

Welcome hot spot as Shaun's aerator keeps ice at bay

Bishops' warm depths blessing

GETTING withdrawal symptoms from lack of fishing during the white-out? Then you could do worse than head for Bishops Bowl.

Owner Shaun Smart has been paying out to keep his aerator running. Result? ice-free pits in which the roach are still feeding in 'warmer' depths going down to 35 feet.

He said: "I've been having eight to 20lb bags of roach and skimmers, fishing just off bottom in 18 feet, in afternoon sessions.

"Some of the carp boys have been catching too. Nigel Alli had four to 18lb in one session."

● Are Makins A league competitors tough or nuts? Either way they broke the ice to fish Sunday – and caught.

Ron Savage won with a 9lb carp, Duncan Warrell had 8-14 and Ian Hughes 8-12.

● Towcester vets also had to smash the crystal lid for their midweeker on Gayton cut. Graham Martin winkled out 118 roach for 4-9, Gerald Greene had 3-2 and Grenville Reed 0-14.

● HAS anyone seen our bridge? What must be one of angling's strangest ever pleas comes from Olney & Clifton.

Last 'summer' they built the bridge (pictured) over a ditch cutting across the path on their Goosey Ouse section.

Massive, it involved some 20 or so heavy railway sleepers. But wood floats... and recent floods carried it away.

Ron Bull said: "It was seen half a mile downstream... but another flood carried it away again before we could do anything about it."

Anyone spotting the wayward bridge should call Ron on 01234 712883.

● 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, a snap of Daventry's Paul Barnes (the one looking like a 'Stones roadie) dates from '78 and shows him collecting £250 – several week's wages back then – top prize in a Castle-run 580 pegger on Nene's GUC.

He blissfully recalls: "With pools I picked up £641, pushing Billy Makin into second."

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.

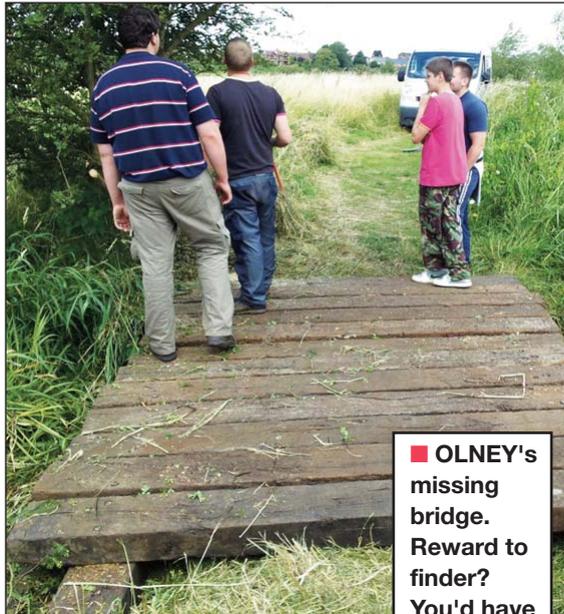
● Standing, like a snow-covered tree trunk, watching an un-moving quivertip on the Ouse at Stony, Sunday, I was startled by a labrador dashing up, shoving its head in my bag and wolfing two slices of bread.

Before I could move, its indignant owner hurtled out of the bushes to grab said mutt and lever the bread from its jaws. "Don't worry, love," I said, "he can have it."

With a look to melt ice, she snarled: "No HE can't. HE mustn't eat THAT!" and hurled the soggy slices back at my feet!

I know it was cheap stuff from Aldi, but...

● FIXTURES: Feb 3, Newport river open, 07718 392639.



■ **OLNEY's missing bridge. Reward to finder? You'd have to ask...**



■ **BLAST from the past: 580 peg CANAL match winner Paul Barnes, on the left.**

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 (click link to email)