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COMMITTEE: Dave Calydon, Milton Lazarus & Daniel Flood

President's Message

Our AGM is on in April. As I wrote in the February Battler, I will step down as President after serving for 2 years. I've enjoyed the last 2 years and its been both a pleasure and an honour to be associated with Bass Sydney, its members and the work that we do on behalf of native fish. While I cannot claim the credit, the club has gone from 33 members to the current number of 44 members (48 if you include everyone on family memberships) in the last 2yrs. The new blood has been great.

Since the last Battler, we have had a few members step up and indicate that they would like to join the Committee. This puts us in a good position, allowing a few of the current Committee to step back. Its not too late, if anyone also wants to put their hand up, you have up to, and including, the AGM to say so. There are always plenty of roles and jobs to do!

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the current Committee for all they have done for the club and the environment. Special thanks should be for departing Committee member Milton Lazarus who has been on the C'tee for over 10 years and has done a variety of roles except for President. I was hoping that Milton would be President this year, but it is not to be as he rightly feels that he needs to spend some time doing some other things. Dave Claydon and Shayne Alexander will also be leaving the C'tee. Dave has also done a variety of roles over the years, including President. Shayne only joined the club a bit over a year ago and he almost immediately joined the C'tee as BassCatch and Pointscore Officer as well as being a strong contributor at Russell St and club events and nailing the big fish this season.

The Bass season is already drawing to an end. I don't know where its gone as it seemed like only yesterday that we were eagerly awaiting for the season opener. Its been a modest season for me as far as bass captures go and I've had to observe, somewhat enviously, from the sidelines as some members, like Shayne, Ashley (of course!), Andre and Josh have just "killed it" for numbers of large bass. A personal highlight for me this season has been being present when Damian Balfour caught his first Aussie Bass after joining the club last year and buying a kayak and after some weeks of "coaching". Similarly rewarding was when I was with Pete Hatzidimitriou for his first time kayak fishing. Before long, he was in the thick of things at the Feb BassCatch.

My (now) annual trip to the Macleay R, scheduled for earlier in March did not eventuate due to the coastal (just about statewide!) flooding. However, all was not lost as I managed to catch my first cod in 9 years and seen a whole lot of new country. Stay tuned for a trip I would like to organise to fish the border cod rivers after what I've learnt recently!

Happy Bassin' !

HS Tham

New Members

The Club welcomes the following new members:

Chris Hanaghan – Chris joined at the February BassCatch when he attended with his father Peter. A keen kayak angler (Hobie), Chris divides his fishing time between chasing kingies and bass on fly.

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John Ducksbury – John enjoys making lures at home and heard of Bass Sydney from Ashley via lure-making websites. John is having “transport issues” at the moment and he hopes to get stuck into more bass fishing when he’s mobile again.

Alan Phillis – most of you know Alan as he is a very generous sponsor of the club for a while now. He decided to make it official by joining the club just before the Feb BassCatch. We’re delighted to have you on board as a member Al!

Millie & Al’s Cod Adventure

After all the rain in February and early March and with the eastern drainage rivers flowing like a bastard, Milton and I decided to try our luck on the other side of the divide. I rang my daughter who lives near Bingara, northwest of Tamworth to get the info on river conditions there. She told me that although the rivers were up we should be Ok in the tribs and creeks in the area. We headed off about 7.30am on Monday morning and not long after received a text from Tham enquiring if we were really going as he had just spent a week or so of annual leave in the area and informed us that the Gwydir was “pumping”. I figured that with the local info I had we would be OK. We decided to stop on the way up at a little spot at the tail end of Split Rock Dam, Glenriddle Reserve, about 10 km.s short of Barraba, a place Garnet and I had stopped at 3 years earlier and found only a trickle of water, this time however it was full.



Glenriddle, a good spot for a camp and yak fish.



