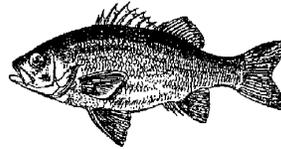


February 2010



Australian Bass, *MACQUARIA NOVEMACULEATA*



THE BRONZE BATTLER

PATRON: Dr Wayne Erskine PhD

PRESIDENT: Chris Ghosn phone 0412385545

VICE PRESIDENT: Neville Lelo phone 0412341621

PAST PRESIDENT: Alan Izzard phone 96532309 (h)

SECRETARY: Ashley Thamm phone 91811768 (h)

TREASURER/

M/SHIP SECRETARY: Garnet Noble phone 9476 3881 (h)

POINTS SCORE & BASSCATCH OFFICER: Al Izzard
9653 2309

PUBLICITY OFFICER: HS Tham

EDITOR: HS Tham phone 0402058903

ENTERTAINMENT &
EVENT ORGANISER: Chris Ghosn

PROJECT OFFICERS:

Parramatta River: Alan Fowkes phone 9626 9938

Hacking River: Warren Hackshall phone 9525 0090 (h)

Lane Cove River: Milton Lazarus phone 9874 7323

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I would like to wish a happy new year to all Bass Sydney members and look forward to catching up with everyone over the course of the year. I am excited by the prospects the New Year brings. The fish ladder on the weir at Penrith is now complete and by all reports working well. I was astounded by the results of the Lane Cove bass catch after the weir there was improved - the boys cleaned up with some notable captures across the board. I am very proud in recent times of the number of new Bass Sydney members and guests getting involved with the club. Please feel free to get involved and participate in all club events.

It would be remiss of me not to mention the great night we all had at the Bass Sydney Christmas party. It was a Chinese banquet dinner at a restaurant. A huge thanks to Milton for organising such a great night. I am sure it will be the first of many great dinners. As the New Year begins and we all start back at work and deal with the pressures associated with work and the busy lifestyle we all live; any fishing is good fishing. It is a great way to relax and unwind even if it's catching up with your mates to talk about fishing or a trip down to the local tackle shop. Tight lines and regards:

Chris Ghosn

NEWS

The Club welcomes 3 new members –

1. **Ben Richards** who joined up at the Lane Cove R BassCatch last December 12th. Ben is a greenkeeper who is also a keen & competitive lawn bowler.
2. **David Rivett**, a mate of Ben's who joined up at the Regatta Centre outing.
3. **Dave Parker** who we have met a few times before, inc. at a GM & the HNF BassCatch in November. Dave is also a keen member of another bass club, but he also likes his yak fishing & decided that Bass Sydney offers an opportunity for him to pursue this activity with like-minded individuals.

Member **Dallas Smith** recently had his kayak stolen from his front yard in Pymble! Please keep a lookout for a dark green Australis Bass with a Bass Angler sticker in the front and a Bass Sydney sticker on the back. *I say! This isn't meant to happen in Pymble old boy!*

Hawkesbury-Nepean February BassCatch will be held over the weekend of Feb 21 & 22. The usual briefing will be held at the next GM, Feb 9th. We have access to the campsite at Wilberforce again. This time, we have to stay behind and help clean up, not leaving it all to Al Izzard!

Unfortunately, on the Saturday of our Bass Catch, we have a unique opportunity to have input into the NSW NPWS's "master plan" for **Bents Basin State Conservation Area**. Bass Sydney has been invited to a meeting at the Bents Basin SCA Education Centre, at 10am Saturday, Feb 20th. We are invited to have our input "into the role our organisation & members would like to see fulfilled by Bents Basin to meet future recreational

February 2010

needs". We will be part of a "facilitated workshop to gather input from groups & similar organisations in the region". Ashley & I will sacrifice a couple of hours fishing to attend. After all, its not often the NPWS asks anglers for any input! Usually, we just get locked out. We'll represent Bass Sydney's views on its non-user-friendly access policy as well as our views on what the future of that unique area should be.

