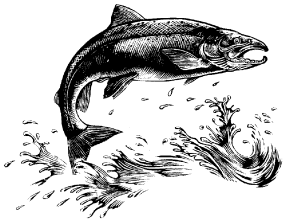


INVICTA

FLY FISHING CLUB, CAMBRIDGE

Affiliated to the Federation of Midlands Fly Fishers (Anglia), the Angler's Conservation Association and the Salmon and Trout Association



Number 123 • JANUARY 2005

www.invictaffc.org.uk

BONEFISH AT HARSTON

David Jones' report on Sean Cutting's visit in October.

If I wrote up Sean's CV it would fill this issue. International Angler of note, Rutland expert, Chairman of our local Federation, organiser of England boat eliminators, and so on. He brought these skills to bear with the aid of a top of the range projector, excellent photographs and various handouts invaluable for the travelling angler.

I have to admit peeking at the atlas to discover where Andros was exactly. I get confused between Bermuda, Barbados and the Bahamas. Definitely head for the last one! So Andros Island is the largest island in the Bahamas set about 150 miles off of the Florida Keys at the edge of the continental shelf. It is roughly 100 miles long, 40 miles wide and split into three 'major' islands by bights (channels) running roughly W-E. Despite its relatively small size it has been estimated that there are about 1000 square miles of flats. Small wonder that Andros is recognised as the Bonefish capital of the world.

Sean is a DIY expert when it comes to holidays. His advice was firstly to check out the tide tables to make sure you are going to be able to fish on a rising tide when the sun (almost

Are you still fishing? Mark Searle is, and here he plays a fish in Rutland's Whitwell Creek. This area has been stuffed, this back end, with browns and rainbows feeding on the enormous quantities of fry.



100% guaranteed) is up in order to facilitate fish spotting. Then get to Heathrow – probably the difficult bit – and fly off to Nassau with American Airways. Again choose the flight so that eventually, after a bit of island hopping with Bahamian Airways at the other end, that you fly over the coast in daylight and spot potential fishing areas. Here Sean was assuming that the angler would be wading rather than hiring a guide (\$4-500 per day). Look out for promontories. There is a coastal road but it is located up to a mile from the beach and although paths exist through to the sea they meander through mangroves and hence progress can be slow.

The tidal range is less than three feet. The bonefish come in with the tide, forage amongst the mangroves and depart on the ebb. Thus there are effectively two fishing windows. Some areas are known for vast (acres!) shoals of smaller fish say 1-3lbs whereas elsewhere small groups of fish between 10-15lbs can be found. Beginners should practice on the smaller fish as their spookiness increases quickly with size. The idea is to cast say 6 feet in front of the target and allow the fly to sink to the bottom. As soon as the fish gets close, raise the fly with a quick pull. Hopefully the bonefish will react to the puff of sand, spot the lure and follow it up. Continue slow stripping until, hopefully, the fish consumes the fly and tighten. First of all you have to spot the fish. Not for nothing are they called the "Ghosts of the flats" as their mirror like scales reflect the surroundings. Direct observation is nigh on impossible if there is much of a ripple or indeed if the angler is wading rather than on a skiff. Whatever, it is not advisable to go in the hurricane season that generally ends in October. Some anglers find it easier to look for the shadows of the fish on the

YOUR COMMITTEE WISH YOU A VERY HAPPY NEW YEAR AND TIGHT LINES FOR 2005 *(Graden, Graham and Mike were unable to be there and John Caldwell was taking the picture)*

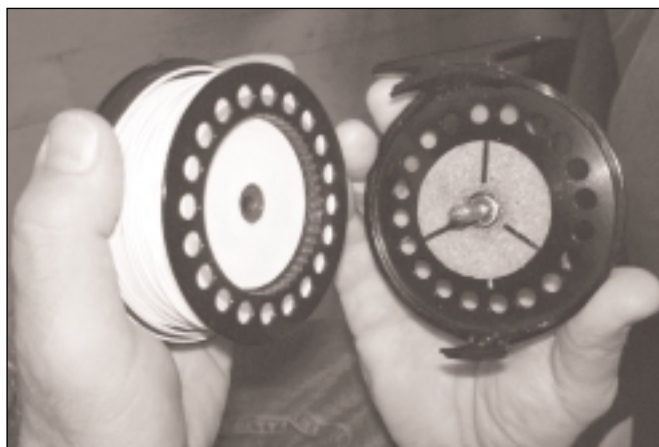


bottom. At other times the tail of the fish rises from the water. After all, bonefish have underslung mouths and are seeking out crabs and shrimps in the seabed. Obviously Polaroid glasses, amber tinted by choice, are essential. Long casting is not. By all accounts if you can fool reservoir trout then you can catch bonefish.