We pushed on and arrived at the homestead for dinner, trouble is we had to organise it for ourselves, My daughter who works for the Upper Gwydir Landcare Assoc. was away for a couple of days and my son-in-law had the kids at swimming lessons. We were dragged out of bed at about 6.30 the next morning with the routine bedlam that supports getting 3 kids, 7, 5 & 3 years, ready for school. It had been decided the previous night that we would fish a nearby creek on a relative of my son-in law’s property. We would also take the 3 year old with us to drop off at her friend’s house, same property, and we decided to call her “chatter box” after about 5 minutes in the car. After we arrived and delivered Indigo to her friend we got the latest goss on where the fish were supposed to be biting, and decided that as the grass was so long it was inadvisable to drive through the paddock where Garnet and I had fished 3 years ago due to the amount of very large sump removing rocks. We decided to walk from the house directly to the creek.



On the way



Very rocky banks.

We worked our way upstream looking for good holes to fish, there were not many, and finally came to a dead end on the side we were on. We decided to climb out and work our way back to where we started from, this time going across country rather than working our way over the rocky banks. It was a tough climb for 2 old blokes, very steep and loose rocks and gravel and nothing to hold on to, but we prevailed in the end and could look over the panorama of the lush countryside.

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Dead end



From the top.

We finally made it back to the starting point and then headed down stream, we could hear the water cascading over the rocks as we walked and then all of a sudden I realised that I could not hear it anymore and decided to investigate and we discovered a small pool that had deeper water and an undercut bank, on the other side of course, and figured it was worth a try. Milton tried first at a snag on the opposite bank, very difficult to get the lure where we wanted so I moved a bit further downstream and tried again. After about the 5th attempt I managed to get the lure pretty close to where I wanted it, Milton yelled "good cast" and I hoped for success. Nothing at first but after about the 5th or 6th wind I was nearly pulled off my feet and into the creek as the Cod smashed the chatterbait. It put up a tremendous fight, giving both Milton and I a shower with its tail slaps, and we decided to try to tire it out as it was going to be difficult to land on the steep bank, it was not going to give up easily and continued to pull drag and even at the end tried to get under a small branch near where I was standing. Milton was finally able to get his fingers into its mouth and gently lifted it out of the water. We put it on the measurer and it went 680mm, my new PB.

680mm



Milton kept fishing this hole and had a couple of hits but no hook ups, standing up higher on the bank I saw the fish chase the lure, strike and then swim back to cover, we could not get it to return. Moving on we came to another pool that looked fishy, we sat and had lunch here before hitting the water again. Again Milton had a couple of strikes but no hook ups so we removed the weedless style soft plastic crawdad from his chatterbait to see if that made any difference. Looking at the pool we figured that we could probably do better on the other side, as usual, so moved on downstream. We finally found a spot where we could cross over and fish the dark undercut banks on the other side, good plan but bloody hard to implement, we could not get a cast in for the trees and where we might be able to the banks were so high we would not be able to land a fish if we hooked one anyway. So we kept heading back to where Milton had the previous couple of hits to try again. On about his 10th cast he was on, at last a hookup, and he landed a nice 530mm Cod.

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The hole



Milts 530mm

That was it for the day, 1 fish each and totally buggered, we picked up my grand-daughter and headed off home, still listening and answering questions being fired at us from the back seat until sleep finally overtook her.

We decided to have a break on day 2 and did some touristy things, went up to Copeton Dam and checked out the Gwydir River on the way back, some good spots to launch if you can find your way to the water through the "Grey Nomads" camped along the bank.

Day 3 saw us on another property with a small river flowing through it, evidently the last flush had come up about 30 feet and was about a metre from breaking the bank on the high side and flooding the house, the owner said it was quite scary. We were shown where to go and were made to promise that we would release all fish caught, a good sign as far as I am concerned. We had to park in the middle of a paddock and hoof it the rest of the way, over barb wire fences and 1.5m high grass on the top edge of the bank, no snakes thank goodness. We finally made the bank and walked to the hole that we were told about, it looked good, again on the other side but this time we were able to wade out a bit to make our casts. Milton struck first and as I was winding in my lure to give him a hand I got slammed as well, double hookup, what a way to start the day. Milts measured 575mm, a new PB, and mine was a little tacker just under 500. I cast back in and immediately hooked up again, 2 in 2 casts, a bit bigger this time in the mid 500's. Milt had to attend to a call of nature and told me not to catch too many while he was away, as he came back I hooked another, this one swallowed the lure right down and it took us quite a few minutes to get it out, with a couple of revival swims for it during the ordeal, but it swam away with no problems.



