



CLUB

PATRON: Dr Wayne Erskine PhD

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NEWS

WINTER BUMPER EDITION

Presidents Message - Alan izzard

President's report July 2015

As per usual, when winter arrives most Bass Sydney members go into hibernation mode. This winter has been no different with a couple of the coldest weeks I can remember. However the committee had organised a couple of events for winter 'get - together's'. These events have not been supported by a great majority of members which is pretty normal, however the few hardy souls that did venture out had a couple of pretty good days, a few fish caught, new places fished and a bit of camaraderie found. We also managed a new member from the Burns Bay day, thanks Doug. I personally also learned a new form of fishing on the Luderick day at Church Point, and along with Milton decided to have a try with the lessons learnt, for me that is - Milton is a long time Luderick fisho, in Berowra Creek that I had tried with long time friend and past member Garnet Noble several years back. I am pleased to announce that I managed 3 fish and lost a cracker, am now sourcing some terminal gear and have now found a nearby winter fishing spot. Kept 2 about 370mm and ate them the next night, smiles all round.



Bass Season is only 1 month away, time to get those casting arms working for opening day, looking forward to it.

Alan Izzard

The Editors Message

Over the Australian winter there's been plenty of activity, some of which has made its way into this edition and the Australian Bass season contrarily, is but a month away. Our four month sabbatical from bass fishing will soon be complete as we look forward to the first of September and the season's opening day. I'll be snooping for leaked reports, snippets of information and rumours, as I suspect there'll be some B.S. members, die-hards and dedicated, who'll be out on the water just after midnight and hooking up. I admire their devotion to the sport and their tenacity; I do feel sorry though, for their employers', who'll have to face their bleary eyed employees in the morning; all I would say is remove your bass Sydney shirt prior to attending your work place and no-one might suspect a thing, despite the lost productivity.

In early May 2015, Bass Sydney planned a planting session at Russell Street in Emu Heights, the original date of the second of May got postponed due to low volunteer numbers and pending inclement weather. And true enough, on the day it rained a plenty – postponement was gratefully appreciated. We reconvened the following Saturday on the eighth of May. Any fears of low volunteer numbers from Bass Sydney were well and truly allayed as members volunteered, numbering ten; highly motivated and enthusiastic participants got stuck in and planted a plenty. For years now Bass Sydney have been driven to improve the bankside flora at Russell St. by removing invasive plant species and creating a suitable area for locally sourced indigenous native plants, encouraging the establishment of a natural habitat for Bass alongside the Nepean River .

Alan Fowkes kindly compiled a summary of the plant species we planted that day and is featured later in this edition. Alan has included their main features and I, for one, found his summary most useful in expanding my limited knowledge of the flora we wish to establish at Russell St. and the benefits. Voluntary work continues at 'Russell St' on the first Saturday* of each month, where we have a BBQ and tea afterwards, so look out for the invitation emailed from Alan Izzard and come along at eight thirty am. Besides the 'hard yakka' at Russell St. there's been a fair amount of angling chatter and on more than one occasion a dearly held secret has let slip and if you're within earshot, those dropped gems might just lift your fishing someday – another advantage of Russell St. I've discovered.

*At times we're attending second monthly depending on our progress there and other factors such as important calendar dates; this arrangement is currently under trial and up for reconsideration.

The National Recfishing Conference 2015 took place this year on Saturday, July 25th, at the Gold Coast Convention and Exhibition Centre. I'm pleased to announce that Bass Sydney was well represented with our own royalty, as former Club President Ashley Thamm and 'Club Person of 2015 *runner-up*' Daniel Flood, both kindly donated their own time and attended on our behalf. I enquired from Ash regarding feedback - a report perhaps, short article, photograph, etching, tracings, crayon impressions of the conference and that it would make for a magnificent contribution to Bronze Battler. He didn't disappoint, taking detailed notes, working the conference room for all it was worth, before compiling his report, please peruse. If your heart was set on attending the conference and you couldn't, try smashing down some table wine and Hors d'oeuvres along with his fine penship for that Conference feel.

Damian Balfour (Editor)

New Member – Darren Cade

I grew up in the UK fishing lakes and rivers and then turned to saltwater when we moved to Australia in 2003. Over the years I've tried many types of fishing but have a growing interest in freshwater, lure and kayak fishing. Still very much a beginner but heard about the club from fellow new joiner Doug Chang (see below). I work in Financial Services but try to get out in the wilderness or on the water as much as I can at weekends and have a keen interest in wildlife and conservation. I'm looking forward to meeting a few other fishos and hoping to learn a few things along the way.