The works on the **Penrith weir & fishway** was completed in December. Hopefully, the re-designed fishway will further improve fish passage, not just for our beloved Bass, but for all native fish. The new weir crest is supposed to better direct migrating fish towards the fishway. Once the rest of the weirs & fishways in the Sydney basin are completed, which should not be too much longer now, our native fish should have much better access to & from their breeding grounds as well as the upper reaches of their range. *You never know, Reach 1 might become a hotspot!*



Photo: © H. Langler, SCA



Photo: © K. Hancock, SCA

Alan Fowkes – long time club stalwart Fowkesy turns 50 in Feb ! Happy Birthday Al !

Hawkesbury-Nepean October BassCatch results –

No. of returned catch cards:	39	Total No. of fish caught:	380
Largest bass:	425mm Chris Aubrey, Reach 4	Smallest bass:	90mm (Reach 4)
Most fish:	102 (Gary Blount)	Participation prize winner:	S. Hutchinson (Wollondilly)

Hunter Native Fish Williams R November BassCatch results –

No. of returned catch cards:	21	Total No. of fish caught:	646
Average size:	164mm	Largest bass:	400mm Chris Cahill of Maitland in Reach 2
Smallest bass:	80mm	Most fish:	88 (Arie Van Spronsen)

Lane Cove R BassCatch December 12th –

No. of anglers:	10	Total No. of fish caught:	23
Average size:	205mm	Largest bass:	389mm (Garnet Noble)
Smallest bass:	130mm	Most fish:	10 (Alan Izzard)

I've been bassing on the LCR 3 times since I've been back in Oz for a total of zero! Grrrrr! A few pix from the day -

Garnet's 389mm beauty



New member & LCR regular Bill Raffle's 369mm fish



Jim Taylor



Ashley working a Sammy



HS Tham, Editor

St Albans Common (by Alan Izzard)

The Springwood Club had invited Bass Sydney members to the Common (Dec 4-6th) to fish for carp and to also see what native fish resided in the Common lake. Garnet Noble, Warren Chalmers, Dave Stewart, Neville Lelo, Ashley Thamm and myself decided to give it a try. You may remember that it was Kate Hughes from the Common Trust that contacted me some time back and proposed that the lake be stocked with Bass once some of the carp were removed. I told her that I would help with carp removal, but under no circumstances would I or the club back stocking of the lake as it feeds into the Macdonald River which has a very good supply of Bass. Unfortunately Kate could not understand my reasoning and had approached Fisheries to buy Bass using "Dollar for Dollar" and I then made representations to Fisheries myself and had the application canned. Anyway, The Common Trust now run a couple of carp bash's each year, \$50.00 per head with \$500.00 prize money, if anyone is interested. Gary Blount from Springwood, the Complete Angler, is right into it and has competed in a couple of the events and was instrumental in organising the recent event. We had to pay \$10.00 per head per night and for that we were to get a toilet a least, we got nuthin! No toilet, no garbage bin, just a place to camp, how big of them. Garnet & I arrived on Friday afternoon and set up camp in very blustery conditions and not long after Warren & Dave turned up for an evening fish before returning home. They put their canoe in and paddled to the far end of the lake and fished up with the wind. When they got off the water, neither were too impressed with things and mentioned that the weed was a massive problem and that they saw only a single swirl behind one of the lures. Garnet and I decided to leave it to later to try our luck and waited for the wind to settle a bit. Again, neither of us got a touch and as mentioned, the weed was a massive problem for lure fishing, surface lures only for the most part and we still picked up weed. Neville arrived while we were on the water and set up.

The lake



The campsite



February 2010

Dawn Saturday was overcast and we thought that we would have a better chance but it was not to be. Ashley turned up and the four of us took to the water. Ashley soon decided that as he only had 1 day to fish, he did not want to waste all of it on this very un-productive waterway and packed up and moved down to the river to fish on his way home, as it turned out we should have gone with him. Garnet and Nev flogged the water for some time before calling it quits.