Milts PB, 575mm



My 490mm



Released.

A few more hits further down without any hook-ups ended the days session, we had to climb back up the bank to get out and then walk across the ploughed paddock back to the car, needless to say we were 2 very happy old chappies after landing 4 beautiful Cod in an amazing little pool, as Douglas McArthur said "We will return". Thanks to Milton for all the photos, my camera was tucked away safely at home, AGAIN!!!. Probably just as well for Milton's sake, but that's another story.

Alan Izzard

25 years of the Hawkesbury-Nepean bass catch

25 years ago fish scientist Dr. John Harris conceived the idea of bi-annual fishing events to be held on the Hawkesbury Nepean River system. He engaged the members of Bass Sydney Fishing Club to hold a weekend event in October and in February each Bass fishing season. The plan was that each angler would record their effort and catch which would be entered into a database to give scientists an idea of fish numbers, recruitment of recently spawned fish per reach etc. That information has been paramount in the decision making process of managing the resources of the system. The most notable recent example of this is the fishway program that has either removed unwanted weirs or had proper functioning fish passage devices installed on nearly all the dams and weirs on the Nepean.

Bass Sydney celebrated this milestone on the 2nd of March with a Bar-b-q lunch. They contacted as many of the original anglers they could find who fished that very first event so long ago. Unfortunately some people were un-contactable but

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the club was able to get 8 of the "Originals" to come to the lunch where they were presented with commemorative shirts. At the last minute due to the inclement weather, Dr. Harris was flooded in and was not able to make it on the day. This was disappointing. 36 Bass Sydney members and some partners attended the day along with 8 children. It was a great way to celebrate 25 years of Bass Catch.

This important occasion was held at Alan Izzard's property which is an oasis of bush and wildlife; the kids were thrilled to see the wallabies and birdlife. Being held here had an added bonus with some trying to land something from one of the two dams on the property. Peter Hatzi was successful landing a yellowbelly from the back dam on his first cast.

The catering was fantastic with everyone well fed, thanks go to Chris Ghosn for this. After a feed, some speeches and photos we went back to the many stories of days past. Such a good time was had that we are considering this as our site for our picnic day in the off season.

Thankyou to all those in attendance or those who tried in vain to make it.

Daniel Flood

Codysey

2 weeks off the first 2 weeks in March! Plan A was a few days on the Macleay, followed by a trip to the border cod rivers. A couple of KFDU members had come through with some advice about a couple of rivers around Inverell and the Glenlyon dam area. After that I was going on to visit friends at Burleigh Heads.

However, that plan was thrown out after the recent deluge and floods on the NSW Mid and Far North Coast. Plan B was to avoid the NSW coast and just stick to cod. My aims were twofold on this trip – to catch my first cod in 9yrs and to catch my first surface cod.

Plan B involved heading to the Central West for 2 or 3 days near Narromine where old mate and former Bass Sydney member, Wazza lived. After that, the Inverell area followed by a couple of days in the Glenlyon dam area before heading to the Gold Coast.

Headed out on the Monday with member Damian Balfour who had never been further west than Katoomba in NSW. Headed to Narromine via a trout stream in the Central Tablelands, an old haunt of mine. Recent rains had hit that area as well and my fave trout stream was muddy and uninviting. I only managed a tiny redfin near Orange.