Hope that's ok. I haven't got my own kayak yet so won't make manly dam this weekend. Where and what time is the meeting on Tuesday?

Cheers

Darren

Darren

New Member – Doug Chang

G'day I'm Doug Chang (friends with Darren – see above). As a former banker turned property renovator I've got a lot more time on my hands now to resume a lifelong interest in fishing. I'm keen to try different styles of lure fishing and luderick fishing. Over the last year I've really enjoyed the challenge of researching different lure styles and experiencing the occasional success. It seemed very difficult to start off on lures but I'm pleased with the steady albeit slow progress so far and the sense of satisfaction it brings. I'm also trying my hand at fly fishing. I'm starting to realise a definite preference for estuary / river and freshwater fishing - as I do also enjoy the bush surroundings. I gotten myself a kayak or two for these conditions and being a Chatswood local am starting to explore the lane cove river and middle harbour for different species. Bass fishing either lure or fly looks appealing and I've managed to already snare a few smallish bass on jigspins locally. I really look forward to being a member of the Sydney bass club and meeting some like-minded fishos to develop my skills and participate in the various activities. Hopefully I can also get my two tween age kids along for some fun too.

Doug

Riparian repair & Habitat Rehabilitation. Alan Fowkes

A description of the four main plants we planted on May 8th 2015 at Russell St. on our 'planting day' were:

- *Angophora subvelutina* or Broad-leaved Apple. These are described as medium sized trees meaning they can reach a height of around 25m but mature specimens can also have a pretty wide canopy. These should be at home in our location as they are native to the alluvial flats of the Cumberland Plain. These were used by early settlers as an indication of quality soil and so most were cleared for farmland. The ones we've planted will do something to redress this balance but also eventually provide a fairly dense and spreading canopy to shade out weeds and provide habitat for birds, possums etc. The four main plants we planted on May 8th 2015 at Russell St. planting day were:

Below *Angophora subvelutina* - flowers and buds



Below - *Angophora subvelutina* Juvenile.



- *Angophora floribunda* or Rough-barked Apple. Another tree that has the potential to reach a medium size and perform the same function as the Broad-leaved Apple. These may not reach full size in our location as they do best in moist valleys but they should still do well enough and will provide variety in size and structure.

- *Leptospermum polygalifolium* or Lemon-scented Tea-tree. This is an understory plant – a shrub with a size potential of around 2.5m. These also like a moist location but should do OK because our planting area is slow to drain after rain. Planting in Autumn, as we have done, gives them time to get established before the hot and dry weather comes along next summer. They provide excellent bird and bee habitat especially when planted in clumps as we have done – a dense understory gives birds better protection from predators. At the moment, our plantings in this area are heavily weighted towards canopy trees and so starting to fill out the structure with shrubs like these is critical to regenerating a fully functioning system.

Below - *Leptospermum polygalifolium* flowers



Planted down near river level were *Tristaniopsis laurina* or Water Gum. These are a very pretty small tree of 4 to 10 metres that typically grow right on the river bank providing shade over the water. They have a role in holding the river bank together and also have beautiful insect attracting flowers around Christmas which can have obvious benefits for bass fishing when those trees are hanging over the water!

Below *Tristaniopsis laurina* leaf



The preparation and the plants were all provided by Penrith Council as far as I know. Al Izzard could confirm and may know the provenance – I'm not sure if these were propagated by the Council nursery or acquired from the likes of Greening Australia.

Have fun.

National Recfishing Conference 2015 - Ashley Thamm

Introduction: Senator Richard Colebeck

Senator Colebeck seemed very engaged and interested in furthering the Rec Fishing industry, his main points involved:

- ❖ Sharing fisheries between stakeholders & keeping access to waterways for all stakeholders
- ❖ Creating a voice for the Rec Fishing industry that is self-sustaining & doesn't rely on government funding.
- ❖ Gathering reliable information on the Rec Fishing sector. Rec Fishing questionnaire to be held every 5 years.
- ❖ Industry worth \$2.5 billion (estimate)
- ❖ Representation that covers all aspects of Rec Fishing



Session 1: Australian fisheries, a shared resource

Whose fish are they anyway? Prof George Kailis

- ❖ No-one owns the fish, but everybody wants to.
- ❖ Legal Sources: The public right to fish first appeared in the Magna Carte – 1215/1225.
- ❖ In the 1500's assertions of Crown ownership changed from "a right to fish" to "a privilege to fish"
- ❖ Australia founded 1788: Public presumption of a right to fish, which is so ingrained it can only be overridden by legislation.
- ❖ Current legal position on the public right to fish is uncertain.....

