



PATRON: Dr Wayne Erskine PhD

PRESIDENT: HS Tham phone 0402058903
VICE PRESIDENT: Ashley Thamm ph: 91811768
PAST PRESIDENT: Chris Ghosn phone 96366896 (h)
SECRETARY: Gary Perry ph: 0416112990
TREASURER/
M/SHIP SECRETARY: Garnet Noble phone 9476 3881 (h)
POINTS SCORE & BASSCATCH OFFICER: Al Izzard

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Ashley Thamm
EDITOR: Ashley Thamm phone 91811768
ENTERTAINMENT & EVENT ORGANISER:
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
Emu Plains Regeneration: Alan Izzard phone 96532309

President's Message

February heralds our second BassCatch of the season. Its been a tough Summer so far with the weather intervening and interrupting our fishy pursuits. I've hardly been fishing myself. The upside is that, for probably the third year in a row, the rivers have been getting plenty of water. This in turn means reduced fishing pressure, enhanced fish passage and better quality water. I just wish we can get out there to take advantage of it! As always, we encourage all members and their friends to participate. Just don't forget to return your Catch Cards!

As most members know, we have had unprecedented success in getting not one, but two grants to continue our regeneration work at Emu Plains. We can now afford some of our own tools to make our work easier and more efficient. Our profile is on the rise with the authorities and environmental groups and we have been asked to support several other funding applications and environmental projects by other groups. In fact, stay tuned for a "media event" with an MP from the Federal government coming to talk to us (& others) and to view some of our work on the Nepean River. This is a testament to Alan Izzard's continuing tenacity and many members in knuckling down to do some work. We need this to continue well into the future not only with the old guard, but also our newer members.

Happy Bassin' !

HS Tham

Sydney weekender -mid week style

By Chris Ghosn

Over the holiday period the fickle Sydney weather combined with the troublesome influence of La Niña which is El Niño's evil sister, prevented me from making any solid plans. Therefore I took advantage of the favourable traffic conditions around Sydney and went on a fishing road show.

Day one Sydney Harbour

6am myself and "Mr Auss bass" Himself Dom were on Sydney harbour. We were donging undersized snapper with consummate ease, before a ferry quite unceremoniously sounded its horn and we had to vacate and area for no obvious reason.

Dom took me to his secret spot where he proceeded to pull several bream out of a barnacle encrusted lathrynth with great skill.

About this time a stiff south westerly came through and did not let up all day. It was just unfishable. One highlight was fishing around the derelict, lack lustre disgrace of the Sydney fish markets, whist day dreaming I fired of a cast under a boat hull and my 1-3kg shimano t curve rod loaded up with a 1000 CI4 and 3lb Power pro violently arced under the boat and slammed into the side. In the process I had been busted up big time on the bottom, Dom screamed "King Fish!". I am unsure if it was a really cool experience or very disappointing. It did wake me up though. However the relentless wind did not give up and we called it a day.

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Former Bass Sydney president, fishing celebrity & all-round champion bloke schooling CG Bream'n style!

Day 2 Devlins

The next day I thought I would head further upstream to get away from the wind so drove out to Devlins, I was relieved to see the car park empty in the morning. It didn't take long before our little friends reminded me they were still there by actively jumping on any 40 mm diving lure I could throw. The only highlight of the day came from throwing one of the weedless frog lures from river to sea. I would deliberately throw it on top of the weed and let it sit in the clear water pockets where little bass would belt the crap out of it. I reckon you should get a medal for actually catching anything as the stupid hook placement makes it almost impossible. After an hour I was bored as anything. I am very much over the relentless rats that inhabit this system.



Which ones the lure! ... Devlins sucks...!

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Day 3 secret creek

The next day I was doing a few things and still had the kayak on the roof when I stumbled upon a little stream I know that has a liberal scattering of golf balls and tennis balls. It was a sweltering Sydney day on the water I managed a few bream and a couple of bass nothing to write home about it was just nice to be on the water. The highlight of the day was bumping into my old mate Garnet. We quickly organised a catch up on the lane cove and boy I was excited.



CG getting back to nature trading his suit for snakes and ticks.