We camped at a riverside reserve just out of Narromine. The next day, Wazza joined us for a yak session on the Macquarie R. The Macq was up a bit and the flow was quite quick. I was the only one to catch a fish that morning, a respectable yellowbelly on a spinnerbait –



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Culled a carp on bread in the arvo, but thought we would get more –

Wednesday saw Damian and I fish my “Secret Ck”, nearby. First time I’ve been there for 9yrs. River height data had shown a serious rise in that stream a few days before we left Sydney, but when we got there, it looked fine. In fact, I wouldn’t like to have been there before the rise!



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Secret Ck, at least where I like to fish, is a tough place!



Nice pools separated by rocky trickles necessitating hard portages and in my experience, after a few portages, its then time to continue on foot. In the past, I usually give up before getting to my favourite pool and it was the same this time. After the third portage, park the yaks and its time to leg it boyo!

Up until then, we haven't had a hit. I finally got crunched by what I thought had to be a cod, but it turned out to be a nice carp that ate my #2 Stumpjumper. It fought hard and almost bricked me under the snag I was standing over. I had to get out on a log to pull it out à



We continued on and eventually I realized that my fave pool had changed completely in the intervening years. I went 2 pools past my pool before I realized. I was a bit disappointed as I wanted to reacquaint myself with a particular little snag where there was always a cod. Gone! A big dead tree in that pool was also gone.

After all this time, nothing and when we turned around, I thought that was it. We got back to "my" pool and after working it again, I was about to leave it with one "last cast". I put out a long, diagonal cast with a 100mm WTD lure and put it next to the opposite bank, next to an undercut bank bristling with tree roots. The lure walked about 1 – 2m before "BOO-WHAP!!". A big hit with a double sound of the implosion followed by the tail slap as the fish turned and I was on! It pulled pretty hard and I got it to my side before I saw it – a nice cod of at least 65cm. I was stoked by my first surface cod and I got Damian to get a few action pix. Right at my feet, just before I reached down to lip the fish, the hooks pulled and the lure flew straight up in the air! It swam slowly away. Strictly speaking, I did not land it, but at least I had the experience, Damian saw his first cod and we got a few pix, taken by Damian –



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On the way back to our yaks, Damian got a hefty carp on one of my white spinnerbaits. Its taken 3 days, but at least he got a fish.



The return trip was just as hard, especially doing the last portage in the dark, but we made it.

Thursday saw us break camp and Damian left for Sydney while I headed north. A long arvo's drive saw me end up in Kwiambal NP, north of Ashford. Its about an hour's drive north of Inverell. Getting to the campsite avoiding roos (crawling with them!) and setting up camp in the dark was not the best. The Lemon Tree Flat camping ground was on a pretty, rocky pool and quite comfy. No hot showers, but a nice site with rainwater supply and toilets. Quite a few grey nomads mid-week. The Severn R ran along the camping ground and it was quite muddy and flowing moderately fast. I did a little bit of shore-based lurecasting in the next couple of days, but no joy. I found other access points to the river which offered better access to pools suited to yak fishing, but I did not put the yak in within the NP.

Our Peter Hatzidimitriou put me on to an Ashford local, Joe who is a Year 12 student and fishing fanatic. At his young age, he already has a blog, sponsors and hopes to have a career in fishing. On

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my first full day there, I contacted Joe and he offered to take me fishing after finishing school early. While I was waiting, I explored the Severn R near Ashford and I managed to land my first cod of the trip. I was wading in shin-deep water via a river ford when my spinnerbait was whacked twice without hooking up. I had been kicking myself since Day 1 as I had left my largest spinnerbaits at home! I only had my bass spinnerbaits with me and I only had 2 x ¼ oz tandem spinnerbaits which were barely cod-sized, a white one and a green & yellow one. I had the green & yellow one on when the cod hit. I changed immediately to a monster nude Mick Munns paddler that Ashley gave me. I gave that a run for a few minutes with no result before I changed back to the spinnerbait. Casting into the willow snag, the cod chased it out and hit it as it neared mid-stream and I soon landed it. My first cod in 9 years! Nothing big, probably just over 50cm, but I was happy.