It is important to realise before you leave the UK that there are no tackle shops on Andros. You must take everything that you will require. Sean had an excellent checklist. The sun shines all day, the temperatures are likely to be in the 90's and there are loads of mozzies. Take UV protective clothing, especially an Arraphat for the head and neck, sun cream, fly repellent and a first aid kit. A bum-bag capable of carrying a couple of ally water bottles is also an essential. A soft drink cordial was recommended as a thirst quencher. A pair of flat (wading) boots are essential as protection against volcanic rock and spiny fish living in the sand. Simms boots fitted with good solid PVC soles rather than felt were considered to be ideal. Ron Thompson wading socks provide skin protection when sand inevitably enters the boots. A waterproof bag, which could be hung on a nearby tree out of the way of crabs and the like, should be used for storage. So if the angler is to survive the holiday, these are the essential considerations.

Bonefish can be caught on standard reservoir tackle. A 9-foot rod handling an 8-9 line was recommended. Ideally it should be a 4 or 5 piece jobbie that can be stored in standard luggage, as bulky kit is no longer permitted in the cabin on trans-Atlantic flights. Sean assured us that the fact that he was sponsored by Hardy/Greys had nothing to do with his personal recommendation of one of their rods - the GRX 8-9 salt water, although this is only available as a 3 piece. Excellent value for less than £100. The Fox #12 pike fly rod was a possibility but a bit of a beast to handle. Reels need to be able to deal with a bonefish departing at 30mph. This equates to the spool spinning at 3,000rpm!!! I think it was a Young's model which had the large cork drag but Formula 1 brakes might be more appropriate. System 2 was another recommended reel.

Sean thought that Rio lines were the best as they were formulated for high temperature use – not much good back in the UK! A floating line suffices as most fishing is done in water of the order of knee deep. 150-300 yards of backing was considered to be essential. This could only be accommodated on standard reels if the ultra thin gel spun backing was used. Beware however, for if it happens to be wrapped around a



One of Sean's reels showing the cork drag



Sean attends to the projector while a box full of typical bonefish flies does the rounds

finger or toe when a take occurs then it acts rather like a butter knife and the consequences could be dire. Fancy tapered leaders were not necessary according to Sean. A 10-foot length of 15 lb bs Fulling Mill World Class fluorocarbon will suffice for bonefish. Fly patterns such as Clousers, Charlies, Gotchas and various epoxy crabs have been described in numerous articles and books. These should be tied on stainless steel hooks and equipped with dumb-bell eyes positioned so that the point sits upright and reduces the tendency to snag in the eel grass. Other weedless devices are also possible. The lure should be tied to the leader with a loop which allows much more mobility than the standard blood knots. Hooks need to be sharpened regularly.

It is essential to realise that no matter how salt-proof kit may be claimed to be, it is absolutely essential to wash everything down in fresh water after every fishing session.

Sean advised that a trip of 10 days was desirable in order to allow for the odd few days when fishing will not be possible due to the weather. These off-days could be spent spinning. Relatively light tackle was recommended with a popper as the lure. A length of nylon-covered trace wire was recommended as there was no telling what might be hooked especially when fishing the blue holes or over the edge of the reef. Tarpon, wahoo, grouper, snapper and boxfish, not to mention nurse sharks and barracuda, are all possibilities.

So if you fancy a low-cost, self-guided trip after bonefish get on the www. and see what you can find but you may have left it a bit late for this year as November/December are the preferred months. I couldn't find a decent guidebook in Cambridge. There was an excellent practical article in the October 2004 Grail by Derek Hine. The web has dozens of sites of which www.capecodoutdoors.com (Bahamas window) featuring Bonefish Bradley is one of the best for aspiring visitors. Tide tables can be found in the EasyTide window on www.admiraltyleisure.co.uk. Enjoy your trip!