Day 4 LCR

The next day we met at the usual spot under heavy skies. It was not long before my old mate was hooked up tight on a cracking LCR fish. These fish go like freight trains, and I watched as Garnet proceeded to knock these fish over time and time again. I was day dreaming as I retrieved my SX 40 with my shimano CI4 1000 stradic. When suddenly out of no where I was slammed and taken into the sticks. It has been some time since I have hooked anything bigger than 100mm therefore I was rusty as hell. My drag screamed as the this micro barra was burying me into the sticks. I eventually managed to rough house this brutish, smallish fish aboard. They certainly punch way above there weight. We had a pleasant paddle up this lovely stream and had a great time before heading home as the rain gently begun to tumble.



Small but heart stopping!...



The Man, Hooked up again

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A Return to the Paterson

As some of you may already know I have moved up to the Maitland area to gain fulltime employment. This has brought me closer the river systems where I was first introduced to the enjoyment of catching the iconic Australian Bass. So without hesitation I invited John to come out with me on the upper Paterson River for a fish.

The weather had been quite hot leading up to this expedition and the sun still had a bite to it when we arrived at the river. After unloading the canoes from the cars we were quickly cooled by the water and shade down at the waters edge. The water still had some colour to it but it was perfect for fishing.

As the both of us headed down stream I remember what Barry (the gentleman who introduced me to Bass fishing) said about the bamboo growing on the banks. NEVER GO PAST WITHOUT A CAST!!! Now bamboo is a problem but it makes for some really good Bass habitat. It was from a bank that was overgrown by bamboo that I caught the first 350mm Bass for the session. The both of us also caught smaller fish from this section of river as well.



At the end of this pool we needed to get out of the canoes and walk down the rapids. As we were doing so I heard John yell out, "Hey look at that". At this point I saw what I would describe as two torpedos heading up river. Two massive Carp, maybe we could have a bait soaking session at a later date. After a quick change of undies we started fishing the next pool with success on both the surface and subsurface.

At this point John was smoking me in the number of fish caught as he got 2 bass in 3 casts. This was until John's leader got tangled in a real mess. Good job buddy! I slowly got some more small bass on. As we drifted down into the next pool the water was looking even more Bassy (if that is a word). There was a log poking up out of the water a couple of metres from the bank and a couple of casts were made into it, as I drifted towards it without a sign of interest. It wasn't until I had drifted pass it that I threw a cast up between it and the bank. As I went to lift the lure out of the water, smack! I was onto another good fish. I fought this Bass with only about a metre of line out and won the battle this time but it could have gone either way.



We drifted down into the next pool where John was working his magic with his Fizzer again accounting for some nice bass. We continued to fish the surface as the last rays of the sun disappeared over the horizon. As the darkness encroached we paddled back to the cars without a single touch. We were both left scratching our heads as we thought that the night action would have been just as great. We decided to fish the pool above where we put in but again not even a touch. Maybe we need to attend a master class with Nutter to be successful with bass after dark.

All in all it was a great afternoon out on my old stomping ground because between the pair of us we managed to get over 25 bass in 4.5hrs. I am now looking forward to exploring backwaters in both the Allyn River and up in the Karuah River. Let you all know how I get on, especially if I get onto some hot action like we did on the Paterson.

Trent McMurray

NEWS

New Member(s)

We welcome 2 new members, Braden Hughes and Mitchell Hunter. Hopefully we'll get to have a fish and a chat at the upcoming Basscatch.

Hawkesbury-Nepean BassCatch February 18 & 19

Just a quick reminder to all that the next basscatch will be held on the 18th and 19th of Feb. Camping will once again be held at Cattai from Friday the 17th, weather permitting. Briefing will be held at Northmead on Tuesday the 14th.

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All new members are encouraged to attend as it is a great opportunity to fish some lovely sections of the river and learn a few new tricks.

Russell St Grants

We were fortunate enough to be successful with 2 of our grant applications, which means work has begun on Stage 2. It was a big day and a lot was achieved, mainly focussing on saving the canopy from Balloon Vine. The new tools Alan Izzard has ordered should make our jobs a little easier for the **upcoming event this Saturday**.

Great work Al!!