Utilising and Sharing Fishing Resources: Getting the balance right – Dr Daryl McPhee

- ❖ Gated Communities: (particularly on the Gold Coast) Stops land based and boat based access to anglers.
- ❖ Offsets needed for loss of Rec Fishing access

Session 2: Improving the quality of fishing in Australia (Fishhabitat Network)

How Recreational Fishers are Getting Involved in Victoria – Renae Ayres

- ❖ More efficient use of resources
- ❖ Better co-investment
- ❖ Strengthen partnerships
- **Fisheries Management Priorities:**

Protecting key fishing assets:	Advocating for habitat improvement
Protecting intact habitat:	Reconnecting habitats
Restoring degraded habitats:	Reintroducing shellfish reefs for increased water quality
Instream woody habitat rehabilitation:	Fish movement
"Citizen science" - using angler catch data.	

Making a difference in the Macquarie River – Matt Hansen

More to come on these guys..... absolute champions

Why do rec fishers get involved with habitat? Craig Copeland

72% of Recfishers that get involved in actively improving their waterways do so because they "saw an opportunity to put something back"

Session 3: What does the future of recreational fishing in Australia look like?

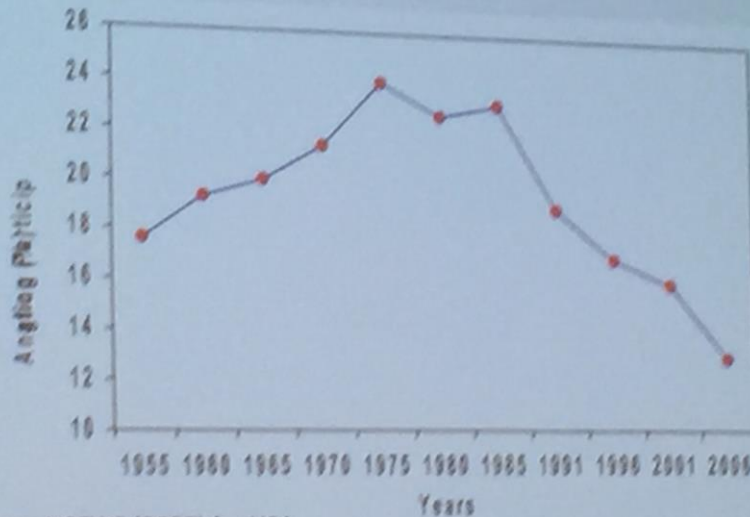
Emerging trends, new generations and what this means for recreational fishing in Australia – Mark McKindle

- ❖ Fastest growing country in the developed world
- ❖ Increasing cultural diversity
- ❖ 27% of Australians are born overseas
- ❖ 46% of all households have one parent born outside of Australia
- ❖ 66% of people polled say Catch & Release should be encouraged
- ❖ Finding ways to motivate Australians to get outdoors and get more involved

Overcoming nature deficit disorder- Richard Louv (Stream USA)

- ❖ As of 2008 more people live in cities than in rural environments worldwide...
- ❖ Family Nature Clubs booming in the US as a way to encourage children and families to get outdoors.
- ❖ US Recfishing Industry under threat due to the low levels of young people buying fishing licences. In 20yrs time the industry may be struggling to exist.

Angling participation in the US



data source: USFWS (2007) for USA



Besatzfisch



Research for the future of our freshwater

Global participation rates by country

Arlinghaus & Cooke (2009), figure credit Barbara Köck



- Participation hotspots: Scandinavia, Australia, North America
- On average in EU 10.6 % of total population, at last 118 million



Besatzfisch



Research for the future of our freshwater

- ❖ Studies show children receive more benefit from outdoor exposure than they do from Ritalin and he makes connections between how much time people spend indoors and how that relates to vitamin D deficiency and the percentage of mental health cases currently in the US.

Receiving recognition from state and federal government – Jim Harnwell

- ❖ Why the Rec Fishing industry is a “sleeping giant”
- ❖ “A big part of our way of life and economy”
- ❖ If we’re not recognised as a peak body we can’t be taken seriously by government
- ❖ At the moment Rec Fishers are lumped with commercial fishers when it comes to policy making

Session 4: What is social licence and how do we maintain it?

