large R.A. can have a bigger overall impact on their local scene, and particularly with their local tackle dealer. There are some real opportunities for persuading him to stock decent gear (or drop poor stuff) if your R.A. represents a large chunk of this clientele. The same can be said of local angling clubs and associations - particularly if the R.A. can get members on the controlling committee. At the very least the R.A. can keep an eye out for anti-pike or pike fishing items on the agenda of club A.G.Ms and turn up in strength to make their views known.

Regional funding

This is a question which arose at the last working dinner. Of course, it would be great if the Club could assist R.O.'s with expenses, but the counter question must always be: "Is this appropriate?" R.A.'s, by their very nature, cater for specifically local needs. The Club's central funds are derived from the whole membership, including many members who are not involved with their local R.A. Is it fair that these members subsidise regions? How would a subsidy be fairly allocated? How would expenses be verified? The practicalities of such a scheme would place a daunting workload on the Treasurer, not to mention the Club's bank balance, having just shelved the idea of one paid administrator we could potentially be faced with replacing it with fifty or more! I think that the general argument has to be that if money is needed to serve members' needs in a particular R.A., then it is to be expected that the members who will directly benefit should raise the sum required. Many R.A.'s have proved to be extremely self-reliant, not only raising money for their own requirements, but making donations to the A.C.A., local charities, youth projects, etc. Hopefully it will not be beyond the ingenuity of any R.A. to meet its own running costs.

There are, of course, numerous ways of generating cash - Bill Winship's article in magazine 51 dealt with this subject extremely well (thanks, Bill). Having said all this, the Committee have not closed their minds to using Club funds to support specific projects. It will be up to the members requesting assistance however, to put up an extremely good case!

If anyone wants to put forward comments, suggestions or ideas connected with any of the above, please do not hesitate to write in.

Regional funding is important to every member, as the regions are the "heart and soul" of the Club. (If this means the Committee are the "brains" then God help us!) Continuing the fiscal theme, Darlington R.O. **Brian Sweet** is . . .

"In for a Penny"

At the R.O.'s Working Dinner back in May, the matter of the expense of running an R.A. was raised. It seemed that some R.O.'s were ending up out of pocket in their endeavours to organise and promote pike angling in their given area. This should not be the case and I am happy to say, is a situation that has never arisen in our own area. I would like to claim that this is due to good planning and administration on our behalf but have to admit that it is all down to good, sound advice and help, given to us at the birth of R.A. 89.

Dennis Heatley and myself were both individual members of the P.A.C. in our, at that time, R.A. starved area. Once we had decided to start a region we spoke to a few of the R.O.'s who we knew from our exploits in various parts of the country. One piece of advice that has always stuck with us was from that well known "slob of a man" from the NW, Eric Edwards. He told us that we should never put ourselves out of pocket at the expense of the group; to note down every stamp, phone call, photocopy, etc., that we paid for and claim it back from group funds. It's all very well thinking it's only 22p for a stamp or 10p for a quick phone call but it all mounts up. I can already hear the distant rumblings of "what group funds?" This is where I hope that this small offering helps out, using the running of our own group as an example.

Although as an R.O. your job is nowhere near on the same scale as that of the P.A.C. Treasurer/Membership Secretary, the two are not dissimilar and it does take up quite a lot of your time. Depending upon the size of your group, a treasurer is one of the first appointments that needs filling (you'll have enough on your plate). Next, get a bank account that pays interest. Now, the only thing left to do is get some money into it.

As a region, we hold meetings once a month, having started off in a small side room in a pub, progressing as we grew, to a large room, with dance floor, in a social club. (I wonder if there's an R.A. in the country that doesn't meet in a bar?) The point here is that no matter what size the venue, it should be free. Pick a quiet night of the week and they will be glad of the trade over the bar in return for the use of the room. Shop around.

In the beginning we used to charge 50p per head per meeting. This meant that the hardcore of members attending the meetings were subsidising the once-in-a-while visitors and so we now have an annual fee of £6. You can, of course, set your own fee, if any.

A good fund-raiser is that old chestnut, the slide show. There are still a lot of people about, contrary to popular belief, who will travel quite a way to do a show for the price of the petrol

and a bed for the night. Do a few shows yourself for your own group and neighbouring groups, then you can pull the "you owe me one" routine.

Shows should not be restricted to your own membership. It's amazing how many people the poster in the tackle shops pull in. Phil King still ain't got the stains from his boxers since walking in on an audience of 140 people. At £1 per head, that was a nice little earner.

