



Australian Bass, *MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA*



THE BRONZE BATTLER

NEXT MEETING
Tuesday
8th April 2008
GUEST SPEAKER

No guest speaker this month.

Northmead Bowling, Recreation and Sporting Club Ltd.
166 Windsor Rd Northmead.
7.30 pm start till 11pm.

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|-----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| PATRON: | Dr Wayne Erskine, PhD |
| President | Domenic Squadrito.....9799-1796(H) |
| Vice President | Dave Sanegor.....0413 136 678 |
| Past President | Dave Claydon..... 9829-1503 (H) |
| Secretary | Jim Taylor..... 9631 7485 (H) |
| Treasurer/Membership | |
| Secretary | Garnet Noble.....9476-3881(H) |
| Points score & | |
| Basscatch Officer | Geoff Shadbolt.....9636-4340(H) |
| Publicity Officer | Alan Izzard.....9653-2309(H) |
| Editor: | Alan Izzard.....9653 2309(H) |
| Event Co-Ordinator | Chris Ghosn.....9636 6896 (H) |
| Project Officers: | |
| Parramatta River | Alan Fowkes.....9626-9938(H) |
| Hacking River | Warren Hackshall....9525 0090(H) |

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE

Hi all,

The last two years as President have flown past, with what seems like a blink of an eye. My role as President will be vacated at the AGM and members will decide this years new electee. I would like to thank everyone for allowing me to be President and also on behalf of the Committee, thank you all for allowing us to lead the club through the course of the last two years and look forward to seeing you all very soon at the club meetings or future club events. During my time as President, I was greatly impressed with the dedication, General and Committee members have shown, and am privileged to have been part of it. My focus during the last two years was to increase membership, encourage as many diverse fishing events as possible as well as ensuring that the fish habitat is also looked after.

Looking back over the 2 years it has been an eventful and fulfilling period for the Bass Sydney Fishing Club. Some of the milestones and achievements were:

- Assistance rendered to Greening Western Sydney with revegetation of South Creek;
- Stream watch monitoring on the Nepean, Lane Cove, Parramatta, Port Hacking and Georges River;
- Carp Catches and Angler information sessions;
- Gaining of a funding grants to assist with the introduction of fishways on the Parramatta River;
- Bass Sydney was honoured with the NSWCFCA 2006 Award for being the organisation that has made the greatest contribution to NSW freshwater recreational fishing, and in particular for the conservation of the bass fishery natural environment in the Sydney region.

With the AGM being held on April 8, all member registration fees will again be due. When paying your registration fees you will be supplied with a Bass Sydney Membership card with the outline of club events for the 2008 / 2009 season, the

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calendar will also be available online on the Bass Sydney website shortly. Those members that attended the 2007 / 2008 club events would all agree that there were many fishing opportunities at various locations which were well organised and very successful and I would encourage as much participation with future club events.

If you know of anyone that is interested in Bass fishing or would like to learn how, where, when and why, bring them along to meetings, including the AGM. New, as well as ongoing membership is the key to a continued and successful club and gives the added benefit of being able to fish productive water without a lot of the guesswork. Only through unity, can this great hobby or pastime be continued well into the future.

I trust that you all have had a fruitful fishing year so far and that it continues throughout the cooler months for those still venturing out.

Take care and successful fishing

Domenic Squadrito

MANNING MAGIC

Famed by the legendary John Bethune's "Bethune on bass" and in recent times popularised by Dave Seaman's "Wild river bass". The Manning river has a reputation amongst anglers as a true trophy bass water.

Over the last 2 years I have ticked off most of the so called glamour rivers but the Manning still remained unfished so it was about time to address this situation. The plan was to fish the Williams river bass catch and on the Sunday continue North and make camp. Dave C, Nev and myself left Clarencetown Sunday mid morning after picking up basic supplies from the super market. We arrived at our designated spot about 50km inland from Taree. The drive up the through the valleys was beautiful it really had an isolated quality to it. We had a lovely chat to the property owners and began setting up camp alongside the river it was picturesque and tranquil to say the least. After getting camp set up we were all quite wary from the drive so we relaxed at camp and chatted and enjoyed a cold drink and a nap before our minds turned to fishing. We loaded up our angling weapons and hit the river for a night mission. The section of the river we were camped on was at the bottom of a rapid and continued for about 500meters it was a nice little pool. Dave C scored a fish first cast in emphatic style with his lure being hit so hard the noise reverberated through his rod before his drag engaged, signalling the presence of a quality fish. It went about 290mm but punched way above its weight. The condition of the fish was superb. It was thick from gorging itself on shrimp. The property owner spoke of the fishes voracious appetite for shrimp and it was obviously apparent. We continued to thrash the water well into the dark of the night with not even a hit. I tied on a small "East coast" popper and gently tweaked it until I came tight on a small but pugnacious fish. We returned to camp at 9pm and enjoyed a gourmet dinner of steak, bacon, eggs & curried lentils washed down with a few glasses of red.

