

# The best Ouse chub catch - ever?

**SIXTEEN chub with THREE over 6lb. That was Jake Stratton's haul – the best Ouse chub catch ever... probably!**

You've got to hand it to 'ice-man' Jake – when others were 'feared to go out in the cold and snow... he was filling his net like there was no tomorrow.

Sunday afternoon, when most had turned away from MKAA's largely frozen-over Stony Stratford Ouse, he was there bagging up with simple lead on the bread.

Netting two from one swim, the 21 year-old moved to another where the chevins went ballistic as he banked an incredible 14 more, the top three going 6-14, 6-6, and 6-3... with two others topping 5lb and some 4s.

Bill McDonald, who pictured the lad half way through the record book session, said: "He'd gone hoping to get his first ever 6... neither of us could believe his luck."

Don't all rush at once, the record-setting section is closed for a match this Sunday.

● ANOTHER ice-man is Steve Ringer. Turning up for a Tunnel Barn match he found the ice so thick that, donning chest waders, he had to chop his way in from the edge using an axe to make a fishable hole.

Soaked through with sweat and pond water, he changed in his van and went back to catch the day's highest weight on the lake, 23lb.

● WHEN Olney's charity cup open on the club's Ouse attracted 17 rods, Mike Farey was the only one to get a bite... but lost the 2lb chub at the net. And that is the first time in Olney's 49 year written history that they have never had a name to put on a cup!

● TOWCESTER's Shutlanger Tove do, MKAA's Stony Ouse sweep and Finedon's knock-up on the Ringstead Nene all finished in similar whimpering style – no-one had so much as a bite.

● THINGS were a lot better on Makins with only one blank among 32



■ Above: one of five 'ottered' barbel, found on Newport's Ouse this week, with tell-tale wounds showing where the furry predator has gone for the fish's blood-rich heart and liver... leaving the rest to rot. What a waste.

rods in the Lanes Baits pairs league third round. Gaz Loughery won with a carp and silvers 12-2 followed by Gaz Stanley 9-12 and Bas Byrd 8-12. John Smalley and Ian Hughes were top pair on the day and lead the league by two points.

● CARPIN Capers' Dougie is still thawing out after enduring driving snow and bitter winds piking on Chew Valley reservoir. He had a 15 and a jack to show for it.

● OTTERS have been making a killing on Ouse behind Newport pits, with FIVE barbel corpses found dragged up the banks during the cold snap.

Four, part of the river's brood stock and which obviously won't now be breeding this spring, were five to six-pounders and the other a decent double.

Otter kill evidence had abated since its 2008 peak – when the British record 'Traveller' and other Adams Mill biggies met grisly ends – possibly because the river's barbel population had been decimated in the initial onslaught.

But the sudden cold spell would have sent most red signal crayfish, otters' main food, into riverbank burrows and left barbel, which go almost comatose in low temperatures, as easy targets.

Newport's Dave Tebbutt said: "These are just the bodies we have found. Five otters were

seen in one area by an angler back in November. If they carry on like this I give it three years max before the river is devoid of barbel."

Not only river fish are threatened. Otters looking for easy pickings have been wreaking havoc among big carp and bream on river-side waters along the Ouse, Tove and, quite probably, the Nene as well.

● FIXTURES: Sunday, Olney pike & perch match 01234 240061. Feb 25, British pike champs qualifier Newport pits 07952 812527 ■

● AND FINALLY: the cut is probably the safest place to wet a line – right? Wrong! Tuesday's Chron records a Blisworth boat owner being jailed for seven years.

He'd assaulted a 73 year-old angler, at Weedon, who'd been fishing with his son and granddaughters aged seven and nine at the time, in September.

A Tazer, sawn-off shotgun and walkingstick shotgun had figured in associated fire-arms charges!

Matches, catches, even rough patches? If there's a tale to tell call Trevor Johnson on 01908 270000 (office) or 07801 183381 or [angling@intermediauk.com](mailto:angling@intermediauk.com) (click link to email)