

Report to MKAA members – January 2014

1) Some people have had some good results during the back half of last year.

Among them Dean Seath had a superb 9-8 tench – two ounces short of MKAA's best – from Caldecotte and, a few weeks later, added a cracking 31-8 common carp...from the Tear Drops! Lee Bushell caught carp of 20-2 and 17-8, also from Tear Drops.

Gary Maton had a 2-1 roach from the Ouzel. Carp to at least 35lb were landed from Willen South while a significantly larger one is rumoured to have been caught there.

Mike Ford had tench of 8lb and 6-8 in a sitting at Bradwell with his young son getting a 5-2. Martin Burr had a 7, and Ejidjus Kavallauskas caught a 24lb Furzton common.

Double figure silverfish nets were fairly common from our Ouse with numbers of perch to 2lb+.

An Ampthill v Leighton Buzzard match was won with 14lb of perch. However larger stripeys and big chub had, largely, been slow to show.



- Above: Dean Seath with 9-8 Caldecotte tench and (left) again with cracking 31-8 common from the Tear Drops
- Below: Gary Maton with 2-1 roach from the River Ouzel

2) There have been a number of successes on the match front. MKAA's matchgroup won through to the Angling Trust winter league (formerly the Angling Times WL) semi-finals following a real battle to finish as runners-up in the Castle Ashby league.

Our lads acquitted themselves well and stayed clear of the troubles in a series which saw an England manager disqualified for rule breaking and, after the final round, two guys come to blows on the bank – hardly an advert for the 'gentle' sport!

Matchgroup also managed 19th from 55 squads in the division 1 national on the Trent & Mersey Canal (James Mead 3rd in section and Dave Tebbutt 5th in his) and were 11th from 19 out in the Fens on the North Level, in the Eastern Region Shield.

And former MKAA junior squad member Michael Buchwalder (OK... that was a while back) won this year's Drennan KO series (up north) in a two-man head-to-head final. We congratulated him on behalf of the association...but he was probably more impressed with his £5,000 winnings!

Back home Ernie Sattler topped the association's individual league – no surprise there – with Kevin Osborne second and Alan Ford third.

3) On the down-side forces beyond our control are almost certainly adding zander to our canal and, probably, the local Ouse – assuming they aren't there all ready!

Quite common in the Grand Union above Braunston, they have moved



more follows....

south following failure of a British Waterways 'air curtain' (a glorified bubble generator) operation to stop them. Now no surprise as a catch on the other side of the Blisworth tunnel, they are popping up below Stoke Bruerne bottom lock in a pound which runs uninterrupted all the way to Cosgrove lock. Four Zs around 4lb each were recently caught from one swim at Stoke Bruerne (5 miles north of the city) by a man in a predator match.

Perhaps most worryingly, less than 400 yards from Stoke bottom lock, the canal regularly overflows into the Tove which, some three miles later, empties into OUR Ouse at Cosgrove.

Zander are a predatory alien species which – judging by its effects on canal stocks north of Braunston – munches small silverfish (and gudgeon) in considerable quantities. It would be far from helpful if they begin to proliferate in the Ouse just as the silverfish are on the up again.



What can be done? Little, other than, as a comparatively recently arrived alien species (certainly in this area), they are fair game for people to take Canal & River Trust (was BW) fisheries officer John Ellis's advice that: "They make very good eating..."

4) This year's Furzton Festival produced £1,220 for Willen Hospice (direct MKAA expence £75) at the final count. Well done everyone involved. The donation will be 'rounded-up' to £1,300.

We are still considering, given the number of events now involved, stretching the 'Festival', possibly to span a couple of weeks instead of just a few days, and to make more use of other venues.

The aims would be to: increase interest, reduce angling pressure on Furzton and, importantly, to help competitors spread the cost of multiple entries over a longer period.

5) Following problems with oxygen levels during the exceptionally hot summer, we have not heard of any water quality problems on our fisheries since then.



6) Back in October Bob Valentine, myself and Alan Ford spent a fair part of a day (with the co-operation of the Parks Trust) **cutting back reeds, rushes and stuff along Toombes, Hollands Field and Brushmill.** Several people have since said it was a good move.

● Above: Mike Buchwalder celebrates £5,000 Drennan win (photo by John Hewison)
 ● Right: Ejidjus Kavallauskas with 24lb Furzton fish
 ● Below: Mike Ford with Bradwell Lake 8 pounder

7) Earlier this year the Parks Trust put considerable effort into trimming trees and clearing undergrowth around pegs on Tear Drops, and some on Lodge. The work was of such standard that even match secretary Bob Valentine was pleased.



But as it still wasn't perfect we raised the problem with the Parks Trust. As a result two MKAA officers visited the site with them, and **the Parks Trust has decided to go around all three fishable Tear Drops** (probably in two phases) and open up a gap – of several metres – in the shrubbery at each peg, and will be doing similar work at Lodge.

From now on they will clear all over-hanging branches as well as ground-level stuff as part of such work.

8) Last week the Environment Agency again **added several**
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hundred more small barbel to the local Ouse, and it is likely that there will be more before the season's end.

9) A month or so back a '**bogus**' **bailiff** was, for a short while, apparently preying on unsuspecting punters fishing where our canal meets Luton's at bridge 102 (Stoke House).

10) Real-life **EA bailiffs have made two random rod licence-checking trawls through the MK area** in the past month or so. The first saw them check 28 anglers and find 5 without licences – which does not reflect well on local anglers.

The second time – backed by local police – they checked 22 and found one defaulter. **But they will be back, again and again, and we advise you to remember that: having a rod licence is an association rule and has been since the 1970s; it is also a LEGAL requirement and getting caught without one can incur fines of up to £1,000 plus costs.**

11) **A grant of £1,800 has provisionally been allocated to MKAA** towards our junior development work, a grant obtained by an Angling Trust officer.

He is in the process of applying for other, much larger, grants on our behalf – for development of a 'fun fishery' and towards major access improvements at Bradwell.

But it is unlikely to be a 'quick' process.

12) Grant seeking can be a long and tedious business and we are aware that, with the number of potential donors out there, we should be putting far more effort into it on our own behalf.

With that in mind, Willen bailiff Mike Reveler has been co-opted him onto the executive, to concentrate on such work as association resources development officer. He will be looking at all legal sources of external funding together with ideas for projects we could take on to benefit the membership and which have potential to attract grant aid.

A great New Year to you all.

Trevor Johnson – chairman, MKAA

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