Get yourselves a friendly, local tackle dealer to put you a stand on. He'll be happy with the extra trade and you'll get cheapies/freebies for the raffle. It's surprising just how many bits and pieces you can scrounge to make up a modest prize table. The safe way is to put an educated guess on how much you can spend on prizes and still make a profit, then as the night progresses, depending on how your ticket sales are going, you can buy a bit more (at cut price) from the tackle stand, thereby enhancing your prize table and encouraging more ticket sales. More money in the bank.

Now that you've accumulated this vast amount of wealth, sit down, give yourself a pat on the back and then get up and make some more. It soon goes. Newsletters don't produce and post themselves, projectors don't last forever and so on. If you do find you've a bit to spare, the A.C.A. are always very appreciative. Take a leaf out of Bill Winship's book (Magazine 51). His is but a small group and if they can raise over 1,000 for charity over five years, you should be quite capable of raising enough funds to run a group without being out of pocket.

This has only scratched the surface of fund raising. Have a social, invite the wives/girlfriends (both is not recommended), that keeps them quiet once a year, stick a buffet on, that shuts them up a second time. The list goes on. THINK ABOUT IT.

Alarm Call!

A number of you, like Chris Leibbrandt, will be of the "traditionalist" school of thought who believes electronics are best left to deal with things like TV's, rockets, computers and the like, and, more importantly, only encourage people to be **less** vigilant in watching for a run, which could end up with a deep hooked fish. Well, whilst I am tempted to write an article which attempts to bring the Philistines amongst you into the 20th (shortly to become 21st) century, this article is aimed more at the pike angler who wishes to use technology to **assist** with their fishing. Let me start off by stating that electronic bite indicators are just that. Indicators. They supplement the angler and his/her instincts, and must always be understood in that context. Unlike most other forms of coarse fishing, pike anglers are required to be attentive at all times if deep hooking is to be avoided. How can electronics help, and which type is the best? To understand the answer to this question we must examine how pike take our baits:

I have been fortunate enough to have seen pike pick up dead baits, and take live baits, and it is against this backdrop I am putting forward my views. For those of you who have not been privileged in seeing pike take baits, let me explain to you what I have witnessed. With deadbaits, pike seem mainly to hover over the bait and then "suck" the bait into their mouth by way of expelling water very fast through their gill covers, thus causing the bait to be pulled into the mouth. I have also seen pike, on fewer occasions than compared to "sucking", tip

John Synnuck examines the choices and considers the use of electronic bite indicators in pike fishing.

down and take the bait into its mouth. Therefore, with both these actions, the first indication, to the angler, would be a minimum line movement caused by the pike taking the bait into its mouth. Pike do not always then swim away with the bait. In some cases they then proceed to engulf the bait on the spot, and the only indication has been the line movement caused by the pike when first taking the bait. Therefore, any form of indicator must be sensitive enough to give an indication of the first actions of the pike in taking in the bait.

In my opinion a drop arm indicator, as opposed to an optonic type, is best for this job as they immediately register a bite if the clip is properly tensioned to give line at any slight movement over and above that being caused by wind, water, etc. Whilst it can, and will, be argued that optonic type indicators also give an indication, they will register only once or twice and, despite the argument that this will also alert the angler, I would suggest that it is human nature to dismiss one or two "blips" as line bites, but to be more attentive as a result of the continuous noise emitted by the drop arm. In short, for deadbaits the drop arm indicator is more likely to ensure that the angler is attentive and is more likely to strike early, because he/she has been "psyched up" by the continuous alarm of the drop arm.

Moving to live baits, in my experience pike tend to hit bait fish and swim off, often towing 2oz. of lead, sunken float, etc., with little regard! Therefore, there is greater and, more often than not, continuous line movement. In view of this, that is, that the fish is **moving**, I would suggest that an optonic type indicator is better suited. My argument for this view being as above, that

as one of an electronic indicator's principal functions is to heighten the "awareness" and senses of the angler, the sound of an optonic constantly bleeping, because of the running fish, is more likely to provoke a swifter response from the angler. The frequency of the bleeps will also give an audible indication of the speed at which the pike is making off.

If you have read this article to this point, you are either a close friend (thanks mate!) or have a genuine interest in how we can use modern technology in pursuit of our favourite pastime, pike angling. Can I therefore emphasise that we must not let these wondrous electronic devices replace our senses in detecting, and subsequently prompting dealing with, takes. They are to enhance and heighten our senses, increase our attentiveness and must *never*, but *never*, be seen as anything other than this. To do so can cause serious injury to our pike.