KERFUFFLE AT THE ACA

Members will know that Bob James of the ACA was booked to talk to us at our first meeting of the year. He couldn't make it due to illness. Since then all hell has broken loose, the story even making a full double-page spread in The Daily Express.

Bob and Jane James and the ACA have parted company, we know, but it is unclear what exactly the reasons are. Clearly there was some dissatisfaction from committee members and an attempt to unearth 'evidence' as to their mismanagement of the Association. There is an agreed pact of silence on both sides and the Jameses have been 'paid off'. This is unsatisfactory for the 1500 or so organisations and clubs - including Invicta - that fund their activities. We need to know what is going on, why there was such a massive falling out and what the plans are for the future.

President Chris Tarrant and others have resigned from the organisation as a protest over the treatment of Bob and Jane, and this in itself is a blow. Fishing needs high profile support in the present 'anti' climate.

Jane James has spoken at length to our secretary Doug and put her side of the case as far as she is able, and following are extracts of a letter posted on the web from the new Chairman. A personal observation is that this situation is the culmination of a long term disharmony in the governing body of the ACA. Obviously the Jameses had their way of doing things and some committee members - including the new chairman - did not like their methods.

Following is one side of the argument

Extracts from a letter from Anglers Conservation Association Chairman Dr Stephen Marsh-Smith (the full text is available on the Web).

“ Dear Members

... I am constrained from making comments in relation to their departure, as are the rest of the Committee of the Association.

... However, no such constraints are placed on me in making comments on the way the Association has been managed over the last five or six years.... I intend to instill a culture of transparency and accountability and while I am in the Chair, I assure you that the Association will be run for the benefit of its members. There is a very great deal to be proud of, but this has not always been publicised in the way it should.

... I joined the Association's Committee and earlier this year I was privileged to become your Chair. I give my time to the Association freely and without receiving payment.

From the moment of my involvement with the Association, I was struck by the lack of information given by management to both the Committee and members. It is in my view essential to establish a proper two way communication between the Association's staff and its Committee and most importantly, with you the members.

The Association is a not-for-profit organisation and is able to operate thanks to the generous funding by its members. This enables the Association to bring civil claims against those who pollute or otherwise damage members' lakes, streams, rivers and waterways. The Association also advises on a range of other legal issues. This acts as both a deterrent to polluters and a way of recovering damages for members to get their fisheries going again.

The Association's key staff are therefore its legal team - solicitors and their assistants. What the Association does, no other angling organisation can do. This fact appears to have been ignored by the outgoing senior officers. During their period in charge, four solicitors were lost in one way or another. One was recently reinstated by the Committee and another has been persuaded to stay, but, some years ago, a third had to be expensively paid off to head off a potential constructive dismissal claim. It seems she had refused to sign the Trustee Company's accounts. A fourth solicitor was lost altogether.

There are a large number of other board and staff members who have found their position made untenable by the out-going Director, following their criticism of the way the Association had been managed.

In addition, throughout this period (1998-2004) it was often heard that progress was made in recruitment of members and securing income. However, a true analysis of the accounts shows otherwise. Against this, the wages, perks and other emoluments paid to senior non-legal staff continued steeply upwards to what can only be described as over-generous levels, so that by 2003 more than 1/3 of all the Association's total expenditure related solely to the cost of employing Mr and Mrs James. It should be remembered that these rises were against a background of financial losses, in some years severe. Interestingly during the same period the expenditure and costs of running the legal department never rose above 19% of the whole annual budget.

Furthermore, much of the Director's work was carried out by outside suppliers at the Association's expense. For example, in tracing why the auditors charged the Association three times the expected amount when compared with similar-sized organisations, it transpired that they undertook the most basic financial tasks when it would be realistic to expect these to be done 'in house'.

I am sure you will understand that a Committee which only meets four times a year simply cannot supervise every aspect of the day to day management of the Association and, as such, reliance is placed on the Director to furnish the Committee with all the relevant information needed to steer and guide the Association. However, key accounts over the entire period, that should have been sent to Committee were found in the outgoing Director's filing cabinet. Whilst many of these issues were discussed at meetings, more often than not acrimoniously, some Committee members found their positions made untenable having dared to ask critical questions. They felt the only proper course of action was to resign.