I had decided to try using the "Mystery Stick" and put on a red wool fly that Greg Hayman from the Singleton Fly Club had shown me how to tie and on my third wobbly cast hooked up to what was I thought my very first fish on fly, lasted about 5 seconds before it blasted it's way into the aforementioned weed and straightened the hook, that was the only action I had. Nev and I decided that the only way you could catch fish there was with bait. Gary turned up at lunch time with a box of carp, one of which weighed 9.43 kg, a massive fish which took about 10 minutes to land on 8lb. line, a great effort. He caught it on bread below a float. He went back to his spot after lunch and caught another 8. There was another family of 3 that sat in the same spot all day Saturday and were still sitting in the same place on Sunday when we decided to leave; I don't know how they do it.

Nev had had enough on Saturday afternoon and packed up and went home, smart move. Garnet and I stuck it out and tried again Sat. evening when Garnet finally got a little interest from a small Bass on a Scumfrog, but alas no hookup. Al Philis from Springwood managed a 210 Bass on bait on Saturday morning and Gary caught a 265mm model on Saturday morning on a Spinnerbait.

Gary's Bass



Gary's carp haul



All I can say is "been there done that, won't be rushing back."

Alan Izzard

Thanks Al, for the report on a sad bass event, but at least it was a good carp cull! Here's a story from Ashley which showed why they should have bailed out & followed him! Ed.

St Albans Common (by Ashley Thamm)

I was itching to get up there as I'd had 3 scoreless sessions in the previous week and I'd put in a lot of casting, paddling and travelling for nothing. A Saturday morning on a nice private lagoon sounded perfect.

I was immediately disappointed when I saw the Common – shallow, muddy and weedy were the first impressions (and the last), but I was still very hopeful of a bass or two.

I threw out my Sammy, usually the first thing to get a run, if this doesn't produce a surface strike nothing will. My hookup rate with them is pretty poor, so I tend to use them to find the fish, not so much to catch them. After 50 consecutive casts were immediately fouled on weed it became pretty clear that to fish here you can't use trebles. So I switched to a spinnerbait. This was even better than

February 2010

As I reached my last portage for the day I was confronted with a deep wide pool. I stood there for a few minutes just watching the tiny strikes. I grabbed my rod and managed my first ever bass caught standing up. Stoked with that, I went back to the yak and began to float back to the car. I cannot wait to return to fish that pool.

I tied on a tiny silver Crawdad, casting into the places that had already produced fish. I let the lure sit there for 30 seconds and it would be quietly inhaled, a slight lift of the rod tip was all I needed to set the tiny hooks. The fish were getting smaller and the shadows were growing longer so I called it a day and dragged my yak back up the rocks.

I landed at least 40 bass that afternoon, missed many strikes and lost a few fish, some of which had enough power to peel serious line off my reels before making their escape. So many reasons to return.

Ashley Thamm

Ashley had one of THOSE days! Over 40 fish in an arvo!! I can only dream of such a hot session. Ed.

Alan Izzard & Garnet Noble took a memorable trip to the New England area recently for some Big Natives! Ed.

New England Cod Trek

I have been visiting the New England area for over 40 years with my family and had never given much thought about fishing there. After my daughter married a local and his rels worked out that I was a mad keen fisho people started to tell me snippets about this cod and that cod that were caught just "last month "in such and such a spot. When my Barra. Trip to Kununurra was cancelled (that's another story); I asked Garnet if he would be interested to check out some of the so called hot spots up around Bingara. "What have we got to lose?" he said so the die was cast. I got into my son-in-law's ear and told him that I wanted some local info and some private access. About a month later he reported that he had what I was looking for, someone had caught a 30 pounder just last week. Yeah right, I said, where? In the Gwydir River was the reply, bloody great help. Anyway we decided on a couple of small creeks that fed into the Gwydir that I was assured that had not been fished for some time due to the lack of water in the area. Evidently they had about 7 inches of rain over Christmas and a lot of small creeks were flowing for just a little while.

We left Sydney bright and early Monday morning and 7 hours later we arrived at my daughters place. We obtained all the relevant info and set off the following morning to the first property on the list, we had decided to use this place as our base. We were shown the way, mud map of course, to the best hole on the creek, man those paddocks were rough, they had square bloody rocks, all sides flat and they ranged from fist size to football size all neatly hidden by the fresh burst of green grass. We came to the creek finally, no damage done, and decided to leave the Ute at the top of the hill, without 4WD I doubted that I would get back up if we went any closer. When we approached the creek we could see fins breaking the water everywhere, wall to wall bloody carp, what had we let ourselves in for???