My first cod since 2004!

Large Mick Munns paddler I coloured with Texta -

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I then met up with Joe, a very nice and articulate young man who took me to fish the Severn R on private property about 20k out of town. We fished on foot and the river looked very nice there. It was only a little discoloured, but flowing quite well. Joe said it was probably a foot or two higher than ideal. He landed a small cod on his 3rd cast! He mainly uses monster 1oz double-colorado spinnerbaits made by a lure-maker in Wagga. Called "Mother Froggers", they are HUGE, with a fixed stinger hook which had a soft plastic frog as a trailer. I was amazed at the use of such big, heavy spinnerbaits in a shallow river. He said that he likes them as it meant he could fish them deep, without worrying about them planing up in the water column. I observed that the weight allowed him to cast it on a baitcaster any old way, backhand, from below, sideways and also allowed the lure to be punched through overhanging willows, etc without as much a risk of overrun. *Hmmmm!*

1oz Mother Frogger double Colorado spinnerbait -

Joe with a small Severn R cod -



We fished that little stretch for a while without any further success even though we had some boils. Using surface lures and spinnerbaits, we found that the surface lures were attracting interest with hits and boils, but it was Joe's big spinnerbait that was hooking them.

Joe then suggested we wade across the river to a large billabong where he hoped the cod were more active. He said that billabongs were often full of cod and they were usually warmer than the main river. The billabong was quite large and wider than the main river. I changed the 100mm WTD lure to a 3/8 oz jointed Jitterbug, your standard night time bass lure. It looked tiny compared to the lures Joe was using, but that's the largest paddler I had.

After a lure-recovery swim, Joe reported that the water temp was indeed warmer than the main river and he was encouraged by this. Sure enough, we were soon seeing cod activity again, boiling on

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surface lures. I was working the Jbug parallel to the bank past a small snag sticking out from the bank when a huge boil erupted, but no hookup. I put out another cast and worked it past the snag again. This time, at the same point next to the snag, I got monstered! I hooked up, but it only lasted about 2 seconds when the hooks pulled... AGAIN!! *Aaaaaargh!* We both saw the cod as it hit and turned and it was a decent fish, probably around the same size as the one I dropped on Secret Ck. I've been wondering if I should have dragged a Dreamfish Twin Buzz past the snag instead, but we'll never know.

A bit later, Joe landed his second cod, bigger than his first, again on his Mother Frogger. Exactly 4mins after he put that one back, he got another one! This was larger again and it dived into some roots in the undercut bank at his feet. He had to get into the water to pull it out and it was a very nice fish of 68cm.

Joe's second cod -



Joe's third cod @ 68cm -



We fished from around 2pm to about 6pm when Joe had to go to footy training. Too bad we couldn't fish the best part of the arvo, but it was an eye-opener!

Joe couldn't fish the next couple of days (the weekend) as he had to work. On the Saturday, I spent half a day on the Macintyre R, north of Inverell. On this day, the Macintyre was a fair bit muddier than the Severn and I got nothing, not even a hit. I then went to fish a section of the Severn, near Ashford and while pretty, I again got nothing. The post-flood conditions were making it tough. I thought if the fish were shut down, I'd need to put lures right into where I hoped they were hiding. I even tried lures and techniques that I don't normally use in Oz, but very common in the USA. I tried a Texas-rigged worm as well as a skirted jig as both lures let you plonk them in the heart of snags or anywhere you think a fish may be. Nope! Nothing!

Texas-rigged worm -



Skirted swim-jig -



Ashford, Cod Town?? I'll be back!

A farm gate!

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I left on Sunday and drove to the Glenlyon dam caravan park just over the Qld border. I was supposed to meet another KFDU person to fish the Dumaresq R near there. The first glimpses of the Dumaresq when I first got on the Bruxner Hwy near Bonshaw were a real tease – gorgeous looking water, quite clear and slow. Further along, I checked out the section where I was supposed to fish on Monday, but it looked to be flowing way too fast. We'll have to rethink our options for Monday.