I accepted the Chair to reconcile these internal problems and to progress the Association's core business, which is the legal work. I am happy to say that although the Association has endured a testing time, we have retained our first class legal team and, as I see it, there is a never ending flow of cases to be won on your behalf. Already morale among staff and Committee has improved dramatically. To this end the Committee and I wish to suggest a route to take the Association forward.

The Future

- 1) The Committee believes that a single competent person could be employed as PR Officer and Director.
- 2) At present the Association can tackle only a very small fraction of the pollution cases, both those that do and don't result in criminal prosecution by the Environment Agency. The problem is that the Association can only act legally for owners or tenants of fisheries that are affected, and not directly for individual anglers themselves. The Association will therefore make a huge effort to recruit angling clubs, fishery owners and other organisations for

whom the Association can act in legal proceedings. Ideally, there must be no stream, lake, waterway or pond in relation to which the Association cannot act.

3) The Association's constitution needs updating. At present the Association is an unincorporated body linked to a Trustee Company so that it is able to own, for example, our building. There are also special requirements for employing in-house lawyers which the Association must meet.

4) The Association needs to approach those true supporters who left the Committee and the Association in recent years. There is a vast groundswell of support for a well-run Association and this must be tapped into. Very influential individuals who have not been able to work with the past senior officers must be welcomed back on board.

5) The Association's budget and staffing levels should be tailored to reflect income and the requirements of the Association's work. More people to tackle the legal work, and less waste.

6) As a longer term goal, the Association may be able to become a registered charity. This would confer a number of advantages. It would automatically ensure better financial control. It would allow certain beneficial tax breaks, making your subscriptions go further. The Association would also be in a position to tackle many more cases.

I believe that what you, the members want is a first class legal service that takes expensive and difficult legal action on your behalf. I would like polluters and those who harm fisheries, and their insurers, to tremble when they hear the name 'ACA'. They must know that the Association will make pollution or damaging fisheries so expensive for them that the only sensible alternative is the fund all the proper controls and measures to avoid causing damage in the first place.

The Association needs your continued support to bring about these changes and I ask that you give the new Committee your continued support. The proof will be in next year's annual report and also in the accounts. Please let us have your views and please can you use email (to guy@a-c-a.org) if possible, as communication by e-mail is a very cost effective way for the Association to keep in touch with you. Our website is www.a-c-a.org

Chairman ””

Just before Xmas, Jane James rang our secretary Doug Head, and explained her and Bob's side of the case, and why Bob had not appeared at our meeting.

Needless to say it was a different story from the one from the new Chairman. Also, on the web, other, sometime committee members give rational explanations for a few of the points made against Bob and Jane.

It appears that we have a sad state of affairs where the only loser is the public's image of angling and protection of the waterways in general. The issue appears to have been the perception that the ACA was not run as efficiently as it might have been and some of those involved at committee level took exception to that.

Sadly we have lost one of the best known faces in angling in Bob, a high profile and popular president in Chris Tarrant, some hard working committee members and a long-time and knowledgeable servant of the organisation in Jane. If more information becomes available we will report further, but meanwhile Invicta will continue to support the ACA and its vital and valuable work and would urge others to do so individually.

Let's hope the vital work of the ACA continues and good luck to them.

Thanks to Peter Wyles of the Crawley Club for sending this replacement picture to the very poor one in the last issue. It shows the Eyebrook AMFC team BUT still isn't quite there - John Caldwell seems to have crept in and there is no John Brownbridge! Oh well, at least they're all smiling!



The latest weather forecast which I guess is correct for every day:

"The weather forecast for tomorrow will be .. wrong. Slightly wrong in the north, occasionally wrong for the west country. Hopelessly incorrect in the mountainous areas of Wales, with intermittent wrongness in the London area."

Courtesy of "Not the Nine O'clock News"

And here's Graden again, sitting in his favourite boat 13 at Ravensthorpe, with a cracking 9 pounder. One of many good fish caught this year by Invicta members.



CHEW AND BLAGDON PILGRIMAGE

The annual pilgrimage to meet up with the Welsh and Scots will be on Bristol Waters next year, and then back at Grafham in '06

All are welcome on a first come first served basis. We can arrange to travel together and pair up according to who is going and when. All those wanting to go should confirm with Chris McLeod to discuss by the **END OF JANUARY LATEST**, and accommodation and fishing will then be arranged. The dates will be the week commencing Sunday May 22nd '05.