We worked our way up 1 side of the creek until we came to a sheer rock wall, no way round, so we backtracked and headed down to what was the shallower end, casting all the way. Just after we climbed under a fence Garnet cast in and after a few winds of the handle he grunted, I had moved on a bit and called back asking what was the matter, he said he had a fish on, just his luck to jag a carp I thought and walked back to help. Standing precariously on a small rock I reached down to haul the fish up when I realised it was a cod, we were both flabbergasted, his first cod in skinny brown water.

Me flogging the Jitterbug



Garnie's carp



February 2010

Cod No. 1



Cod No. 2



After many photos, I think we both thought that this may be all we might catch. We crossed the creek and moved back upstream. Up a couple of pools we came onto what looked like great water, large rocks with deeper clearer water. I kept on with my Jitterbug while Garnet, naturally, was still using a chatterbait. I flogged the water in what I thought was the best looking bit of water to no avail and then moved on. I had gone no more than 20 meters when Garnet cast along the same rock face and came up solid again, another cod. I rushed back to help and take photos once again. That was about the action for Day 1 - Garnet 2, me a doughnut.

Day2: Today we went to the "Good Hole" further downstream, the one where someone had caught a 30 pounder, must have been a long time ago. Anyway, more bloody carp, no cod, the sun was cooking us so we called it a morning and headed back to the house. It's a wonder we were able to leave the house and its air-conditioning. Dedication or just plain bloody mindedness because Garnet had 2 and me none was possibly more the reason. We headed back to the creek where we had luck the day before. This time I also tied on a Chatterbait. No luck in the places we (Garnet) caught fish the day before but persevere I did. There was a large rock at one end of the pool. I cast well out past it and as I retrieved I thought I had a knock. Having seen DVD's about cod I threw back into the same spot and after several winds the lure just stopped. Damn I thought, snagged. I put a bit of pressure on and all of a sudden the snag started vibrating, beauty, my first cod!

I kept working the same area and came up with another about the same size, we measured Garnets, they were 550 and 560 and my first 2 were approx the same. An interesting thing happened just after - I cast the lure about 10ft right to the large rock and hooked up another, "great!" I thought, when I could see the fish he spat the lure and as it started to sink he rushed forward again and grabbed it once more, again he spat it, by this time the lure was at my feet and as I lifted it out of the water the cod charged once more, missed and ended up in about 2 inches of water. He turned in a huff and swam back to where he came from. When I recovered from the shock I cast back again and it happened all over again, weight, spit, weight, spit and then he must have realised what was going on and disappeared. We both worked the spot over for about another 10 minutes to no avail. End Day 2: 2 fish a piece, that felt better.

My First Cod



The best Cod of the trip



February 2010

Day 3: On to the next property. The creek here was worse than previous, no gorge country just long rocky flats with the odd deeper hole and surprise, surprise, lots of bloody carp. We tried for several hours, even got the good oil for a spot where 2 creeks met. We only managed 1 cod today, top end of a pool under a willow.

Day 4: Last chance day, we moved way down and the water here looked great, still plenty of carp. Garnet was retrieving when his lure passed a largish carp and it turned and followed it in. He dropped the lure back into the water and the carp smashed it instantly, first fish of the day to Garnet, even if it was a mud sucker, it put up one hell of a fight. Unfortunately, for the carp, this fish is no longer swimming, that happens when someone sticks a knife into your skull and drops you 10 meters from the bank. There were some great spots but no action. I moved upstream and walked passed a partially fallen willow and noticed that there was a fair bit of driftwood on the upstream side, looked promising. I cast downstream and slowly retrieved, keeping the lure out a bit away from the fallen snags. Nothing! Tried again, this time closer to the bank. Just as the lure got to the snag it stopped, "Bugger!" Caught on the log I thought. I tried to jiggle it off when I noticed that there was some dirty water being stirred up, bloody hell it was a fish!! He decided to fight dirty and went under the log jam, there was nothing else to do but climb over it and try to haul him out. Luckily the jam was pretty solid, I was sure I was going to finish nugget deep in water, but all went well and the best cod of the trip was landed, 650-655mm. Garnet managed another and dropped what appeared to be a really good fish while I donated a couple of lures to the creek gods. We could have used the kayaks here. Totals: 1350Kms, 1 Carp, 8 Cod.