Editor's comment: John's observations of pike dealing with baits, and the deductions he makes as to the most effective type of indicator, certainly provides food for thought. Chris, I am sure, would still argue (and I expect he will!) that you cannot beat a float - especially if your finances do not run to a hundred pounds or more worth of "electronic surveillance". I know Chris uses mechanical drop arm indicators in conjunction with his floats, for those moments when his attention is on his thermos or some such. He says, however, that he has lost count of the occasions where he has pulled the line free of the clip himself, long before the running pike would have got around to it. If you have anything to add to the "high vs. low tech" debate, please don't hesitate to write in. J.M.



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Regional Associations and Organisers

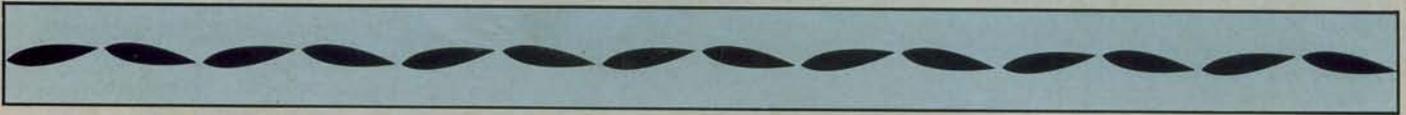
In June, Chris sent every R.O. a very simple form, together with a stamped, addressed reply envelope. The following are the positive replies received. If your region is active, but not listed, perhaps you could have a quiet word with your regional "organiser"! (If he was off fishing during "flaming awful" June, please pass him our commiserations!