Settled into the Glenlyon Dam Tourist Park and enjoyed my first shower in a week! I met Brian & Debbie Dare, the owners of the park who turned out to be great. Brian is heavily involved in stocking the dam and more importantly, has been working on a 5-year project with NSW & Qld Fisheries on the Dumaresq R. The dam might be how he makes his living, but his first love is river fishing. He organised groups of anglers to fish stretches of the Dumaresq, similar to a Basscatch. Part of the project has also involved him working with the Fisheries people in filming cod mating, spawning and the male cod guarding their eggs. Some of the stuff they discovered has the potential to turn existing knowledge of cod behaviour and breeding on its head. In those 5yrs (the project ended nearly 2yrs ago and the report will soon be finished), they landed well over a thousand cod from the Dumaresq! He showed me some amazing video of male cod with their eggs and fry. He encouraged me to return with a group of anglers if we wanted to enjoy some amazing river cod fishing. As part of the "codcatch" project, he has divided the Dumaresq, between Glenlyon dam and Bonshaw (~60k of river), into stretches of a day or part day floats, all of which are accessible legally via TSR's and river reserves!! We could elect to camp on them or stay at his Tourist Park if we wanted to. 2 or 3 of us can fish one stretch while, at the same time, another small group could fish another stretch at the same time. Sounds bloody good to me and I want to organise a group to go up as soon as I can! How does next April sound??! And its not just the Dumaresq R either – the so-called "Border Cod Rivers" include the Mole, Beardy, Severn (Qld) (there are two Severn Rivers, one in NSW which runs into the Macintyre and one in Qld which runs into the Dumaresq), Pike Ck, Tenterfield Ck, AND its just over an hours drive to Ashford! The thought is just making me salivate!

Back to my fishing trip. The KFDU person (a nice lady fisho by the name of Pam from Ballandean, Qld) met me at the caravan park on Monday morning and after talking to Brian, he suggested that we fish a stretch of the Mole R where he thought it would not be too fast flowing. Brian seems to know every pool and riffle of those rivers! As I mentioned, the Dumaresq R closer to Glenlyon was flowing way too fast and so was the Severn (which looked bloody fantastic BTW). The slower parts of the Dumaresq was just further than Pam wanted to drive to as she has driven an hour from home to meet me. Pam and I headed off and before too long we were at a road crossing with the water running about 20cm over the road surface. The pool above looked very nice and as it turned out, we had about a kilometre of pool that was absolutely fine to fish. Plenty of snags to fish.

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Pam and I fished slowly as we only had that stretch to fish and she had to leave around mid-arvo. Before too long, I had the yak butted up to some debris and a small snag. By that stage I had bought a big jointed Kingfisher paddler and a $\frac{5}{8}$ oz spinnerbait from the kiosk at Glenlyon dam. They had a good range of lures for sale there and the prices were more than reasonable. I was bringing the paddler back into the snag I was at when I thought it was tangled. I was about to lift it off when it just disappeared... no big splash, no noise...just got sucked under by what turned out to be a little cod of less than 50cm. I landed my first surface cod finally, but not as spectacular as I had hoped.

I was to land 2 yellowbelly as well, including one that went ~43cm. The first one was caught on a small, $\frac{1}{8}$ oz Dreamfish twin-arm Eagle Spin. I'm not sure what possessed me to tie on that small spinnerbait for a change, but it worked! The second one was the larger of the two and it was caught on the green & yellow tandem spinnerbait I caught the first cod near Ashford. The big spinnerbait I had bought from the kiosk was to be lost that day, never to be seen again.

Little Mole R cod -



Pam didn't land a fish that day, but she experienced a monster bust-off! She didn't get to see the fish, but she was fishing a spinnerbait over a log in a big snag pile and got smoked. She left around 4pm and I wasn't sure what to do. I could have driven to another stretch of the same river, but laziness got to me, so I just hung around, had something to eat, had a rest and decided to fish the same pool again in the late arvo until dark. I didn't get another hit in my second stint and in retrospect, I should have moved.