Day 5: Headed for home, tired but happy.

The Gwydir River is a regulated river with Copeton Dam upstream, that's why I only wanted to fish the creeks and tribs. When water is released from the dam you can have a very fast ride downstream when kayaking and there are people camping everywhere on the bank, making finding unfished water very difficult. May get back there next time it rains.

Alan Izzard

A couple of pix of the creek Al & Garnet were on –



While Al & Garnet were having a ball on green fish, others were pulling in bronzed fish at an unusual venue...

International Regatta Centre Outing with the Springwood Club Jan 16th 2010

I must admit I was looking forward to this outing. Yes, its lake fishing which is not among my favourite activities, but this is not a place one can fish freely every day. Hoping for hungry, uneducated big bass I was among the first from Bass Sydney to put up my hand. Our old friends at Springwood had been several times before and have already jumped through the bureaucratic hoops (Insurance, Risk Assessment...) which we didn't have to do as their guests.

The day started quite nicely, but the forecast was for "scattered showers" & a dropping barometer. I went for a pre-fish at Cattai Ck which I haven't fished for over 10 years. It looked nice, with its usual brown water moving upstream with the tide, but after over 2hrs without a fish, I pulled the plug & headed for Penrith. I had lunch at a pub near the Regatta Centre & enjoyed the cricket until it was time to head for the lake. I hoped the bass there were more cooperative than those at Cattai!

February 2010

Somehow, there was a misunderstanding as I thought we were fishing until dark, followed by a BBQ. However, when I got there with a nice full tummy, I found the Springwood boys (& a few ladies) either around the BBQ cooking or eating lunch! We were supposed to lunch first, then fish until dark! *Burp! I better put away a burger & a snag or 2 for appearance sake then! Can't have Bass Sydney appear ungrateful!*

Quite a large turnout, with many Springwood people and 7 Bass Sydney members turning up (Milton, Ashley, Ben Richards, his mate David Rivett, David Stewart, Warren Chalmers, David Sanegor & The Ed). We were on the water a little after 3pm. It was a long stretch of the warm-up lake that we were fishing and I was surprised by the crystal clear water and deep weedbeds. We turned up in our canoes & kayaks while some of the S'wood contingent turned up with tinnies & electric outboards. Ashley, after a dramatic morning at home (*aaah, toddlers!!*), arrived with 2 kayaks (one for Dave Sanegor), his tackle and no rod & reel! Luckily, I had my usual 3 outfits and I lent him a spin combo.

There were some shallow weedbeds close to shore, but most of the lake was surprisingly deep, up to 6m deep in places, I was told. Being a rowing centre, I guess they have to keep the weed under control otherwise the rowers would grind to a halt. I started by trolling my baitcaster rig with a largish spinnerbait and after a few minutes & a few fishy bumps, I switched to my spin stick & a metallic green & gold #3 Stumpjumper I've had for about 15 yrs & had accounted for a few bass over the years. This one came with double hooks which were still on it. I thought it would help with the weed. Within a couple of minutes, I was on to a fish. A little 180mm bass came in & I thought a bit small. Within a few meters of trolling, I hooked another around 280mm and after another 3 fish; I lost my lure & leader on a fish which didn't feel very big. Bad leader knot I thought. After re-rigging with a new leader I clipped on the only other Stumpjumper I had, a purple model. A couple more fish later I got a monster hit and before I could get my dramatically bent rod out of the holder, I was busted off again! At least this was a real bustoff by a serious fish. The carp & catfish there take lures too I was told, so maybe it was a big carp. The braid broke near the reel – weakened line from a wind knot perhaps?!

BBQ



Vale old Stumpjumper(sob!)



I tried a couple of other lures without much success until I asked Ashley if he had a Stumpjumper. He said he did and that I was welcome to borrow it as he's never caught a fish on one before. It was a purple one too! However, it only had the deep-diving bib on which ran a little too deep. Warren Chalmers to the rescue this time & I borrowed a shallow Stumpjumper bib from him and I was back in action.