Prices for a day ticket and half a boat are:

Chew £29.50, Blagdon £23.50

(Concession less £2)

Accommodation £20-25 per night

+ Pool money of a pound a day and a fiver for the week.

So far there are 6 definites and we can find accommodation for around a dozen. So please let Chris McLeod know as soon as possible, to avoid disappointment.

FISH FOR ENGLAND

Next year Invicta members will be able to fish what has, until now, been the East Midland TFA's own eliminator.

This is an alternative route to the Midland final, for East Mids and Invicta anglers, in addition to the established Odds and Sods eliminator.

There will be two matches involving a dozen or so anglers and a good proportion will qualify for the Final. No details yet, but if anyone is interested then please contact Chris McLeod.

ANNUAL DINNER

Once again this highlight of the social calendar will be held at the Gonville Hotel.

Bob Ayres is the main organiser and the date is **Saturday 19 February '05**

Doug will be sending out details separately.

E-MAIL ADDRESSES

A number of members have expressed an interest in receiving the newsletters only by e-mail.

This would save the club a few quid and make folding and enveloping less of a marathon. If we have an e-mail address it also allows us to send out information and last minute reminders. Increasingly this is an important way of keeping in touch.

So, if we do not have an address for you, please let us know either by completing and returning Doug's form, or e-mailing chris.mcleod@dial.pipex.com.

MEETING WITH GRAFHAM WATER SAILING CLUB.

Anglers from several of the Midlands clubs were welcomed to GWSC by the Vice Commodore Mike de St Paer aided and abetted by Simon Dabson, the present Commodore and Jim Hibbert, the rescue coordinator.

The aim of the meeting was to build bridges between the sailing and fishing communities, and alleviate supposed conflicts between the two groups.

Mike pointed out that fishing and sailing were complementary skills until 100 years ago. All large fishing boats were under sail and some still are, for example oyster trawlers in the Falmouth area, in the interests of conserving stocks. Even anglers have retained some of these skills. Perhaps Peter didn't realise that some boats at Grafham feature unofficial lee boards which would account for the fact they don't always drift in the direction expected. Both sports involved outdoor skills and engender a love of the aquatic outdoors and an appreciation of the environment. They were not spectator sports but both can be enjoyed either as a competition or as a leisure pursuit. So far so good! But trout, indeed fish of any sort, need a supply of food in order to thrive. Generally this means weed and if sailors don't notice any they are happy: anglers are distraught. The absence of clouds of flies around the reservoir is not cause for rejoicing but a sign that all is not well in the water. I seem to recollect that sailors quite reasonably wanted the semi-submerged hedgerows removed from around the edge of the reservoir which were damaging their craft. The net result was that bank erosion increased and anglers lost the opportunity of fishing deep water which could readily be reached from the bank. Cormorant predation has been a major problem. Not only do I get the feeling that sailors are perhaps not aware of the problem and in any case would not be bothered unless the birds were roosting in their masts. Furthermore, it is suspected that the sailing fraternity would have a good deal more clout than the anglers in solving the problem had it affected them. When it comes to the perceived harming of wildlife, anglers seem to be the whipping boys.

Although formal racing in the UK started in the 1600's, dinghy sailing is a post World War 2 activity. Some of the dinghy classes such as the Flying 15 are still raced although, as with fishing tackle, the materials of construction have advanced somewhat. GWSC started in 1964 and is now regarded as the premier inland sailing venue in the country. Anglers should be aware of the GWSC website which features a real-time weather station (<http://www.grafham.org/weather.htm>) as well as dates for important sailing events. The Royal Yachting Association regulates sailing in the UK. Thanks to their policies the GB team was the most successful outfit at the Athens Olympics. Training for the various RYA squads takes place regularly at Grafham.

GWSC is entirely funded by its 1500 or so members, of which about 10% race on a regular basis. Windsurfers tend to sail on a day (ticket) basis. Club racing takes place on Sundays with a couple of events in the winter and an additional event in the summer. Racing also takes place on a Wednesday evening in the summer months. In addition there are 14 open events which attracts up to 200 boats from all over the UK.