Pam -



Mole R -



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Mole R yella 1 -



Mole R yella 2 -



I was leaving for the Gold Coast the next day, but Brian offered to take me to “meet” Dumb and Dumber, 2 cod that he makes the point of catching about once a week, every week in the season!!! I’m not going to say where they live, but suffice to say it is on a river nearby. On this day, we were outsmarted by Dumb & Dumber, mainly because the river was pumping and it was hard to fish their lies. Brian did have a hookup, but his crankbait came back with the front treble missing! It must have been an old, rusty split ring as it was no monster. I don’t remember if it was Dumb or Dumber.

Yella 2 -



Kingfisher paddler -



After that little sojourn, I broke camp and headed off to Burleigh Heads and this is where my Codysey ended. If I went a couple of weeks later, I know it would have been far better, but what can you do...? As far as fishing trips go, it wasn’t that successful, but I got to meet some fascinating people, saw a lot of country that I’ve never seen before and now I’ve got a whole new area to return to and to explore further. I’d barely scratched it and I can’t wait to return.

HS Tham

First Cod trip- a reconnaissance mission – “operation green fish”

Buoyed by the tales of club members about the aggressive nature of Murray Cod and their willingness to take surface lures. I have become a little bit obsessed about catching my first ever green fish.

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Having not ever fished for them before, certainly presented itself as a major challenge, and one that I relished. My enthusiasm for the task has certainly added new spice to my angling life and has provided some sorely needed motivation. As it reminds me of my early Bass fishing days when I knew nothing at all and started from scratch.

I have had to purchase new lures, topo maps, books. Technology has come a long way since I started sport fishing, things such as internet forums, you tube, Google maps etc, has exponentially grown my knowledge. With help from Alan Fowkes I was able to focus my attention on a region. For weeks I studied the location and sought as much local knowledge as I could find.

Finally the time had arrived to fish for Cod. The logistics involved was as highly technical as that of "operation overlord" during the D – Day landing. I had arranged to be dropped off at the top of a fire trail and then picked up in the evening. This involved having to sync multiple GPS devices, my iPhone and Ipad as well as install and set up communication systems (comms). I headed down the trail looking more like a paratrooper armed with my 3-6 kg spin stick, trusty reliable Shimano Stradic 2500, spooled with 10lb fire line and 20lb leader.

The main objective of the mission was to check out what the water looked like, was it a viable fishing option etc. the walk in took about 45 minutes in around about 30 degree heat. It certainly took its toll as I consumed quite a few litres of water. My first glimpse of the river was impressive and I was pumped. I eventually worked my way to the bank of the river and set up my gear.

Upon reaching the water I discovered a lovely clear river with a large sandy bank. There weren't many obvious snags, so I targeted deeper water and shade pockets. I was using my newly home built chatterbaits. Which are ¼ ounce 3.0 jig head chartreuse and lime skirt with purple crawfish soft plastic. They worked a treat and was very satisfying to see how great they swim. They will be deadly on bass in the Macleay and the Manning river.

I fished for several hours without accounting for any fish. One of the difficulties in fishing from the bank was the problem of snagging up. This became disappointingly difficult over a period of time. I eventually tied on a 5/8oz double jointed jitterbug. It worked so well in the moving water and was impressed; the only thing that would have made me happier would be a massive surface strike which did not eventuate.

I bumped into 2 anglers on the way out and we had a bit of a chat. They were quite coy on where exactly they were going to fish. Which makes me all the more interested to return as I reckon I have uncovered a great cod spot.

Overall I had an enjoyable time; I learnt a lot and enjoyed my time in the bush. I will be returning soon this time with my yak and plan to fish it more methodically, and hopefully score my first cod.



Chris Ghosn

Next Meeting is the AGM and will be on
April 9th
7:30pm at
Northmead Bowling Club.

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