How do values and beliefs influence fishing? – Prof. Robert Arlinghaus

Individual Rec Fishers may not impact as much upon politics as much as commercial fishing but with 5 million Rec anglers we have a cumulative effect.

Social licence: describing the approval of an act amongst society

Values = desirable goals that motivate action. Linked to emotion/affect, serve as standards

Transcend situations, affect attitude & behaviour

Economic impacts have more to do with angler number percentages than direct access to waterways.

Acceptability/desirability of rural lifestyles directly impacts on angling numbers. So more urbanised cultures such as those in parts of Europe have a less desirable view of angling overall.

C&R fishing in Germany is seen as “playing with your food”

Economic factors dictate attitudes towards C&R. “Fish feeling pain” actually does not matter when it comes down to the polling.

The science of catch and release fishing – Julian Pepperell

- Early ethics include releasing fish at private landholders request. The landholder would request release of all juvenile fish so they themselves had something to catch in the future. So began C&R....
- These days C&R has more direct links to scientific programs such as the sailfish programs of the 1950's. Tagging has direct relevance to the C&R movement.
- Bass 94-100% release rate
- Fish kept in livewells in high summer temperatures (when most Bass Comps are run) have a much higher mortality rate



Session 5: Creating our fishing future

What is recfishing?: “A bunch of interested parties joined by a common theme, fishing.

Basscatch model implemented in Dumaresq River for Cod

What do we want to achieve?

What battles are we willing to fight?

We are lucky at the moment that we are able to manage our own funding through fisheries. The more definition we seek for Rec Fishing the more decisions will be made for us by appointed agencies.

Rec Fishers described by the minister as “Trying to keep frogs in a wheelbarrow”, the last minister was quoted as saying that dealing with rec fishers was like “herding cats.....

A repeated message of the conference was *Rec Fishers should be very careful what they wish for.....*

Ash.

Bream Fishing Report from Mid North Coast Early June - Trent Deaves

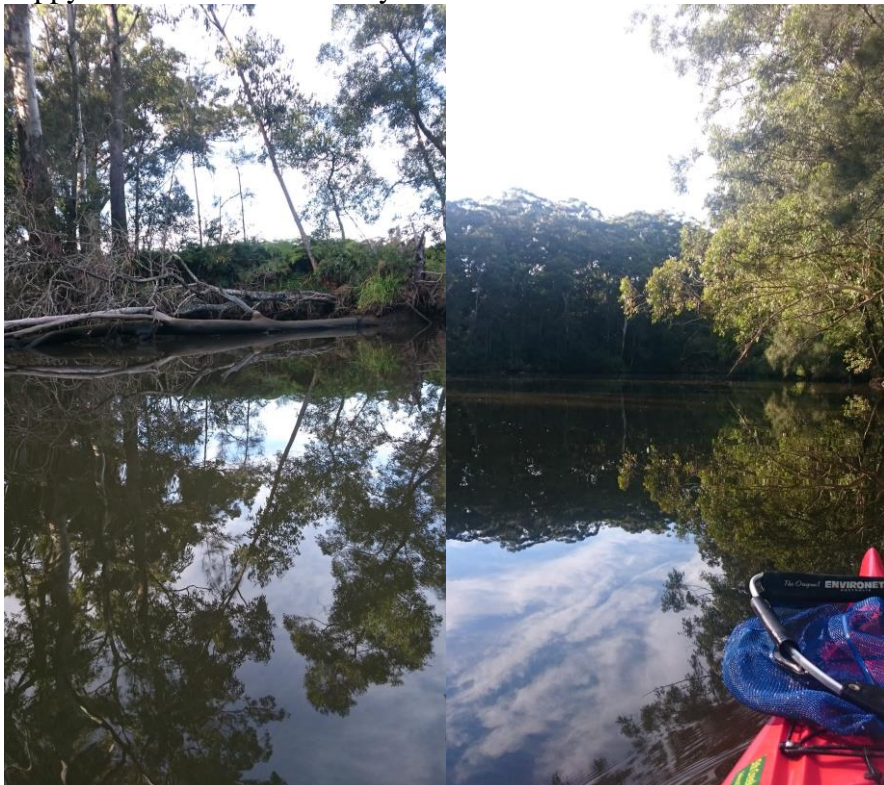
With Bass Closed season and winter settling in I was in desperate need for a fix. So, whilst visiting some relatives on the mid north coast, I decided to take my little bass kayak and try and tempt some bream from the floating oyster racks in the Camden Haven river around Laurieton; where I've had good success before also at this time of year. Early Saturday morning I launched at the boat ramp beside the bridge and headed up to the oyster racks, something didn't feel right... when I arrived I was surprised to see they had all been emptied of their oysters, every single rack was empty... no oysters... no bait... no fish.... so shift to Plan B & try and pin a few flathead, a few small ones came up on the blades but nothing to brag about, however after a massive first run I was snapped off on 4lb leader and an ecooda wasp lure to what I presume was a decent flathead.