MacDonald River Basscatch

Missing the last event I was determined to get back to the MacDonald Valley for a bit of Clearwater bassing in the reeds. I met new member Shayne Alexander at the St Albans Pub and after a Coopers we headed to the camp. There was a large tarp tied up out the front with an ad for riverside camping spray painted on it so unfortunately there were already a couple of families down by the river. Oh well, \$20 for a bed in the house isn't a bad option we thought.

At 10:30pm we were informed that we were to have 2 roommates for the night that snored. Oh well, can't be that bad I thought, that was until one of them reached for the earplugs. These blokes have to wear earplugs so they don't wake themselves up!! After a sleepless night on the couch and a bit of grumbling (from me) in the morning we were off for a chilly early morning session. The gate was overgrown and was a little hard to find in the dark (where's the bloody signs!) but eventually we hit the water. Shayne got off to a good start but it was a tough morning session and after a couple of soakings we called it quits and headed back to the paddock before our cars sunk too deep.



Not the Clearwater I was after!

GEORGES R OUTING JANUARY 28th

Sydney turned on a lot of rain during the week before Saturday, but after checking out the river on Friday, I thought it wasn't too bad at all. Lure visibility 2-3ft, at least 6" higher than normal, but I didn't think it was unfishable. The usual weed wasn't going to be a problem!

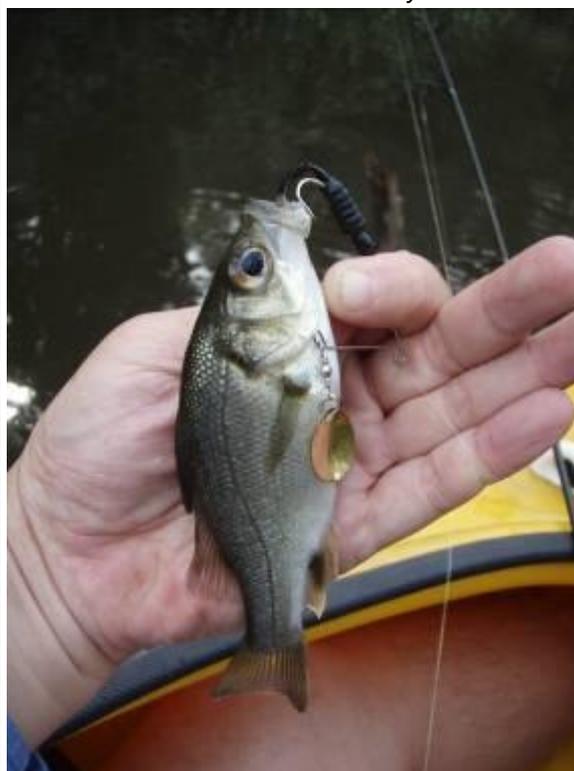
We got a fairly good turnout for this outing with 7 anglers turning up at Simmos Beach Reserve at 7am. There was myself, Sherif, James Tran who brought along a mate Jay, Craig Somerville and new member Derek Sonter who we met for the first time.

We also had a visitor, Paul Matten who had contacted us to ask if he can join us. Living nearby, he was the first one there, but before long the group had assembled and plans made. Paul and I decided to fish down to Cambridge Ave and as he had a ute, we did the car shuffle and left his vehicle down there.

Sherif entertained us at the start with his electric motor modification to his SOT. Lets just say doing donuts is not restricted to dry land!! Bloody good effort, but back to the drawing board!

Sherif about to try out his handiwork

The 1st fish of the day!



The river was pumping through and I expected a quick 3.5/4k trip. Craig & Derek went upstream and Sherif, James & Jay decided to go downstream with Paul & I and then paddle back up to Simmos. With the water flow, it was going to be a workout paddling back up, but not impossible.

The fishing was not easy with the water feeling quite cold and an easterly breeze all day. However, the day was pleasant with good company and I managed 5 tiny tackers by the end of the day. Paul also got a couple of small fish, but also landed a 30cm & a 26cm to add to his tally. We met up with James & Jay on their way back upstream and James had also landed a 30cm bass. We also met up with Sherif paddling back up.