Morning dawned full of promise as we began about getting our gear loaded. The plan was simple, fish the 10km of river from camp down to "Tiro" bridge. We dropped my Ute off and drove back to camp jumped aboard our yaks and down the river we went. The scenery was truly spectacular and so quiet. We came across the pool that had the round rotating house on it that Dave had told us about. About this time all hell broke loose as I could see Nev wrestling with what looked like a good fish. The fight continued until the penultimate moment was reached when most big fish are lost. Nev was being dragged deeper and deeper into the cover, but like a true seasoned campaigner he leaned back on his stick and put his multicoloured yak in reverse and steered the beast from the labyrinth of fallen timber. The water churned when the fish surfaced it slapped its tail ferociously spraying water every where. We paddled over to see all the commotion, it was obvious this was no tiddler. My first glimpse of the fish was at its belly and it was huge!! Nev managed to get his boger grips into its gob and get it on the measure. It went 412mm boosting Nev straight into the exclusive 400 Club or as it is now referred to as "club 400". Watching some one get their first 400 is just as rewarding getting one yourself. In this case this point couldn't be any truer as Nev has been a true disciple of bass fishing and climbed the ladder of opportunity starting from catching little tiddlers through to consistently producing big fish. It had to only be a matter of time before he cracked one and this was the day. We were full of praise for Nev and all very excited.

We continued down the river and within moments Dave was onto another monster which dove down deep like a tiger shark, he was pumping and winding trying to get some line back but it continued to sound on the bottom like a submarine. High stick'n Dave flexed his muscles and bullied this mammoth from the depths. The result another chrome monster that well and truly crossed over the 400 mark.

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You would think with all this action going on fish were easy to come by but for me they weren't as I managed to go a whole day without turning a scale. I tried a range of tactics but nothing worked, I wasn't too perturbed as I thought I cast very well putting my lure deep into bassy zones all day long but unfortunately the bronze battlers weren't jumping on board. Back in the winners circle Nev and Dave were going fish for fish like to magicians trying to out do one another. The boys continued to rack up fish before we decided to stop for a break. I needed to cool off so I had a swim in the gin clear water and relaxed. We told jokes and chatted before heading down the river.

Now Back at camp the night before we had noticed the river narrowed but didn't think much of it, this was about to change. We approached the end of a pool and came across a rapid that was flowing reasonably fast but we couldn't see where it came out. We couldn't walk around so we had to go down. Nev led the way with me closely following behind. It was fast water alright with boulders and severe drop offs, we negotiated 2 dips before I saw Nev go under. From my view it was a horrible experience seeing your mate get thrown out of a kayak and to make matters worse I was on a collision course with him. I wanted to stop to help but the force of the river was too strong, the water was narrow but extremely deep with massive turbulence. The rapid seemed to go forever through a maze. When we caught up to Nev he wasn't injured but lost his rod and reel in the process. This highlights just how bloody dangerous things can be going down rapids. The rest of river was narrow with bottle brush trees growing across the river, to go down the rapids' you would knock your head on tree branches, it was extremely dangerous. We walked a long, long way until we found access back to the river. The boys continued catching fish at regular intervals until we reached the end of the journey. We returned to camp buggered. Dave went for a shower and by the time he returned both Nev and myself were asleep. We awoke at 9pm cooked and ate dinner and went back to sleep.

We awoke sore the next morning, slowly did our camp chores and drank copious amounts of coffee to wake up, none of us were in a hurry. Nev had to head home so he packed whilst Dave and myself got our thoughts together to have another fish. Upon saying our good byes to Nev Dave and I headed upstream of camp to fish a lovely long pool. It was a great bit of water and before long Dave had a fish. I was still dazed from the long day before when I felt little bream taps I slowly jigged my lure like I would in the salt until I felt the weight of what felt like a small fish than my rod rolled in my hands and arced violently towards the tree line. My twin power 2500 with its smooth superior drag system was screaming. I didn't panic and tried to get on top of this fish, my feeble attempts weren't working so I had to open up a can of whoop ass on this fish before I got busted up. I cranked ferociously on my reel until I came up tight on the fish and could feel its weight. I changed rod angles and eventually it came into the open water. I got it aboard and she went a tick over 410mm. I was very happy. We fished till about 3pm. Dave managed a few more and I got another 1. We headed back to camp to have a rest.

We again headed off into the dark for a night fish, we could hear fish hitting the surface but they were few and far between. Dave had a fish on and it took him deep into the weeds. He fought it for ages and I didn't take much notice until I arrived to hear huge tale slaps, Dave was connected to a monster. In pitch black you could see how big it was and Dave put it on the measure and she went 450mm. It wasn't until we got back to camp and looked at the photos that we realised just how massive the fish was. It was a horse well conditioned with fat tail wrist and muscled disposition.