I was up early the next morning and was still intent on catching some bream so put Plan C into action and drove to a small brackish creek near my relative's farm. I set off feeling confident that I would be able to pull some bream from some heavy timber on some hard body diving cranks. The first lure I tied on was my old faithful black sx40 and after a few casts I was into my first bream, not huge but still put up a good account for itself.



After the first bream I continued down river and kept on plugging away cast after cast, and as the sun was rising I decided to put on a deeper diving lure and put on the old chubby in muddy prawn, after cranking it into a few sunken trees with some decent pauses I was able to wrangle out one more bream and that was enough to keep me happy and I set off back to my relatives farm.



(Is that snow on them hills? Ed)

Trent

Bass Sydney Social Blackfish Outing at Church Point - Matt McHugh (Vice President)

19/7/2015

I was introduced to the Bass Sydney club by Tham. I'm very thankful for that, having met great people and being introduced to the bronze battler. I met Tham through my website and really because he is a fellow blackfisherman. Others in the club have fished for them before, and they seem to be a great winter option.

For a club with a focus on the environment and sustainability, targeting blackfish as a winter option is perhaps very appropriate. It is a very selective style of fishing, by-catch is rare, deep hooking is rare and snags and lost gear are rare indeed. Furthermore, they are not an endangered fish in any way, the biomass of blackfish in eastern waterways would be staggering, and with no real commercial fishery they remain a very sustainable target for fishos that like to keep a few fish to eat.

I suggested that we run a learning day in spot that was reasonably accessible and which had a nice area for a barbecue. In retrospect I would pick another spot so that it was a bit easier to access, and when we do this again next year, it will be in a different and more central location with better parking.

We had quite good attendance from Tham, Rico, Milton, Alan and Doug. I would love to report that the fish were biting their heads off, but unfortunately that wasn't the case. Well actually it was the case, but the fish were generally small to tiny. Very few fish were hooked and landed, and only Tham landed 2 legal fish, one of which was borderline.



It was still an opportunity to learn how to rig and what terminal tackle to use, and how to apply baits. The general rule for blackfishing is to keep everything simple in the rig. Apply baits loosely with a half hitch to keep them over the hook so that they look natural, and sink the float as deep as it will go without actually sinking.

Although it was relatively fish free, we had a great day. The weather gods smiled on us, and although we had a cold breeze, the sun was out for most of the day. We had a barbecue and plunger coffee and talked a bit of rubbish which is always good fun.

On the funny side of things, Tham happened to knock Doug's \$200 sunnies into the water off the jetty. This wouldn't have been funny except that Doug went back later with snorkel and face mask and actually retrieved them!

Many thanks go to Tham and Doug for providing bait and berley, and for Milton for bringing all of the barbecue paraphernalia. I'm looking forward to doing it all again next year.

PS. A short time after this day, Milton and Alan Izzard ventured down to Berowra Creek and managed some decent fish in the mid-thirties. They have started gathering the gear to make this a regular venture and Alan reported he even cooked some fish in Panko breadcrumbs will smiles all round.



(A great day, sadly I missed it while travelling overseas; we need another, what say ye? Ed.)

My new found love for the salt and a new addition to the family! - Pete Hatzi

I always used to say, I'm fresh water to the bone...keep me away from that ghastly salt! But the real reasons behind this, were because of my ultimate frustration that I just wasn't really much good at catching anything in the salt apart from Australian salmon when they amassed in Swansea channel near Newcastle. My saltwater fishing usually resulted in many hours of nothing. The occasional fish would sometimes accidently find itself on my line. My persistence with using soft plastics was proving fruitless after years of stuffing about a number of land based spots. Having the kayak has opened up the possibilities for me, which also helped increased my catch rate, but again..I was only seeming to catch either dopey small flathead or bream off the surface. This winter, I had made it my mission to become more well-rounded Angler.

