

Ouse big perch boom on the cards?

ARE real monster river perch – 4lb+ fish – once again a realistic proposition on the local Ouse?

Judging by Sunday's MKAA winter league opener fished around Stony, in which Steve Schubert included a 3-14 in his 4th-placed 6-6, the answer has to be yes!

Half a decade back fish knocking that magic mark were becoming a regular occurrence until suddenly (perhaps due to a year-class dying of old age) the tap turned off and a two-pounder again became notable.

Last winter saw a resurgence, with 30lb nets of fish into the early 3s. Now this season has seen a number nearing 4lb. Time to give it a go?

■ Ernie Sattler (MK Angling Centre) won the match with 10-9 of silvers. Ampthill's Dave Gisborne had a 5lb bream in his 10-5 while, a few pegs away, GoneFishin's Paul Abbott netted 8-15 of skimmers.

For most of the rest, bitter winds made it about as much fun as a root-canal job without anesthetic!

Top teams: MKAC 16 points, Ampthill 12, Team Raiders 12 (3rd on weight).

■ FED-up with failing on the Ouse, Ray House headed for a swollen River Kennett and bagged the 15-2 barbel pictured – AND a 13-12.

Both came within minutes of each other from a bankside 'slack'

...where a 4 oz lead just about kept his hair-rigged meat on the bottom! Extreme fishing or what?

■ ANYONE under 50 will probably find it impossible to believe that some local canal opens once attracted well over 500 entrants.

But, found in my loft, the snap below of local lad Paul Barnes (the one looking like a 'Stones roadie) dates from 1978 and shows him collecting £250 – several week's wages back then –

top prize in a 580 pegger on the cut just north of the city.

He blissfully recalls: "With pools I picked up £641, pushing Billy Makin into second. It was the start of a long big money run for me... sadly it didn't last."

Can canal match fishing ever thrive again? Go to www.mkaa.co.uk 'news button 4' and see the canal & River Trust's draft revival strategy – and then PLEASE have your say.

■ SUNDAY saw John Lewis man Gary 'Is it May yet' Maton net a 15-8 canal pike. Days earlier John Wright had a 15 from Olney's Ouse.

■ OSPREY, Pidley lake, Huntingdon: Andy Boocock 46lb (carp), Steve Potter 41-8, Loll Summers 37-8.

■ TOWCESTER, Broadwater Tove: Les Goodridge 5-2, John Broughton 2-14, Darren Pannell 1-6.

■ MK VETS, Calverton Road Ouse: Austin Maddock 4-5-4, Paul Chapman 4-0-8, John Hewison 3-10.

■ CALVERT, Ouse in Buckingham: Dave Lewis and John Weatherall both 1-11, Barry Witteridge 1-5.

■ FIXTURES: Feb 1, Newport river open, 07718 392639. Feb 4, Beacon AGM, 8pm, The Inn on the Lake. Feb 17, Olney charity river open 01234 240061. May 25, Terrie Tapp memorial, Tofts Farm, Bucko 01327 351780.



● 'Extreme' angler Ray House with his 15-2 whiskers



● Blast from the past: 580 peg CANAL match winner Paul Barnes, below.

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