Overall we had an excellent trip that was most relaxing and in the process the trio of us encountered 400s. I look forward to heading back there real soon.

Chris Ghosn

THE QUEST FOR A 500mm + AUSTRALIAN BASS by David Sanegor

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The North Coast of NSW is renowned for producing bass in the extra large sizes, with much talk of fish in the 500 -600mm bracket and even bigger caught or talked about amongst bass anglers. These bass or perch, as some of the less environmentally enlightened folk refer to them as, are just an incredible sight to behold for a keen bass angler used to catching the average fish of 200- 400mm. The strike and fight that these north coast leviathans put on is really something else. And with that huge mouth, they are capable of tackling much larger flies and lures up to 6" in length. To catch one of these mothers has been a long held desire of mine and it has finally been realised. I met Graeme Bowes, a keen north coast bass angler over the Internet through his contact with Domenic. Graeme is a really nice guy, and like most of us shares a great respect for the environment and bass. When the opportunity to fish the Clarence Gorge with him came up, how could I resist!

The Clarence and its tributaries have been in various states of flood for most of the summer season. This has enabled them to migrate farther upstream and repopulate the headwaters of many rivers. It has given the bass a reprieve from the hordes of anglers that descend on the north coast to fish. In an unpressured state, bass become extremely aggressive like most fish will respond to a well-presented lure or fly.

When we arrived at the Gorge, our hopes were subdued somewhat as we gazed down at the raging torrent beneath us. Graeme assured me that we would find a few spots to fish and thus we did. The flow was simply too strong to fish most of the pools even on foot! (kayaking it was out of the question!) We had to concentrate on back eddies where foam (up to 20cm thick or more) and debris concentrated. This provided cover and an easy food supply for some truly huge bass!



We walked and bush bashed our way through vast areas of uneven marble and volcanic rocks, at times impenetrable water gum scrub, to reach these spots.

At one point, Graeme said that he would be surprised if I didn't get a 500. I thought this was a big call, I was wrong ☺

I rigged my 10wt fly rod with one of my weedless 3/0 deer hair sliders and cast the fly over a few small, partly submerged bottlebrush bushes. The fly slid over the first couple, then there was a boil behind my fly as the fish attempted to tackle my offering through the thick suds. Three hits in a row in fact and I was firmly connected to a huge bass which I sighted on the strike as the fish charged back around the bushes. I gave her everything I could with the rod bent over big time and stripping line like crazy!

I finally hauled the hawg out of the bushes and she was mine!!!!!! Yeah baby!!!!!!

We measured the fish at 530mm total length, 510mm fork. The fish would have gone 2kg easily!



I was wrapped, it no longer mattered that I only caught 1 other tiddlywink the next day, and that we were forced to make a hasty retreat the following day as the rains came back to haunt the valley....

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Thanks Graeme!

Hawkesbury Nepean Bass catch Feb 08

Due to the rainy weather and hassles with obtaining the key to Yellowmundi Reserve the Bass catch was a very low key affair. I know that someone (Ben) did very well but did not fill in his catch card, a shame really as it would have put a Bass Sydney member in front of the point score for the first time that I can remember. Here are the details:

The results from the last Bass Catch was,
48 only caught (44 in reach 4 the other 4 in reach 3A)
Biggest fish caught was 340mm (reach 4)
Biggest fish caught in reach 3A was 294 - Barry Cole
Geoff Bennett was the point score winner with 66 points
Runners up were Barry Cole and Gary Blount both with 28 points

Regards,
Geoff

Williams Bass Catch

I do not have any official info from the Hunter Club but Bass Sydney had 7 starters for the event. The Hunter club had organised DPI people to fish the event also, Danielle Williams from Cronulla, the Bass catch Data Co-ordinator and 2 young guys from Coff's were there as well. Garnet, Milton and myself had a late start, compared to some, as I did not arrive till the Saturday morning. We decided to fish the last bit of the Dungog to Thalaba bridge section. We managed to catch 79 Bass, all about the same size of 200-250mm. Les and Arie fished the Fosterton to Dungog section and I heard that Les boated 68 and Arie 55, a very good effort considering that the last 2 times that reach was fished the total was 8. I did not fish Sunday as I had other commitments and left them to it. I believe Garnet and Milton went back and caught another good number of fish in the same reach we fished the day before. As usual the Hunter boys put on a great night and a terrific raffle which Milton won, 1st, 2nd and also 3rd prizes but he refused to take the 3rd prize, and only after a fair amount of badgering did he agree to take the 2nd, good on you Milton, good to see you win something for a change. Alan Izzard.

STOP PRESS

Just received the following pic. from Milton of his mate Kevin. The bream, caught in Sydney harbour measured 400mm fork length. HmMMM, that bridge looks familiar.



Might chase some of these myself this winter.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 8th AGM – This is your club, come along and take part in this important meeting

April 19 Wyong/Ourimbah

May 17/18 Del Rio