Paul's 30cm bass

James' 305

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We got back to Simmos around 3pm for a gathering and BBQ. Milton and Dave & Sue Claydon (& dogs) had turned up and we got talking and eventually fired up the BBQ's to fry up some yummy Vietnamese sausages James had brought along. By this stage, Sheriff had obviously made it back and had gone and so had Derek. After chewing the fat and then chewing the sausages and finishing off with a cuppa, we all departed about 5:45pm.

Scenery -



Craig & Derek setting off



Visitor Paul decided to fish the upcoming H-Nepean BassCatch and may join the club too so we may have another new member soon.

HS Tham

Ed's Fishing Report

My first (and second) Baitcaster



I have always used a threadline. Whether it was dropping a prawn off a jetty or throwing a tassie devil under Windsor bridge a spinning reel covered every application I encountered as a kid.

But then I found Bass fishing and spincast or closed face reels, these opened up a whole new world of opportunities in ultra tight water. Which got me to thinking, I wonder what a baitcaster could do that my threadline couldn't?

I have read all the debates over the years claiming that baitcasters are more accurate and remained unconvinced, (they seemed like a lot of hard work to me) but last week an ad for a cheap baitcasting combo caught my eye and the next day I proudly took possession of my very first baitcaster.

That's right, a top of the line Tokushima! It did the job

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however and it didn't take long until I had my first ungodly tangle. Over the years I had watched many a birdsnest being picked by fellow fishermen so it didn't take long to figure out how to quickly untangle even the most horrific of tangles in a couple of seconds.

Half an hour on the first day, shadowed by my 4 year old with his goldcast, had me casting 7 out of 10 times without a birdsnest. Day 2 and I had managed to get line caught in a gap in the spool. Unable to take off the spool the brake was rendered useless, however the caught line managed to slow the spool down enough that I could cast a 3/8th plug, basically with the brake set a little light.

Day 3. Alright, time for the target.



A nice dark spot for a bass to sit.

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There's a forgiving overhang to keep my looping casts low, and here's a quick note, baitcasters are great for trimming a few of the lower branches on your backyard trees.

The Trials

I had 5 attempts to see how many I could get in the bucket out of 10 casts.

3 out of 10 was my best, but my consistency was rapidly improving. I knew removing those lower branches on the Jacaranda was a good idea!

I also have the backcast obstacle covered



There's a step to practice casting from a sitting, standing or slightly elevated position too. I'll also put up a few more targets to practice casting at different angles.

I can already see many advantages to having this in my arsenal. Casting larger spinnerbaits and buzzbaits has always been a chore, but casting a 3/8th pug is an absolute pleasure with the baitcaster.

As usual it didn't take long for me to upgrade and I sourced a cheap Daiwa Megaforce and Bass Raider. I hit the water at the first possible opportunity and I arrived at a very swollen very brown river. I was here to cast though not catch fish so undeterred I spent a very pleasant 3 hours learning my new rig a little more intimately. Spinnerbaits and Buzzbaits are an absolute breeze to cast and it only took a little while to figure out how to cast a Sammy a reasonable distance.

Unfortunately the pristine waters of Sydney during rain didn't yield any results, so I had to venture a little further afield to find some cleaner water and willing Bass. The first fish to nail my [Dreamfish EagleSpin](#) was a very chunky 39cm and I could immediately feel how much more control I had over the fish with the baitcaster. I can't wait to give it a decent run this upcoming Basscatch.

The LC looking particularly murky this season



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See you all there!



Ashley Thamm, Editor

Next Meeting is on February 14th
7:30pm at
Northmead Bowling Club

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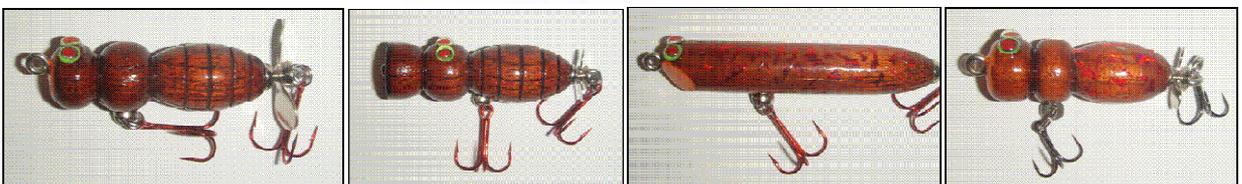


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