Meanwhile, most everybody were pulling in fish regularly except for Milton who, in keeping with traditional bassin' values, preferred to cast... and cast... for about an hour & a half until he saw the light and started trolling. He caught 3 fish in 3 minutes after that! Warren C & David Stewart also did well, with their only regret that they didn't bring the electric for their "Big Red" canoe.

I wanted to catch a fish casting, so I headed to the far bank where it was lined with reeds & found it fairly deep straight off the reeds. I put a small spinnerbait close to the bank and it was taken on the drop by another high 200's specimen. I worked that bank for quite a while without another hit, so I went back to trolling. Catching up with the others, I found that Ashley was steadily accruing a few & so had everyone. It was quite fun with quite a few anglers in a relatively small area though it was certainly big enough to not feel boxed in. Lots of chatter & whooping from us fishos going on all around the place. The fish were concentrated in the middle of the lake, mainly in front of the ramp.

February 2010

Ben Richards kept trying for a topwater bite and succeeded with a couple on a Sammy. I tried a buzzbait for a while, working the middle & near the bank as well as some shallow weedbeds, but never got a hit. Ben's mate Dave incidentally, was on his first ever yak fishing trip and scored very well trolling. He got the largest fish out of the Bass Sydney contingent with a nice 35cm fish.

28cm fish on a cast spinnerbait



David Rivett's 35cm bass

(Photo: Ashley Thamm)



I ended up with 17 fish, with nothing over 280mm. I dropped one that might have been around 30cm yak-side, along with at least 5 or 6 other fish which were dropped before landing. On dusk, when we were supposed to be off the water, they came on the bite again & I think I got 4 or 5 in the last 10mins. Ashley scored the most fish out of our group, with 22 landed. The largest fish was a 46cm+ specimen caught by Chris Bennet from Springwood. A few of our contingent turned up late & did not get a catch card so did not contribute to the total of 249 fish counted on the day. I don't know how many people S'wood had there, but it must have been at least 20. So, about 30 anglers accounted for close to 300 bass. Not bad for about 5hrs effort & \$7 each.

I collected a couple of bucks each from our guys as I donated two 6-packs of beer to Springwood to thank them for inviting us. I also had a 6-pack for whomever in our group that caught the largest fish. I'm going to have to rethink my impromptu prizes as David Rivett was a non-drinker and when I said to give it to his mate Ben, Ben said that he didn't drink either! Can't even give a prize away! So Ashley got it and it was fair enough as he caught the most out of our group.

I must say I enjoyed it and was impressed with the steady action & would have caught more if I had just kept trolling. There were times when you'd think they've gone off the bite only to persevere for a few more minutes before hooking up again. I only got 2 fish under 200. The vast majority of bass caught on the day by everyone were in the 25 – 30cm range. All the fish had a bit of bulk to them & hit HARD! The weather & barometer was probably against us too, but it sure made it comfy! Springwood are already talking about another outing there soon & I hope we'll be invited again. I want to avenge my big bustoff! They started stocking those lakes before the Sydney Olympics, so there may be fish (like the 46cm mumma) that are 10-12 yrs old.

Our resident adventurer, David Sanegor at one stage went snorkelling in the clear water and reported that the lake was full of life, with many snails, gudgeons, nymphs and saw a large catfish. Getting more info from the S'wood guys, I found that the lakes are not exactly rarely fished as you can fish any time from the bank. You need to go through the risk assessments, etc if a group wants to fish from water craft, but apparently that happens most weekends. You can also hire kayaks there and there were about a half dozen people doing that. I don't know if you are allowed to hire one of their kayaks and fish from them!?

The Editor

**Next Meeting is on
7:30pm Tuesday, 9th
February, Northmead
Bowling Club, Windsor
Rd, Northmead**

Thanks to our great sponsors:



Great Aussie-made bass catchin' lures:

www.ausspinlures.com

Need a Sydney tackle store ?

www.absolutelyhooked.com.au

Fly fishing gear & accessories:

Derek McKenzie Fly Fishing Outfitters

www.derekmckenzie.com.au