A race is organised by a Committee boat out on the water. The course is marked out using the fixed buoys with additional 'pillar buoys' which are inflated and positioned on the day. Active buoys are marked with a pink flag. All races start into the wind so that the craft have to zigzag (tack) to the first mark. The course is followed in an anti-clockwise direction. Points of interest for anglers was the fact that the boats are jockeying for position for up to 15 minutes prior to the start in order to gain maximum advantage at the off. The start line, which can be between 80-150 metres wide, is set at right angles to the wind. Craft then tack up-wind in steps of varying widths, driven by the wind compass on the hull rather than mere whims of the crew. Wind shifts are another critical factor. Hence the fleet seems, to the uninitiated, to explode in all directions on the first tack. Multiple 'bursts' arise when the start is staggered by say 5 x 5 minutes as in handicap races. However, racing on subsequent legs is much more orderly and predictable. The choice of course depends not only on the wind but also the type of craft. Some reach speeds of 20mph. Open events may involve 3 different courses. The intention is to get a race to last an hour and a half. Starts on Sunday are at 11.00am and 1.30pm.

There followed a Q & A session:

Q. What are your main safety problems on a day-to-day basis?

A. All sailors must be insured and are required to wear lifejackets supplemented with wet or dry suits in the winter. There is constant surveillance from the clubhouse and a high-speed rescue craft manned by volunteers. No sailors have drowned since the club started.

Q. Do you get complaints from anglers?

A. Very infrequently, although on one occasion anglers parked up on a buoy felt aggrieved. If anglers feel the need to complain then take the sail number of the craft. (windsurfers, the main source of angst, rarely have sail numbers and hardly ever sail to a fixed course).

Q. Is there any liaison with John Mees regarding courses?

A. Yes, usually on the Friday before the weekend. These meetings cannot take account of changes in the weather so that sometimes requests to avoid certain areas cannot be met. There is also a regular Users Liaison meeting which goes a long way to ensuring harmony.

Q. Do you have to use the dam end of the reservoir?

A. We do not like to sail at the eastern end, as the conditions are generally poor. However, for open events, it is sometimes inevitable that the whole reservoir is put to use.

Q. What do you tell sailors about anglers?

A. Do not approach within 20 metres.

That response induced a bit of excitement in the audience! 20 metres? Where did that come from? First of all anglers boats are rarely anchored. Casting involves aerialising typically 20 metres of line in the air, covering the front and rear of the boat, and the final cast probably puts over 30 metres of line out onto the water. Fish are often feeding on daphnia blooms which tend to occur in the middle of the reservoir just where the sailing is taking place. Some anglers afloat felt as though they were targets rather than objects to be given a wide berth!

The meeting ended with a great deal of bonhomie, with little conflict. John Mees concluded we should get a couple of ferry boats (referring to an introductory video clip where a sailing craft was sliced in two in Sydney Harbour) and charge around the reservoir. In response Mike de St Paer suggested that AWA moved marker buoy G to the car park!

It was decided that we should have another meeting in which GWFFA hosted members of the sailing club. I hope we can match the courtesy with which we were received.

Thanks to David Jones for supplying this report, and also to the committee of the Grafham Water Fly Fishing Association for formally inviting Invicta, along with other local clubs, to the meeting. A very helpful and constructive event.