I set 2 goals for this winter, 1 is to catch my first ever Mulloway aka Jewfish on a lure, and the 2nd was to catch Bream on soft plastics! I have now officially ticked off one of those! Having fished with fellow Bass Sydney members Josh Pearson and Andre Dukino, I have learned so much both about Bass fishing and bream fishing. The wealth of knowledge between these too has proven priceless. Both themselves continue to improve as anglers and are constantly improving their catch rate and upgrading PB's on an almost weekly basis. From lure selection, techniques and rod and line setups I have slowly started to refine my methods and the results are starting to follow.

Just this Saturday gone, armed with my new Hobie Pro Angler 14, I braved the cold conditions to fish a section of the Hawkesbury. Launching at 4am meant we were cruising around in complete darkness with only the night sky as our guide. Looking in the heavens a shooting star spiraled down towards the earth leaving an amazing show of light and dust as it burnt up entering the Earth's atmosphere, a truly magnificent site that late morning starters would never get to witness!

The morning saw a number of very hungry and aggressive chopper Tailor which although meant I would not donut this session were NOT my target species, today was all about the the humble Bream! I slowly worked a rocky shore line which had a nice steep drop-off...the water was slightly coloured given the rain in the area the day before. Casting my newly purchased G.Loomis custom bream rod I slowly worked my little 2” shad plastic back towards my yak, gripping the light and crisp blank waiting for that little tick in my line, watching it intently ready to strike...tick
tick...Zzzz.....I was on, half asleep the adrenaline kicked in...this fish was heading straight for the shore line to which it came. Andre helped me keep my calm and instructed me to peddle (not paddle..haha) out into deeper water. The fish continued to pull drag in the opposite direction, with my having to reposition the rod over my head as I tried to turn the fish on this light line. For what seemed like a lifetime, which in reality was probably only 10 seconds or so, I had the fish in 6 meters worth of water and could afford to let it dance around on the line and tire itself out. After some nice powerful charging runs, the fish began to surface and a nice healthy bream reluctantly came towards the yak. I grabbed my Environet and quickly tried to scoop him which was done prematurely, as the fish had other ideas! After nearly fuffing the landing I had a nice healthy Bream in my lap and a big smile on my face. After a few quick snaps, she was released to fight another day!

<insert PB bream pic)

What I love about the salt is that it's a lucky dip, you just never know what you might have on the other end of the line, a mixed bag is always great fun...this winter I've caught Bream, Flathead, Tailor, Leatherjacket, Australian Salmon, Silver Trevally and a rare but very welcomed Giant Herring which was a first for me and very memorable catch! It's amazing how well both of these fish fought, peeling line off my 2000 sized reel with 5lb line the drag certainly got a great workout and my already tired line roller bearing now needs replacing! I initially thought the Herring was a Salmon or Rat King as I saw it's profile deep in the water, I have never actually seen one in person so as it came closer I had no idea what it was until the boys informed me.



Andre himself had hooked a number of these, some displaying amazing aerial performances akin to a Salmon cross Barra! I was also lucky to be present when Josh landed an amazing Jewfish on 4lb which he fought for almost 30mins, I was lucky enough to be within 15 meters of this as it unfolded, filming it with my GoPro. Testament to Josh's angling abilities that he was able to land the fish on such a light setup, a new PB for him and I'm sure a moment he won't forget any time soon!



Andre and Josh are both producing some amazing photographs lately too, capturing their memorable catches in unreal style! All pics used in this article are courtesy of Josh and Andre.

I'm still on the hunt for that elusive Jewfish! I've so far had one fish break my line (defective braid) and the other spit the hooks after 2 decent runs. I'm sure it will happen for me eventually, I just have to keep putting in the effort and target them specifically and regularly. The schoolies are definitely around this winter, so hopefully it's only a matter of time and armed with the new Hobie I'm sure I'll be doing much more saltwater fishing from now on, it helps to fill the void until our beloved Bass season kicks off again in September! Cheers, Pete.



<https://www.facebook.com/BassSydneyFishing>



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**Next Meeting is on
Tuesday 11/08/2015 -
7:30pm at
Northmead Bowling Club**

Monthly Fishing Cartoon



"And first place goes to Andy Bean, who caught absolutely nothing for 22 straight hours -- a new record!"

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