- 1. Birmingham.** Robert Tonks, 5 Barford Close, Sutton Coldfield, West Midlands B76 8UL.
- 2. Cambridge,** Paul Evans, 24 Windsor Road, Godmanchester, Huntingdon, Cambridge PE18 8DN.
- 3. Dudley,** Ian Jarvis, 102 Pinfold Lane, Penn, Wolverhampton WV4 4EP.
- 4. Retford, Notts.** Ian Swannack, 9 Pear Tree Close, Clarbrough, Retford, Notts. DN22 9NP; Ken Jones, 47 Kings Street, Hodthorpe, Worksop, Notts. S80 4XA; and Barry Sharland, 20 Kings Road, Metheringham, Lincs. LN4 3HT.
- 6. Preston,** Keith Pearson, 30 Howick Park Avenue, Penwortham, Preston, Lancashire PR1 0LS.
- 7. York,** Alan Storey, 77 Ouseburn Avenue, Beckfield Lane, Acomb, York. YO2 5NP.
- 9. Cheshire,** John Dearden, 35 Clarendon Road, Swinton, Manchester M27 1BP; Andy Astbury, 32 Wall Lane, Nantwich, Cheshire.
- 10. South Wales,** Howard Yendle, 50 Hewell Street, Cogan, Penarth, Cardiff CF6 1JZ. Tel. (0222) 705152.
- 11. West Sussex,** Dave Cloke, 49 Millfield Close, Chichester, West Sussex PO19 4UR.
- 12. Bridgwater,** Richard Bull, 5 Elmgrove Close, Bridgwater, Somerset TA6 4UD; and Chris Langford, Coombe Batch Cottage, Wells Road, Wedmore, Somerset BS28 4DX.
- 14. Reading,** Bob Williams, 354 Wensley Road, Coney Park, Reading, Bucks.
- 15. Walton-on-Thames,** David Fish, 50 Homefield Road, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey KT12 3RE; and Trevor Nicholls, 13 Wolsey Road, Sunbury-On-Thames, Middlesex TW16 7TH.
- 17. Blackpool,** Paul Dickinson, 53 Limerick Road, Blackpool.
- 18. Northern Ireland,** George Higgins, 201 Lower Braniel Road, Belfast BT5 7NP.
- 19. Dartford,** Mervyn Jones, 16 Silverdale, Hartley Longfield, Kent, DA3 7DS. Tel. (04747) 3197.
- 20. Southport,** John Alvey, 316 Guildford Road, Southport.
- 21. Kirkcudbrightshire,** Joe Ross, "Glen Isla", Main Street, Crossmichael, Castle Douglas, Kirkcudbrightshire DG7 3AU. Tel. (055667) 346.
- 22. South East Essex,** Lawrence Jones, 51 Bardenville Road, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 8LL.
- 23. Milton Keynes,** Roger Stratton, 17 Kempton Gardens, Bletchley, Milton Keynes MK3 5NH. Tel. (0908) 649446.
- 24. Lincoln,** Bryan Munday, 9 Morton Drive, Hartsholme, Lincoln LN6 0DL. Tel. (0522) 694912.
- 25. Luton,** Paul Elborn, 6 Belham Road, Kings Langley, Herts.
- 26. Notts/Derbys.,** Pete Haywood, 20 Carisbrooke Avenue, Gedling, Nottingham NG4 2RD; and Bruno Broughton, 27 Ashworth Avenue, Ruddington, Notts.
- 27. East Norfolk,** Derrick Amies, Alder Carr, Court Road, Rollesby, Norfolk NR29 5ET.
- 29. N. Wales,** Richard Mark, 18 Hennessy Terrace, Bridge Street, Denbigh, Clwyd LL16 3BW.
- 30. Isle of Thanet,** John Roberts, 102 Minster Road, Westgate-on-Sea, Kent CT8 8DG.
- 31. St. Helens,** Kevin Glover, 45 Bosworth Road, St. Helens, Merseyside WA11 9HQ.
- 32. Ely/Fenland,** Dave Howard, 35 Wootton Road, Gaywood, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE30 4EZ; and Ashley Brown, 33 Butterwick, Fairstead Estate, Kings Lynn, Norfolk.
- 33. Durham,** Dave Woods, Halfway House, 10 East Terrace, Hesleden, Hartlepool, Cleveland.
- 35. Derby/Burton-on-Trent,** Carl Hill, 38 Marshgreen Close, Alvaston, Derby DE2 0XF; Roy Sutton, The Mount, 2 Belmont Road, Tutbury, Near Burton-on-Trent, Staffs. DE13 9NL; Andy Yeoman, 8 Byron Close, Oakwood, Derby DE2 2DP.
- 40. Aviemore/Inverness-Shire,** Roddy Stevens, 26 Strathspey Drive, Granton-On-Spey, Moragshire.
- 41. Gloucester,** Adrian Nelmes, 35 Bathleaze, Kings Stanley, Stonehouse, Glos. Tel. Stonehouse 823115.
- 44. Bradford,** Steve Naylor, 16 Kingsway, Wrose, Bradford BD2 1NE. Tel. (0274) 621818.
- 50. Ripon,** Bill Winship, 7 Knox Chase, Harrogate, N. Yorks. HG1 3HZ; and Kevin Russel, 11a Fitzallan Road, Bedale, Yorks.
- 52. Lancaster,** Geoff Parkinson, 30 Chequers Avenue, Lancaster LA1 4HZ; and Richard Kernick, 162 Dorrington Road, Lancaster LA1 4TP.
- 53. Glasgow,** Ralston McPherson, 17 Barrhill Court, Rosebank, Kirkintillock, Strathclyde G66.
- 54. Ipswich,** Bob Copping, Education Centre, 11 Fore Street, Ipswich, Suffolk IP4 2PJ.
- 56. Hull,** Allen Cunningham, 17 Trafford Road, Kingson Road, Willerby, Hull HU6 10AJ; and Kev Collis, 177 Worcester Road, Wold Road, Hull.
- 57. Sheffield,** Phil Rhodes, 32 Haywood Avenue, Deepcar, Near Sheffield S30 5QD. Tel. 0742 887382.
- 59. Medway,** Kevin Murphy, 62 Milton Avenue, Cliffewoods, Rochester, Kent ME3 8TX; and Mick Hopwood, 6 Scarlett Close, Hunters Field, Lordswood, Chatham, Kent ME5 8LE.
- 61. Wigtownshire,** John Thomas, Rowan Tree Guest House, Glenluce, Wigtownshire, S.W. Scotland.
- 62. Stoke,** Ian Stanger, 1 Bank End Cottage, Hammond Avenue, Brown Edge, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs. and John Davey, 48 Tonbridge Avenue, Bradley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffs.
- 64. Peterborough/Spalding,** A. Anderson, 69 South Street, Stranground, Peterborough, Cambs. PE2 8EX.
- 65. Manchester/Radcliffe,** Tim Southern, 10 Black Moss Close, Radcliffe, Manchester M26 ORG; and Frank Mathews, 130 Lancaster Road, Salford M6 8PY.
- 66. Leeds,** Brian Birdsall, 3 Hough End Crescent, Bramley, Leeds LS13 4RU; and Ralph Hedley, 25 Cottingley Approach, Cottingley, Leeds LS11 OHQ.
- 67. Leicester,** Dennis Potter, 29 Wreake Drive, Rearsby, Leicestershire LE7 8YZ; Tony Denton, 12 Cross Lane, Mountsorrel, Leicestershire LE12 7BY.
- 69. Rothesay,** David and Ronald MacQueen, 91 Ardbeg Road, Rothesay, Isle of Bute, Scotland PA2.
- 70. East Sussex,** Chris Tingley, 160 Millfoil Drive, Langley, Eastbourne, Sussex BN23 8DJ.
- 71. Harrow/Middlesex,** Peter Miles, 1532 Greenford Road, Greenford, Middlesex; and Ken Erswell, 112 Abercorn Crescent, South Harrow, Middlesex HAL DPV.
- 75. Salisbury/Wilts.,** Brian Hayward, 37 Bridge Street, Fordingbridge, Hants. SP6 1AH.
- 78. Doncaster,** Bob Hopwood, 84 Miller Lane, Thorne DN8 5ND. (0405) 814295; and Andy Tate.
- 83. East London,** Ray Rogers, 88 Grove Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex. 081-598 8292.
- 85. Lea Valley,** Mike Staines, 23 Smarts Green, Cheshunt, Herts.; and George Lee, 12 The Lynch, Hoddesden, Herts. EN11 8EU.
- 86. Tyneside,** Andy McIntosh, 9 Conifer Court, Meadow Estate, Forest Hall, Newcastle-Upon-Tyne NE12 9QU. Tel. 091-266 8966.
- 88. Aberdeen/Grampian,** Mark Christie, 92 Lee Crescent, Bridge of Don, Aberdeen, Scotland AB1 8FL.
- 89. Darlington,** Brian Sweet, 5 Larchfield Street, Darlington, Co. Durham. Tel. (0325) 284959.
- 91. East Lincs.,** Neil Cash, 6 Wold View, Market Raisin, Lincs. Tel. 0673 843530.
- 92. Kettering,** Tony Horner, 46 St. Annes Road, Kettering, Northants. NN15 5EH.
- 94. Kidsgrove/Staffs.,** Alan Hickson, 324 Shelton New Road, Cliffe Vale, Stoke-on-Trent ST4 7BZ.
- 95. Rotherham & District,** Mark Hutchinson, The Priory Arms, Cundy Cross, Barnsley, S. Yorks. S71 5RF; Jon Davies, 67 Windermere Crescent, Kirk Sandall, Doncaster DN3 1LD.
- 96. Wakefield,** Graham Copley, 47 Denhale Avenue, Flanshaw, Wakefield, West Yorkshire WF2 9EG.
- 97. Tayside,** Ian McNeil, 48 Wellbraehhead, Forfar DD8 3AX.