NEAR MISS AT EAST MIDLANDS QUIZ

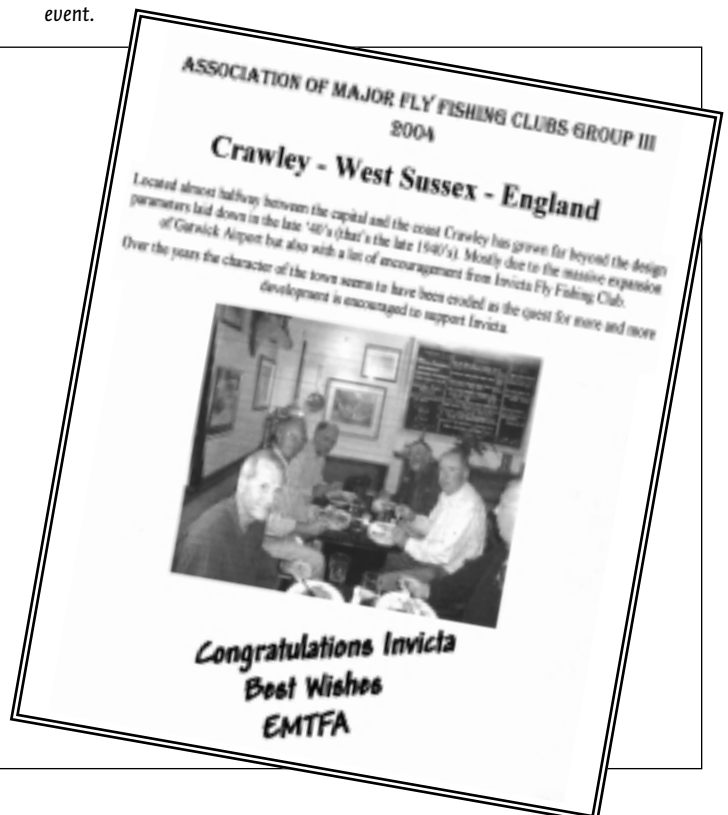
Our team of Lawson Wight, Mark Searle, Peter Reeves and Chris McLeod were runners up at the EMTFA annual quiz.

Despite a storming finish, Invicta, were pipped into second place by Anglian Water professionals, losing by one point.

Teams of 4 battled it out in an intensive competition covering topics such as personalities, tactics, waters and literature.

A good time was had by all and thanks to East Mids for inviting us, despite their deep disappointment at being thrashed during the season in the AMFC competition.

By way of recognition of our achievements this year, during the evening their Chairman presented Chris McLeod with a truly beautiful, framed, commemorative award. The design was centred around a team photo (which contained at least one East Mids member, and only 5 of us), a few spelling errors and obscure references to Crawley. However it will take pride of place in the Invicta trophy cabinet (at present located in Crawley Town Hall).



REPORT FROM THE MIDLAND CLUBS MEETING WITH ANGLIAN WATER.

Annually a group of Anglers from local clubs meet Anglian Water's recreation boss David Moore and his team to discuss issues that have cropped up over the previous year.

The meeting, fiercely chaired by Mel Parrott, was held at Grafham at the end of November and was attended by representatives of most of the local clubs. John Caldwell and Chris McLeod were there for Invicta, and David brought Jon Marshall, John Mees, John Seaton and Nathan Clayton.

Under discussion were a variety of topics such as stocking policy, cormorants, safety, accessibility and catering at the lodges, and Anglian Water's response to all our concerns was very positive. Not only was it a chance to question some of the policies but also to say thanks to David and his team for providing such top class facilities.

It was noted that Grafham Water was voted 'Best managed Water' in a poll of Trout Fisherman readers.

The unfortunate ducking suffered by an Invicta member had been under discussion by AW management and they had already taken measures to avoid this situation in the future. We already have a compulsory wearing of life jackets on the water, but also now no one will be allowed on to a jetty at any time alone. And that includes wardens. All the AW staff, including retail staff, will be aware of when anglers are about to set off or return, so there will always be a watchful eye on the dock areas.

Boat handling courses

An important topic was safe boat handling. As members may know, AW offer day long courses at £50 a day each person. But group rates are available and it should be possible to negotiate a deal if enough members are keen to do it.

Q. Why should we consider doing it?

A. Although it is not compulsory at the moment, AW envisage a time when it might become essential to have done

SELL, SWAP OR BUY

It has been suggested that members might like to advertise any unwanted or superfluous equipment in this prestigious organ (that's this newsletter).

Peter Reeves has these items. Please contact him direct if you are interested.

- Sierra XDA 10' Rod 3 piece #8
 - Snowbee Diamond II Rod 10' 2 piece #7/8
 - LCroo Reel with spare spool
- also
- Hardy Marquis Multiplier Fly Reel # 8/9 with spare spool (This well used but still good working order as one would expect of a quality reel)

All open to offers or swap lighter weight crisp action rod #6 or 7.

a course before an angler is allowed out. They generously encourage us to undergo the course by knocking a pound of the cost of a day boat if you've completed it successfully. So within a couple of years most of us would have recouped the cost.

You also get a piece of paper which is valid as a certificate of competence all over Europe.

Stocking policy

AW spend an enormous amount of money each year on stocking. Most of the fish are one of two sizes, 650 or 750 grammes.

There were complaints that Grafham and Ravensthorpe both suffered from undersize stocking in the latter part of the season, and AW agreed that this was not desirable. Because there is now a demand for bigger fish and because the smaller ones are just about small enough to be swallowed by a cormorant, next year there will be very few of the smaller fish put in the lakes. So the 750 gramme (NB the fish are bought in metric and caught in imperial!) fish will be the norm next year.

There was discussion as to the experiments with different varieties of trout - blues especially. (There are some ongoing trials at Rutland to see how other types of trout get on.)

We'll know more about this in due course but AW did make the point that availability, rather than cost, was often the problem.

FEDERATION CONFUSION

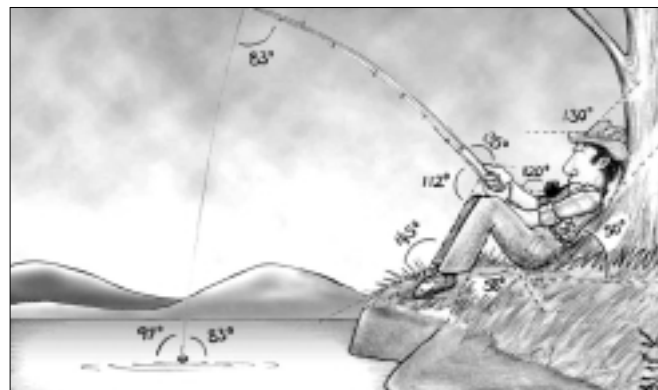
The issue of drogue attachment

Invicta are affiliated to our local Federation of Midlands Fly Fishers (Anglia), along with about a dozen other clubs. It exists simply to discuss and organise national qualifiers with a view to supplying team members to fish in the English National stillwater and river teams, but it also reviews and sets 'International Rules'.

At our last meeting the issue of drogues and how they attach to the boat was discussed. There was a great deal of misunderstanding about this, and the amended rule book did not make it any clearer.

For reasons of control and safety it is permissible to have two points of attachment and in the next issue we will expand upon this, with diagrams!

In case you ever wondered, this is an explanation of the origin of the word 'angling'





The fashion statement for '05

CAPS AND BADGES

The new cap is available from Alan Prevost at £7.50.

Also badges at £3.00.

If you buy both, Alan will accept a tenner.

Very smart and in an understated, sophisticated tint of grey.

CLUB CAPTAIN

After the success of our teams in the AMFC matches last year, the committee decided to appoint an official Captain.

This is so members know who is 'in charge' at matches, and gives us a name as a point of reference in lots of ways.

It involves a fair degree of work in getting anglers to events and making sure they have an idea of tactics and techniques, and ensuring that all the money is collected.

It is not necessarily a position for a committee member, but is likely to be a more than competent match angler. Because of his hard work and success in past years the committee asked Graham Williams to take on the job, and he duly accepted the position. We say thanks to Graham and wish him well in the coming season.



This is Captain Graham, as if you didn't know!

WINTER PROGRAMME

All members should have received Doug's flyer, but this is the (slightly amended) list of events for the second half of the winter.

INVICTA LATE WINTER PROGRAMME '05

6 JANUARY 05

MEMBERS FLY TYING EVENING

Please bring some basic equipment so we can have a general discussion, swap each others patterns and do a bit of tying.

20 JANUARY 05

STUART ILSLEY ON FLIES AND MATERIALS

Materials for sale and lots of talk about flies, fly tying, reservoirs, etc, etc.

3 FEBRUARY 05

AGM + SLIDE SHOW

Apart from the usual Annual business we hope to have a few pics of the last season to project on to the wall. Disrespectful banter essential.

17 FEBRUARY 05

ANGLIAN WATER WITH DAVID MOORE AND JOHN MEES

Our chance to hear from David and John on last season and expectations of the new season

3 MARCH 05

COLIN BRETT ON CANADA

Colin's report from his recent trip to the fabulous Fraser River and the area around Vancouver. Essential listening for all those planning a trip.

17 MARCH 05

QUIZ NIGHT

A similar format to previous years but with invited teams. Easier questions preferably ones that Invicta members can answer, and Anglian Water can't! (Some hope!)