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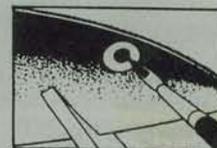
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Rapala wobblers are not coloured to look colourful. And not to appeal to fishermen. But for the fact that in different situations the colour of the wobbler brings forth its unique swimming action. The colour intensifies the signal given by the action!

This is how you choose the right colour

Is the weather clear or cloudy? Is the water clear or dark? Is the sun high or low? Is the water surface smooth or rippled? How deep do you fish? What is the natural food of your catch? Check the conditions carefully! Pick the colour according to these guidelines.

- S** Clear weather, clear water. Imitates a natural baitfish.
- G** A dark version of the above. Use on cloudy days, in dark water.
- B** Clear sky, cold and clear water. For deep fishing.
- P** Dark weather, dark water, the choice for dawn. Imitation of perch.
- RT** In bright conditions, or deep fishing. Suits well for salmon before spawning.
- GFR** A fluorescent colour for more attention. For shallow waters. When it's dark weather or water. Catches salmon species especially.
- SFC** Fluorescent for more attention. Fish deep, in twilight, in the dark or in dark water.
- CW** Dark weather, dark water. For trout and salmon.
- NF** Clear weather, cold, clear water. Fishing deep.
- GR** Special wobbler for dull weather and dark water. Catches best in warm water.
- RH** Effective colour for irritation. Imitates a fleeing wounded fish.
- SM** Clear weather, cool and clear water. For salt-water and deep fishing.
- GM** Dull weather. For sea fishing.
- SD** Clear weather, clear water. A general colour.



Add colour to fishing

Genuine Rapala wobblers – all the 15 colours – are made at the biggest wobbler factory in the world. There each wobbler is tank-tested, trimmed and coloured by hand – just like Lauri Rapala made his first wobbler over 50 years ago. So far, over 100 million Rapala wobblers have been sold.

Although you already know all the Rapala wobbler colours, don't think that fishing is a dull science! Test all the colours! Surprise the fish! Try your own colour favourites! We guarantee that the Rapala wobblers will add colour to fishing tales this season.

RAPALA®

The wobbler that knows how to swim

Nor**mark**®

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